



LIFE AS A

LAB TECHNICIAN



Jasper David Chaplin BSc (Hons) MSc MRSB

WHO AM I?



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● **University of London graduate**

● **Had a LOT of part-time jobs:**

- Exotic pet sales
- Chemical handling assistant
- Academic proofreader
- Events management intern
- Freelance photographer

● **Teaching and research technician for the RVC**

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WHO AM I?



2018: BSc Zoology

**2021: MSc Biological Sciences
by Research**

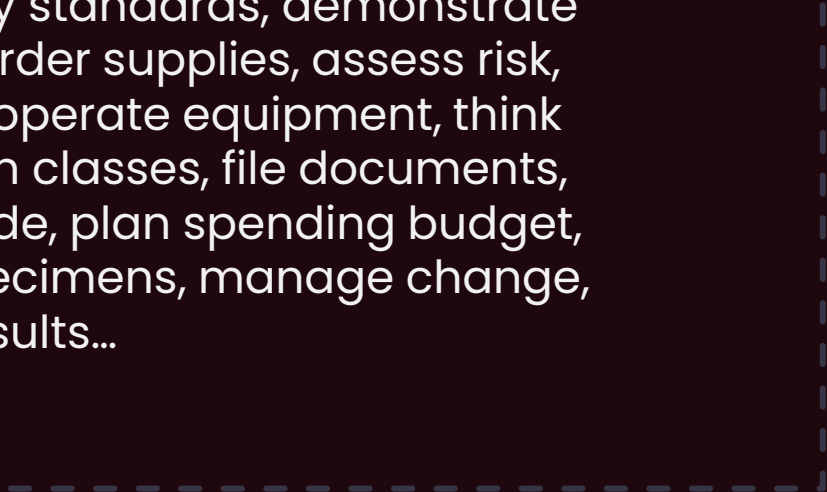
2022: Laboratory Cleaner

**2023: Multi-Faculty
Technician**

WHAT DOES A LAB TECHNICIAN DO?

SUPPORT

Provide training, prepare labs, troubleshoot, collect data, fix broken machines, uphold safety standards, demonstrate techniques, run experiments, order supplies, assess risk, problem-solve, help students, operate equipment, think quickly, encourage people, plan classes, file documents, approve building work, write code, plan spending budget, present information, archive specimens, manage change, analyse results...



JOB SECTORS

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- Biomedical
- Veterinary
- Pharma
- Biotech
- Forensics
- Agricultural
- Ecological
- Education
 - Primary
 - Secondary
 - Tertiary

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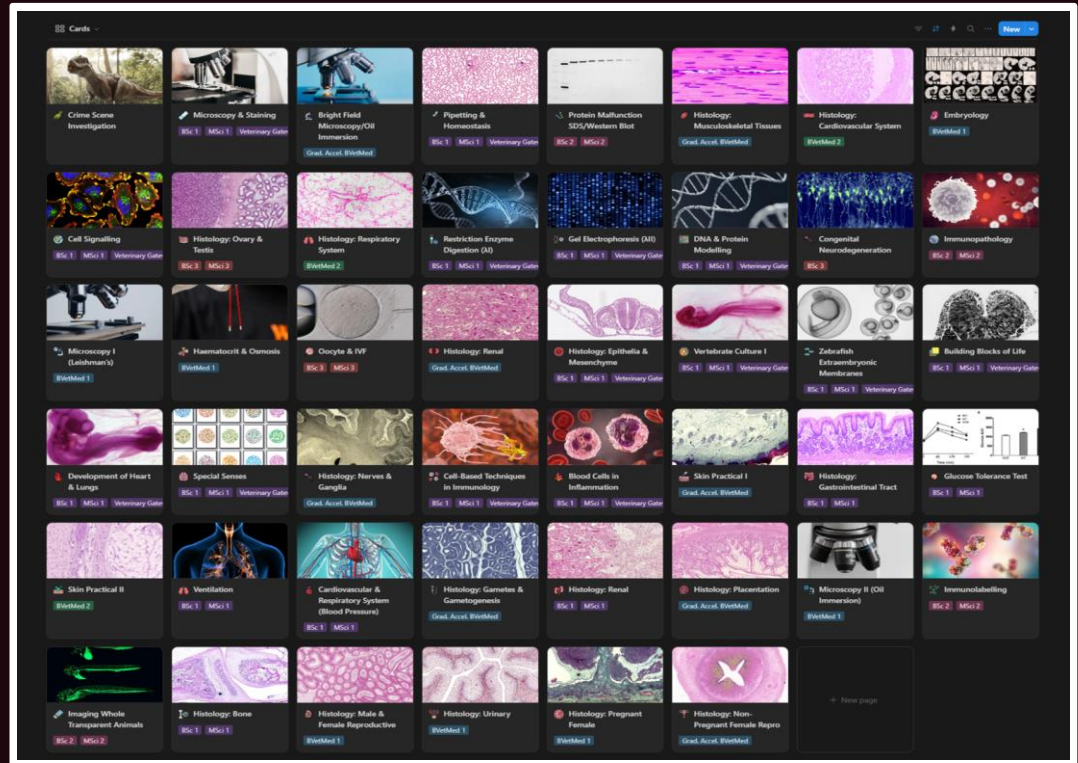
ROYAL VETERINARY COLLEGE

