

## Queen Mary University of London Technician Commitment 3 Year Action Plan (2022 - 2025)

The Themes of the Technician Commitment are:

**Visibility** - Ensure that all technicians within the organisation are identifiable and that the contribution of technicians is visible within and beyond the institution.

**Recognition** - Support technicians to gain recognition through professional registration and external awards schemes.

**Career Development** - Enable career progression opportunities for technicians through the provision of clear, documented career pathways.

**Sustainability** - Ensure the future sustainability of technical skills across the organisation and that technical expertise is fully utilised.

Theme	Heading	Status	Actions	Key Outputs/Measure
Career Development, Progression and Recruitment	Review of job profiles	Ongoing	Review and develop standardised job profile templates that clearly articulate the different responsibilities undertaken at each grade. To include variations in teaching, leadership and specialist duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Consult with technical staff to review consistency of job profiles against the work undertaken by technicians.</li> <li>* Published definitions of roles and responsibilities of Technical Services roles at each pay grade.</li> <li>* Publish standardised job titles suggestions and job descriptions on staff webpages to ensure accessible to all technical staff.</li> </ul>
	Technical Career Pathway	Ongoing	Development of a Clear Visual Technical Career Pathway by using our reviewed job profiles. Continue collaboration with other HE institutions who have successfully developed and implemented a clear pathway highlighting how technicians can expect to progress. As part of this work explore and develop the expansion of the technical grade profiles beyond grade 6 to align with professional services and research and academic groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Clearly defined structures in place, which promote clear, transparent career pathways.</li> <li>* Workshop(s) held to launch the Technical Career Pathway.</li> </ul>

Career Development, Progression and Recruitment	Career Progression	New	Work with our HR business partner to provide staff with guidance and transparency over accessing discretionary salary increments (for managers and reports). Examples of types of performance targets that could be applicable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Inclusion on HR rewards page and on TechNET pages.</li> <li>*Circulation during application round.</li> </ul>
	Personal Career Development Opportunities	New	Development of Technical Services Career Development Tool to identify skill gaps and development opportunities. Based on Professional Services Career Development tool designed by OPD team to help identify gaps between current skills/experience and those needed to move into more senior roles, either at Queen Mary or elsewhere. The tool is intended to support career aspirations and shape development in designing individual career journeys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Roll out availability of tool to technical staff with accompanying guidance resources.</li> </ul>
		New	Greater use/availability of secondment opportunities for training and development of staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Develop specific secondment guidelines for technical staff, including a clear mechanism for financing and approving secondments and feedback form on completion of secondment.</li> <li>*One secondment per year using this mechanism.</li> </ul>
		New	Work Shadowing - Explore how to implement an informal work shadowing scheme across the organisation and possibly surrounding institutions/companies. Engage and take part in the South East and London Technician Commitment Leads Network job shadowing and job taster opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Engage with Technical Managers to discuss how time and opportunity can be provided to allow technicians to work shadow.</li> <li>*A proposal will be put forward to suggest how this can be implemented across the University.</li> </ul>

Career Development, Progression and Recruitment	Personal Career Development Opportunities	New	Explore setting up an internal mentoring scheme for technicians and profile technical manager and technical experts who are willing to act as mentors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Work with OPD to advise and support the development of mentoring guidance for technicians like that for academic mentoring.</li> <li>*When sufficient support or interest organise a technical cohort for the 'introduction to mentoring course'.</li> <li>*Develop profiles for staff willing to volunteer as mentors.</li> </ul>
		Ongoing	Continue to increase our portfolio of focused training courses for technical staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Aim to deliver a year-on-year increase in tailored training courses developed from community feedback or sector examples.</li> </ul>
		New	Promote existing staff apprenticeship development opportunities, accessing levy funding to build new skills to support career development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Increased participation of technicians in Apprenticeship Programmes.</li> <li>*Monitor numbers engaging with apprenticeships and in which areas of expertise/learning.</li> <li>*Potential impact measures would be to demonstrate succession or promotion within the organisation.</li> </ul>
	Recruitment	Athena Swan linked action	Aim to address gender imbalance in Schools with disproportionately low female technicians. Understand and address any disproportionate drop off at stages of the recruitment process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Advertised Technical roles in Schools with disproportionately low number of female technicians to have text in advert to actively welcome applications from females.</li> <li>*Make additional advertisement placements/network efforts to get the roles known to more diverse groups.</li> <li>*When new e-recruitment system comes in (expected late 2022) assesses first five technical roles for any trends in disproportionate applicant drop off rates by gender and race. Following these first five roles make assessment of appropriate level of sampling.</li> </ul>
		New	Include Professional Recognition as a desirable in the skills section on all new technical job adverts - linked to job profile work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Include in job profile templates.</li> </ul>
		New	Address difference in notice period for technical positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Change notice period for grade 5 and above positions to 3 months.</li> </ul>

