Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB DETAILS	
Job Title	Associate Practitioner
Reports to	Histology Manager
Band	Band 4
Department/Directorate	Histology / Cellular Pathology / Specialist Services

JOB PURPOSE

- To support the day to day running of all aspects of the histology service.
- To support and participate in all the main histological techniques and processes.
- To provide supervision for Medical Technical Officer and Medical Laboratory Assistant staff in their roles in cut up and reception.
- To ensure stock levels are maintained within cut up and reception areas.
- To train new members of staff in cut up and specimen reception techniques.
- To participate in processing, embedding, section cutting and staining of routine histology specimens**.**
- To provide leadership to the Medical Technical Officer team and in digital pathology.

KEY RESULT AREAS/PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- To organise the Medical Technical Officer and Medical Laboratory Assistant team and prepare a rota to ensure all aspects of the laboratory support processes are adequately covered.
- To participate in the Biomedical Scientist rota for the embedding, section cutting and staining of histology specimens under the supervision of the specialist Biomedical Scientist in the main laboratory.
- To participate in the specialist cutting of levels.
- To assist, and liaise with Consultants and senior Biomedical Scientist staff in specimen dissection and record accurate results.
- To receive, validate and prepare specimens for processing.
- To input and retrieve data on the laboratory computer system and other clerical functions.
- To support the BMS duties and ensure all parts of the service are running efficiently.
- To perform technical and clerical duties appropriate to the grade and experience.
- To prepare all Bone Marrow samples for processing, including decalcification.
- Maintain a high standard of work and follow Standard Operating Procedures accurately.
- Be aware of urgent high risk and / or unusual specimen requests and bring these to the attention of qualified staff.
- To prepare high-risk specimens and be conversant with Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) and Health and Safety regulations

KEY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

The Cellular Pathology Department comprises three specialist sub-departments; Cytology, Histology and the Mortuary and processes over 38,000 specimens and performs 600 autopsies per year.
The combined service budgets amount to approximately £4 million.

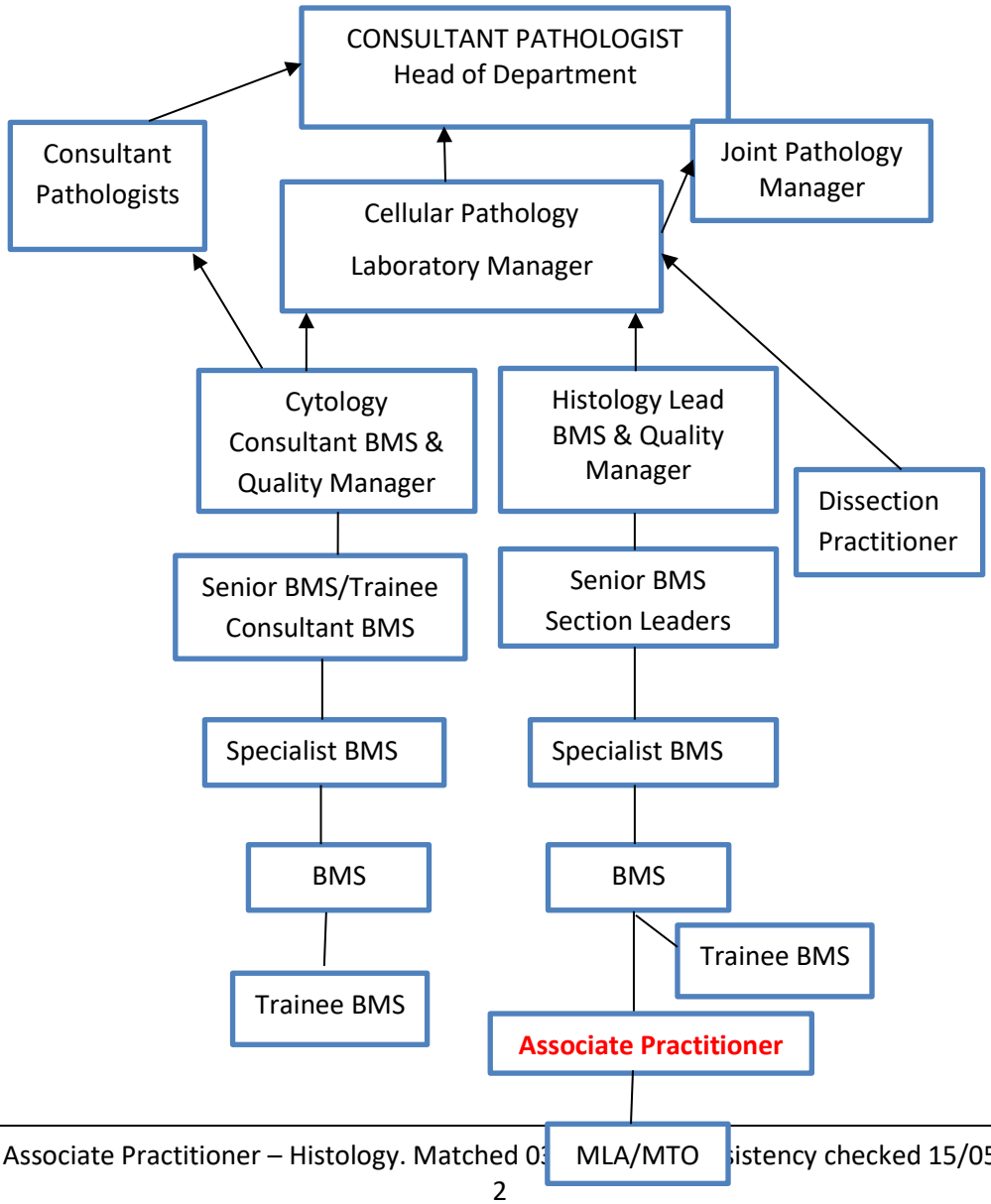
The department employs in 35 WTE scientific and technical and support staff grades. In addition, there are 17 medical staff and 6 trainee medical posts.

