

Lexington Medical Center School of Medical Laboratory Science

Essential Functions for Medical Laboratory Science Students

Essential Functions are the non-academic standards required of medical laboratory science students. Essential Functions have been established as a tool for realistically informing students of the minimum requirements needed, with or without reasonable accommodations to participate in the School of Medical Laboratory Science (MLS program).

The duties of a Medical Laboratory Scientist require the performance of complex laboratory techniques and the operation of complex laboratory equipment in a safe and effective manner without endangering patients, self, or other health care workers.

In order to be admitted into the MLS program, the applicant must affirm in writing their ability to comply with the following:

I. Physical Demands

The Student Medical Laboratory Scientist must possess:

- Sufficient upper body muscle strength and coordination to handle body fluid specimens, biohazards, chemical hazards, and instruments safely in order to prevent harm to self or others.
- Ability to perform delicate manipulations of specimens, instruments, and equipment to meet specifications for accuracy in diagnostic testing.
- Ability to move freely around the laboratory and medical center. Be able to reach laboratory bench tops and shelves; and patients lying in hospital beds or seated in specimen collection furniture.
- Ability to lift and carry objects weighing up to 10 pounds and occasionally carry objects weighing up to 30 pounds. Be able to push/pull up to 20 pounds and bend/squats 5-15 bends/squats per hour. Be able to twist/turn/reach 25-35 twists per hour.
- Fine motor skills, manual dexterity, and good eye-hand coordination to perform all tasks within the scope of practice for the practitioner in the workplace.
- Ability to perform extensive hand/wrist repetition and slight to moderate wrist deviation.
- Ability to perform moderately taxing and repetitive tasks. The work may require prolonged sitting, standing, and/or walking and the ability to climb stairs (<1 per hour).
- Sufficient touch discrimination to discern veins in order to perform phlebotomy.
- Willingness to work with blood and organisms that may be infectious.
- Ability to operate a computer and a computer keyboard.
- Sufficient visual and observational skills to perform and interpret laboratory assays, including the ability to do the following:
 - Read and comprehend test procedures, numbers, and graphs displayed in print and on a video monitor.
 - Characterize the color, consistency, and clarity of biological specimens or reagents.
 - Use a microscope to discriminate among fine differences in structure and color (i.e. hue, shading, and intensity) in microscopic specimens.

- Observe laboratory demonstrations in which biologicals are tested for their biochemical, hematological, microbiological, and immunologic components.
- Distinguish colors, hue, shading or intensity, clarity, and viscosity of biological specimens, reagents, and chemical reactions.
- Sufficient hearing to answer and respond to phones, beepers, timers, and alarms; and to give and receive verbal communications.
- Functional use of smell and tactile sensation.

II. Communication/Interpersonal Skills

The Student Medical Laboratory Scientist must possess:

- Effective and efficient oral and written communication skills in English in order to obtain and transmit information to patients and members of the health care team.
- Ability to:
 - Follow verbal and written instructions in order to correctly and independently perform laboratory test procedures.
 - Cooperate with others in a positive, respectful and tactful manner.
 - Accept constructive criticism in a positive manner.
 - Clearly instruct patients prior to specimen collection.
 - Work independently, in small groups and as a member of a team of peers
 - Project a professional image.
- Legible printing/handwriting in order to accurately report results and communicate information.

III. Intellectual Ability/Emotional Stability/Ethical Standards

The Student Medical Laboratory Scientist must possess:

- Ability to:
 - Comprehend, calculate, measure, synthesize, integrate, analyze, and apply information.
 - Master information presented in the course work in the form of lectures, written material, and images.
 - Solve problems and think critically.
 - Sit for lectures, laboratory demonstrations and/or exercises, and written or oral examinations; complete written assignments; deliver presentations; and perform laboratory testing.
 - Work quickly and accurately in changing, stressful and/or distracting situations.
 - Handle highly confidential and highly sensitive information.
 - Work with unpleasant biological specimens.
- Sufficient judgment to recognize and correct performance deviations.
- Emotional stability to exercise appropriate judgment in responding to emergency situations that may present in the health care environment. The student must be able to exercise sound judgment, complete responsibilities promptly, display flexibility and function independently in the face of uncertainties that might arise.
- Time management and multitasking skills to complete tasks within reasonable time frames.

- Ethical judgment, integrity, honesty, dependability, and accountability and be forthright about errors or uncertainty.
- Respect for individuals of different ages, ethnic backgrounds, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

IV. Environmental requirements

Laboratory work involves risks that require special safety precautions, additional safety education, health risk monitoring, working with sharps, hazardous chemicals and infectious/biohazardous materials.

The Student Medical Laboratory Scientist must be able to:

- Recognize potentially hazardous materials, equipment and situations and proceed safely to minimize risk to self or others
- Use personal protective equipment or clothing, such as masks, goggles, gloves, and lab coats or aprons.
- Work in environments 60-85 degrees F.
- Work with chemicals, fumes, odors, humidity, biohazards, bloodborne pathogens, infectious wastes.

The applicant is required to sign a statement on the application indicating that they have read and understood the essential functions for medical laboratory science students. Contact the Program Director with any questions or concerns prior to submitting the application.

Immunocompromised individuals may put themselves at personal risk due to exposure to infectious agents that can occur in all aspects of laboratory work.

It is the responsibility of an applicant with a disability to request reasonable accommodations in writing at the time of application if he/she feels that accommodations are needed to execute the essential functions described above. Current professional documentation of a disability is required. Disclosure of a disability is voluntary.

Student recruitment and admission shall be non-discriminatory in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations.