

Medical Laboratory Technical Officer		Australia
ASCO Code: 3111-11		July 2007
Labour market rating	No Shortage	
Comment		

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

The Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) defines the tasks for medical laboratory technical officers as performing or assisting with routine laboratory tests and complex analytical procedure in support of medical professionals engaged in the diagnostics, monitoring, and treatment of disease. A survey of employers who had recently advertised for medical laboratory technical officers was undertaken for this report. The majority of the vacancies were from the pathology departments in private and public laboratories.

About 80 per cent of surveyed vacancies were filled within six weeks of advertising. Employers in Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory filled all of their vacancies. Employers in New South Wales and South Australia had some trouble recruiting, but filled around two thirds of their vacancies. The experience of regional employers differed slightly to that of metropolitan employers with a small number reported difficulty attracting suitable applicants to work in rural laboratories.

Nationally, on average there were 13 applications for each vacancy, with three applicants considered by employers to be suitable per vacancy. Employers commented on the small number of international applications received, most of whom were not considered for vacancies. Apart from the international applications the main reasons applicants were considered by employers to be unsuitable were lack of specific skills in medical laboratory work, lack of experience, lack of formal qualifications, failure to address the positions' selection criteria, poor interview skills and unwillingness to relocate to a regional location.

The majority of employers stated there are enough graduates applying for positions but that they were often seeking medical laboratory technical officers with two or more year's experience who are multi-skilled. Some employers in small private companies commented that they were losing their suitable applicants to public companies as they offered better remuneration. Some employers mentioned that the hours of work was also a factor in difficulty finding suitable applicants as many required shift work or 'on call' arrangements. On balance, most employers commented there is not a shortage of medical laboratory technical officers.

Labour market outlook

There is no evidence to suggest there will be any significant change in the level of demand or supply to this occupation over the next six months.