



Position Description

Position title:	Senior Laboratory Technician
Salary range:	VCGS Professionals & Administrative Salaries – Level 4 Step 1-4
Reporting manager:	Team Leader
Direct reports:	0
Home group:	DNA Unit and Sequencing

Who we are

Victorian Clinical Genetics Services (VCGS) is a not-for-profit subsidiary of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute. We provide a wholly integrated genetic testing, diagnostic and counselling service for health professionals, patients, and their families across Australia and New Zealand.

Our clinical geneticists and genetic counsellors work closely with our medical scientists to provide the most accurate interpretation for complex genetic tests. VCGS also plays an important role in research and development, driving translational research and policy development in genetics.

Our values

People at VCGS follow our values



Value people first

People are at the core of our business. We lead with empathy. We display compassion and respect towards each other, our patients and the community.



Build trust

We communicate and act with transparency, sincerity, and truthfulness in all aspects of our work.



Pursue excellence

We share a commitment to delivering high-quality, sustainable science and services. We acknowledge mistakes and encourage each other to learn and grow.



Be innovative

We encourage curiosity, collaboration and critical thinking. We value new ideas, and continuous improvement.

Position Overview

The Sequencing Platform is the key laboratory team of VCGS tasked with the delivery of sequencing related assays, including Sanger sequencing and genomic-scale Next Generation Sequencing (NGS). The Platform is NATA accredited, has a strong commercial focus and aims to produce high quality data in an efficient and rapid manner. The platform was established in 2014 and is equipped with a variety of sequencers, including Illumina MiSeq, NovaSeq 6000, NovaSeqX Plus, and Oxford Nanopore PromethION sequencer, and instrumentation for library preparation and quality controls such as Agilent TapeStation 4150/4200, Agilent Bravo, Qubit, and Hamilton robotics.

The Senior Laboratory Technician reports to the Team Leader of the Sequencing Platform. The position will work with an existing, engaged, friendly, and collaborative team of Laboratory Technicians that work closely with the greater VCGS team of clinical variant curators, clinical bioinformaticians, medical scientists, clinical geneticists and genetic counsellors, as well as research scientists.

The role will primarily assist with customer communication, sample/project management, and the delivery of sequencing and related services to both research and diagnostic users. Priority areas of work include genomic, exomic, and transcriptomic sequencing. Other areas of work will be dictated by the priorities of VCGS and MCRI and will include our Acute Care Genomics service. The successful applicant will be required to work independently and as part of a team.

This is a full-time position working Wednesday to Sunday, including weekend supervisory responsibilities. Part-time arrangements (including weekend work) may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Key Accountabilities

Laboratory Workload

- Extraction, handling, and processing of a variety of specimens
- Data entry into Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS)
- Perform laboratory procedures for clinical and research samples
 - Sample and library quality checks (QCs) on instruments such as Qubit and TapeStation
 - NGS Library preparation, manual and automated
 - PCR, qPCR, MLPA
 - Bisulfite conversion and methylation arrays
 - Sanger sequencing
- Operation, maintenance and troubleshooting of Illumina MiSeq, NovaSeq 6000, NovaSeqX Plus, Oxford Nanopore Technologies PromethION24 and other instruments
- Set up, operation, and maintenance of our various liquid handling robotics systems
- Use of laboratory information management systems (Clarity LIMS and Labware)
- Ensure that work is performed in accordance with ISO 15189 requirements, the VCGS Quality System, and other regulatory requirements that may be applicable to Laboratory Services
- Provide technical support within laboratory
- Handling and troubleshooting of sequencing libraries/data that fail to meet VCGS' minimum requirements according to the established procedures
- Handling and troubleshooting anomalies found during processing
- Provide advice with regards to collection of pathology specimens for testing as required
- Perform post-analytical tasks as required

Customer Focus and Finance

- Customer and stakeholder management, including assistance with regards to customer communications with new and existing customers
- Actively engage with laboratory clients to provide optimal and patient/client-centric service
- Address and report client feedback using appropriate quality tools
- Ensure consumers are able to exercise their rights and responsibilities e.g. adherence to MCRI Privacy policies/proper records kept to track samples
- Be responsive to customer enquiries, complaints, and concerns