The department provides diagnostic and technical services to Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, NHS Devon and Community Hospitals.

Cellular Pathology laboratory is accredited in accordance with the recognised International Standard ISO 15189:2022. This accreditation demonstrates technical competence for a defined scope and the operation of a medical laboratory quality management system (UKAS 8123) and is approved by Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) for biomedical scientist training and specialist training.
Communications with a wide range of professionals and service users within and outside the Royal Devon University Healthcare Trust will include the following:

Internal to the Trust	External to the Trust
• Cellular Pathology Manager • Pathology subspecialty Managers/seniors • Clinical Lead • Cellular Pathology Consultants • Biomedical Scientists, Laboratory and Administrative colleagues • Digital Services • Epic Beaker & pathology IT teams • Nursing Colleagues • Governance Team	• Digital system suppliers • Pathology Suppliers • Colleagues in other NHS and Social Care organisations

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



FREEDOM TO ACT

- To work independently adhering to the Institute for Biomedical Science professional code of conduct at all times.
- To provide the technical services for the laboratory diagnostic service as described in departmental Standard Operating Procedures to ensure high quality patient care outcomes.
- To make decisions using knowledge, experience and analytical judgement skills to ensure accurate digitisation of pathology slides.

COMMUNICATION/RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

- To maintain the highest level of patient confidentiality.
- Liaise with senior technical staff on the day to day operation of the department.
- To report any anomalies within the department to a senior member of staff.
- To provide and receive routine information orally to inform work colleagues or external contacts, and to exchange routine information where tact and persuasive skills are required.
- To provide feedback of specimen rejection by telephone or in writing.
- To communicates with service users when specimens do not meet the department acceptance criteria.
- To communicate with digital teams, particularly Epic beaker and Digital Pathology teams.

ANALYTICAL/JUDGEMENTAL SKILLS

- Undergo training and become competent in relevant histological techniques, digital pathology and methodologies.
- To have a knowledge of specialist techniques such as digital pathology and identifying correct application of scanning procedures.
- To support Medical Technical Officers and Medical Laboratory Assistant duties associated with reception, cut up and the main laboratory, ensuring that all are performed at the highest standard and follow departmental Standard Operating Procedures
- To be conversant with COSHH and Health and Safety regulations
- To identify any faults and using the correct maintenance procedures for all laboratory equipment.
- To use and maintain laboratory equipment and record downtime and corrective measures taken.

