

"There are many opportunities for hands-on experience that I wouldn't get in other roles."

After finishing her life sciences degree and working as a phlebotomist part-time, Leanne applied for a support role to refine her laboratory techniques.

Leanne Evans

Laboratory support technician

Employer or university

Liverpool Clinical Laboratories

Salary range

£15k-£25k

Leanne Evans

How I got into the role

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During my A-levels and degree in 'life sciences applicable to medicine', I worked as a phlebotomist. My role consisted of obtaining emergency blood samples from a wide range of wards including haematology, geriatric medicine and surgery for analysis. I really enjoyed my role and it sparked my interest in working in laboratories. After graduating, I applied for a laboratory support technician role because I was looking to gain some hands-on experience and strengthen my technical skills.

What I do

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In my current position, I support clinical and biomedical scientists to analyse blood samples to help with the diagnosis and treatment of patients. There's no such thing as a typical day because it depends where I'm based in the laboratory.

On the days when I'm working in the automated part of the laboratory, I ensure that urgent samples are processed and that the results are obtained within strict timeframes. Here, I may also be involved with running both the pre and post-analytical systems.

On other occasions, I may be based in the specialised high-pressure liquid chromatography/ mass spectrometry section. In this part of the laboratory, I use non-automated techniques to perform a wide range of tests including those for immunosuppressant drugs and a range of vitamins and steroids.

The best bits and challenges

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I love my job because it's very interesting and diverse. There are many opportunities for hands-on experience that I wouldn't get in other roles. I'm also constantly learning new techniques and adding to my knowledge.

One of the highlights in my role so far has been contributing to work to look into ways the laboratory can improve its current methods. Whilst working on this project, I had the opportunity to present my work at various meetings including the international EuroLab conference.

Career plans and top tips for others

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If you think you'd like to work as a laboratory support technician, my tips are to ask lots of questions and be willing to learn. There are also plenty of training opportunities, so take them when they are available.

In the future, I would love to become a healthcare scientist and I know all the experience I'm gaining in my current role will be very useful in helping me achieve this.

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