

36 month action plan January 2021-January 2024		
Visibility Ensure that technicians within the organisation are identifiable and that the contribution of technicians is visible within and beyond the institution		
	Action	How impact will be evidenced
B1.	As with all Schools and Functions, we have a budget for Celebrating Success Vouchers and Lump Sum awards, however (apart from our Employee of the Year award), when we make these awards, they are not widely known about or celebrated. This is also the situation when technical staff are regraded, although we do publicise appointments of team members to higher grade roles. We will increase visibility of the award of Celebrating Success Vouchers, Lump Sum Awards and regrades to increasingly demonstrate that recognition of success and career progression within Technical Services is well-established.	Technical staff will be made aware of awards in our newsletter and at staff meetings. Hall of Fame information will be sent out in our Technical Services email updates.
B2.	Our promotion of our activities beyond the University are rather sporadic, with occasional appearances in national technical newsletters and articles. We will incorporate and implement a communication strategy and associated plan into our Technician Commitment Working Group to ensure that we submit stories to national bodies such as the Science Council and Technician Commitment. In addition we will consider means by which we can publicise our community activities more widely in the local area.	We will have a library of articles that record our efforts associated with this action
B3.	Our Technical Services TechNET sessions run on a fortnightly basis (except 2019) outside of term time and until now these have usually involved contacts from other Functions providing information on their role and information sharing and initiatives across the University. We will change the focus of a number of these sessions to include our own technicians to describe and showcase their work and expertise.	Technical staff will have an increasing understanding of activities across Technical Services and networks will continue to develop
B4.	Continue to raise the external visibility of technical staff at all levels by equipping them with the knowledge and confidence to represent the University at technical conferences and external workshops. This also aligns with the career development pillar.	We will have a larger group of technical staff who have presented at external conferences and events at other universities
B5.	Working with GRA and MCE, students to have increased awareness and appreciation of technical roles at the University by featuring technical staff in future prospectuses, Career Events and Open Days (Continuation of Action A5).	We will have greater visibility with students
B6.	Through our Technical Services Outreach Working Group we will develop an Outreach strategy (continuation of Action A6).	We will have greater visibility in local schools
B7.	As a result of the pandemic we developed a range of orientation videos that were made available to students to familiarise them with the new arrangements that were in place in labs, studios and workshops before they came on to campus. We will use these skills to develop videos for inductions and training of staff and students, and on the Technical Services website.	We will have additional ways of increasing our visibility with job applicants, students and staff

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Recognition Support technicians to gain recognition through professional registration		
	Action	How impact will be evidenced
B8.	Through discussions with MCE we will determine how to best publicise that our efforts associated with the Technician Commitment and professional registration are recognised at UoR. We will explore the feasibility of producing a video on the Technical Service website featuring a member(s) of UEB.	Our professional registration status is recognised at the highest level at the University
B9.	Our involvement in demonstrating in, and running of, practical classes and supporting project students in specialist areas is an important part of the student experience. In addition, we have an increasing number of Associate Fellows and Fellows of the HEA. Technical Services to raise our profile and demonstrate our excellent support to teaching.	Aim to have a reference to technical staff in Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) submission
B10	So far, at least 40% of Technical Services staff are professionally registered/accredited as Registered Science Technicians, Registered Scientists, Chartered Scientists (we have Employer Champion status), Registered Practitioners, Fellows and Associate Fellows of the HEA. Our action is to increase this through supporting staff with workshops and a network of mentors. Currently, we run internal workshops for professional registration and will now do the same for HEA accreditation. In addition, we are building a buddy network for professional registration and HEA accreditation and we will roll this out as one of the means to achieve this action.	We will have at least 65% of our staff holding professional registration, registered practitioner status and/or HEA accreditation
B11	Our Technical Services website includes role profiles of most of our staff. As well as updating these pages and including qualifications we will include professional registration and accreditation status.	Technical staff will see that our professional registration is recognised and valued
B12	Our generic job descriptions have served us very well and until now have included professional registration as a desirable criterion. We will now update these to include professional registration, or the ability to achieve this within an appropriate timeframe, as an essential criterion when advertising roles. We will also align our technical career framework to expectations relating to level of professional registration.	Technical staff will see that our professional registration is an important expectation in career development
B13	We support research through our technical staff being based in research facilities such as the Chemical Analysis Facility, Confocal Microscopy Facility, Crops Research Facilities, Bioresource Unit and MRI Facility. In addition, we have a pool technician model where technician time outside of research facilities is bought out for research. We will determine the level of recognition/acknowledgement of our technical staff in research publications with a view if appropriate, to develop protocols for consistently recognising these contributions.	Technical staff will be increasingly named in research publications (if their contribution is currently found to be poorly recognised)
Career Development Enable career progression opportunities for technicians through the provision of clear, documented career pathways		
	Action	How impact will be evidenced
B14	As well as reviewing and updating our generic job descriptions to align to professional registration/accreditations schemes, we will consider if	Our D&I group will confirm that they

