

Queen's University Belfast, Technician Commitment 36-month Action Plan 2021/23

	Action	Success Measure	Pillars	Responsibility	Deadline
1	Continue to promote the Queen's Technician Network and establish it as a key feature of the connectivity for all technicians, institution-wide	<p>Successfully deliver networking events, workshops, seminars and podcasts for technicians to encourage connection across the University. We will introduce tours of facilities to publicise areas in which technicians work.</p> <p>At least one networking and one training event per semester</p>	Visibility	TC Steering Group	Ongoing 2021-2023
2	Promote inter-institution networking with technicians across the other HE institutions locally and nationally.	<p>Extend links with other Northern Ireland, ROI and UK-wide HE organisations and research institutes for sharing best practice. This will seek to identify and cluster collaboration between organisations linking technicians in similar disciplines or relevant cross-disciplinary working.</p> <p>Increased attendance at external events, conferences, workshops etc enabling technical staff to establish networks, sharing of best practice and keep abreast of activities associated with the Technician Commitment.</p>	Visibility	Faculty Technician Committees/Line Managers	Ongoing 2021-2023
3	Appoint a technician as "Technician Commitment Coordinator" to ensure the leadership and ownership from within the technician workforce to drive implementation of the TC actions.	Establish how a TC Coordinator role can be introduced and how the Technician Commitment can be supported through R&E and P&C.	Visibility	TC Steering Group Faculties P&C	31 Dec 2023
4	"Chief Technicians" will be referred to as "Technical Managers"	The Chief Technician nomenclature is outdated and the new title(s) better reflect the actual role. Updated role taxonomy implemented in advance of 2022-23 academic year	Visibility Recognition	P&C	1 Sept 2022
5	Fully harness the potential of the Technical Managers Forum.	<p>Technical Managers are briefed on what is offered through Learning & Development.</p> <p>The Technical Managers Forum will meet regularly (every 2 months) and will discuss what/how to promote and facilitate available internal and external opportunities and</p>	Visibility Career Development	Technical Managers Forum	Ongoing 2021-2023

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		workshops, through the Science Council or eg. the Institute of Science and Technology, aiming to have at least one workshop per year. Encourage successful applicants to become a Professional Registration Champion with the Science Council.			
11	Promote and encourage technicians to achieve Associate Fellow or Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.	Create a campaign for all technicians, promoting the Queen's Merit Award, a Professional Recognition Scheme which enables individuals in Queen's to gain HEA fellowship status. Technical Managers will promote HEA accreditation during PDR discussions.	Recognition Career Development	TC Steering Group CED	31 Dec 2021
12	Ensure technical contribution is addressed and included in Queen's Research Culture and Research Concordat Action Plans.	Dissemination of clear communication and guidance to research staff on the inclusion of technicians as authors on research publications so this is embedded in Research Integrity policy of the University by implementing the sector-wide CREDIT Taxonomy http://credit.niso.org/	Visibility Recognition	R&E, OD	31 Dec 2021
13	Explore new financial models whereby academic researchers are expected to support core technical roles spanning cognate areas	Achieve a culture change whereby permanent, core technician positions continued to be underwritten by the University but salaries, where possible, are covered by grant income. This, in turn, will create visibility of the role of technicians within research groupings and also create resource for new technician appointments.	Visibility Career Development	Research Finance VC	31 Dec 2023
14	Seek avenues for greater recognition for technicians' contribution to teaching.	Schools will recognise how technicians contribute to workshops, practical training of students/staff, small group teaching. Technicians will be included in module handbooks. We will explore how to recognise technicians as "associate supervisors" on undergraduate and postgraduate research projects.	Visibility Recognition Career Development	Faculties Heads of School Directors of Education	31 Dec 2023

