Career options: Forensic Science

The degree program prepares graduates for employment in forensic laboratories, with its emphasis on forensic applications and the presentation of expert evidence in criminal cases. Graduates will have skills employable in a range of scientific disciplines. This degree program will also prepare students for further study in the forensic disciplines and forensic research.

In addition to knowledge and skills directly related to your program of study, you will also develop a range of other skills (e.g. teamwork, analytical, communication) through academic study, employment, voluntary work, sporting activities and life experience. Recognising the value employers place on these skills is an important factor in your graduate job search.

Occupations and industries

Forensic Science graduates find employment in:

- Forensic laboratories
- State and Federal police forces
- State health departments
- Pathology laboratories
- Armed forces
- Hospitals – private and public
- Universities

Positions and employers

Many graduate employers recruit from a wide range of disciplines. The major directory of graduate recruitment in Australia, Graduate Opportunities, lists employers by the disciplines from which they are recruiting. You might be surprised by the range of employers recruiting from your degree and the sectors of the workplace where you might establish a career.

Examples of graduate positions and employers include:

- Police officer- Scientific and scenes of crime
- Radiochemist
- Laboratory assistant

Queensland Police Service
Global Medical Solutions
University of Queensland
Queensland Health Forensic and Scientific Services

Vacancies on-line

Australia

- Australian Defence Force Recruiting
- Australian Public Service recruitment
- Australian Job Search
- Careers at CSIRO
Many work opportunities are not advertised. It is common practice for jobseekers to search out these opportunities. When approaching potential employers, conducting research to identify links between your selling points (your skills, experience, interests and qualifications) and an employer’s needs, increases your chances of success. Research will also reduce the number of approaches you
need to make, saving you time in the end. Developing and using your personal and professional networks is also a valuable tool in finding these ‘hidden’ opportunities.

- Australian Government departments
- Australian Universities
- Biotechnology companies in Australia
- CSIRO
- Drug and alcohol services in Australia
- Federal and state health departments & agencies in Australia
- Medicines industry companies in Australia
- Police services in Australia
- Private hospitals in Australia
- Public hospitals in Australia
- Queensland biotechnology directory
- Queensland Government Departments
- Scientific supply companies in Australia

Employment prospects and starting salaries

Grad Jobs and Dollars provides information on employment rates and median starting salaries by field of study, for Australian university graduates surveyed four months after graduation. Information on occupations Australia-wide, such as the size of the workforce, employment prospects and average weekly earnings is available from JobOutlook.

Professional associations

Joining a professional association is a great way to meet people in your field, who can assist you to explore your career options and potentially find employment opportunities. These associations exist in every field of employment and hold regular professional development and networking events. Students are welcome to join, and membership and can cost as little as $60 per year.

- Australasian Association of Clinical Biochemists
- Australian and New Zealand Forensic Science Society
- Australian and New Zealand Society of Criminology
- Australasian Society of Clinical and Experimental Pharmacologists & Toxicologists
- Australian Physiological Society
- Australian Science Communicators
- Australian Society for Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
- Australian Society of Forensic Odontology
- Australian Society for Microbiology
- Epigenetics Society
- Genetics Society of Australasia
- Haematology Society of Australia and New Zealand
- Human Genetics Society of Australasia
- International Society of Forensic Toxicologists
- National Institute of Forensic Science Australia
- Royal Australian Chemical Institute

Other career-related links for Forensic Science students

- Bioscience careers
- Careers in biometrics
Careers in biotechnology
Careers in chemistry
Careers in criminology
Careers in forensic biology
National Institute of Forensic Science Australia
Careers in forensic science (American Academy of Forensic Science)
Careers in genetics & molecular biology
medical laboratory scientists
Graduate Entry Medicine & Dentistry Admissions Test (GAMSAT)
Forensic science Crime investigators are increasingly turning to forensic science to help solve cases. But is this rapidly advancing field really as useful and reliable as some popular television programs would suggest? What are the limits and the possibilities of forensic science?
Sample job advertisements

The Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research strives as a key priority to encourage the sustainable growth of Australian industries by developing a national innovation system that drives knowledge creation, cutting edge science and research, international competitiveness and greater productivity. The Department is committed to developing policies and delivering programs, in partnership with stakeholders, to provide lasting economic benefits ensuring Australia’s competitive future.

