

Academic Divisions/ Divisional Operations: Technical Services

The University of Kent is a leading UK institution with an excellent reputation for outstanding teaching, strong research and international links. There are many new initiatives underway to build on existing strengths, such as Signature Research Themes, the Institute for Cultural and Creative Industries and the Kent and Medway Medical School.

The University is continuing to look to the future whilst responding to sector-wide challenges. Kent has set out a vision and strategy that builds upon strong foundations in education, student experience and research, embracing flexibility and growth to ensure a sustainable future for our community, and to enable the University to further its position and navigate these challenges successfully.

As part of this, we're reshaping our operating model to ensure our directorates and academic divisions are effective, efficient and focused sharply on delivering the University's ambition to be a leading civic university; delivering an outstanding student experience, outcomes, and world-leading research.

Job purpose

Working as part of a technical support team providing a comprehensive, immediate and specialised support service for staff and students within the Division, the role of Senior Technical Specialist helps to deliver timely and effective specialised research and teaching support to students, academic and research staff at all levels and visitors to the Division. A Senior Technical Specialist will be a recognised expert in the subject area and possess extensive and highly refined technical skills, gained through significant experience and theoretical understanding. The Senior Technical Specialist will act as an internal and external consultant, advising on the development and application of specialist techniques and procedures as well as the analysis and interpretation of results. The role holder will advise and assist students and staff in all aspects of the subject area, providing guidance on future resource requirements to support the delivery of teaching, research and innovation. Using in depth technical skills the role holder will take the lead in specialist support across the division, providing technical training and setting technical standards. A Senior Technical Specialist will take the lead in providing specialist facilities and/or equipment, ensuring effective, safe and efficient use of resources managing operational availability and service levels.

Reference:

Salary:

Grade 7

Contract:

Ongoing

Full/Part time

Location:

Canterbury campus

Responsible to:

Technical Manager / IT and Technical Services Manager

Responsible for:

Activities: Specialist Technical Support Services

Job family:

Technical

Key accountabilities

The following are the main accountabilities for the job. Other duties, commensurate with the grading of the job, may also be assigned from time to time.

1. Take the lead in a technical specialism using highly refined skills and knowledge to interpret and implement solutions. Plan and oversee specialist support activities acting as lead technical advisor in a given specialism. Act as an internal and external technical consultant in the specialist area
2. Be the most senior technical specialist expert in a given work area, working both independently and as a team. Use expert skills and knowledge to utilise specialist equipment, facilities and technology to deliver divisional activities.
3. Liaise with staff at all levels and external service providers to ensure that complex technical requirements are understood in a way non-specialists can understand. Communicate outside the Divisions, including other Universities and organisations.
4. Be the lead specialist expert for complex, high value technical equipment. Maintain complete operational oversight including, availability, safety, security and service.
5. Diagnose faults, maintenance and repair of equipment and systems of a very specialist nature. Provide support to staff at all levels on complex, leading edge equipment.
6. Collaborate and work with relevant senior management and academics in all matters relating to the specialism. Act as the lead technical specialist. Ensure work is carried out and performed to the required standard.
7. Manage the space occupied by the specialism ensuring it is deployed to maximum effect
8. Understand, write, promote and apply COSHH/Risk Assessment and Departmental health and safety protocols for specialist equipment and facilities. Ensure that users of the equipment are given appropriate safety training and advice; including taking on specific safety roles where required. Ensure that legislative and regulatory safety testing of the specialist equipment is carried out and documentation is completed
9. Use appropriate computational methods to analyse data to agreed timeframes; providing appropriate interpretation
10. Lead the review and implementation of specialist procedures to maximise the efficient running of the work area
11. To apply experience and up to date knowledge for the tendering, management and purchasing of complex technical equipment and associated service contracts. To oversee supplies and equipment, ensuring optimum stock levels within budget accountabilities
12. Manage budgets, monitor resource allocation to ensure maximum efficiency is achieved. Ensure budgets operate effectively within budget constraints, maintain appropriate financial records. Contribute data to influence budget setting
13. Present work at meetings, conferences etc. lead discussions on advancement in specialism with staff and external stakeholders
14. Design, develop and deliver inductions, training and demonstrations of specialist techniques ensuring compliance with safety and regulatory guidelines to staff, students and external stakeholders
15. Review specialist areas and recommend changes to improve efficiency and quality.
16. Provide in class support to teaching activities. Undertake technician led teaching
17. To actively demonstrate a commitment to professional development by continuing to advance knowledge, understanding and competencies
18. Maintain up-to-date knowledge of the field; investigate and propose additions and improvements to services; help keep facilities up-to-date with best working practices and new operational protocols

Key challenges and decisions

The following provide an overview of the most challenging or complex parts of the role and the degree of autonomy that exists.