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15	Introduce a Queen's University Technician of the Year Award	Receive nominations through the TC Steering Group and presented at one of our networking events	Visibility Recognition	TC Steering Group	31 Dec 2021
16	Continue to encourage nominations for Technical staff at the Staff Excellence Awards	Make a specific call for technicians to be nominated, by advertising on Technicians' website and encouraging Faculty Technician Committee member to engage with their teams.	Visibility Recognition	Faculty Technician Committees	2021-2023
17	Encourage nominations for technicians in the "Support for Research" prize in the Vice Chancellor's annual prizes	Highlight to PIs and Researchers that Technicians are eligible for nomination in this category of the VC's prizes	Heads of School PIs	Heads of School	31 Dec 2021
18	Create well-defined and visible career pathways for technicians.	This will be developed by using our existing grade profiles, encourage learning (training) and development and refreshing existing job descriptions. As part of this work explore and develop the expansion of the technical grade profiles beyond grade 7 to align with professional services and research and academic groups. There will be continued collaboration with other HE institutions who have successfully developed and implemented a clear pathway highlighting how technicians can expect to progress.	Career Development	P&C TC Steering Group	30 June 2023
19	Continue to promote learning (training) and development opportunities for technical staff.	Provide L&D opportunities internally and externally. Internally through People and Culture, IS, CED and R&E; and externally, through our institutional membership of HEaTED, encouraging technicians to take ownership of their own career development. Provide information on available training and networking opportunities, via "Technicians at Queen's" website and include in PDR discussions with Technical Managers.	Career Development	Technician Website Team Technical Managers	2021-2023
20	Provide a Mentoring Scheme for technicians, similar to that already available for academic and research staff.	Explore and develop a Mentoring Scheme. Organisational Development will advise and support the development of mentoring training for technicians, particularly group mentoring, similar to that in place for postdoctoral research staff.	Career Development	OD, TC Steering Group Technical Managers	31 Dec 2022

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21	Explore how implement a work shadowing scheme within and across faculties.	Technical Managers will discuss how time and opportunity can be provided to allow technicians to work shadow. A proposal will be put forward to suggest how this can be implemented within School/Faculties and across the University.	Career Development Sustainability	Technical Managers Heads of School P&C	31 Dec 2022
22	Further develop relationships with Belfast Metropolitan College, Ulster University, other Further Education Colleges and industrial partners to provide training and upskilling opportunities for the technical workforce across Northern Ireland.	We will hold exploratory meetings with these institutions with a view to agreeing a training programme for technicians across these institutions Explore the idea of establishing an exchange programme with these NI institutions.	Career Development Sustainability	TC Steering Group	31 Dec 2023
23	Ensure there is an overview of existing skills shortages/needs/future requirements following an evaluation of skills	Coordinate with Technical Managers to identify any immediate areas where development of skills and provision of training is required. Design/distribute short surveys to allow individuals to highlight where their strengths and challenges lie. Results of all surveys will be shared with technical staff	Career Development Sustainability	Technical Managers TC Steering Group	31 Dec 2022
24	Pursue the idea of technician apprenticeships with our Further Education Colleges/ Dept of the Economy	Continue conversations with Belfast Metropolitan College about how/when there will be an opportunity for Queen's and Belfast MET to introduce an apprenticeship scheme	Sustainability Career Development	TC Steering Group	Ongoing
25	Adhering to the principles of Athena Swan aim to address gender imbalance where possible	For example, There is a particular lack of female technical staff in more senior roles, eg as Technical Managers, therefore we will actively encourage female staff to undertake management training and be given the opportunity to shadow senior colleagues. This will be discussed with QGI to explore where imbalance is identified	Visibility Career Development	Visibility Career Development	31 Dec 2023
26	Encourage technicians to become more involved in outreach opportunities, particularly in promoting technical careers in schools and FE colleges	School visits along with academic, videos presentations of technical expertise to be made available promoting technical careers	Visibility Sustainability	Faculty Heads of School	
27	Ensure Technician Commitment, Research Culture, Research Concordat and Athena Swan action plans are linked.	Introduce regular meetings (minimum 5 per year) with RPO, OD, QGI representatives to ensure that Action Plans across the University have common ground.	Visibility	R&E OD QGI, TCSG	31 Dec 2023

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28	Annual Review of progress of Action Plan	<p>Undertake review through surveys and tracking interest and attendance at technician events and uptake of training opportunities. Reviewing Staff Survey results for changes in technician satisfaction.</p> <p>The TC Steering Group and Faculty Technician Committees will regularly review and update progress of the Action Plan (annually).</p>	Evaluating Impact	TC Steering Group	31 Jan 2022