Technical Services Strategy

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University of Nottingham: 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 external landscape is changing rapidly in terms of expectations around recognition, reward and development for Technical Services colleagues. The University of Nottingham is proud to be a founding signatory of the Technician Commitment; a sector wide initiative, backed by the Research Councils, along with other stakeholders to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for the technical community in higher education and research. In parallel, in 2017 RCUK 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".

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. The Technical Services Strategy has been developed to enable us to achieve this vision. Our strategy has four strands, aligned to key elements of the University's Global Strategy 2020; 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.

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.

Teaching & Student Experience: We will recruit, develop and retain high quality, professional technical staff to enable and deliver teaching of the highest standard on an international stage.

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.

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

Technical Services Strategy

*Please note - alignment to the themes of the Technician Commitment are denoted by * in the following colours:* ==*== *- visibility,* ==*== *- recognition,* ==*== *- career development,* ==*== *- sustainability*.

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.

Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Introduce clear guidance to ensure appropriate costing of technician time, equipment and facility charges so the full costs associated with TS staff and research are quantified. ****	Promote the inclusion of TS staff as investigators (PI/CI) on internal and external research funding applications where funding bodies allow (e.g. Industry, Innovate, EU) *****	Recognise technicians as an integral part of the research community by including statements in all appropriate Unit of Assessments to REF 2021 to evidence UoN as a world leading employer of technicians ****
Develop and communicate clear and consistent guidance on the inclusion of technical services staff as authors on research papers to ensure full and appropriate recognition for all contributions, aligned to the University of Nottingham Publication Framework *****	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 *	
Communicate the opportunity for all TS staff to gain professional registration with an appropriate professional body *	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 TS skill requirements) *	
Develop a university wide mapping of TS 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 *	Ensure TS staff are represented on School/Departmental, Faculty and University level Research Committees/Boards in order that the views of TS staff are represented in decision-making processes related to research *****	

Establish routes/sources to allow TS 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 in order that the contribution they make is understood and appreciated both by colleagues inside the University and with wider stakeholders **		

Teaching & Student Experience

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

Year One	Year Two	Year Three
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 UoN TS staff body *	Ensure TS staff are represented on School, Faculty and University level Teaching and Learning Committees/Boards in order that the views and expertise of TS staff are represented in decision-making processes related to teaching and student experience ***	Explore the inclusion of teaching qualifications of TS staff in UoN HESA return * Inclusion of TS staff, where appropriate, in staff:student ratios/contact time **
Develop "Technical Tutor/Technical Teaching Fellow" roles as a specialist role within the TS Job Family to ensure skilled, teaching focused TS roles with a clearly defined career path and associated development opportunities *	Students to have increased awareness and appreciation of TS roles at the University by featuring TS staff in future prospectuses and showcasing the expertise of TS staff at Open Days **	
Provide the opportunity for all TS staff to gain teacher training and Fellowship with the Higher Education Academy in line with R&T colleagues (via ATP route or Nottingham Recognition Scheme) *	An increase in TS staff leading practical teaching sessions in laboratories/workshops, (where appropriate), to ensure opportunities for development in TS teaching roles **	
Representatives of TS staff to be invited to graduation ceremonies as degrees are conferred as a reflection of the varied 'team' roles required to enable student learning **		

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.

Year One	Year Two	Year Three
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 Services Strategy ****	Explore the expansion of the TS Job Family to align with R&T and APM job families (expansion to Level 6 and 7), whilst meeting university requirements ****	All key decision-making Committees/Boards to have TS representation/expertise where appropriate ***
Further develop the TS network to promote networking across the institution and cross faculty development opportunities (regular TS seminars/events) sharing best practice and leveraging the world class skills offered by our TS staff across the University ***	Explore possible models of progression routes based on the development of technical skills in relation to teaching and/or research ****	The introduction of development programmes aligned to apprenticeship standards and supported through the Apprenticeship Levy for existing TS staff **
Professional Registration/Accreditation to be embedded in recruitment processes for TS positions as a desirable recruitment expectation **	Identification and support for the development and career progression of leaders and managers from TS job family – including Aspiring Leaders, Future Leaders, High Performing Teams programmes. Target of at least 9% staff participation to be TS staff in these programmes by 31/12/18 **	Collaborate with HR on the development and introduction of a review, recognition and development process that ensures engaged and motivated TS staff ****
A Technical Services newsletter to be launched and circulated to TS staff across the University highlighting news, events and development opportunities *	Promote coaching and mentoring provision to TS staff and ensure TS staff have the opportunity to access a mentor/coach *	Explore the possibility of a "Technician School" (similar to Graduate School) that offers dedicated training and development opportunities/advice for the TS job family **
Identify EDI priority areas within Technical Services and put a plan in place to address these as part of the wider University EDI		Establish UNNC/UNMC Summer Schools to ensure provision of the highest quality technical training for TS staff at our international campuses and the sharing of global best practice

strategy, e.g. in recruitment processes ********	Leverage TS collaboration across the University to ensure enhanced job satisfaction and enhanced delivery of outcomes for all stakeholders *******	********
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 TS staff (through the University's Leadership & Management Academy - LMA) linked to new competency framework and complete with flags to relevant training provision ******	Establish a mentoring/buddy scheme between UNUK TS staff and TS staff at our international campuses in Malaysia (UNMC) and China (UNMC) ********	
	UNMC and UNNC representatives on UoN TSM Committee ********	
Develop appropriate TS specific career development activities, including developing tools and supporting career planning, co-ordinated through the LMA's online Careers Hub ******		

Partnerships for Growth

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

Year One	Year Two	Year Three
"Technicians in Partnership" project to build relationships and networks within the strategic partnership between UoN and the University of Birmingham (UoB) *******	Celebrate and encourage the contribution of TS staff to the University's outreach/widening participation work *******	To have attracted external recognition and funding for technician development related projects ********
Lead and develop the Midlands Innovation Technical Managers Forum and national Higher Education Technicians Summit & Papin Prizes ********	Placement/training schemes in collaboration with external partners, e.g. UoB and Manufacturing Technology Centre ******	
Build relationships with HEIs and stakeholders and influence sector wide activity regarding technicians to ensure UoN at forefront of sector/policy developments ********	Explore commercial opportunities for TS expertise and introduce training to TS staff on Intellectual Property *******	