

Practitioner - Certificate of Competence for Genetic Technologists

Guidance for applicants

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Introduction

This Guide supports an applicant completing an application including the personal statement required to demonstrate competence against the Genetic Technology Standards of Proficiency.

The application and personal statement is a record of training gained to demonstrate the attainment of competence across a range of activities.

Your completed application and personal statement will be considered by the Academy, and we may require further information from you. If you successfully complete the process and are awarded a Certificate of Competence, you may apply for registration with the Academy for Healthcare Science. The award of a Certificate of Competence does not guarantee registration or employment.

Based on the information you provide, we may consider that you would qualify for the Certificate of Equivalence as a Healthcare Science Practitioner. If so, we will contact you to discuss options.

Eligibility criteria

The Practitioner Certificate of Competence for Genetic Technologists involves an assessment of your competence against the published Standards of Proficiency. The Academy believes that such competence can be gained through a combination of appropriate qualifications and experience. To be eligible to apply for the certificate, you must:

1. Hold a first degree in an approved subject or other suitable qualification approved by the AHCS and a minimum of 3 years' relevant experience (or 5,000 hours, if part-time) as a Genetic Technologist working at career framework level 5 or above in a post approved by the AHCS.

Or

2. Hold a first degree in an approved subject and a Certificate of Competence gained through the National Training Programme for Genetic Technologists in an appropriate post approved by the AHCS

Or

3. Have a minimum of six years' training and experience (or 10,000 hours, if part-time) relevant to the work of a Genetic Technologist with evidence provided to support competent practice, including a minimum of 3 years relevant experience (or 5,000

hours, if part-time) as a Genetic Technologist working at career framework level 5 or above in an appropriate post approved by the AHCS.

Or

4. First degree in an approved subject or suitable qualification approved by AHCS and a Certificate of Competence gained through the 2 year Post Graduate Practitioner Training Programme in an appropriate post approved by the AHCS

Whichever of the above criteria you meet, your application will be assessed against the published Standards of Proficiency for Genetic Technologists. We recommend that you familiarise yourself with these standards. The Academy also publishes a handbook, which sets out how your application will be assessed, how your competence will be established and the possible outcomes of this process. We recommend that you refer to this handbook.

Section 1 – discipline

This guidance relates to the Certificate of Competence for Genetic Technologists. Other guidance documents are available for Anatomical Pathology Technologists (APT), Ophthalmic Science Practitioners and Tissue Bank Technologists who wish to complete the Certificate of Competence.

Section 2 – about you

Insert the title by which you are normally addressed (e.g. Dr, Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms). Insert a previous surname if your professional qualification certificates are under a different name.

You are required to provide certified copies of proof of identity and change of name.

If you are awarded a Certificate of Competence, you will need to complete a separate, online application for registration. The information you provide here will not be published by the Academy.

Section 3 – your academic and professional qualifications

3.1 Relevant educational qualifications

Documentary proof in the form of photocopies of certificates must be provided. If these cannot be supplied, evidence of why they are not available should be submitted e.g. written statement from an examination awarding body, professional body or employer. Relevant educational qualifications for routes 1, 2 and 4 outlined above include a first degree in a relevant subject, for example genetics, biology, biological science, human biology, biochemistry, biomedical science, molecular biology or involving a human genetic related component. If you have no such qualifications you will need to record qualifications obtained at school/sixth form college e.g. O levels, GCSE, A levels etc.

3.2 Relevant professional qualifications

Management, Teaching and other qualifications can also be included. Documentary proof in the form of photocopies of certificates must be provided. If these cannot be supplied evidence of why they are not available should be submitted e.g. written statement from an examination awarding body, professional body or employer.

3.3 Membership of professional bodies

It is not a mandatory requirement to belong to a professional body, though the Academy strongly recommends that you join the Association for Clinical Genetic Science. You may also consider joining the British Society for Genetic Medicine (or which the Association of Clinical Genetic Science is a member).

Section 4 – your professional record

4.1 Articles and publications

You should include any articles written for professional body journal or other journals, as well as published abstracts, from poster or oral presentations at meetings.

4.2 Research

You should include any research projects (funded, not funded) to which you have made a contribution. You may include any other information that you wish to draw to the attention of the Academy. This may include involvement with your professional body, activities undertaken within a health region/area or within your hospital, for example training/teaching experience. Only include relevant information from the last 5 years.

