

Lab Technician interview checklist

Lab technician hiring usually has an HR screen, a technical viva with the lab manager or pathologist, sometimes a practical such as a blood draw, smear or analyser run, and a final discussion on shifts and salary.

10 QUESTIONS TO PRACTISE OUT LOUD

1. What is the correct order of draw for blood collection tubes, and why does it matter?

What it checks: Core phlebotomy knowledge, and whether you understand that additive carry-over between tubes can change patient test results.

2. Tell me about a time you noticed something wrong with a sample or result before it was reported.

What it checks: Attention to detail and willingness to stop and check, which prevents wrong reports reaching patients.

3. Our lab runs round the clock. Are you comfortable doing night duty as a lab technician?

What it checks: Willingness and practical readiness for night shifts in a hospital lab, where emergency samples arrive at all hours.

4. How do you identify a patient and label samples so that a mix-up cannot happen?

What it checks: Patient safety habits: using two identifiers, labelling at the point of collection and never pre-labelling or labelling away from the patient.

5. Describe a time QC failed during a busy run. How did you handle the pressure to release reports?

What it checks: Integrity under pressure, and whether you follow QC rules even when doctors or managers are waiting for results.

6. With your DMLT or BMLT and bench experience, what pay are you looking for, including night duty allowance?

What it checks: Whether you know typical pay for your qualification and setting, such as a hospital, a diagnostic chain or a standalone lab.

7. What are the common reasons a lab rejects a sample, and what do you do when you reject one?

What it checks: Knowledge of pre-analytical errors and following a documented rejection process instead of quietly testing a bad sample.

8. Tell me about a time a patient was anxious or afraid during blood collection.

What it checks: Patient handling and empathy, along with safety awareness for patients who may feel faint or panic during a draw.

9. Why do you want to work at our diagnostic laboratory rather than a small clinic lab?

What it checks: Motivation and fit for a larger lab, including interest in accreditation, automation and quality systems.

10. How do you run and interpret internal quality control on an analyser before patient samples?

What it checks: Understanding of daily QC, Levey-Jennings charts and basic Westgard rules, and knowing not to release results when QC fails.

TIPS FOR THIS INTERVIEW

- Revise the order of draw, tube additives, sample rejection criteria and the colour codes for biomedical waste, as they come up in almost every lab interview.
- Be ready to explain QC in simple terms: control levels, Levey-Jennings charts and what you do when a control fails.
- Know the analysers you have used by name and be honest about which tests you ran yourself and which you only watched.
- Prepare for a possible practical, such as a blood draw on a mannequin, a smear or a Gram stain, and follow safety steps carefully while you work.

THE DAY BEFORE

- ☐ Confirm the time, venue or video link and the interviewer's name
- ☐ Plan your route and leave time for traffic, or test your camera, microphone and internet
- ☐ Keep copies of your resume, ID proof, certificates and photographs in a folder
- ☐ Iron your clothes and charge your phone and laptop
- ☐ Do one final run-through of your introduction, then stop and rest

ON THE DAY

- ☐ Arrive 15 minutes early, or log in 5–10 minutes early for a video call
- ☐ Greet everyone politely, including the receptionist or coordinator
- ☐ Listen to the full question, pause, then answer in a clear structure
- ☐ Take brief notes of names and key points
- ☐ Ask your prepared questions and confirm the next steps before you leave