Technician Commitment Three Year Action Plan - December 2020 to December 2023

Technician Commitment Lead: Christine Raines, PVC-R

	Aim	Lead	Actions	Target Date
Sustainability				
S1	Continue the Technician Group meetings.	PVC-R Delegate	a) Meet three times a year, reporting into the People, Culture and Inclusion Advisory Group b) Review the membership annually	Ongoing
S2	Coordinate resource for Technician Commitment action plan	PVC-R / Action Plan manager	a) Review options for the management of the Technician Commitment Action Plan, including secondment opportunities for technical staff, or continuing centralised project management resource b) Consider the benefits in a member of technical staff being seconded for 1-2 days per week to represent technical staff and coordinate a university wide approach in empowering technical staff c) Secure the most appropriate resource	May 2021
S3	Develop processes to ensure consistency of grade boundaries	HR Business Partner	a) Finalise standardised job titles and job descriptions for departmental technicians that show clear progression routes. b) Publish standardised job titles and job descriptions on staff webpages to ensure accessible to all technical staff c) Encourage the use of the standardised job descriptors for new appointments	May 2021
S4	Review technician job descriptions	HR Business Partner	a) Consult with technical staff to review consistency of job descriptors against the work undertaken by technicians. b) Consider the benefits of transitioning existing technicians onto the standardised job titles and/or descriptions, and do so where deemed appropriate.	December 2023
S5	Review Technicians Commitment action plan	Technical Managers Group	a) Network with contacts at other signatory institutions and the Technician Commitment regarding best practice. b) Review best practice of other universities. c) Evaluate and update action plan if required.	June 2022
S6	Engage with People Landscapes and Athena Swan	People and Culture	a) Consider impact of Covid-19 and other changes on the structure of technical teams and proportion of technical staff within departments b) Identify any substantial changes to technical staff resourcing in departments and consider potential impact c) Support departments with the creation of new technician apprentices where applicable	Ongoing

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			d) Technician input into department's Athena Swan plans	
S7	Liaise with ITS and Estates regarding involvement in the Technician Commitment work	Action Plan manager	a) Facilitate conversations informing leads in ITS and Estates about the Technician Commitment Aims b) If requested, develop a professional services Technician Commitment Action Plan to run in line with this one	December 2021
Visibility				
V1	Maintain regular updates for technical staff through the opt-in technician mailing list	Action Plan manager / OD / Technical managers	a) Lead by example in using the list to share updates on the Technician Commitment, HEaTED training opportunities, and key information b) Encouraging technical staff to sign up and utilise the mailing list	Ongoing
V2	Ensure inclusion across all campuses for technicians	Action Plan manager / OD	a) Colchester campus based staff to visit Loughton and Southend to engage with technicians across all campuses (once it is safe to do so) b) Actions in this plan aim to support all technicians, so if location makes engagement challenging, arrangements to facilitate participation will be put in place wherever possible, such as running sessions in multiple locations or online	Ongoing
V3	Promote the benefits of having access to the extensive technical skills our technicians offer	Technical Managers Group	a) Highlight achievements of technical staff at the Technicians Group meetings b) Share details to CER where suitable to develop a higher profile for technicians through showcasing the benefits they provide to student experience and research capabilities. Looking to increase visibility in Essex Weekly, Essex Spirit, prospectuses, and through the website	Ongoing
V4	Encourage the inclusion of technician's names on research papers to which they have contributed their skills	DDR Science and Health	a) At Faculty Steering Group and Faculty Research Committee include updates on the Technicians Commitment work being undertaken at the University, including a reminder about the inclusion of technicians on research papers	Ongoing
V5	Improve representation on University committees	Technical Managers Group	a) Ensure technicians are being represented on relevant committees within faculties and departments b) Follow up on requests from technicians for further representation at committees, and encourage utilisation of professional technical knowledge available in the decision making processes, as well as providing career development opportunities for technical staff	Ongoing
V6	Monitor representation on University committees	Technical Managers Group	a) Run an annual survey of technician engagement in committees and meetings to monitor inclusion levels	April 2021, 2022 and 2023

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			b) Share results with Faculty Managers and HoDs, and facilitate discussions around technician participation in committees where necessary	
V7	Celebrate achievements through University awards specifically for technical staff	People and Culture	a) Continue to encourage technicians to apply for Excellence in Education Awards (EEA) b) Offer support with completing EEA applications	February 2021, 2022 and 2023
		REO	c) Review potential for a technician category in the Celebrating Excellence in Research and Impact Awards	May 2021
		Action Plan manager	d) To collate details of the achievements and invaluable efforts of technicians throughout the pandemic, so that these can be formally recognised by senior staff, e.g. through emails of thanks, Essex Weekly, or another suitable medium	June 2021
		Action Plan manager	e) To develop an award format for technicians to celebrate the achievements of our technical staff	June 2022
Recognition				
R1	Review availability of funding to support technicians to apply for their first year of professional recognition	HR	a) When the financial situation allows, to secure ring-fenced funding for the first year of professional registration for technicians b) Once funding established, to consider whether this scheme can be expanded to provide assistance with costs of a second year of registration	February 2021, 2022 and 2023
R2	Promote the benefits of professional registration to technicians	Technical managers / People and Culture	a) Inform and remind staff of process and benefits for applying for professional registration	Ongoing
R3	Provide support with applications for professional registration for technicians	People and Culture	a) Run workshops supporting with the application process b) Facilitate writing sessions where technicians can allocate time to work on their professional registration applications together	November 2021, 2022 and 2023
R4	Provide support with the professional services annual review process (for bonuses and increments) for technicians who gain professional registration	People and Culture	a) Run workshops on how to feed gaining professional registration into applications made to the annual review process	March 2022 and 2023
R5	Review technician input into HoD selection process	PVC-R / Action Plan manager	a) Survey departments that have technicians to evaluate whether technicians are able to vote in the election of HoDs b) If required, consider a unified approach to technical staff recognition in departmental votes	September 2021
Career Development				

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C1	Ensure time and budget is allocated for technicians' personal development	HoDs	a) Ensure technicians are eligible to request funds from DOB for staff training, and are supported by line managers where appropriate b) Line managers of technicians to discuss training ambitions in appraisals	Ongoing
C2	Run training and networking workshops for technicians twice a year	Organisational Development / Technical Managers Group	a) Plan and hold sessions around subjects such as health and safety, risk assessments, LEAN training, fire safety, procurement and disposal. Directly followed by networking opportunities.	July and December 2021, 2022 and 2023
C3	Provide ongoing support for technical managers to develop line management skills	People and Culture	a) Survey technical managers regarding areas they wish to be supported in and review mandatory training uptake b) Encourage networking between technical managers	Ongoing
C4	Review availability of funding to reintroduce Technician Training Grants	Faculty Managers / People and Culture	a) At budget review points, to advocate the need for a central ring-fenced training fund to encourage and support technician training b) Once funds secured, to develop and run an application process to facilitate grant applications c) Encourage technicians to apply for training, networking and collaboration opportunities	February 2021, 2022 and 2023
C5	To host a regional training session for technicians	Technical Managers Group	a) To arrange to host a regional training and networking event for technicians at Essex, possibly thorough HEaTED or the Eastern Arc for example, to develop wider technical team networks	December 2023
C6	Develop links with technicians within the Eastern Arc	Technical Managers	a) To engage the Eastern Arch collaboration between Essex, Kent and UEA to connect with other technical teams	Ongoing
C7	Informal 'coffee morning' events	Technical Managers	a) To encourage informal communication between technician staff, such as through monthly informal 'coffee mornings' for technical staff. These may be online or on at a campus location	Ongoing