

Policy

Suitable Qualifications for Scientific and Technical Positions for Recruitment

Insert the unique identification number



Health
Pathology

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide Clinical Directors, Operations Directors, Operations Managers, Laboratory Managers, Principal and Senior Scientists, Human Resources Managers, recruitment convenors, their teams and staff with guidance in meeting the selection criteria for shortlisting of applicants for scientific and technical positions during the recruitment process. This guidance is in relation to their qualifications meeting criteria for shortlisting for interview.

2. Background

In August 2021 National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council (NPAAC) 'Requirements for Supervision in the Clinical Governance of Medical Pathology Laboratories (Sixth Edition 2021)' was published. This document provides the definition of qualification requirements for Medical Scientists and Technical Officers for supervision and forms part of the framework for laboratory accreditation.

Choosing applicants with a suitable qualification in pathology or the relevant analytical or forensic science discipline, and appropriate experience in the relevant scope of practice of the role applied for, sets them up for a fulfilling career with NSWHP. It affords them with an ability to progress professionally - from trainee to Scientist (such as Medical Scientist or Forensic Scientist), Senior, Principal, Clinical Scientist or Medical / Forensic Managing Scientist and enables them to be certified with the national certification scheme if they wish. It provides confidence to NSWHP that a level of pathology knowledge has been attained, that this can be built on, mitigates risk to the organisation and ensures laboratory accreditation is not impacted.

3. Scope

This policy applies to assessing the suitability of applicants and their qualifications and experience to address the selection criteria for all recruitments for scientific and technical positions, only in NSW Health Pathology.

4. Policy Statement

4.1 PRINCIPLES

The following Principles apply when assessing applicants during recruitment for scientist and technical officer positions:

- A. Current NSW Health Pathology employees applying for a position at the same level (e.g. Technical Officer to Technical Officer) would not be excluded for shortlisting in the current area of their work regardless of qualification or in a scope of practice based on the qualification and previous experience, but would need to meet the remaining selection criteria, in a merit based selection process.
- B. This policy is to be used at the shortlisting stage when assessing applicants and their qualifications and experience against the selection criteria.

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- C. Applicants for Scientist and Technical Officer positions follow the same assessment process.
- D. The qualifications risk matrix can be used as a support tool to guide conveners on the most suitable applicants to shortlist. This will demonstrate the level of risk associated with the applicant's qualifications and experience.
- E. When required, qualifications, including transcripts and certificates, curriculum vitae and any other supporting documents will be reviewed by the Director Scientific and Technical Strategy (or their delegate) to support conveners and HRSS during the recruitment process.
- F. Reviews of Decisions: Where a local laboratory requests a review of an unfavorable decision by the Director Scientific and Technical Strategy, the review will be provided by an independent subgroup consisting of pathologists on the NSWHP Strategic Leadership Team, including Director Clinical Operations, Director Medical Services and Chief Pathologist, with advice from Director People & Culture, to ensure the review is independent of the original decision makers. Their decision is final.
- G. Those applicants applying for an On-site Manager, would be expected to cover for an On-site Manager or with delegated responsibility from a pathologist, should meet the requirements of the National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council (NPAAC) 'Requirements for Supervision in the Clinical Governance of Medical Pathology Laboratories (Sixth Edition 2021)'.

4.2 Qualification Assessment for Applicants holding qualifications other than those in Section 4.5

Subjects **must** be relevant to and be substantially founded in pathology (as opposed to General Science, Animal Science, Mathematics, Exercise and Physiology, Environmental, Business, etc) for non-specialised diagnostic pathology positions; appropriate for specialised diagnostic pathology positions; or analytical or forensic science discipline to which the role applies.

