Government of South Australia
SA Health

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Role Title:	Technical Officer
Classification Code:	TGO-0/1
LHN/ HN/ SAAS/ DHW:	Statewide Clinical Support
Hospital/ Service/ Cluster:	SA Pathology
Division:	Microbiology & Infectious Diseases
Department/Section / Unit/ Ward:	Food & Environmental Laboratory
Role reports to:	Laboratory Manager
Role Created/ Reviewed Date:	April 2021
Criminal and Relevant History Screening:	☐ Aged (NPC) ☒ Working With Children's Check (WWCC) (DHS) ☒ Vulnerable (NPC) ☐ General Probity (NPC)
Immunisation Risk Category Requirements:	☐ Category A (direct contact with blood or body substances) ☐ Category B (indirect contact with blood or body substances) ☒ Category C (minimal patient contact)

ROLE CONTEXT

Primary Objective(s) of role:

The technical officer is required to perform routine diagnostic laboratory functions in the Food and Environmental Laboratory, including specimen reception, processing of diagnostic samples (automated and manual), preliminary evaluation and reporting of associated results and data processing associated with diagnostic tests, dispatch of specimens and maintaining laboratory supplies.

The incumbent will rotate through several work areas of the laboratory and other laboratory sites in SA Pathology in order to acquire and maintain expertise.

The following objectives for a Technical Officer at the classification level of TGO 0/1 are as follows:

- Activities at this level may be undertaken on an individual basis or in a team, and will include a requirement to exercise knowledge.
- Perform duties which require expertise, experience and technical skills to apply standardised practices and procedures in the conduct of a range of technical activities.
- Participate in technical project work which requires a level of applied knowledge and skill, which can be gained by experience.

Direct Reports:

The incumbent reports to the Laboratory Manager or Section Head through the Section Supervisor of the rostered section or workgroup.

The incumbent is required to work in conjunction with the appropriate section supervisor in the day-to-day operations of the assigned section.

Supervisor Reports to: Section Head/Laboratory Manager
Supervisor's Position: Section Supervisor
Subject Position: Technical Officer (TGO-0/1)

Key Relationships/ Interactions:

Internal

- Interacts closely with personnel at all levels on a daily basis within SA Pathology regarding specimens, tests, results and equipment.
- Communication with medical and laboratory staff within the directorate and across directorates

External

- Communication with clients regarding specimens and testing
- Communication of results to a variety of authorised staff.
- Inform supervising staff of test results as required or requested
- Inform medical personnel including Infectious Diseases Consultants, ward staff and Infection Control staff of test results as required or requested.

Challenges associated with Role:

Major challenges currently associated with the role include:

- Understanding the variations between test requirements.
- Participating in an efficient integrated workflow.
- Understanding the need for courteous and clear communication at all times, particularly at times of high workload pressure.
-
- The incumbent is required to fully participate in the laboratory roster and after suitable training and competency assessment and will be required to participate in a 24-hour / 7 day roster which includes day and afternoon shift and may include night shift.
- The incumbent is required to handle and process infectious / potentially contaminated samples
- As required the incumbent will rotate through a range of laboratory sub-speciality work areas
- Some out of hours work and covering vacancies may be required at short notice.

Delegations:

As per Statewide Clinical Support Services HR and Financial delegations.

Key Result Area and Responsibilities

Key Result Areas	Major Responsibilities
Specialised Area	• Ensure that all work is performed in accordance with current departmental procedures and NATA requirements and to ensure the confidentiality of laboratory results and patient information. • Develop multidisciplinary skills as required
Service Provision	• Receive specimens into the laboratory (information system) and perform identity checks in accordance with established laboratory protocols. • Sort and prepare samples for testing and analyses including dispatch to other laboratories where appropriate. • Under the governance of the supervisor perform diagnostic testing and reporting across multiple disciplines (according to worksite requirements) as directed and in accordance with established laboratory methods/guidelines and appropriate to technical grade delegations. • Provide high quality and accurate results within a timeframe determined through established KPIs. • Perform analysis of quality control material, review and report outlier results in accordance with established laboratory protocols. • Promptly bring to the attention of the supervisor any abnormal or unexpected results. • Assist with storage of consumables, specimens and the safe transport and disposal of specimens. • Maintain records of results. • Undertake routine laboratory housekeeping duties. • Operate and maintain laboratory equipment in accordance with established procedures. • Prepare analytical reagents and controls and ensure that supplies of reagents and consumables are always available • Stock maintenance
Quality Management	• Actively participate in the application of Quality Management principles in accordance with appropriate regulatory framework. This includes: o Procedural audits and reviews as directed. o Implementation of new methods and procedures. o Ensuring acknowledgement of relevant procedural updates. o Ensuring appropriate and immediate reporting of incidents, errors and complaints. o Participation in risk management and continuous quality improvement activities as part of day to day work practices. • Understand, maintain and apply the principles of internal quality control and external quality assurance programs and contribute to the resolution of problems that may arise.

