

Training

A medical laboratory technician trains on the job.

A medical laboratory technician trainee must work for up to 2 years under supervision of a medical laboratory scientist or an approved health practitioner in an accredited laboratory.

A medical laboratory technician must

- have a Certificate of Competency and Experience completed by their supervisor
- pass the Qualified Medical Laboratory Technician (QMLT) examination
- have a drivers' licence
- be registered with the Medical Sciences Council of New Zealand
- have an Annual Practising Certificate

The subjects that will help most with this job are English, biology, chemistry, physics, health and maths.

Personal Qualities

Medical laboratory technicians deal with many samples each day. They need to be:

- careful and methodical
- accurate
- able to work quickly
- cautious about safety
- enquiring and adaptable
- problem solvers
- able to work under pressure
- able to cope with samples, which may be unpleasant

Medical laboratory technicians need good eyesight (with or without glasses) and must have normal colour vision.

Information collated by NZIRH
Where to go for more information:

www.msccouncil.org.nz

www.careers.govt.nz

www.kiaorahauora.co.nz

NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF RURAL HEALTH
PO Box 834, CAMBRIDGE 3450



p: 07 8239274
email: admin@nzirh.org.nz
www.nzirh.org.nz

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Medical Laboratory Technician



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Medical laboratory technicians work under medical laboratory scientists. They carry out laboratory tests on blood, tissues and other samples taken from patients. They may work in any of the following disciplines:

Clinical Biochemistry

analysis of body samples (blood, urine, faeces, tissue) for diseases e.g. diabetes or kidney failure.

Clinical Immunology

test for diseases involving the body's immune system, such as HIV infection or for allergies.

Cytogenetics

investigate genetic diseases.

Haematology

analysis of blood samples for conditions such as anaemia or diseases such as cancer.

Histology

preparation of tissue samples for a pathologist to determine diseases or abnormalities.

Medical Cytology

test cell samples for cancer and other diseases.

Medical Microbiology

detect, cultivate and test for bacteria and fungi.

Transfusion Science

prepare blood and blood products for transfusion.

What do they do?

Medical laboratory technicians may:

- analyse blood, tissue and urine samples from patients
- get samples ready for a pathologist
- evaluate results from analyses
- send test results to hospitals and doctors
- use specialized laboratory equipment
- maintain quality assurance and safety standards
- care for medical equipment
- help develop new tests and equipment



Where do they work?

Most medical laboratory technicians work in public hospital laboratories. Others work in:

- private diagnostic labs or hospitals
- university research labs
- chemical and pharmaceutical companies, in research and development.

Working in a hospital

In a hospital laboratory setting, many of the laboratory staff move around the different areas e.g. haematology, biochemistry, histology. They carry out tests to support clinical diagnosis and health screening.

Medical laboratory technicians working in hospitals do shift work and may be required to work at night or during the weekend in an emergency.

