Our vision for technical talent

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World-class technical talent

The University of Nottingham's technicians are vital to the success of our institution. Our highly skilled and expert technical staff are essential to delivering research and teaching on an international stage.

We employ over 700 technicians across our campuses in the UK, China and Malaysia. They have expertise that spans a wide range of disciplines and they make a fundamental contribution towards the University's aims to deliver excellence in research and knowledge exchange, teaching and the student experience.

The University of Nottingham is proud to be a founding signatory of the Technician Commitment; a sector wide initiative, backed by a range of stakeholders, to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for the technical community in higher education and research. In 2017 the Research Councils issued a statement regarding expectations of research organisations to ensure that technical staff are "supported as equal members of research teams and have access to appropriate career development and progression". a sentiment which is echoed by the University of Nottingham.

Our vision

The University of Nottingham has a diverse technical base of the highest quality in terms of skills, knowledge and expertise. **Our vision is to ensure that our technical staff are world-class and that the University of Nottingham is the employer of choice for technical talent.** We are committed to attracting, developing and retaining the highest-quality technicians. This strategy has been developed to achieve this vision and deliver on our Technician Commitment.

Our strategy has four strands, aligned to key elements of the University's Strategy: Research excellence, teaching and student experience, people and partnerships for growth.

In order to deliver our strategy, we have a number of specific objectives which are organised by short, medium and longer term.

Our four strands

1. Research excellence
We will recruit, develop and retain high quality, professional technical staff to enable and deliver research of the highest standard on an international stage.

2. Teaching and student experience
We will recruit, develop and retain high quality, professional technical staff to enable and deliver teaching excellence of a world-class calibre.

3. People
We will ensure technical careers are recognised, respected, supported and developed as professional careers in higher education, ensuring technicians are proud of their profession and are motivated and engaged. We will work to ensure parity of esteem between all University staff roles through breaking down of barriers, whether perceived or real.

4. Partnerships for growth
We will build excellent links with external organisations whose expertise, facilities and equipment provide mutual benefit for technical excellence.

Research excellence

We will recruit, develop and retain high quality, professional technical staff to enable and deliver research of the highest standard on an international stage.

Timeline for actions

Year one

Introduce 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

[*] [*]

Develop and communicate clear and consistent guidance on the inclusion of technical staff as authors on research papers to ensure full and appropriate recognition for all contributions, aligned to the University of Nottingham Publication Framework

[*] [*] [*]

Communicate the opportunity for all technical staff to gain professional registration with an appropriate professional body

[*]

Develop a University wide mapping of technical activity to ensure that Nottingham is equipped to deliver our ambitions in terms of excellence in teaching and student experience and research and knowledge exchange

[*]

Establish routes and sources to allow technical staff to apply for funding to attend appropriate conferences to both develop and disseminate their expertise

[*]

Celebrate technicians as an integral part of the research community to ensure the contribution they make is understood and appreciated both by colleagues inside the University and with wider stakeholders

[*] [*]

Year two

Promote the inclusion of technical staff as investigators or named researchers on internal and external research funding applications where funding bodies allow (for example Industry, Innovate and EU)

[*] [*] [*]

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

[*]

Ensure the University has a strategic awareness of technical skills and that it is able to succession plan effectively at both an institutional and local level (mapping/forecasting of future technical skill requirements)

[*]

Ensure technical staff are represented on school/departmental, faculty and University level research committees/boards in order that the views of technical staff are represented in decision-making processes related to research

[*] [*] [*]

Year three

Recognise technicians as an integral part of the research community by including statements in all appropriate Unit of Assessments to Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 to evidence the University of Nottingham as a world-leading employer of technicians

[*] [*]

Symbols legend

Alignment to the themes of the **Technician Commitment** are denoted by * in the following colours:

[*] **Visibility**

[*] **Recognition**

[*] **Career development**

[*] **Sustainability**

Teaching and student experience

We will recruit, develop and retain high quality, professional technical staff to enable and deliver teaching excellence of a world-class calibre.