PLANNING/ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS

- To prioritise the microtomy, staining and digitisation of urgent slides.
- To plan and manage the daily digital slide scanning of routine workload.
- To attend any further education regarding digital pathology and leadership.
- To take part in continuous assessment monitored by the training officer
- To complete the Laboratory Training Manual.
- To complete the Institute of Biomedical Science portfolio within 1 year of appointment.
- To label, check and sort stained slides into individual cases for reporting by Consultant Pathologists.

PATIENT/CLIENT CARE

- To use and maintain specialist expertise to prepare optimum specimens for diagnostic purposes.
- To provide timely specimen preparation and testing services to ensure department adheres to referral to treatment targets.
- In the interest of patient safety to ensure clear communication regrading technical and scientific issues at all times.

POLICY/SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

- To adhere to all policies and procedures as described in the department's SOPs, with particular attention to quality procedures and health and safety.

- To take part in the quality management system and record any incidents, errors or non-conformities.
- To assist in the implementation of new techniques and procedures where appropriate and agreed by the cellular pathology laboratory manager.
- Record service complaints and incidents and ensure that effective immediate and follow up actions are carried out as agreed with laboratory managers.
- To take part in internal audits against defined quality performance measures and feedback non-compliances and actions to the Quality Managers.
- To assist the department in ensuring compliance with ISO 15189:2022 standards to maintain UKAS accreditation.

FINANCIAL/PHYSICAL RESOURCES

- To monitor and maintain use of supplies and ensure this is done efficiently and cost effectively in line with the needs of the service.
- To assist in acceptance testing and verification of new technology as directed by senior BMS.
- To ensure stock levels of consumables are adequate for daily laboratory work.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- To supervise any trainee Medical Technical Officer staff.
- To take part in the mentoring and training of less experienced staff
- To undertake internal and external professional updates and training to maintain a high level of competence at a professional level expected of an Associate Practitioner.
- To be responsible for own personal development.

INFORMATION RESOURCES

- To be a competent user of the laboratory IT system and ensure compliance with system update.
- To be involved in audit and data collection as directed by senior staff.
- Collate data and statistics to support own technical and scientific development.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- To undertake laboratory technical work and digital imaging to support approved Trust clinical trials and research activities as directed by the Consultant Pathologists and Consultant Biomedical Scientists.
- To support in the technical work required to acceptance test new technology and equipment.
- To participate in appropriate national mandatory audit activities and others as arranged by the Laboratory Manager.

PHYSICAL SKILLS

- Restricted positions at laboratory benches for short periods of time when carrying out the filing of slides, tissue embedding and block microtomy.
- To support the Biomedical Scientist duties and ensure all parts of the service are running efficiently.
- To perform technical and clerical duties appropriate to the grade and experience.

PHYSICAL EFFORT

- To carry out laboratory tests and specialist methodologies that require care and precision e.g. microtomy, embedding, special stains and molecular work – will require periods of standing and or sitting for up to 3 hour sessions.
- To maintain skills that require some hours of study at a slide scanner- will require periods of standing and or sitting for up to 3 hour sessions.
- Frequent light physical effort moving and lifting boxes and specimens on arrival.
- Frequent light physical effort moving blocks, stock and slides between floors (a lift is available)
- Frequent light physical effort pushing specimen trolleys from specimen reception to dissection areas.

MENTAL EFFORT

- Frequent – requirement for prolonged concentration.
- Concentration for recording Consultant Pathologists in tissue dissection – detailed work without interruption.
- Working to a daily routine.

EMOTIONAL EFFORT

- Occasional emotional discomfort in regards to specimens for dissection, handling of post mortem tissue, products of conception, limb amputations, high grade cancer, breast specimens.
- Awareness of necessity for absolute confidentiality
- Clear communication of detailed and sensitive information with users, patients and colleagues

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Daily exposure to bodily fluids and chemicals of varying hazard
- Daily and prolonged use of Display Screens (VDU)
- Use of Personal Protective Equipment as required
- Coping with high temperatures and noise

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Take part in regular performance appraisal.

