

Post Details		21/7/25	
Faculty/Administrative/Service Department:	Faculty of Engineering & Physical Sciences (FEPS) Division of MMA Engineering		
Job Title:	Experimental Officer		
Job Family & Job Level	Technical and Experimental	Level 4	
Responsible to:	School Technical Manager / MSSU Academic Lead		
Responsible for:	Microscopy and Analysis Technician		
<p><u>Job Purpose Statement</u></p> <p>To provide research support to the materials characterisation facilities associated with MicroStructural Studies Unit (MSSU) and the Surface Analysis Laboratory (SAL). The post holder supports the maintenance and operation of equipment/systems, ensures the safety of equipment, and provides supervision to staff, students and clients in the use and applications of equipment. The post holder actively contributes to the smooth operation of the unit and towards a positive student/staff/client experience.</p>			
<p><u>Problem Solving, Accountability and Dimensions of the role</u></p> <p>The post holder will work without close line management supervision but will operate with some direction and guidance in terms of the nature of work allocated. The post holder will have the freedom to work in a proactive manner and will decide how to achieve the end result, generally based on their judgement and technical expertise. The post holder will liaise with internal and external clients to identify their requirements and ensure that they have appropriate and timely access to the equipment in the laboratory. This will involve the post holder using their judgement and initiative to resolve any conflicts of interest that may arise during the booking process. The post holder is expected to take a proactive approach to maximising the operating efficiency of the facilities in the laboratories, through overseeing the maintenance schedule and coordination of Service Engineers. The post holder will need to demonstrate a good level of verbal and written communication within this role, as they are responsible for marketing the facilities in the MSSU, to expand the expert services business.</p> <p>During their day-to-day activities, the post holder is expected to apply an in-depth knowledge of most of the instrumentation within the laboratories and its applications and to provide technical support, advice and solutions (within their specialist technical area) to staff, students and clients. The post holder is expected to respond confidently and in a timely manner to problems/issues such as equipment malfunction and prioritisation. They are expected to apply well-established processes and procedures and technical and working knowledge to assist students in the design and preparation of experiments, oversee the activities of external clients and supervise technical staff on the maintenance of equipment and the safe operation of systems. Technical problem solving is therefore an integral element to the work undertaken by the post holder. The post holder is required to identify and address most problems/issues they face with minimal guidance from their line manager; however, more complex problems should be referred up, either for guidance or for resolution.</p> <p>The post holder is responsible for the safety and security of the laboratory space and equipment. This includes monitoring and maintaining a safe working environment within the laboratories, ensuring that the environment and equipment meets Health and Safety requirements and that any procedures are carried out in compliance with their associated regulations. The post holder will train operators on the equipment and is responsible for deciding when an operator is technically competent to use the equipment unsupervised. Errors in judgement or failure to carry out a particular task could result in the damage of the equipment or risking students, staffs' and clients' personal safety.</p> <p>The provision of these services impact upon the materials characterisation facilities associated with MSSU. The post impacts upon students, as they are expected to help supervise students, including postgraduate students, and other junior members of the group, to support learning through demonstration of equipment and experiments.</p> <p>The post holder has line management responsibility for the Microscopy and Analysis Technician and therefore, is involved in all aspects of management, including training and completing staff appraisals. They are expected to maintain knowledge of new developments in the field and advise key staff on the needs to update/change the facilities. They are also expected to assist in the preparation of bids and other documentation related to the facilities.</p> <p>The post holder will manage the laboratory accounts, which will include maintenance and consumable budgets, invoicing of clients and presentation of annual accounts.</p>			

Background Information/Relationships

The post holder is responsible for the day-to-day running of the MicroStructural Studies Unit and Surface Analysis Laboratories. There will be demands on these facilities from internal clients (academics, research fellows, PhD students, EngD research engineers, MSc students and UG project students) and external clients (commercial customers, instrument manufacturers). It will be necessary to ensure that all demands are met in a timely, prioritised and efficient manner.

The post holder will need to communicate effectively with the entire range of clients outlined above, providing training as appropriate.