You will experience a variety of interesting and challenging activities, ranging from supporting small and medium sized Australian enterprises to help them become more innovative, efficient and competitive to contributing to high-level Ministerial meetings. The 10-month graduate development program provides you with:

* Three work placements
* The opportunity to work with other graduates on a major project that tackles real-life industry issues
* Three “off-the-job” training blocks A network of Innovation people, including a dedicated “buddy”, who are there to support you and answer your questions
* A Certificate Level IV in Government

Other benefits of the program include:
Relocation assistance should you be moving from interstate
Competitive salary of $49,323 during the program and upon completion, a permanent position with a salary of around $59,848 and the opportunity to gain further promotion through merit-based selection processes

* Flexible working conditions under a competitive Enterprise Agreement, including health-related lifestyle subsidies
* salary packaging options and generous superannuation
* Ongoing professional development opportunities

Seeking...
The Department is recruiting approximately 40 graduates from various disciplines for 2011. We don’t mind if you’re just graduating this year or if you graduated some time ago. We value people who have strong skills in communication; teamwork; research and analysis; adaptability; flexibility; initiative; and judgment. If you’ve also got work experience, political awareness, business acumen, knowledge of change management issues or marketing, it’s a bonus!

Degree/Disciplines
We welcome applications from graduates from all disciplines, particularly:
Economics; Commerce; Public Policy; Business; Law; Science or Engineering. Applicants who also have postgraduate qualifications and some work experience are strongly encouraged to apply.

Alphapharm is committed to the highest level of structured training and development together with exceptional on the job experience.

As a graduate chemist, your training starts with a structured induction into our company and the pharmaceutical industry followed by a tailored on the job development program. As you progress your career through ongoing internal opportunities, we provide business and leadership development that will help you reach your potential on the bench and beyond.

Applications are invited throughout the year.
Current Vacancies

Scientific and Technical Careers

Discipline required:
* Science degree with a chemistry focus

Relevant courses:
* Chemistry, Industrial Chemistry, Analytical Chemistry, Applied Chemistry, Pharmaceutical Chemistry or similar

Graduate vacancies per year:
* Five to fifteen

Positions available:
* Research and Development Chemist;
* Quality Assurance / Quality Control Chemist

An employer of choice in the power industry is currently looking for a junior laboratory technician to work full time hours in their lab starting in September. This is an initial 6-7 months contract with the possibility of extension depending on workload and performance.

The position is part of a team of science personnel in a laboratory dedicated to the analysis of oil and insulation from electrical equipment.

To be successful in this role you must:
* A degree or associate diploma in chemistry
* Have experience working in a laboratory (commercial or academic)
* Be able to communicate effectively with other laboratory staff and project managers
* Have PC experience in preparation of documents and spreadsheets
* Own transport is essential

This is a great opportunity for a recent chemistry graduate to commence their career in their related field. On the job training and guidance will be provided.

The NSW Division of Analytical Laboratories is looking for a Technical Officer Grade 1-2 Drugs Laboratory.

Position Summary: Prepare and maintain chemical standards/solutions, perform calibrations of balances and instruments, ordering of chemicals, and provide support in chemical analytical work.

Applicants must address the selection criteria:

Essential Criteria: Tertiary qualifications in chemistry or equivalent; knowledge and experience of quality control procedures; experience in analytical techniques; good communication, writing and basic computer skills; knowledge and awareness of EEO principles and OH&S requirements.

Desirable Criteria: Experience in thin layer and gas chromatography; ability to prioritise tasks and work independently; ability to work within a team and liaise with clients and suppliers.

The Forensic Services Division, Australian Federal Police seeks a Team Member (Chemical Criminalistics)

The Forensic Team Member undertaking chemical trace evidence examinations (Chemical Criminalistics) contributes to a forensic team by providing effective and efficient forensic support to AFP operations and, where appropriate, external clients.

The successful applicant should possess an undergraduate degree with a major in Chemistry.
Sydney West Area Health Service Division of Analytical Laboratories requires a Technical Officer (Forensic Toxicology).

Applications are invited from suitable applicants to apply for the above position. Duties: Analysis of post mortem and ante mortem biological specimens for the presence of drugs and poisons for forensic purposes. The laboratory uses a wide range of modern instrumental techniques including GLC, HPLC, MS, UV/VIS and immuno assays. Some out of hours work may be required.

Essential criteria: A relevant certificate/Diploma/Degree or equivalent with a major in chemistry or equivalent. Good communications and interpersonal skills. Demonstrated knowledge or ability in the use of the above instrumentation.

Desirable criteria:

Computing skills and experience with forensic analysis.

Careers and Employment Service, Griffith University