Other administrative tasks

- Assistance with Clarity LIMS workflow set up and testing

- Maintenance of laboratory and quality system records and documentation according to the VCGS Quality System
- Participation in quality activities, to ensure laboratory compliance with National Association of Testing Authorities and International Standardisation Organisation (NATA/ISO) and other relevant standards
- Aware of and adheres to MCRI policy on Intellectual Property/Material Transfer Agreements / Contracts /Clinical and Public Health Outcomes

Leadership / Supervision

- Coordinate and oversee weekend laboratory operations, including distributing work, supporting team members and ensuring continuity of service delivery
- Assist in knowledge sharing, development and support of new starters and peers
- Exercise initiative and offer suggestions for process improvements
- Provide administrative support to laboratory and administrative staff as required

Research

- Participate and assist in research projects

Contribution to VCGS

- Seminar attendance
- Membership of associations and committees as required
- Completion of mandatory compliance training

Selection Criteria

Essential

- An Associate Diploma/Diploma/BSc in Biological Sciences or a related discipline plus an appropriate level of expertise gained from a combination of hands-on experience, training or professional accreditation
- Availability and willingness to work a Wednesday to Sunday roster, including regular weekend shifts
- 1+ years experience in NGS library preparation and sequencing on an Illumina, or Oxford Nanopore Technologies sequencing platform
- 2+ years of working experience in a NATA accredited diagnostic environment
- Understanding of specimen reception and patient information
- Demonstrable understanding of a wide range of molecular genetic techniques and technologies
- Strong attention to detail, and the ability to perform laboratory work with a high degree of precision and accuracy
- Ability to manage time effectively, adequately prioritise workload, identify problems or opportunities for improvement, and have logical problem-solving skills
- Demonstrated computer skills, including database programs, Microsoft Word and Excel

Desirable

- Exceptional understanding of and hands on experience with a variety of Next Generation Sequencing methods (manual and automated), as well as sequencing from a range of different sample types (blood, saliva, dried blood spots, prenatal samples, tissues)
 - Experience with the handling and management of medium to large scale projects processing biological samples
 - Experience in managing ongoing customer relationships
 - Experience in training staff in NGS library preparation and/or sequencing on an Illumina or Oxford Nanopore technologies sequencing platform
 - 5+ years of working experience in a sequencing service or related diagnostic environment
 - Experience in the use of automated liquid handling/robotics platforms (Hamilton, Tecan, etc.)
 - Experience in the use of Clarity LIMS, Labware, or other laboratory inventory management systems
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Conditions of employment

- Keeping children safe is our highest priority. We maintain rigorous safeguarding standards and employ comprehensive screening processes to ensure the safety of the children we work with. This includes mandatory screening processes for all successful candidates, including:
 - Valid Working with Children Check (or equivalent)
 - Satisfactory criminal record check
- The right to reside and work in Australia and you meeting any applicable visa conditions

Health, Safety & Wellbeing

- We are committed to providing and maintaining a working environment which protects the health, safety and wellbeing of our people, partners and the community
- Employees conducting duties on behalf of VCGS are expected to meet the environment, health and wellbeing requirements and responsibilities specifically required for the role
- We are committed to supporting children in their right to be safe and adhere to the responsibilities we have to ensure their protection and safety as per the Child Safety Policy
- The Institute is committed to the safety of children and young people, and takes a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child abuse, exploitation and harm. The Institute prioritises child safety in our decision-making at all levels of the Institute and supports our employees to understand and enact their safeguarding responsibilities
- We are committed to a diverse, inclusive workplace where all staff are supported to reach their full potential, regardless of gender, career status, age, disability, cultural background, religion or sexual orientation. Staff contribute to campus efforts in gender equity, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing through participation, active learning and by role modelling our values
- Specified positions may be subject to medical review to ensure that the inherent requirements of the role can be undertaken safely

As VCGS evolves to meet its changing strategic & operational needs and objectives, so will the roles required of its employees. As such, this document is not intended to represent the position which the occupant will perform in perpetuity. This position description is intended to provide an overall view of the incumbent's role as at the date of this statement.