Career Development, Progression and Recruitment	Workforce analysis	Ongoing	Data to be reported on a quarterly basis to TCSG and monitored for impact. Explore data collection on turnover, vacancy rate, appraisal rates and successful bonus scheme and contribution point applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Used to identify trends or areas that need to be addressed.</li> <li>*Impact analysis and development of future actions.</li> </ul>
Visibility	Networking Opportunities	New	Launch first year of technical networking conference attendance fund.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Record numbers attending external events such as HETS, ITC, TMU and Technician Partnership Conference.</li> <li>*Increase numbers attending.</li> <li>*Increased contacts between other Universities for sharing good practice.</li> </ul>
		New	Deliver Technician Networking events regularly through the year, to encourage informal communication between technician staff e.g., coffee mornings, meet the tech team etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Initially aim for one informal networking event on each campus per term (9 in year), with a member of TCSG in attendance at each.</li> <li>*Aim to increase regularity and attendance year on year</li> </ul>
		New	Deliver a Technician Conference every year.	*Events that encourage participation (>30%).
		Ongoing	Develop our Technical Services 'People directory' to highlight individual skillsets so that others can request work-shadowing and training. Based on QM 'Find an Expert'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Explore with comms team functionality of 'find an expert'.</li> <li>*Encourage completion of technical staff profiles.</li> <li>*Embed on TechNET pages and publicise.</li> </ul>
		Ongoing	Identify and promote relevant opportunities for staff to participate in faculty/directorate and university level committees and project boards. Continue to invite new members to join the Technician Steering Group as a way of providing opportunities for technicians to gain experience of Committee membership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Findings to be circulated to School/Institute Managers and FDO to raise awareness and promote discussion.</li> <li>*Faculties to produce a list annually of committees which have specific technical involvement e.g., H&amp;S, Athena SWAN, EDI, equipment &amp; resourcing committees.</li> </ul>

Visibility	Communication	Ongoing	Continue to use existing technician communications channels (newsletter, website, social media and mailing lists) to engage with technicians across Queen Mary. Highlighting awards, graduation, outreach, conference, profiles, achievements, sector and career opportunities to our technical community. Explore establishing a community of practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Bimonthly newsletter and time dependent relevant mail outs in between.</li> <li>*Website updated 6 monthly, 6 new case studies per year.</li> <li>*Monitor engagement statistics.</li> <li>*Use social media platforms to share information for, and about our technical community through individual, School &amp; University social media pages, and via @QTechNET Twitter page.</li> </ul>
		New	Work of Technician Commitment promoted at 6 monthly New Staff event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Have a presence/stall at the 6 monthly new staff welcome event.</li> <li>*Produce an information flier that can be given out as part of new induction paperwork.</li> </ul>
		New	Increase engagement with IT and Estates technicians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Facilitate conversations informing leads in ITS and Estates about the Technician Commitment aims and benefits to their teams.</li> </ul>
Recognition	Professional Registration	Ongoing	To continue our annual professional registration fund, showcasing previous applicants and supporting current applicants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Aim to have a year-on-year increase in applicants, post regularly on Professional Registration MS Teams site and quarterly check in e-mails.</li> <li>*Explore buddying up a past applicant with a current applicant.</li> </ul>
		New	Meet our Professional Registration threshold to become a Science Council Employee Champion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Employer Champion status published, formal recognition of staff who have obtained professional registration, promotion via TechNET and E-Bulletin.</li> </ul>
	Research Environment	New	Work with Researcher Concordat lead to promote join up of Technician Commitment and Researcher initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Invite Researcher Concordat lead to TC Steering Group.</li> <li>*Work with Researcher Concordat to ensure there is synergy between the two initiatives.</li> </ul>
		New	Explore the expansion of the eligibility criteria for the supervision of student research projects to ensure that, where appropriate, technical staff can gain formal recognition for supervision roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Discussion and engagement with Doctoral College.</li> </ul>