Professional Development	• Develop and maintain skills to ensure current knowledge in diagnostic, research and development activities of the laboratory. • Take part in departmental seminars and presentations • Participate in training programs and staff meetings • Assist with approved research and development • Assist as required, in the training of new staff in established methodologies • Assist as required, in the assessment of new techniques
Work Health & Safety	• Contribute to Work Health and Safety within SA Pathology by taking reasonable care to protect personal health and safety of other staff, wear protective clothing and use safety equipment as directed. • Report incidents and risks in a timely manner. • Handling and processing of biological hazardous samples. • Collaborate with senior staff in resolution of issues and mitigation of risks. • Complete mandatory training obligations including emergency evacuation and fire training.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

ESSENTIAL MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Educational/Vocational Qualifications:

For appointment at the TGO-1 level, a Diploma or Advanced Diploma in an approved and recognised qualification e.g. Food Science and Technology, Laboratory Science

For the appointment at the TGO-0 level, educational standards required for entry to an appropriate Technical study course.

Note that employees without the required qualifications who are already working in such positions, at the TGO-1 level are eligible to apply and compete for this position.

Personal Abilities/Aptitudes/Skills

- Ability to work under limited supervision.
- Ability to follow written and verbal instructions.
- Positive commitment to customer service.
- Communicate and work effectively within a team environment.
- Ability to complete variable workloads to a high standard and within defined timelines.
- A desire to work in a laboratory environment.
- Good interpersonal skills.
- Ability to use initiative to solve problems.
- Good numerical and keyboard skills.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Ability to prioritise work to ensure efficient and effective performance.
- Ability to handle confidential and sensitive information in a professional manner.
- Ability to use various computer software to perform work duties.

Experience:

- Experience working within a team environment
- General laboratory experience.

Knowledge:

- Knowledge of laboratory principles and concepts.
- General knowledge of science and laboratory practice.
- Knowledge of Work Health, and Safety legislation.

DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS

Educational/Vocational Qualifications

- A proven ability to acquire and apply technical skills.
- A proven ability to undertake relevant training programs including further education courses
- Evidence of desire for self-improvement – attendance at seminars, courses, etc

Personal Abilities/Aptitudes/Skills:

- Demonstrated relevant technical expertise.
- Laboratory skills in analytical methodologies.
- Ability to communicate with health care professionals
- Demonstrable competency in the performance of routine tests undertaken in the Food and Environmental laboratory or other medical laboratories – depending on training and experience
- Demonstrable technical skills, including manual dexterity and technical precision/accuracy
- Motivated and demonstrated initiative and attention to detail being flexible and dependable
- An ability to assess workloads and assign priorities
- Able to work effectively both in a team environment and without supervision when required
- Aptitude for 'out-of-hours' work
- Punctuality – must be ready to commence work on time as indicated on rosters
- Proactive – must show initiative, especially alerting senior staff to potential problems

Experience

- Experience in medical, food or pharmaceutical microbiology
- Experience with laboratory equipment.
- Experience in working in a multi-disciplinary laboratory.
- Experience in Data Entry.

Knowledge

- Knowledge of food microbiology techniques.
- Computer/word processing skills with Microsoft Office and Microsoft Access
- Knowledge of commonly used Microbiology Laboratory Information Systems (LIS)
- Knowledge of pathology laboratory principles and concepts.
- General knowledge of science and laboratory practice.
- Knowledge of current accreditation and legislative requirements as applied to Pathology Laboratories.
- Knowledge of Work, Health and Safety.
- Knowledge of legislation, policies and guidelines relating to privacy.
- Knowledge of multiple pathology disciplines.

