Job Description

Associate Technician (Apprentice Lab Technician)

Salary: Apprentice Grade 3
Contract: Full time, ongoing
Location: Canterbury Campus
Responsible to: Technical Manager
Job family: Technical

Apprenticeship Information

The Apprenticeships programmes combine work, training, and studying so you can 'earn while you learn'. With the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy in April 2017, it is giving employers, such as The University of Kent, the opportunity to develop the workforce using Apprenticeships, that are fully funded by paid for via the Levy.

By undertaking an Apprenticeship, it can provide the right balance between working and learning, as it enables the employee to develop their career with a structured learning programme that combines both.

It is all about taking on real responsibilities whilst gaining the skills and experience you need to succeed – all with the support of knowledgeable colleagues from within the business. Working in a supported environment to develop the skills and knowledge, which will assist you to complete an Apprenticeship and achieve the standard.

As an Apprentice, you will actively participate in your own learning plan, which is to be agreed with your line manager and the assessor/tutor from the training provider. The expectation is that the Apprentice is committed to undertake training and constructively take part in meetings, supervision, seminars and other events designed to improve and develop your skills and to assist your effective development.

In agreement with the Departmental Managers / Supervisors, you may be required to attend and complete required national recognised training courses that aligns to the Apprenticeship standard. This could involve attendance at educational establishments on a regular basis, as appropriate.

Throughout the programme, you will have regular review meetings to support your progress and achievement, from your mentors, manager and from the training provider used to deliver the standard.

When an Apprentice starts at Kent, the starting salary can be set at 15% below the job grade. During the Apprenticeship programme you will be set learning and work targets to achieve at set times. If targets are met your salary will be reviewed and if agreed with be increased 3 times by 5%. as by the end of the programme and on achievement your salary will be paid at the job grade as you will have completed the development of your skills and competency by achieving the Apprenticeship.

Your Employee Apprenticeship Manager, Loretta Finch will also support you through the programme with information and guidance.

Job purpose

Working as part of a technical support team the Apprentice Associate Technician will help provide a technical support service for staff and students within the Division. The Apprentice Associate Technician will support the delivery of timely and effective teaching and research support to students, academic and research staff and visitors to the Division. The Apprentice Associate Technician will work primarily under supervision and through training will solve simple technical problems.

Key accountabilities

- Carry out routine day to day tasks to established guidelines, to achieve team objectives. Under supervision provide technical support to divisional customers solving simple technical problems. Refer unusual or non-routine queries to more senior staff.
- Seek advice and direction of more senior staff, to achieve outcomes in standard situations.
- Communicate with appropriate staff, escalating problems or difficulties to a supervisor. Respond to internal and external contacts for routine queries.
- Operate basic equipment, carrying out straightforward maintenance.
- Apply knowledge to solve routine problems and use initiative.
- Assist colleagues and students in the work area with the preparation of equipment and supply of consumables for scheduled activities.
- Maintain a clean and safe working environment including the correct disposal of waste. Transport goods and equipment.
- Understand, promote and apply relevant health and safety procedures ensuring they are followed at all times.
- Maintain accurate records of work undertaken, inputting data, fault logging and maintenance of straightforward databases using appropriate IT systems and software.
- Assist with general administrative tasks associated with the operation of the work area.
- Assist with purchasing including ordering and distributing goods. Undertake a range of tasks to ensure adequate loan and return of resources.
- Replenish basic stocks of consumables following routine stock control procedures. Ensure the effective and return of resources.
- Work effectively with others and assist with induction of students and staff to the work area.
- Contribute and support change in work area to continually deliver an excellent student and staff experience.
- Assist in the day-to-day operation of the Divisions practical teaching and research spaces including computer suites, laboratories and production environments.
- Work with other divisional colleagues to assist with the day-to-day oversight of Estates-related queries and projects to ensure the timely completion of work requests.
- Actively demonstrate a commitment to professional development by continuing to advance knowledge, understanding and competencies.

Key challenges and decisions

The following provide an overview of the most challenging or complex parts of the role and the degree of autonomy that exists.

- Apply technical knowledge and understanding to be able to respond to a wide range of diverse enquires and recognise when it is appropriate to refer to other members of the technical team or other on-campus service departments for specialist advice and assistance.
- Works primarily under supervision and through training has ability to solve simple problems.
- Managing multiple requests for information and technical assistance or dealing with several customers politely and professionally and work across the team.
- Communicating in a timely and effective manner to ensure the professional delivery of technical support to a broad range of staff, students and visitors to the Division, with varying levels of competency.

Facts & figures

Kent Technical Services provide specialist support to all areas of the University including teaching, research, innovation, and civic activities. There are 6 academic divisions within the University of Kent supported by embedded technical teams who provide specialist subject support, facility operation and resource management.

Internal & external relationships

Internal: Staff at all levels within the academic division and professional services areas; students

External: Specialist equipment and software suppliers; consultants; contractors; visitors and visiting academic researchers; alumni

Health, safety & wellbeing considerations

This job involves undertaking duties which include the following health, safety and wellbeing considerations:

- Regular use of Screen Display Equipment
- Working with chemicals (inc. requirement to wear latex gloves and inc. work with CO_2 or N_2 gasses and cryogenic liquid)
- Biological Agents/Scientific Hazards (experiments/lasers etc, and waste/sewage)
- Prolonged physical/manual work/Manual handling (inc. human beings)

Further technical specialisms

Technical Services roles have common accountabilities across role types. The following provides an overview of any additional technical specialisms which are specific or unique to this role:
- Willingness to study for a level 3 lab technician qualification
- A passion for science is essential
- Willing to learn new skills within the natural sciences
- An interest in working with scientific equipment

Person specification

The person specification details the necessary skills, qualifications, experience or other attributes needed to carry out the job. Applications will be measured against the criteria published below.

Selection panels will be looking for clear evidence and examples in an application, or cover letter (where applicable), which back-up any assertions made in relation to each criterion.

Essential Criteria:

- Standard GCSEs or NVQ Level 1 or equivalent qualification or experience (A)
- Ability to prepare accurate, clear, and concise documentation (A)
- Good interpersonal skills with the ability to liaise confidently with students and staff (I)
- Good IT general experience and skills (A, I)
- Ability to deal flexibly with a wide range of technically demanding situations (A, I)
- Ability to work under own initiative but also collaboratively within teams (A, I)
- Ability to manage own time, use initiative and work to deadlines (A, I)
- Knowledge of basic safety regulations & procedures (A, I)
- Organised with the ability to prioritise a wide range of workload with competing priorities (I)
- Firm commitment to achieving the University's vision and values, with a passion for a transformative student experience and multidisciplinary, impactful research (I)
- Commitment to deliver and promote equality, diversity and inclusivity in the day to day work of the role (I)

Desirable Criteria:

- Experience of working in a similar support/administrative role (A)
- Proven ability to adopt an active approach to problem solving whilst assessing outcomes of own work and constantly reviewing processes to improve them (A)
- Can demonstrate technical specialisms, as detailed in this job description (I)
- Experience of working within, and knowledge of, the Higher Education (or related) sector (A)
- Professional registration or willingness to work towards for example, RSciTech, EngTech, ICTTech (A)

Assessment stage: A - Application; I - Interview; T - Test/presentation at interview stage