4.3 Employment/positions held

Please indicate any periods of employment and career breaks or other periods of absence greater than one month in this section of your application. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary. If you have been working for less than two years following a career break of greater than five years you will need to supply evidence of re-training and subsequent re-assessment. It is not necessary to send copies of in house documentation. Details should be included in your personal statement in the section that describes your training and experience. Your referee(s) should confirm re-training and competence to practice after return to work from a break in service.

4.4 Training

The combination of this section and the personal statement forms a record of training gained to demonstrate the attainment of personal competence across a range of activities which relate to the sections of the written report.

You should list in this section courses or training sessions attended by you which help to maintain, develop or increase levels of competency infection control. Such courses or training may be external or in house.

Section 5– competence

5.1 Your Personal statement

Your competence will be assessed against the Standards of Proficiency for Genetic Technologists; these are published on the Academy’s website and we strongly recommend that you familiarise yourself with them before drafting your written statement.

Your written statement should be written using the headings stated below to establish your competence in each of the areas listed:

Technical

The written report should demonstrate your understanding of Health & Safety, CoSHH, Risk Assessments and Safe Handling. It should also provide evidence of your (basic) knowledge about the function, operation, and routine and corrective maintenance requirements of laboratory equipment appropriate to the section(s) of the laboratory in which you work. It should show that you perform a range of duties to administer the technical genetic diagnosis process and/or management of such processes. For instance, for Molecular Genetics these techniques include administrative and technical activity associated with sample receipt, and all activity associated with DNA and RNA extraction. It also includes the modification and amplification of DNA or RNA, and the detection of genetic variation. For Cytogenetics, this includes sample acceptance and culturing, metaphase or interphase preparation, and staining or in situ hybridization for a range of sample types. It also includes analysis by karyotyping or in situ hybridization for a defined set of sample or referral types.

This section of the written report should also detail your understanding of the purpose of quality assurance and accuracy; set out the limits of your responsibility; your ability to work under limited supervision and your ability to rectify problems within a laboratory process.

Clinical

The written report should demonstrate your general knowledge of specimen requirements, acceptance and priority, and include a basic knowledge of common inherited disorders and/or cytogenetic abnormalities. The report shows your ability to use appropriate testing methodology and perform a range of genetic analyses in a highly proficient manner. Your report shows that you are aware of ethical issues surrounding genetic testing.

Communication Skills

With colleagues, other Healthcare Professionals and external agencies involved in the technical genetic diagnosis process. The ability to present data and information both verbally and visually will be clear from the written report. It demonstrates your understanding of your laboratory's information management systems. The report should set out the limits to your reporting of standard test results. It also shows your understanding of the importance of patient confidentiality. Writing SOPs and training others can also be used as evidence for your communicating within a laboratory.

Managing and planning your work activity

Your work activity and/or the work activity of others. Your report demonstrates that you understand your laboratory's management structure and your place within it. Supporting evidence is your ability to supervise junior members of staff, or visitors to the laboratory. Your report shows your undertaking Continuing Professional Development (provide details in your application form), and your awareness of Laboratory Accreditation, local Quality Management Systems. The report details your participation in staff appraisal, assessment and the Knowledge and Skills Framework.

Teaching and training

The written report should detail your training and supervision of others less skilled in laboratory processes. It provides evidence of your attending meetings and presenting information in journal clubs, seminars and national meetings.

Research & Development

The report should evidence your participation in focused research and development activity and the evaluation and introduction of new techniques and equipment into the diagnostic service under the supervision of more experienced colleagues. Evidence can also include your attendance of appropriate local, regional and national meetings. Finally it should detail your participation in clinical audit under guidance from a Clinical Scientist colleague.

5.2 Professional meetings and CPD

Document your attendance/participation at professional conferences, laboratory staff meetings, journal clubs, seminars, committees and activities that acquire Continuing Professional Development (CPD) credits in this section.

5.3 References

Your Head of Department should provide a written reference. Also provide a name of a second referee who can be contacted, if needed. It is required that your reference is from a person who is already bound by statutory regulation of practice.

Please be aware if your Head of Department is not a registered practitioner you should supply a second reference from someone who has a good knowledge of your training and experience and who is either already on the Academy Genetic Technologists Register, or a state register (such as the Health and Care Professions Council).

If you have recently changed posts (in the last 6 months) you will be required to supply a reference from your previous employer.

Your referee(s) should confirm training, and any re-training undertaken and your overall competence to practice as a Genetic Technologist.

References must be on official headed paper (i.e. NHS, local Authority, etc.), currently dated and signed. Only references dated within 6 months of the date the application has been received will be accepted.

Section 6 – Declarations

You are required to confirm that all information you have provided is to the best of your knowledge accurate.

You are required to pay the application fee before your application will be progressed.