Special Conditions:

- It is mandatory that no person, whether or not already working in SA Health, may be appointed to a position in SA Health unless they have provided the a satisfactory current Criminal and Relevant History Screening, as required by the *SA Health Criminal and Relevant History Screening Policy Directive*.
- *For appointment in a Prescribed Position* under the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act (2016),* a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) is required from the Department for Human Services Screening Unit. For other positions, a satisfactory National Police Certificate (NPC) assessment is required.
- For *'Prescribed Positions'* under the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act (2016),* the individual's WWCCs must be renewed every 5 years from the date of issue; and for '*Approved Aged Care Provider Positions*' every 3 years from date of issue as required by the *Accountability Principles 2014* issued pursuant to the *Aged Care Act 1997* (Cth).
- Appointment is subject to immunisation risk category requirements. There may be ongoing immunisation requirements that must be met.
- Depending on work requirements the incumbent may be transferred to other locations across SA Health to perform work appropriate to classification, skills and capabilities either on a permanent or temporary basis subject to relevant provisions of the *Public Sector Act 2009* for Public Sector employees or the *SA Health (Health Care Act) Human Resources Manual* for Health Care Act employees.
- The incumbent may be required to participate in Counter Disaster activities including attendance, as required, at training programs and exercises to develop the necessary skills required to participate in responses in the event of a disaster and/or major incident.

General Requirements:

Managers and staff are required to work in accordance with the Code of Ethics for South Australian Public Sector, Directives, Determinations and Guidelines, and legislative requirements including but not limited to:

- *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* (SA) and when relevant WHS Defined Officers must meet due diligence requirements.
- *Return to Work Act 2014* (SA), facilitating the recovery, maintenance or early return to work of employees with work related injury / illness.
- Meet immunisation requirements as outlined by the *Immunisation for Health Care Workers in South Australia Policy Directive.*
- Equal Employment Opportunities (including prevention of bullying, harassment and intimidation).
- *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* (SA) 'Notification of Abuse or Neglect'.
- Disability Discrimination.
- *Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012* (SA).
- *Information Privacy Principles Instruction.*
- Relevant Awards, Enterprise Agreements, *Public Sector Act 2009, Health Care Act 2008* and the *SA Health (Health Care Act) Human Resources Manual.*
- Relevant Australian Standards.
- Duty to maintain confidentiality.
- Smoke Free Workplace.
- To value and respect the needs and contributions of SA Health Aboriginal staff and clients, and commit to the development of Aboriginal cultural competence across all SA Health practice and service delivery.
- Applying the principles of the *South Australian Government's Risk Management Policy* to work as appropriate.

The SA Health workforce contributes to the safety and quality of patient care by adhering to the South Australian Charter of Health Care Rights, understanding the intent of the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards and participating in quality improvement activities as necessary.

Performance Development:
The incumbent will be required to participate in the organisation's Performance Review and Development Program which will include a regular review of the incumbent's performance against the responsibilities and key result areas associated with their position and a requirement to demonstrate appropriate behaviours which reflect a commitment to SA Health values and strategic directions.

Handling of Official Information:
By virtue of their duties, SA Health employees frequently access, otherwise deal with, and/or are aware of, information that needs to be treated as confidential. SA Health employees will not access or attempt to access official information, including confidential patient information other than in connection with the performance by them of their duties and/or as authorised. SA Health employees will not misuse information gained in their official capacity. SA Health employees will maintain the integrity and security of official or confidential information for which they are responsible. Employees will also ensure that the privacy of individuals is maintained and will only release or disclose information in accordance with relevant legislation, industrial instruments, policy, or lawful and reasonable direction.

White Ribbon:
SA Health has a position of zero tolerance towards men's violence against women in the workplace and the broader community. In accordance with this, the incumbent must at all times act in a manner that is non-threatening, courteous, and respectful and will comply with any instructions, policies, procedures or guidelines issued by SA Health regarding acceptable workplace behaviour.