- Camden, Hawkshead, and Boltons Park Farm
- Teaching and research institution
- Runs courses for Veterinary Medicine and Biological Sciences

TEACHING SUPPORT

A whole year of classes!

- Histology
- Western blot
- Gel electrophoresis
- Cardio and respiratory physiology
- Embryology
- Microscope skills



EXTERNAL RELATIONS



EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



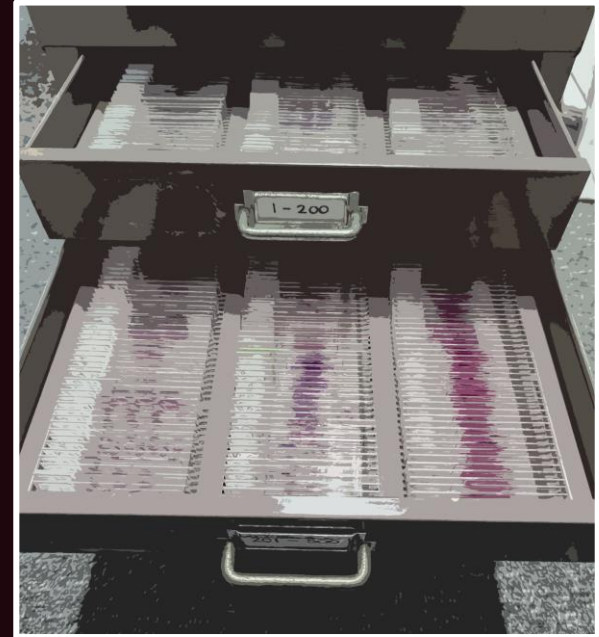
DAY IN THE LIFE...?

Autumn to Spring

- Class prep and supervision
- Outreach and widening participation
- Equipment training

Summer

- Histology
- Continued Professional Development
- Archiving historical specimens



SKILL REQUIREMENTS

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**Problem-solver; efficient;
quick learner**



**Demonstrable laboratory
experience**



Subject knowledge

- Histology and microscopy
- Cell culture
- Polymerase chain reaction
- Gel electrophoresis
- Western blot



