



**Harper Adams
University**

Laboratory Assistant

[Permanent, Part Time, 37 hours per week, 32 weeks of the year,
Term Time Only]

Candidate Information Pack



Harper Adams is a friendly, talented community of more than 600 employees, working to ensure that everyone on the planet has access to food, and that this is achieved sustainably. Our work contributes to planetary health, animal health and wellbeing, and ultimately how this contributes to human health. We are passionate about what we do, and are committed to making a difference.

Harper Adams University is committed to the wellbeing of our employees, and their personal and professional development. This is reflected in our annual employee survey - employees tell us they're proud to be a part of the university and that it is a good, safe place to work where they feel trusted to do their jobs and supported by their managers.

Whilst many of our teaching, research and knowledge exchange activities are delivered or coordinated from an attractive campus in rural Shropshire, our impact and reach is regional, national and international. We offer free staff parking, leisure facilities, and we are only a short drive from the busy market town of Newport.

Some of the benefits of working at Harper Adams University are:

- Beautiful rural location
- Generous holiday entitlement
- On campus retail, catering and gym facilities
- Corporate discount to 7 fitness suites in the Telford and Wrekin area
- Opportunity to purchase additional holiday
- Opportunities for agile working
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Disability Confident Employer
- Enhanced maternity benefits
- Enhanced sickness absence payments
- Cyclescheme supporter
- Workwear provided (*if applicable*)

Harper Adams University is the UK's premier educational institution serving the agri-food, animal wellbeing and connected industries, recognised as a world-leading specialist provider. Our focus is on food production and technology, animal health and wellbeing, management of land and property, and their contribution to sustainable living environments for our planet's population; we are equally committed to making the UK's food and farming competitive in a world where we will need to compete globally. Our education and research encompass food production and processing, animal sciences, environmental sustainability, mechanical engineering, land management and sustainable business management. We have strong relationships with companies in the UK and abroad, and with academic institutions across the world, collaborating in research and in the delivery of our courses. We are a University with regional, national and international reach and impact, repeatedly appearing in *The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide* as the UK's highest-ranked modern university.

The University began life in 1901 as Harper Adams Agricultural College and was granted University status in 2012. Our Chancellor is Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal; our current Vice-Chancellor is Professor Ken Sloan, who joined us in 2021. The University is based on a single campus in Shropshire, close to the old market town of Newport and within easy reach of the modern town of Telford, which offers a range of housing possibilities and has excellent rail and road links to the West Midlands conurbation and beyond. Investment of more than £50 million over the last decade has ensured that our campus boasts the most up-to-date teaching, research and conference facilities as well as

accommodation for around 800 students. Our most recent additions include contemporary laboratories and a purpose-built Veterinary Services Centre for teaching and research, swiftly followed by a £500,000 refurbishment of the veterinary nursing facilities. On-campus leisure facilities include a multi-gym, sports hall, dance and aerobics studio. And we are one of the very universities to have its own commercial farm: covering 494 hectares, its facilities include a £2 million leading-edge dairy unit with a robotic dairy.

For a virtual tour of main campus, visit <https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/university-life/our-university/virtual-tour/>

We are regarded as the UK's highest-ranked small specialist provider for the agri-food and animal wellbeing industries, consistently producing the largest cohort of graduates for the agri-food and animal wellbeing sectors, more than 99% of whom go immediately into employment. We currently have about 3,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students, studying both full-and part-time. Our courses cover not just every stage of the food chain – from developing the machinery used to prepare land through to how food is sold and the nutrients it delivers – but also broader subjects such as general business management, automotive engineering and veterinary professions, including, since the establishment of the Harper and Keele Veterinary School in 2020, Veterinary Medicine and Surgery. We have achieved the highest ratings in Quality Assurance Agency reviews. Our undergraduate curriculum is industry-aligned, work focused, co-developed and co-delivered with industry, rooted in partnerships with about 1,100 companies in the UK and abroad. At its heart is our mandatory Placement Year – a bespoke learning experience for our students, tailored to the real needs of employers. We offer a swathe of employer and philanthropically funded scholarships channelled through our Development Trust. And we support employers by providing a large range of (often bespoke) CPD courses – we have about 2,000 learners here – and with our Higher Level and Degree Apprenticeship Programmes launched in 2017. These courses enable us to address directly the skills needs of the UK's agriculture and food industry. We reinforced this work in 2021, by establishing, with support from the NFU, Morrisons and McDonalds, our School of Sustainable Food and Farming, tasked with ensuring that the sector has the skills to enable it to deliver its 2040 Net Zero goal.

