PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE
Technician Commitment

# Technician Commitment

## Guidance for Completing the Self-Assessment & Action Plan

The Technician Commitment is a university and research institution initiative, led by a steering group of sector bodies, with support from the Science Council and the Gatsby Charitable Foundation's Technicians Make It Happen campaign. The Commitment aims to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for technicians working in higher education and research, across all disciplines. Universities and research institutes are invited to become signatories of the Technician Commitment and pledge action against the key challenges affecting their technical staff.

The themes of the Technician Commitment are: Visibility, Recognition, Career Development, Sustainability and Evaluating Impact. The fifth theme of Evaluating Impact takes the form of a self-assessment process, to be undertaken one year after an organisation becomes a signatory and biennially thereafter.

The self-assessment process enables the Technician Commitment Steering Group to gain an understanding of the position of each signatory organisation and the measures to be put in place to ensure that signatories are making progress against the themes outlined in the Commitment. The self-assessment process asks for contextual information, progress to date and a detailed 24-month future action plan.

The Technician Commitment Steering Group does not seek to dictate how organisations promote a positive culture for the technician community. This is a matter for autonomous institutions and the technician, research and academic community to agree. It is expected that as a minimum, signatories publicly state their Technician Commitment signatory status and institutional action plan on a dedicated and discoverable webpage, along with their named point of contact. The Steering Group would like signatories to evidence that the 'technician voice' is present in the development and formation of institutional action plans. The Technician Commitment is a collaborative endeavour and the Steering Group will support and facilitate the establishment and sharing of best practice demonstrated in the self-assessments and action plans. A vibrant community of Institutional Leads tasked with implementing the Technician Commitment is emerging and the Steering Group aims to ensure a range of forums are available to enable peers to share expertise, good practice and experiences.

To support institutional action planning, please see Appendix A for examples of activities and initiatives that have been successfully implemented in a range of universities and research institutes. Additional details are available on the Technician Commitment's dedicated online resource, available at http://technicians.org.uk/techniciancommitment/. Cross referencing to other sector institutional reviews relevant to technicians is welcomed; for example, institutions may wish to reference Athena SWAN applications, Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) submissions and Research Excellence Framework (REF) environment statements where technicians have been explicitly mentioned.

Please note that finalised Action Plans should be signed off at an institutional leadership level (e.g. Vice-Chancellor/President/Director level).

For any additional queries, please contact k.vere@sciencecouncil.org or tracey.dickens@gatsby.org.uk.

# Technician Commitment

## Evaluating Impact through Self-Assessment & Future Action Planning

**Organisation:**

**Name of Institutional Lead:**

**E-mail:**

**Contact Number:**

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| To provide some context, please provide a brief profile of your organisation (up to 250 words): |

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| Please tell us how your organisation defines its technicians: |

How many technicians are there in your organisation? Please provide some information on where they are based and/or how they are structured (in terms of subject/discipline/department):

Please provide details of initiatives/programmes/activities that were already in place for the technical community within your organisation prior to becoming a signatory of the Technician Commitment:

The Technician Commitment aims to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for technical staff across higher education and research. Please tell us of any initiatives your organisation has put in place to address these themes since becoming a signatory of the Technician Commitment:

Please provide a 24-month action plan, detailing future plans to ensure your organisations addresses the themes of the Technician Commitment and details of how impact will be evidenced: (this may be detailed here or attached to this document as an appendix):

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| Please evidence how the ‘technician voice’ was present in the development and formation of the institutional action plan: |

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| Please confirm that your Technician Commitment status and action plan is published on your organisation’s website and provide the relevant URL here: |

Signed…………………………………………….(Technician Commitment Nominated Institutional Lead)

Date:

Signed…………………………..……………..(Technician Commitment Signatory – Leader of Institution)

Date:

## Appendix A: Examples of activities and initiatives to address the themes of the Technician Commitment

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Please note that this is not an exhaustive list, it intends to demonstrate example activities to support institutions in action planning.

| Theme | Example Activities |
|---|---|
| Visibility<br>Ensure that technicians within the organisation are identifiable and that the contribution of technicians is visible within and beyond the institution | • Organisations can identify how many technicians they employ<br>• Technician roles have clear job descriptions<br>• A consistent policy that where technicians have contributed to research outputs and grants, they are named as authors<br>• Technicians to feature in organisation prospectuses and marketing materials<br>• Technicians to sit on decision making committees where appropriate<br>• Technicians visible in costing mechanisms for research grants<br>• A mechanism for celebrating technician achievements across the organisation<br>• Organisation strategy documents to include technicians where appropriate<br>• A vibrant ‘Technician Network’ |
| Recognition<br>Support technicians to gain recognition through professional registration | • Organisation communicates the opportunity to become professionally registered to technical staff (Science Council, Engineering Council, BCS). Conferment of the organisational level Science Council Employer Champion award in recognition of the support given to technical staff to gain professional registration and engage in continued professional development<br>• Recognition and support of the teaching aspect of many technician roles through the accreditation of teaching practice through the Higher Education Academy<br>• Internal award schemes recognise the contribution of technical staff<br>• Nominations to external award schemes that recognise the contribution of technical staff |
| Career Development<br>Enable career progression opportunities for technicians through the provision of clear, documented career pathways | • Technician specific professional career paths/frameworks which clearly document progression opportunities<br>• Professional development opportunities, signposted to technicians and aligned to career pathways<br>• A dedicated webpage showcasing case studies of technician careers<br>• Expansion of technician specific job families in recognition of high level technical specialisms |
| Sustainability<br>Ensure the future sustainability of technical skills across the organisation and that technical expertise is fully utilised | • Appropriate succession planning for technical roles including the analysis of technician profiles to ensure future sustainability of skills within the organisation<br>• Secondment/placement programmes for technical staff to develop new skills<br>• A technician trainee/apprenticeship programme<br>• Utilisation of the Apprenticeship Levy to train and upskill existing staff |