- 1. As a guide in assessing 'relevant subjects' and 'an adequate number of pathology subjects'
 - a. Subject/Courses
 - i. specifically related to diagnostic pathology (counts 100% towards 2 or 3 years of study)
 - ii. related to areas covered by diagnostic pathology disciplines (counts 50% towards 2 or 3 years of study)
 - iii. not related to diagnostic pathology (not applicable)
- 2. Relevant pathology subjects include:
 - a. Foundation subjects – Chemistry, Biochemistry, Cell and tissue biology, Microbiology, Molecular Biology and Genetics, Statistics, Anatomy & Physiology, Pathophysiology
 - b. Haematology
 - c. Clinical Biochemistry / Clinical Chemistry / Chemical Pathology
 - d. Blood Transfusion/ Immunohaematology
 - e. Immunopathology
 - f. Histopathology / Anatomical Pathology / Cytopathology
 - g. Medical Microbiology / Virology / Parasitology / Mycology / Serology

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- h. Molecular Pathology / Genomic Pathology / Cytogenetics
3. Ideally, applicants should have completed course subjects in the scope of practice of the laboratory within which they will be working.
4. Unless applicants can provide evidence of an adequate level of experience relevant to the position being applied for, if they have not completed a course of study in a discipline required for the role, it is recommended they undertake appropriate study in that subject (e.g. single subject at UTS or CSU, short course through RMIT in Transfusion) if they become the preferred applicant.

4.3 Sub-Specialist disciplines and discretionary response when the above process does not identify a suitable applicant for shortlisting:

1. Consideration will be given to a broader range of qualifications for sub-specialist areas, specific non-Core laboratory roles (e.g. Molecular / Genomics, trace metals, immunology, environmental microbiology, research, forensic medicine, forensic analytical services, andrology).
2. *and* for roles that are proving difficult to recruit to under 4.2 above.
3. Shortlisting can be assessed on a case by case basis along the following principles using the risk mitigation table:
 - a. Qualifications: AQF level, range and extent of those qualifications
 - b. Experience relevant to the position
 - c. Consultation with Clinical Director / APP taking medico-legal responsibility for the appointment
 - d. Continuing professional development
 - e. Training plan and scope of practice implications
 - f. Support for appropriate further training
4. After shortlisting and before interview, consideration should be given by the convener as to risk mitigation strategies that could be used and the associated work required for each applicant.
5. A risk mitigation plan / staff support plan for the preferred applicant must be developed by the recruitment convener. This could be done in consultation with the laboratory manager, Clinical Directors and if appropriate Director of Scientific and Technical Strategy.

4.3.1 Biobank

1. The Biobank supports research studies. Scientist qualifications best suited to working in the Biobank include degree or higher qualifications with subjects in biochemistry, molecular biology, genetics, and/or cell biology, and exposure to research.

4.4 Additional Information on Qualifications:

4.4.1 Overseas Qualifications

Diagnostic Pathology:

1. All applicants with overseas qualifications applying for scientist and technical officer roles must have their qualifications assessed with AIMS.

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- a. The specified assessing body by the Commonwealth Government for overseas qualifications is Australian Institute of Medical and Clinical Scientists (AIMS). National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) only assess the level of qualification, not the relevance of the degree in relation to pathology. In exceptional circumstances for specific roles NOOSR assessment may be relevant and should be pre-approved via HR Support Services, during the culling and selection process. Overseas qualifications will be assessed by AIMS as:
 - I. suitable for the skilled occupation of Medical Scientist ANZSCO 234611 or eligible for Professional member = Medical Scientist
 - II. suitable for the skilled occupation of Medical Laboratory Technician ANZSCO 311213 or eligible for Intermediate member = Technical Officer
 - III. Eligible for Associate member = not eligible for appointment as a Technical Officer or Scientist

Forensic and Analytical Science Service:

1. All applicants with overseas qualifications applying for scientist and technical officer roles must have their qualifications assessed with AIMS (as above) or National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR), whichever body is most appropriate.

4.4.2 Trainees

Trainee Technical Officer - applicants must be enrolled in a recognised course of study, applicable to the role or discipline (e.g. TAFE Diploma in Laboratory Techniques - Pathology)

Trainee Scientist - applicants must be enrolled in a recognised pathology degree course applicable to the role or discipline or a course recognised by the appropriate professional body.