We have a strong research profile. Our work is esteemed nationally and internationally for its quality and impact, particularly in areas such as entomology, sustainable agriculture, crops, livestock nutrition, autonomous and precision farming. In the 2021 Research Excellence Framework, 60% of our research was judged to be world-leading or internationally excellent. Our research is both strategic and applied. Our strategic research tackles the inter-related challenges of food security and sustainability, focusing on the need to achieve Net Zero in agriculture and food supply chains in concert with the requirements for sustainable agriculture. We focus particularly on smart agriculture; improving soil health; sustainable land use and rural communities; reducing the impact of ruminant livestock; sustainable food systems and the circular economy, and integrated pest and disease management. Our applied research, in collaboration with regional, national and international companies, addresses their particular needs and is an important part of our research portfolio. Student research also contributes significantly to our research output - a research project is part of all our degree courses, undergraduate and postgraduate. Our research is structured around two overarching research centres covering Crop and Environmental Science, and Animal Welfare, each containing a number of themed groups; we also have cross-cutting multidisciplinary research groups, and our Future Farm – our focus to realise a pathway to Net Zero within wider sustainability parameters.

Harper Adams is a young university, energetic and purposeful – one that says not just ‘can do’ but ‘will do’ – ambitious and forward -looking. We are an optimistic, pragmatic and collaborative community, facing challenges with confidence, ready to grasp new opportunities. We aim by 2030 to combine being regarded as the UK’s leading specialist institution with being an internationally recognised university for food production animal health and wellbeing and their contribution to sustainable living environments for the world’s population. Our Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ken Sloan, has recently led a revision of our Strategy to take us up to 2030: this sets out how we can achieve this ambition by focusing on goals of inclusion, community, influence and sustainability. It charts a path that offers both opportunities and challenges – a pioneering journey that involves our whole Harper Adams’ community, one to which everyone working to make a difference belongs.

Facilities

Harper Adams has extensive, well-equipped facilities and is constantly investing in its campus. Facilities include a range of modern teaching facilities and an extensive library, a variety of IT suites including an engineering design centre, newly extended laboratory facilities, a field laboratory and a livestock project centre, a glasshouse complex, an agricultural engineering unit with a large, covered soil working area and a number of sustainable technology installations. New facilities opened since 2017 include new laboratories, an Agri-Tech Innovation Hub and SMART Dairy Unit. A Veterinary Education Centre opened 2021, in support of existing programmes and the new Harper & Keele Veterinary School. Capital funding to support the development of many of these facilities has been provided through the work of the Development Trust.

The University also provides a range of training and professional development opportunities via its staff development programme.

Catering and Sports Facilities

The University’s Students’ Union operates a membership fee paying gym that staff may join. The University has bowling green and tennis courts that are available for staff use during the summer period. A variety of university catering outlets provide access to lunch facilities on campus.

For further details about the University, please visit our website: <http://www.harper-adams.ac.uk>

JOB DESCRIPTION

Title of the post: Laboratory Assistant
[Permanent, Part Time, 37 hours per week, 32 weeks of the year,
Term Time Only]

Department: Laboratories

Reporting to: Laboratory Manager

The Princess Margaret and Elizabeth Creak Laboratory Team

The lab team, based in the Princess Margaret Laboratories and Elizabeth Creak Building is a central service support team responsible for the provision of laboratory services to the University. We ensure the provision of practical classes to taught students and support to research students and staff in four key subject areas: Soils and Environmental Science; Microbiology, Molecular Biology and Animal Health; General Biology; Nutrition. We are a happy team consisting of 12 permanent staff with different professional backgrounds and experiences. We also have two placement students.

