

Life Science Technical Officer		Australia
ASCO Code: 3112-15		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 life science technical officers as identifying and collecting living organisms and conducting field and laboratory studies in support of life scientists. A survey of employers who had recently advertised for life science technical officers was undertaken for this report. Approximately half of the vacancies were in the eastern states in metropolitan areas. There were no vacancies identified in Tasmania in the survey period and no Tasmanian employers were contacted for this report.

Almost three quarters of surveyed vacancies were filled within six weeks of advertising. A small number of vacancies filled during the survey period were filled internally. Employers reported they experience moderate staff turnover of life science technical officers with most employers commenting that new entry-level employees, such as recent graduates, leave their employment after one to two years to move to others positions which offer better remuneration.

Nationally, on average, there were about 13 applications for each vacancy, with around two applicants considered by employers to be suitable per vacancy. Employers commented on the small number of international applicants, most of whom were not considered for vacancies as employers did not consider their educational background and experience to be suitable. Apart from the international applications the main reasons applicants were considered by employers to be unsuitable were lack of formal qualifications, lack of specific skills in laboratory work, lack of experience, failure to address the selection criteria and poor communication skills.

The majority of employers stated there are enough graduates applying for vacancies but that they were often seeking life science technical officers with one or more year's experience. Only a few employers were seeking graduates for their entry-level vacancies. On balance, most employers commented they did not believe there is 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.