They will work alongside academic staff with regard to the running and development of student and academic research projects.

They will have regular contact with Estates and Facilities to report faults and oversee contractors work within the laboratory areas, including disposal of hazardous waste and surplus equipment.

The post holder will liaise with members of other divisions/departments both within and outside the faculty, as well as external companies and universities in the provision and costing of specialist services. There is a necessity within the post to interact with the manufacturers in terms of routine servicing and new updates to the equipment in terms of the hardware and software and also with external customers.

This job purpose reflects the core activities of the post. As the Department/Faculty and the post-holder develop, there will inevitably be some changes to the duties for which the post is responsible, and possibly to the emphasis of the post itself. The University expects that the post-holder will recognise this and will adopt a flexible approach to work. This could include undertaking relevant training where necessary.

Should significant changes to the job purpose become necessary, the post-holder will be consulted and the changes reflected in a revised job purpose.

Person Specification This section describes the sum total of knowledge, experience & competence required by the post holder that is necessary for standard acceptable performance in carrying out this role.

Qualifications and Professional Memberships	Essential/ Desirable	
Degree, HND, NVQ 4 qualified in a relevant subject (materials science), plus several years relevant experience OR Significant vocational experience, demonstrating development through the acquisition of appropriate specialist knowledge and involvement in a series of progressively more demanding/relevant work/roles.	E	
Technical Competencies (Experience and Knowledge) This section contains the level of competency required to carry out the role (please refer to the competency framework for clarification where needed and the Job Families Booklet).	Essential/ Desirable	Level 1-3
Operating knowledge of relevant specialised instrumentation and software.	E	2
Some relevant management experience of people and resources.	E	2
The ability to provide suitable training for staff and postgraduate students in the routine operation of specialised equipment.	E	3
The ability to advise staff and postgraduate students on the relevant procedures to conduct specialist experiments.	E	2
Understanding of Health and Safety legislation and issues	E	3
Special Requirements:	Essential/ Desirable	Level 1-3
n/a		

Core Competencies This section contains the level of competency required to carry out this role. (Please refer to the competency framework for clarification where needed). N/A (not applicable) should be placed, where the competency is not a requirement of the grade.	Level 1-3
Communication Adaptability / Flexibility Customer/Client service and support Planning and Organising Teamwork Continuous Improvement Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills Leadership / Management Creative and Analytical Thinking Influencing, Persuasion and Negotiation Skills Strategic Thinking	3 2 2 2 2 2 3 1 2 2 2
Organisational Information	
<p>All staff are expected to:</p> <p>Positively support equality of opportunity and equity of treatment to colleagues and students in accordance with the University of Surrey Equal Opportunities Policy.</p> <p>Help maintain a safe working environment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending training in Health and Safety requirements as necessary, both on appointment and as changes in duties and techniques demand. • Following local codes of safe working practices and the University of Surrey Health and Safety Policy. • Excellent environmental performance is a strategic objective for the University of Surrey. All staff are encouraged to work to achieve the aims of our Environmental Policy and promote awareness to colleagues and students. • Undertake such other duties within the scope of the post as may be requested by your Manager. 	
Key Responsibilities <p>This document is not designed to be a list of all tasks undertaken but an outline record of the main responsibilities (5 to 8 maximum) and should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Job Purpose.</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oversee and manage the efficient, effective and safe running of the MicroStructural Studies Unit and Surface Analysis Laboratories. 2. Coordinate duties of technical support staff. 3. Ensure equipment is maintained in a fully operative state. 4. Market the laboratory facilities and undertake/coordinate specialist characterisation work for external clients. 5. Manage budgets and present annual accounts associated with the laboratory. 6. Provide advice and guidance to students, academics and research staff on the use of equipment and instrumentation in the laboratories, and train operators in the use of equipment and make assessment about their level of competence. 7. Initiate and co-ordinate the activities of a Users Group. 8. Ensure compliance with all aspects of Health and Safety, including maintenance of records such as electrical safety testing, COSHH and waste disposal. 	
N.B. The above list is not exhaustive.	