Harper Adams is a proud signatory of the [Technician Commitment](#) and has pledged to take action to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for its technicians.

You will play a key role in the provision of basic laboratory support to the rest of the laboratory team. Normal working hours are typically 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday, 32 weeks of the year covering Harper Adams University term time.

The main duties of the role include:

Laboratory Washroom Management:

- Maintain a high standard of cleanliness for laboratory glass and plastic-ware, ensuring proper removal of labels, use of the laboratory dishwasher and washing by hand when necessary.
- Ensure damaged glassware is safely disposed of.
- Dilute concentrated acetic acid safely to produce acid of the required standard concentration for use in the laboratory dishwasher.
- Efficiently redistribute cleaned glass and plasticware to the appropriate locations.
- Responsibly handle empty chemical containers, rinsing them out and ensuring proper disposal through binning, reusing, or recycling, as necessary.
- Autoclave waste within the Microbiology Labs, ensuring successful sterilization, label and record as directed and transfer the bagged sterilized waste to the external bins.

Provide Customer Service:

- Liaise with laboratory users to identify specific cleaning requirements for equipment and inform users when their items are ready for use.
- Identify and communicate any issues or problems promptly and offer alternative solutions where appropriate.
- Use feedback and experience to recommend improvements to services provided by the laboratory to users.

Maintaining Foyer and Laboratory Area:

- Keep the foyer area of the Princess Margaret Laboratories tidy.
- Coordinate with porters to remove waste cardboard and other items.
- Dealing with deliveries of clean, laundered lab coats; replenish teaching labs with them and putting the remainder away.

Stock replenishment:

- Ensure safety glasses containers are replenished and well-maintained.
- Regularly restock essential consumables such as gloves, paper towels, and soap dispensers in the Princess Margaret Labs and Elizabeth Creak Building.
- Promptly respond to ad hoc requests from lab team members for replenishment of items.

Routine Inspections and Record Keeping:

- Conduct routine procedures and inspections of key laboratory and health and safety systems to ensure safety and compliance, planning activities alongside washroom processing and in consultation with lab users to minimise disruption to lab work.
- Maintain records of inspections and promptly provide comprehensive, written summary reports of any faults or problems found, providing necessary details to the Laboratory Manager or designated senior technician for timely resolution.

General Housekeeping:

- Perform general housekeeping duties within the laboratories, including cleaning of lab benches, sinks, and floors.

Support for Practical Sessions:

- Aid in preparing for and clearing up practical sessions.
- Providing holiday/sickness cover to the Nutrition, Soils and General Biology undergraduate placement student:
- Collate, set out and clear away items for simple laboratory classes.
- Collate and organise items and consumables for field trips in response to information provided by the trip leader and by students, advising when equipment is not available and suggesting possible alternatives.
- Monitor stock levels for entomology students and set up and maintain pinning stations in support of their course work.

Interactions and Training:

- Interact professionally with staff, students, contractors, and visitors, addressing their enquiries and redirecting them as needed.
- Train and supervise undergraduate placement students on duties related to washroom management and routine inspections.
- Undertake relevant training to develop skills and knowledge.

Supporting the Team:

- Demonstrate enthusiasm and actively contribute to the success of the Laboratory Team.
- Participate in the team's lunchtime and break cover arrangements to ensure continuous support during work hours.
- Attend and contribute to team meetings.