Timeline for actions

Year one

Recognise that technical staff are crucial to teaching and learning at the University through inclusion of evidence in the institution's TEF application around the quality of the University of Nottingham technical staff body

*

Develop technical tutor/technical teaching fellow roles within the technical job family to ensure skilled, teaching focused technical roles with a clearly defined career path and associated development opportunities

*

Provide the opportunity for all technical staff to gain teacher training and fellowship with the Higher Education Academy in line with Research and Teaching (R and T) colleagues via the Associate Teacher Programme (ATP) route or the Nottingham Recognition Scheme (NRS)

*

Representatives of technical staff to be invited to graduation ceremonies as degrees are conferred as a reflection of the varied 'team' roles required to enable student learning

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Year two

Ensure technical staff are represented on school, faculty and University level teaching and learning committees/boards, to ensure that the views and expertise of technical staff are represented in decision-making processes related to teaching and student experience
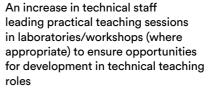
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Students to have increased awareness and appreciation of technical roles at the University by featuring technical staff in future prospectuses and showcasing the expertise of technical staff at open days

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An increase in technical staff leading practical teaching sessions in laboratories/workshops (where appropriate) to ensure opportunities for development in technical teaching roles

* *****

Year three

Explore the inclusion of teaching qualifications of technical staff in University of Nottingham Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) returns

*

Inclusion of technical staff, where appropriate, in staff to student ratios/contact time

* *****

People

We will ensure technical careers are recognised, respected, supported and developed as professional careers in higher education, ensuring technicians are proud of their profession and are motivated and engaged.

We will work to ensure parity of esteem between all University staff roles through breaking down of barriers, whether perceived or real.

Timeline for actions

Year one

Formation of a University Technical Managers committee with appropriate reporting structure and terms of reference to lead the development and delivery of the University's Technical Strategy and Technician Commitment

Further develop the technical staff network to promote networking across the institution and cross faculty development opportunities (regular technical seminars/events) and sharing best practice and leveraging the world-class skills offered by our technical staff across the University

Professional Registration/Accreditation to be embedded in recruitment processes for technical positions as a desirable recruitment expectation

A newsletter to be launched and circulated to technical staff across the University highlighting news, events and development opportunities for technicians

Identify Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) priority areas across the University's technical community and put a plan in place to address these as part of the wider University EDI strategy, for example in recruitment processes

Increased trainee technicians and technician apprenticeship positions (mapped to areas of internal targets for these to address succession planning challenges)

Clearly defined career pathways for technical staff through the University's Leadership and Management Academy (LMA) complete with links to relevant training provision

Develop appropriate technical specific career development activities, including developing tools and supporting career planning, co-ordinated through the Leadership and Management Academy's online careers hub

Year two

Explore the expansion of the technical job family to align with Research and Teaching and Administrative, Professional and Managerial (APM) job families (expansion to Level 6 and 7), whilst meeting University requirements

Explore possible models of progression routes based on the development of technical skills in relation to teaching and/or research

Identification and support for the development and career progression of leaders and managers from technical job family – including aspiring leaders, future leaders, high performing team's programmes. Target of at least 9% staff participation to be technical staff in these programmes by 31 December 2018

Promote coaching and mentoring provision to technical staff and ensure technical staff have the opportunity to access a mentor/coach

Leverage technical collaboration across the University to ensure enhanced job satisfaction and enhanced delivery of outcomes for all stakeholders

Establish a mentoring/buddy scheme between University of Nottingham technical staff and technical staff at our international campuses in China and Malaysia

UNMC and UNNC representatives on the University of Nottingham's Technical Managers committee

Year three

All key decision-making committees/boards to have technical representation/expertise where appropriate

The introduction of development programmes aligned to apprenticeship standards and supported through the Apprenticeship Levy for existing technical staff

Collaborate with HR on the development and introduction of a review, recognition and development process that ensures engaged and motivated technical staff

Explore the possibility of a 'Technician School' (similar to Graduate School) that offers dedicated training and development opportunities/advice for the technical job family

Establish UNNC and UNMC Summer Schools to ensure provision of the highest quality technical training for technical staff at our international campuses and the sharing of global best practice

Partnerships for growth

We will build excellent links with external organisations whose expertise, facilities and equipment provide mutual benefit for technical excellence.

Timeline for actions

Year one

'Technicians in Partnership' project to build relationships and networks within the strategic partnership between University of Nottingham and the University of Birmingham (UoB)

* * *

Lead and develop the Midlands Innovation Technical Managers Forum and national Higher Education Technicians Summit and Papin Prizes

* * * *

Build relationships with higher education institutions and stakeholders and influence sector wide activity regarding technicians to ensure the University of Nottingham is at the forefront of sector/policy developments

* * * *

Year two

Celebrate and encourage the contribution of technical staff to the University's outreach/widening participation work

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Placement/training schemes in collaboration with external partners, for example UoB and Manufacturing Technology Centre

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Explore commercial opportunities for technical expertise and introduce training to technical staff on Intellectual Property

* * *

Year three

To have attracted external recognition and funding for technician development related projects

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Find out more

To discover more about the development opportunities available to technical staff across the University and to learn more about the strategy and its progress, please visit **nottingham.ac.uk/technicians**

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