**Awareness of student
experience**



**Good organisational and
time management skills**

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ORGANISATION IS EVERYTHING

Practical	Date	Courses	Module/Strand
Crime Scene Investigation	September 26, 2024 12:00 PM → 2:45 PM	BSc 1 MSci 1 Veterinary Gateway	Biology of Cells
Microscopy & Staining	October 1, 2024 1:00 PM → 4:30 PM	Grad. Accel. BVetMed	Principles of Animal Form and Function
Bright Field Microscopy/Oil Immersion	October 4, 2024 9:00 AM → 12:00 PM	BSc 1 MSci 1 Veterinary Gateway	Biology of Cells
Pipetting & Homeostasis	October 7, 2024 2:00 PM → October 8, 2024 12:00 PM	BSc 2 MSci 2	Basis of Disease
Protein Malfunction SDS/Western Blot	October 8, 2024 12:00 PM → October 9, 2024 2:00 PM	Grad. Accel. BVetMed	Principles of Animal Form and Function
Histology: Musculoskeletal Tissues	October 10, 2024 9:00 AM → 12:00 PM	BVetMed 2	CVRS
Histology: Cardiovascular System	October 11, 2024 9:00 AM → 12:00 PM	BVetMed 1	Developmental Biology
Embryology	October 15, 2024 11:30 AM → 5:00 PM	BSc 1 MSci 1 Veterinary Gateway	Biology of Cells
Cell Signalling	October 16, 2024 9:00 AM → 1:00 PM	BSc 3 MSci 3	Advanced Concepts in Reproduction
Histology: Ovary & Testis	October 17, 2024 1:00 PM → 5:00 PM	BVetMed 2	CVRS
Histology: Respiratory System	October 18, 2024 9:00 AM → 1:30 PM	BSc 1 MSci 1 Veterinary Gateway	Inheritance Genes and Evolution
Restriction Enzyme Digestion (AI)	October 21, 2024 12:00 PM → 5:00 PM	BSc 1 MSci 1 Veterinary Gateway	Inheritance Genes and Evolution
Gel Electrophoresis (AII)	October 28, 2024 1:00 PM → 5:00 PM	BSc 1 MSci 1 Veterinary Gateway	Inheritance Genes and Evolution
DNA & Protein Modelling	November 4, 2024 2:00 PM → 5:00 PM	BSc 3	Development and Disease
Congenital Neurodegeneration	November 5, 2024 1:00 PM → 3:00 PM	BSc 2 MSci 2	Ageing & Degeneration
Immunopathology	November 5, 2024 3:00 PM → November 6, 2024 11:30	BVetMed 1	Principles of Science
Microscopy I (Leishman's)	November 18, 2024 9:00 AM → 2:30 PM	BVetMed 1	CVRS
Haematocrit & Osmosis	November 19, 2024 2:00 PM → 5:00 PM	BSc 3 MSci 3	Advanced Concepts in Reproduction
Oocyte & IVF	November 21, 2024 1:00 PM → 3:00 PM	Grad. Accel. BVetMed	Urinary
Histology: Renal	November 22, 2024 2:00 PM → 5:00 PM	BSc 1 MSci 1 Veterinary Gateway	Developmental Biology
Histology: Epithelia & Mesenchyme	November 26, 2024 2:30 PM → 3:30 PM		

Assessment Forms

Repository of all risk assessments and COPEX forms related to CEE multi-tenancy teaching, class preparation, and handling of the Curriculum. Copies are stored on the SharePoint Risk and COPEX register. Do not make additional copies to preserve version integrity.

Teaching Laboratory	FTIC Preparation Room	FTIC Microscopy Room	FTIC Staining Room
Cell Signalling, CS	Cell Signalling, CS	Laboratory General Cleaning	Genetic AS Special States
Basis 3D Printing (TBA)	Protein Malfunction, Western Blot, SDS-Page	Microscopy	Genetic AS Standard States and VP Tissue St
Protein Malfunction, Western Blot, SDS-Page	Practical Investigative Biology (PIB) (TBA)	Histology (IMAN)	Laboratory General Cleaning
Practical Investigative Biology (PIB) (TBA)	Inheritance, Genetics, Evolution	Microscopy Proficiency	VP Preparation (TBA)
Inheritance, Genetics, Evolution	Microscopy Proficiency	Immune Labelling of Tissue Sections	Genetic AS (TBA)
Microscopy Proficiency	Immune Labelling of Tissue Sections	GTT Assay (Ovular Method)	Histology (IMAN)
Immune Labelling of Tissue Sections	GTT Assay (Ovular Method)	Embryology	
GTT Assay (Ovular Method)	Embryology	Blood and Immunology, CVRS, Venenation	
Embryology	Blood and Immunology, CVRS, Venenation	Apoptosis	
Blood and Immunology, CVRS, Venenation	Apoptosis	Laboratory General Cleaning	
Apoptosis	Laboratory General Cleaning	Preparation Room (IMAN)	
Laboratory General Cleaning	Preparation Room (IMAN)	Blood Smear (DU/TRACE) (TBA)	
Blood Smear (DU/TRACE) (TBA)	Blood Smear (DU/TRACE) (TBA)	Microscopy	
Microscopy	Microscopy	Embryology	
Embryology	Embryology	Blood and Immunology	
Blood and Immunology	Blood and Immunology		
	Teaching Laboratory (IMAN)		
	Genetic and CVRS		

EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS



Bachelor's degree



Relevant extracurricular experience



Life sciences or related

- Zoology/Ecology
- Chemistry/Biochemistry
- Biology
- Biomedical Sciences
- Molecular Biology
- Veterinary Science

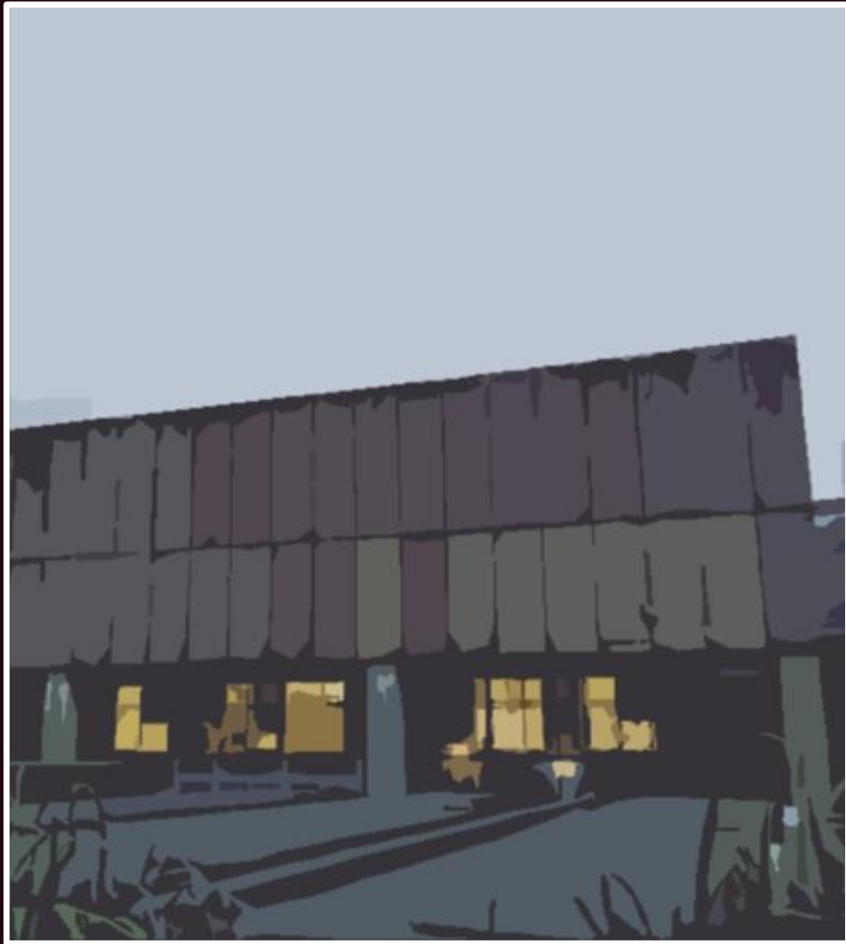


Risk assessments and COSHH



Lab techniques





HOW DID UNI HELP?

- Lab techniques
- Risk assessment
- Scientific communication
- Teamwork
- Project management

LIKES AND DISLIKES

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Small, friendly team

Ten of us in a close-knit group



Practical changeovers

Stressful if the timetable is packed



Histology

My favourite type of lab work



Long days

Up to 12 hours during term time!



Career progression

Pathways for upgrading



Lack of recognition

Technicians are 'background staff'

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WE NEED MORE TECHNICIANS!