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	Good standard of general education	
Experience	Experience of working for an employer and complying with health and safety rules.	<p>Experience of working in a laboratory setting.</p> <p>Experience of working with students and/or academic staff.</p> <p>Experience of making up solutions within a laboratory.</p> <p>Experience of handling hazardous chemicals.</p>
Knowledge/Skills	<p>Exceptional cleaning, tidying and organisational skills.</p> <p>Use of email and ability to complete digital forms.</p>	<p>Competent in use of Microsoft Office programs Outlook, Word and Excel.</p> <p>Knowledge of basic laboratory equipment and laboratory health and safety.</p>
Personal Qualities	<p>Excellent at establishing great working relationships with colleagues and students.</p> <p>Flexible and can adapt well to changing requirements and circumstances and can display good initiative and independent working.</p> <p>Enthusiastic about delivering an excellent service.</p>	

Conditions of Service

The national recommendations which have arisen from the negotiations between UCEA and the unions recognised at national level, the Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff (JNCHES), directly affect the terms and conditions insofar as they have been adopted by the Board of Governors.

Salary	The commencing salary will be within the range £24,344 - £25,448 pro rata , per annum. The point of entry will be dependent upon relevant qualifications and experience. Salaries are paid monthly, in arrears, by credit transfer on the 28 th day of the month.
Contract Term	This is a part time role, working 37 hours per week, 32 weeks of the year, term time only . Employment may be terminated during the course of the contract by either party giving one months' notice in writing
Hours of Work	The routine working week is 37 hours over Monday to Friday, inclusive, term time only . There may be a requirement for overtime working from time to time and time off in lieu may be allowed for agreed hours worked in excess of 37 per week.
Holidays	<p>The annual holiday entitlement is a pro rata of 22 working days, plus statutory bank holidays. In addition to this there are 8 University closure days during the full annual leave year. The holiday year runs from 1 August to 31 July and in the holiday year in which the employment commences or terminates the holiday entitlement will accrue on a pro-rata basis for each complete week of service. The timing of holidays is subject to the agreement of the Line Manager.</p> <p>All annual holiday entitlement (including bank holidays and University closure days) is pro-rata for part-time employees. Further details will be confirmed on appointment.</p>
Sick Leave	During periods of certified sickness, the post-holder will be eligible to receive sick pay in accordance with the University Sick Pay Policy. The payment of sick pay is subject to compliance with the University rules for the notification and verification of sickness absence, details of which will be provided to the successful applicant upon commencement of employment.
Pension	The post-holder will be entitled to join the Harper Adams Group Pension Scheme and details will be provided to the successful applicant upon commencement of employment.
Exclusivity of Service	You are required to devote your full-time attention and abilities to your duties during working hours and to act in the best interests of the University at all times. Accordingly, you must not, without written consent of the University, undertake employment or engagement including external consultancy, which might interfere with the performance of your duties or conflict with the interests of the University.

It follows that, regardless of whether you are employed on a full-time or part-time contract, you are required to notify your line manager of any employment or engagement which you intend to undertake whilst in the employment of the University (including any such employment or engagement which commenced before your employment under this contract). Your line manager will then notify you within 10 working days whether such employment or engagement is prohibited.

Criminal Convictions

The post involves the opportunity for access to children and young persons under the age of 18. For this reason, the University is entitled to consider any criminal convictions, cautions or impending case(s) that it considers to be relevant to this post.

The post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means that applicants are not entitled to withhold information about convictions which for other purposes are “spent” under the provisions of the Act.

Applicants must therefore complete the part of the application form declaring any criminal convictions and cautions from any court or police authority. The successful applicant will have to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service Check before an appointment can be made.

References

Candidates should ensure that they provide full details of the name and postal address of their referees. Please include e-mail addresses and telephone numbers wherever possible. Referees should include your present, or most recent, employer.

Application Procedure:

All applications should be completed and submitted using the Harper Adams e-Recruitment programme at <http://jobs.harper-adams.ac.uk>

To be submitted no later than midnight **21 February 2025**

Please note that interviews will take place 3 March 2025