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	any improvements can be made associated with Diversity and Inclusion mindful of career development opportunities for underrepresented staff (also aligns with Sustainability pillar below).	have been consulted and are satisfied with any updates
B15	We are aware of our staff occasionally missing out on securing vacancies at higher grades due to a lack of confidence in applying for roles (despite having the appropriate knowledge and skills). We will increase support of technical staff during internal job application processes with job application workshops and interview preparation sessions.	The numbers of internal candidates successfully securing interviews for higher grade posts will increase
B16	Our technical career pathway provides opportunities to progress through the research technical expert pathway in addition to the managerial pathway. There does not appear to be sufficient awareness of this route amongst all of our technical staff. We will develop and publicise case studies of our technical experts and consider how we upskill to become experts including training, interaction with industry and with our university links.	Technical staff will be increasingly aware of the technical expert pathway as demonstrated in our annual Technical Services staff survey
B17	We have technical staff who demonstrate in practical classes as standard, though the responsibility of technical staff running practical classes is inconsistent across the Schools. We will review our approach and clarify responsibilities in this area. In addition, we will explore the responsibilities of teaching staff in Schools and clarify if there are any overlaps and/or opportunities for technical staff who would like to be developed to pursue non-technical careers in teaching.	Technical staff will have an awareness of teaching career paths, as demonstrated in our annual staff survey
B18	Currently we support technical staff to attend conferences that are aimed at developing their knowledge of current developments in their field, however although discussed and agreed as part of the PDR process, we allocate budget to this on an ad hoc manner and we do not follow up to determine the learning outcomes We will roll out an annual call to all technical staff for them to make a case for attendance at conferences in a fair manner and the expectation will be that technical staff report back at technical staff meetings or in the Technical Services newsletter.	Technical staff will be aware of the development fund as demonstrated in our annual Technical Services staff survey
B19	With the exception of Health and Safety courses, our uptake of training tends to be when courses are identified and pursued through the PDR process. Whilst an excellent approach, we need to address inconsistencies across Technical Services in the quantity and type of training undertaken. We will work with People Development to carry out a training needs analysis for Technical Services in its entirety and align this to our career pathway.	Technical staff and managers will be increasingly aware of training needs that are appropriate for the various career levels
B20	Prior to the pandemic we were about to publicise opportunities for shadowing and job tasters across our South East and London Technician Commitment Leads Network. We will re-establish this once the pandemic subsides. We will also explore work shadowing with surrounding institutions/companies	Technical staff will report at staff meetings or in our newsletter on the learning that has been achieved via job tasters and shadowing at other institutions

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B21	Set up 'my career before UoR' and 'my career after UoR- next destinations' sessions with current and ex-employees in our TechNET programme and our newsletter to increase awareness of technician career opportunities across and beyond the sector.	Staff meetings and newsletters will include articles on the technical careers
Sustainability Ensure the future sustainability of technical skills across the organisation and that technical expertise is fully utilised		
	Action	How impact will be evidenced
B22	Technical Services to seek approval to implement a formal means to network with externally funded research technicians at the University to increase their awareness of professional registration schemes and career development opportunities, extending sustainability of technicians across the university. This is a continuation of A12 and A17.	More fixed-term technicians will be aware of Technician Commitment activities
B23	Following on from Action A15 above, we will now rollout coaching and mentoring provision to technical staff and ensure technical staff have the opportunity to access a mentor/coach. We will work to establish a sustainable, supportive, empowered and growing network of mentors and mentees, that will align with other mentoring networks which run University wide, and within other Functions	We will be able to quantify number of mentors in Technical Services and assess benefits in annual Technical Services staff survey
B24	In attracting new candidates when advertising vacancies, we will work with HR to link our Employer Champion and Technician Commitment information to adverts.	We will ask interviewees about their awareness of our status and if this increased the attractiveness of roles at UoR
B25	As part of our Outreach Working Group strategy we will engage more with local primary and secondary schools and as well working with the Schools (at the University) in widening participation activities for prospective students, we will aim to raise the visibility of the technician career and aim to expand the technician recruitment pool to attract those in the local community who may be interested in trainee and apprenticeship opportunities (aligns with B6).	We will increase recruitment of trainee and apprentice technicians from the local area.
B26	Through the Athena SWAN Implementation Co-Chair (Director of Technical Services) engage the Technical Services Diversity and Inclusion Group in working on University wide actions that are part of the institutional Athena SWAN action plan. This will include activities such as those relating to formalisation of the Professional Services sub-group of the Self-Assessment Team (SAT), career development, wellbeing, underrepresented groups, intersectionality and apprenticeships.	Technical staff will be involved in leading and steering D&I improvements both within TS and across the University
B27	We will engage fully with the new ways of working that are part of the University strategy to remain sustainable and we will continually upskill and modernise our approaches to digitisation, remote working and flexible working patterns as far as is possible, recognising the limitations for a practical, hands-on workforce.	Technical staff will be equipped and expected to remain abreast of all new developments associated with modern workplaces.

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