Universities are always looking for technicians



Unlikely to be replaced by AI and automation



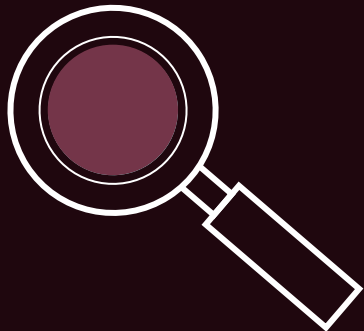
Institutional knowledge should be passed on





£30,000

Salary for an early career technician



EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS



**Academic email account
will get you discounts**



Training readily available



6 weeks annual leave



**Good pension and
parental leave packages**



**Opportunity to work from
home for admin tasks**



Good EDI support



TECHNICIAN COMMITMENT



VISIBILITY

Ensure all technicians within the organisation are identifiable and that the contribution of technicians is visible within and beyond the institution

GO TO CHALLENGE

RECOGNITION

Support technicians to gain recognition through professional registration and external awards schemes

GO TO CHALLENGE

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

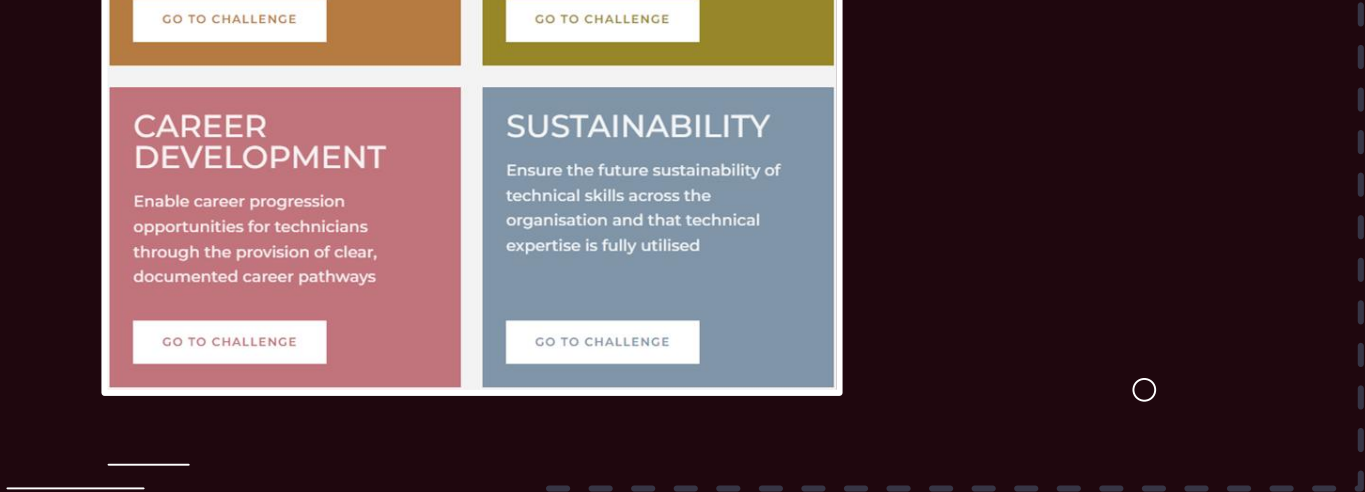
Enable career progression opportunities for technicians through the provision of clear, documented career pathways

GO TO CHALLENGE

SUSTAINABILITY

Ensure the future sustainability of technical skills across the organisation and that technical expertise is fully utilised

GO TO CHALLENGE



ADVICE FOR YOUR EARLY CAREER



Don't worry about specialising early



Take extracurriculars that give you responsibility



Have someone proofread your CV



Be approachable, reliable, and competent

RESOURCES

[technicians.org.uk](https://www.technicians.org.uk)

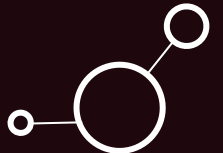
- information about technicians and the varied work they do
- see case studies and get advice from real technicians

[techniciancommitment.org.uk](https://www.techniciancommitment.org.uk)

- an initiative to increase awareness and support for technicians
- most UK universities have signed up

[heated.org.uk](https://www.heated.org.uk)

- provides opportunities for technicians to develop professionally
- access to training and networking events





THANKS!

Feel free to contact me here:

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or on LinkedIn.