1. The role holder will provide expert technical advice and guidance in the specialist subject area, acting as lead expert and contact. Equitably supporting both teaching and research activities to deliver the very best customer experience and research impact.
2. The role holder will demonstrate expert knowledge in the use of equipment and facilities relating to the specialist area ensuring that they are operating within agreed service levels.
3. Using the extensive experience and knowledge in the specialist area the role holder will support teaching, demonstrating and coaching activities, sometimes independently taking technical led sessions and developing supporting material.
4. Work collaboratively with senior academic staff to deliver specialist technical support to UK and world leading research. Act as a specialist technical consultant to colleagues and external stakeholders as and when required.

Facts & figures

Kent Technical Services provide specialist support to all areas of the University including teaching, research, innovation and civic activities. There are 6 academic divisions within the University of Kent supported by embedded technical teams who provide specialist subject support, facility operation and resource management.

Internal & external relationships

Internal: Staff at all levels within the academic division and professional services areas; students

External: Specialist equipment and software suppliers; consultants; contractors; visitors and visiting academic researchers; alumni

The role holder is expected to demonstrate a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion; promoting collaboration and positive partnerships, working harmoniously with colleagues, students and other stakeholders of all cultures and backgrounds.

Health, safety & wellbeing considerations

This job involves undertaking duties which include the following health, safety and wellbeing considerations:

- Working with machinery
- Manual handling – lifting and moving specialist IT equipment
- Regular use of Screen Display Equipment
- Conflict resolution
- Working in a hot environment with electrostatic charges

Further Technical Specialisms

Technical Services roles have common accountabilities across role types. The following provides an overview of any additional technical specialisms which are specific or unique to this role:

Person specification

The person specification details the necessary skills, qualifications, experience or other attributes needed to carry out the job. Applications will be measured against the criteria published below.

Selection panels will be looking for clear evidence and examples in an application, or cover letter (where applicable), which back-up any assertions made in relation to each criterion.

Besides your technical skills and experience, you will have excellent interpersonal skills which ensure that colleagues and students find you approachable and you will build and maintain good working relationships with staff across the Division.

You'll be able to demonstrate the following skills, experience, abilities and personal interests:

Essential	Assessed via
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University degree, Higher National Diploma or equivalent qualification or experience 	A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive experience in a related technical role 	A, I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent verbal and written communication skills, including clear and effective facilitation and presentation skills and the ability to produce clear and concise written materials 	A, I, T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience managing specialist technical facilities 	A, I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience managing the operation of complex technical equipment 	A, I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent working knowledge and experience of implementing safety regulations, legislation, and procedures. For example, Risk Assessment, COSHH 	A, I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience managing budgets 	A, I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience in leading the procurement of high value, technical equipment. Providing complex equipment and technology advice to others. 	A, I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expert troubleshooting, advanced problem solving and diagnostic skills, with an ability to assess highly technical problems and implement solutions within own expertise 	A, I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience managing multi-disciplinary projects, working within defined timescales and financial limits within technical services 	A, I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate, negotiate and influence staff, students and external stakeholders 	I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firm commitment to achieving the University's vision and values, with a passion for a transformative student experience and multidisciplinary, impactful research 	I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment to deliver and promote equality, diversity and inclusivity in the day to day work of the role 	I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate extensive experience in the further technical specialisms detailed in this role. 	A, I
Desirable	Assessed via
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of working within, and knowledge of, the Higher Education (or related) sector 	A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional registration or willingness to work towards for example, RSciTech, EngTech, ICTTech 	A

* A - Application; I - Interview; T - Test/presentation at interview stage