4.4.3 Technical Officers

The following qualifications are acceptable for shortlisting during the recruitment process:

1. Australian qualifications

- a. The following qualifications are acceptable where an applicant is currently working or has recently worked in a pathology laboratory.
 - Biological Technicians Certificate (discontinued)
 - Chemistry Certificate (discontinued)
 - Nuclear Medicine Technician's Certificate (discontinued)
 - Pathology Technician's Certificate (discontinued)
 - Pathology Technician's Certificate with the Higher Certificate (discontinued)
 - Associate Diploma of Health Science (Pathology Techniques) of the Department of Technical and Further Education (discontinued)
 - Associate Diploma in Medical Technology awarded by Riverina CAE (discontinued)
 - Associate Diploma in Medical Laboratory Science awarded by Charles Sturt University (discontinued)
 - *Note: The Advanced Certificate in Biomedical Techniques does not qualify employees for appointment as a Technical Officer.*

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- b. Diploma in the field of pathology for diagnostic pathology; or biology, chemistry or laboratory science for FASS or relevant to the role applied for E.g.
 - Diploma of Laboratory Technology (Pathology) - TAFE NSW, ABC Consulting (NB: the non-pathology streams are not considered acceptable)
 - Diploma in Laboratory Technology (PML50104) - Canberra Institute of Technology
 - c. Recognised Pathology Degree (see table 4.5)
 - d. Other degree
 - I. Bachelor in Analytic or Forensic Science for FASS, assessed by FASS.
 - II. Bachelor of Science, Biomedical Science or Medical Science degree for Diagnostic Pathology positions. The applicant must have completed an adequate number of relevant subjects (equivalent to 2 years of full-time study).
 - III. Transcripts, supplied by applicants with their application, are assessed for acceptable relevant pathology subjects, relevant subjects in forensics or subjects specific to the role applied for.
 - i. Bachelor degree <2 years of relevant subjects is NOT acceptable for shortlisting.
 - ii. Bachelor degree >2 years and <3 years of relevant subjects are eligible for shortlisting. However, they are ineligible to apply for scientist positions. Further study would be required to make them eligible [e.g. Postgraduate Diploma in Pathology (University)].
 - e. Bachelor of Science not substantially in pathology, analytical science, forensics or related to the position applied for AND the applicant has greater than 5 years recent experience as a Technical Officer relevant to the position to which the applicant has applied, are eligible for shortlisting for a Technical Officer position.
2. Overseas qualification assessed by AIMS as suitable for the skilled occupation of Medical Laboratory Technician ANZSCO 311213.

4.4.4 Scientists

The following qualifications are acceptable for shortlisting during the recruitment process:

1. Australian qualifications
 - a. Recognised Pathology degree (3-4yr degree) (see table in 4.5)
 - b. Other degree at minimum AQF 7. Transcripts, supplied by applicants with their application, are assessed for acceptable relevant pathology subjects, relevant subjects in analytical or forensic science or subjects specific to the role applied for.
 - I. Bachelor degree in subjects relevant to the analytical or forensic science discipline relating to the position, assessed by FASS.

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- i. For Forensic Biology area: a Forensic or Medical Science degree specialising in Biology or a Biology degree with a major in Molecular Biology, Biochemistry or Genetics
- ii. For Forensic Chemistry area: it varies and an Analytical Chemistry degree or a Forensic Science degree majoring in Chemistry will be suitable for some while a Bachelor of Pharmacology and/or Toxicology would be suitable for others.
- II. Bachelor of Science, Biomedical Science or Medical Science degree must have completed an adequate number of relevant pathology subjects for diagnostic pathology positions.