Undertake any training required in order to maintain competency including mandatory training, e.g. Manual Handling

Contribute to and work within a safe working environment

You are expected to comply with Trust Infection Control Policies and conduct him/herself at all times in such a manner as to minimise the risk of healthcare associated infection

As an employee of the Trust, it is a contractual duty that you abide by any relevant code of professional conduct and/or practice applicable to you. A breach of this requirement may result in action being taken against you (in accordance with the Trust's disciplinary policy) up to and including dismissal.

You must also take responsibility for your workplace health and wellbeing:

- When required, gain support from Occupational Health, Human Resources or other sources.
- Familiarise yourself with the health and wellbeing support available from policies and/or Occupational Health.
- Follow the Trust's health and wellbeing vision of healthy body, healthy mind, healthy you.
- Undertake a Display Screen Equipment assessment (DES) if appropriate to role.

DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CHECKS

This post has been identified as involving access to vulnerable adults and/or children and in line with Trust policy successful applicants will be required to undertake a Disclosure & Barring Service Disclosure Check.

GENERAL

This is a description of the job as it is now. We periodically examine employees' job descriptions and update them to ensure that they reflect the job as it is then being performed, or to incorporate any changes being proposed. This procedure is conducted by the manager in consultation with the jobholder. You will, therefore, be expected to participate fully in such discussions. We aim to reach agreement on reasonable changes, but if agreement is not possible, we reserve the right to insist on changes to your job description after consultation with you.

Everyone within the Trust has a responsibility for, and is committed to, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults, children and young people and for ensuring that they are protected from harm, ensuring that the Trusts Child Protection and Safeguarding Adult policies and procedures are promoted and adhered to by all members of staff.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title	Associate Practitioner

Requirements	Essential	Desirable
QUALIFICATIONS / TRAINING		
NVQ level 3, foundation degree or equivalent qualification (IBMS certificate of achievement part 1)	E	
GCSE (or equivalent) English, Mathematics/Sciences, Grades A-C	E	
KNOWLEDGE / SKILLS		
Good level of technical competence in relevant sections of Histopathology	E	
Good level of technical competence in Digital Pathology		
Good theoretical knowledge of Histology to diploma level	E	
Ability to use IT systems required for laboratory work	E	
Ability to work on own initiative and plan day to day activities with minimum requirement for supervision	E	
Good communication skills	E	
Ability to work accurately under pressure	E	
Good dexterity	E	
EXPERIENCE		
Demonstratable or proven experience working as a Medical Technical Officer in histology	E	
	E	
PERSONAL REQUIREMENTS		
Enthusiastic highly motivated and committed to completing registration portfolio.	E	
A flexible approach to work	E	
Ability to initiate and coordinate change to working practices	E	
Able to prioritise own work load and meet deadlines	E	
Able to work independently with minimal supervision	E	
Good communication and telephone skills	E	
Remain calm and professional in a busy environment	E	
OTHER REQUIREMENTS		
Enthusiasm for further studies	E	
Flexible to work Saturday	E	

WORKING CONDITIONS/HAZARDS		FREQUENCY (Rare/ Occasional/ Moderate/ Frequent) R	O	M	F
Hazards/ Risks requiring Immunisation Screening					
Laboratory specimens	Y				Y
Contact with patients	N				
Exposure Prone Procedures	Y				Y
Blood/body fluids	Y			Y	
Hazard/Risks requiring Respiratory Health Surveillance					
Solvents (e.g. toluene, xylene, white spirit, acetone, formaldehyde and ethyl acetate)	Y				Y
Respiratory sensitisers (e.g isocyanates)	Y	Y			
Chlorine based cleaning solutions (e.g. Chlorclean, Actichlor, Tristel)	Y		Y		
Animals	N				
Cytotoxic drugs	N				
Risks requiring Other Health Surveillance					
Radiation (>6mSv)	N				
Laser (Class 3R, 3B, 4)	N				
Dusty environment (>4mg/m3)	Y	Y			
Noise (over 80dBA)	N				
Hand held vibration tools (=>2.5 m/s2)	N				
Other General Hazards/ Risks					
VDU use (> 1 hour daily)	Y			Y	
Heavy manual handling (>10kg)	Y	Y			
Driving	N				
Food handling	N				
Night working	N				
Electrical work	N				
Physical Effort	Y				Y
Mental Effort	Y				Y
Emotional Effort	Y			Y	
Working in isolation	Y	Y			
Challenging behaviour	N				