Recognition		New	Promote the inclusion of technical staff as investigators or named researchers on internal and external research funding applications where funding bodies allow (for example BBSRC and MRC Equipment, Industry, Innovate and EU).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Identify barriers which could be preventing applications.</li> <li>*Work with Research Services to ensure that if applicable funding is available there is a clear pathway for internal approval of submissions.</li> <li>*Ensure opportunities are circulated via TechNET.</li> <li>*Prepare guidance notes on process.</li> </ul>
		Ongoing	Develop clear guidance to ensure appropriate costing of technician time, equipment and facility charges so the full costs associated with technical staff and research are quantified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Consult with Finance &amp; JRMO.</li> <li>*Working groups with Facility Managers.</li> <li>*Sign off by RIB.</li> <li>*Publish finalised guidelines and circulate.</li> </ul>
		Ongoing	Continue to promote the Publication Acknowledgment Guidance on a regular basis and ask senior leaders to ensure this is cascaded. Follow up with Facility Managers to analyse if improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Facility Managers annual check.</li> <li>*Work with library services on possible methods of output analysis.</li> </ul>
	Teaching Environment	Ongoing	Promote Advance HE accreditation for technicians who teach or demonstrate and support application process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Run one advance HE workshop per year.</li> <li>*Increase the number of Advance HE accredited staff year on year.</li> </ul>
		Ongoing	Building on pilot program embed mental health awareness and student signposting session as an annual training offering available for all teaching technicians and PGR supporting staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Run one technical mental health workshop per year.</li> <li>*Build up 'real life' anonymous case studies from these workshops for inclusion in future sessions.</li> </ul>
		New	Include reference in the next TEF submission to the essential contribution that technicians make to the student learning experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Technical staff are referenced in the TEF submission.</li> <li>*Showcase innovative teaching</li> </ul>
	Soft promotion	New	Explore job title change. Applicable if you have achieved professional recognition and are over halfway up grade points. Acknowledging expertise and commitment to CPD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Work with our HR business partner to provide clear differences in job title and guidelines for when it should be implemented.</li> </ul>

Recognition	Awards	Ongoing	Continue to promote both internal and external award opportunities. Expand mechanisms for seeking nomination with other categories of staff who may wish to nominate their technicians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*3 external nominations per year.</li> <li>*Opportunities for application visible on website to all staff.</li> </ul>
Sustainability	Workforce planning	New	Consider tools for workforce planning for technical managers. To identify areas where succession planning is needed, single points of failure (potential apprenticeships), areas with skill gaps or roles where turnover is known. Work into Institutional planning round program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Consult with PS Transformation project</li> <li>*Produce simple School technical team, work force planning table and guidance on how to filter identified information into annual planning round</li> </ul>
	Apprenticeships	Ongoing	Continue to identify and promote new apprenticeship opportunities for technical staff at the university, focussing on areas where skills gaps/succession planning issues are identified. Ensure publicised in local community/Schools/FE etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Increased participation of technicians in Apprenticeship Programmes.</li> <li>*Monitor numbers engaging with apprenticeships and in which areas of expertise/learning.</li> <li>*Potential impact measures would be to demonstrate succession or promotion within the organisation.</li> </ul>
Evaluating Impact	Staff Engagement - Technicians Voice	New	Develop a suggestions box on our TechNET site for anonymous engagement.	*Embed anonymous feedback form on front techNET page to increase methods of feedback
		Ongoing	Review of progress of action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Undertake review through surveys, feedback forms, attendance at technician events and uptake of training opportunities.</li> <li>*Reviewing Staff Survey results for changes in technician satisfaction and regularly review workforce data.</li> <li>*The TCSG will regularly review and update progress of the action plan with a live RAG report.</li> </ul>

Governance	New	<p>Review theme leads within the Steering Group to spread the responsibility.            Have two nominated people responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Keeping the website site up to date.</li> <li>* Writing newsletter and monitoring and answering techNET admin e-mails.</li> <li>* Maintaining social media channel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Chair to ensure action plan is being implemented.</li> <li>* Theme leads reporting to the steering group on progress and development within their areas. This will help in valuating overall impact of the Technician Commitment and in subsequent self-assessments.</li> </ul>
		<p>Formalise annual budget for Technician Commitment action plan delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Clarify governance, reporting and approval process and update Technician Commitment Steering Group Terms of Reference.</li> </ul>