I & II:

- i. Bachelor's degree must have completed a 3-year degree course in relevant subjects to be acceptable for shortlisting.
 - ii. Where <3 years of relevant subjects have been successfully completed, further study would be required [e.g. Masters in Medical Laboratory Science (Pathology), Postgraduate Diploma in Pathology]
 - c. Bachelor of Science, Biomedical Science or Medical Science not substantially in pathology, analytical or forensic science discipline or related to the position applied for AND the applicant has greater than 5 years recent experience as a Scientist relevant to the position to which the applicant has applied, are eligible for shortlisting for a Scientist position.
 - d. Bachelor of Science, Biomedical Science or Medical Science not substantially in pathology, analytical or forensic science discipline or related to the position applied for AND the applicant has greater than 10 years recent experience as a Technical Officer relevant to the position to which the applicant has applied, are eligible for shortlisting for a Scientist position.
2. Bachelor degree assessed by AIMS as suitable for the skilled occupation of Medical Scientist ANZSCO 234611.
3. Membership or Fellowship *by examination* with one of the professional bodies as below:

Professional Body	Membership
Australian Institute of Medical and Clinical Scientists (AIMS)	Professional Member or Fellow
Australasian Association for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine (AACB)	Member or Fellow
Human Genetics Society of Australasia (HGSA)	Member or Fellow Master of Diagnostic Genomics, Queensland University of Technology
Australian Society of Cytology (ASC)	Fellow

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	Cytologist holding the Australian Society of Cytology CT(ASC) qualification which includes the gynaecological cytology component
Australian Society for Microbiology (ASM)	Professional Member or Fellow
Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA)	Fellow of the Faculty of Science

4.5 Recognised Pathology Courses for Scientists

AIMS Accredited Courses
Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science (Honours) – Central Queensland University
Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science – Charles Darwin University
Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science (Pathology) – Charles Sturt University
Bachelor of Science (Laboratory Medicine) – Curtin University
Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science – Fiji National University
Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science – Griffith University
Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science (Honours) – James Cook University
Bachelor of Laboratory Medicine – Murdoch University
Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science – Queensland University of Technology
Bachelor of Biomedical Science (Laboratory Medicine) – RMIT University
Master of Laboratory Medicine – RMIT University
Bachelor of Laboratory Medicine (Honours) – University of South Australia
Bachelor of Laboratory Medicine – University of Tasmania
Masters of Laboratory Medicine – University of Tasmania
Master of Clinical Pathology – University of Western Australia
Pathology courses usually with a full pathology component but not AIMS accredited (transcripts must be checked)

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Bachelor of Biomedical Science – University of Technology Sydney
Bachelor of Science (Biomedical Science) – University of Technology Sydney
Bachelor of Medical Science (Pathology) - University of Technology Sydney (from 2022)
Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science – Massey University, New Zealand (accredited until 2018)
Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science – University of Otago, New Zealand (accredited until 2016)
Graduate Diploma in Diagnostic Pathology – University of Canberra (discontinued)
Masters in Diagnostic Pathology – University of Canberra (discontinued)
Bachelor of Biomedical Science - Southern Cross University

5. Transitional Arrangements

A transitional arrangement for existing staff will be developed as part of the planned consultation with staff. This section is a placeholder for outlining these arrangements.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

All managers and recruitment convenors must comply with this policy.

7. Legal and Procedure Framework

Hospital Scientists Award

Health Employees Technical (State) Award

Health Professional and Medical Salaries (State) Award

8. Related Legislation and Supporting Documents

NPAAC 'Requirements for Supervision in the Clinical Governance of Medical Pathology Laboratories (Sixth Edition 2021)'

NPAAC 'Requirements for Laboratories Reporting Tests for the National Cervical Screening Program (Second Edition 2019)'

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed by 01/12/2022.

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10. Risk

Risk Statement	Non-compliance with this policy will impact on the effective recruitment of new employees.
Risk Category Choose one category	Workforce

11. Further Information

For further information, please contact:

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12. Version History

The approval and amendment history for this document must be listed in the following table.

Version No	Effective Date	Approved By	Approval Date	Procedure Author	Risk Rating	Sections Modified
1.0	DD/MM/YYYY	ED P&C	DD/MM/YYYY	Vanessa Thomson	Low	NA