



Job Situation

Biology lab. Small shared office with computer. Some field work. Alone or with team. Reporting to research scientist.

Weekly Hours of Work

35

Overtime

Monthly Salary

\$3,400

Student Loan – Owing

Student Loan – Monthly Payment

\$200

Duties

Conduct tests and analyses. Perform technical procedures in plant genetics. Assist in field research and surveys. Analyse data. Prepare reports.

Prospects

Supervisory positions. Laboratory technologist. Consulting.

Job Title

Biology Laboratory Technician

National Occupational Classification (NOC)

2221

Job Description

If truly earthshaking discoveries are to be made in the near future they will probably involve breakthroughs in medicine or genetics, and laboratory technicians will be some of the first people to know about them. Lab technicians carry out research under the direction of scientists and become experts in experimental techniques.

Your main focus is on the practical aspects—setting up experiments, preparing samples, testing and analyzing, observing and recording. An experiment can be ruined and months of valuable research rendered useless by sloppy procedure, so a good technician is distinguished by meticulous attention to detail and careful adherence to proper scientific methods. Once the research team are confident in your technique they will assign more interesting and responsible duties and you will eventually work as a trusted member of the team.

Extremely fine observational skills are also typical of good technicians. You notice tiny changes, anomalies and irregularities, and bring them to the attention of the research head in case they may be important. Your immediate, daily, hands-on connection to an experiment in progress gives you a unique viewpoint that can be very valuable to the research effort. When a great discovery is made it is often a technician who first notices that something is up. Then the technologists and scientists find out what is up and why.

Technicians also do field work sometimes, especially in agricultural research, collecting samples and making observations. They keep records and write reports concerning their own duties, and may assist in analyzing data and writing progress reports for the team. If something great results, you definitely share in the glory.