Resilience:
SA Health employees persevere to achieve goals, stay calm under pressure and are open to feedback.

Organisational Context

Organisational Overview:

Our mission at SA Health is to lead and deliver a comprehensive and sustainable health system that aims to ensure healthier, longer and better lives for all South Australians. We will achieve our objectives by strengthening primary health care, enhancing hospital care, reforming mental health care and improving the health of Aboriginal people.

SA Health is committed to a health system that produces positive health outcomes by focusing on health promotion, illness prevention and early intervention. We will work with other government agencies and the community to address the environmental, socioeconomic, biological and behavioural determinants of health, and to achieve equitable health outcomes for all South Australians.

Our Legal Entities:

SA Health is the brand name for the health portfolio of services and agencies responsible to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. The Department for Health and Wellbeing is an administrative unit under the Public Sector Act 2009.

The legal entities include but are not limited to the Central Adelaide Local Health Network Inc., Northern Adelaide Local Health Network Inc., Southern Adelaide Local Health Network Inc., Women's and Children's Health Network Inc., Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network Inc., Eyre and far North Local Health Network Inc., Flinders and Upper North Local Health Network Inc., Limestone Coast Local Health Network Inc., Riverland Mallee Coorong Local Health Network Inc., Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Inc.and SA Ambulance Service Inc.

SA Health Challenges:

The health system is facing the challenges of an ageing population, increased incidence of chronic disease, workforce shortages, and ageing infrastructure. The SA Health Care Plan has been developed to meet these challenges and ensure South Australian's have access to the best available health care in hospitals, health care centres and through GPs and other providers.

Health Network/ Division/ Department:

SA Pathology's mission is to provide:

- The people of South Australia with comprehensive quality pathology and associated critical services that improve patient outcomes and the health of the community through a commitment to education, innovation and research.
- Our customers with exceptional services and support.
- Our staff with a working environment conducive to fulfilling their potential.
- The Government of South Australia with cost-effective, sustainable pathology and clinical services.

Values

SA Health Values

The values of SA Health are used to indicate the type of conduct required by our employees and the conduct that our customers can expect from our health service:

- We are committed to the values of integrity, respect and accountability.
- We value care, excellence, innovation, creativity, leadership and equity in health care provision and health outcomes.
- We demonstrate our values in our interactions with others in SA Health, the community, and those for whom we care.

Code of Ethics

The *Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector* provides an ethical framework for the public sector and applies to all public service employees.

- Democratic Values - Helping the government, under the law to serve the people of South Australia.
- Service, Respect and Courtesy - Serving the people of South Australia.

- Honesty and Integrity- Acting at all times in such a way as to uphold the public trust.
- Accountability- Holding ourselves accountable for everything we do.
- Professional Conduct Standards- Exhibiting the highest standards of professional conduct.

As a public sector employee, you have a responsibility to maintain ethical behaviour and professional integrity standards. It is expected that you act in accordance with the Code of Ethics, and contribute to a culture of integrity within SA Health.

The Code recognises that some public sector employees are also bound by codes of conduct relevant to their profession.

Approvals

Role Description Approval

I acknowledge that the role I currently occupy has the delegated authority to authorise this document.

Name: **Role Title:**

Signature: **Date:**

Role Acceptance

Incumbent Acceptance

I have read and understood the responsibilities associated with role, the organisational context and the values of SA Health as outlined within this document.

Name: **Signature:** **Date:**

Version control and change history

Version	Date from	Date to	Amendment
V1	10/02/17	09/04/17	Original version.
V2	10/04/17	04/07/17	Safety & Quality statement in General Requirements.
V3	04/07/17	10/07/18	Minor formatting with order of information amended.
V4	11/07/18	26/03/19	Updated legal entities for Minister and Department title on Page 7. Updated Immunisation Guidelines to Policy Directive under general requirements.
V5	27/03/19	04/06/19	Added categories for immunisation requirements on front page.
V6	05/06/19	25/06/19	Updated changes to the Criminal Relevant History and Screening.
V7	26/09/19	09/06/20	Updated legal entities to include new regional LHN's.
V8	10/06/2020	03/05/2021	Update Risk Management Statement
V9	04/05/21		Inclusion of integrity statement under Code of Ethics on Page 6