

## Technician Commitment: Renewal Self-Assessment & Action Plan Guidance

*Please note: This guidance and template is intended for institutions who have already submitted their Initial Self-Assessment & Action Plan 12-18 months after becoming an official signatory of the Technician Commitment. This guidance and template is for **renewal** of ongoing self-assessment and action plans which are submitted every three years.*

The Technician Commitment aims to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for technicians working in higher education and research, across all disciplines.

The renewal stage of self-assessment and action planning process asks for reflection on past action plans, evidence of progress and engagement and a further 36 month action plan. The self-assessment includes a 'RAG' analysis of previous action plans - a 'Red, Amber & Green' status report.

The Technician Commitment 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 plans on a dedicated and discoverable webpage, along with their named point of contact. The Technician Commitment asks 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 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 continually developing and the Steering Board aims to ensure a range of forums are available to enable peers to share expertise, good practice and experiences.

Cross referencing to other sector institutional reviews relevant to technicians is welcomed; for example, the Technician Commitment are keen to learn how signatories are advancing equality, diversity and inclusion for the technical community and institutions may wish to reference Athena SWAN and Race Equality Charter submissions. The Technician Commitment are also keen to learn of Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) submissions and Research Excellence Framework (REF) environment/People, Culture and Environment statements where technicians have been explicitly mentioned. The Steering Board are particularly keen to see activity and plans to enact the recommendations of the TALENT Commission embedded in renewed self-assessments and action plans.

Please note that finalised Action Plans should be signed off at an institutional leadership level (e.g. Vice-Chancellor/President/Director level). Kindly export this completed form (and any appendices) as a single .pdf file titled **Institution Name/Month/Year of Submission**. There are two submission windows per year – end of January and end of July every year.

For any additional queries, please contact [tc@itss.org.uk](mailto:tc@itss.org.uk).

## Technician Commitment Renewal Self-Assessment & Action Plan

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

**Organisation:**

University of Kent

**Name of Institutional Leads:**

Phil Marsh, Head of Technical Services

Joanna Scamp, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)

**E-mails:**

[p.marsh@kent.ac.uk](mailto:p.marsh@kent.ac.uk)

[j.l.scamp@kent.ac.uk](mailto:j.l.scamp@kent.ac.uk)

**Contents**

1. Please provide an overview of technical staff structures in your organisation, along with details of any changes since signing the Technician Commitment. .... 3
2. Please provide an overview of the governance, leadership and reporting lines of the Technician Commitment at your institution, along with details on how it is resourced, and information on how your organisation has engaged with the wider community within and beyond your institution. How has this developed since you became a signatory?..... 6
3. Please provide a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) analysis on your institutional 36-month action plan indicating which activities you have undertaken and completed (green), which are in progress (amber) and which are still to be carried out (red). Please provide an explanation for those categorised as red. This may be detailed here or attached to this document as an appendix. .... 10
4. Please provide evidence that your previous action plans are having impact. (For example, you may wish to provide links to initiatives, websites, testimonials, articles/blogs). .... 49
5. Please provide details of how your institution is enacting the recommendations of the TALENT Commission (<https://www.mitalent.ac.uk/theTALENTcommission>). .... 54

1. Please provide an overview of technical staff structures in your organisation, along with details of any changes since signing the Technician Commitment.

Technical staff structures have changed since our stage two self-assessment and action plan. In 2020/2021, as a part of the University wide Organising for Success (OfS) restructure, the academic schools moved from faculties to divisions. There were six academic divisions that academic schools were grouped within.

Division of Arts & Humanities	Division of Natural Sciences	Division of Computing, Engineering & Mathematical Sciences	Kent Business School	Division of Human and Social Sciences	Division for the study of Law, Society and Social Justice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kent School of Architecture and Planning</li> <li>• School of Arts</li> <li>• School of English</li> <li>• School of European Culture and Languages</li> <li>• School of History</li> <li>• Centre for Music and Audio Technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School of Biosciences</li> <li>• School of Physical Sciences</li> <li>• School of English</li> <li>• School of Sport and Exercise Sciences</li> <li>• Medway School of Pharmacy (as an affiliate)</li> <li>• Kent and Medway medical School (as an affiliate)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School of Computing</li> <li>• School of Engineering</li> <li>• School of Mathematics, Statistics and Actuarial Sciences</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School of Anthropology and Conservation</li> <li>• School of Economics</li> <li>• School of Politics and International Relations</li> <li>• School of Psychology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kent Law School</li> <li>• School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research</li> <li>• Centre for Journalism</li> </ul>

IT and Technical Services staff were embedded within these divisions along with other professional services roles. Technical staff within divisions were headed up by an IT and Technical Services Manager who oversaw the IT and Technical Services teams within a division.

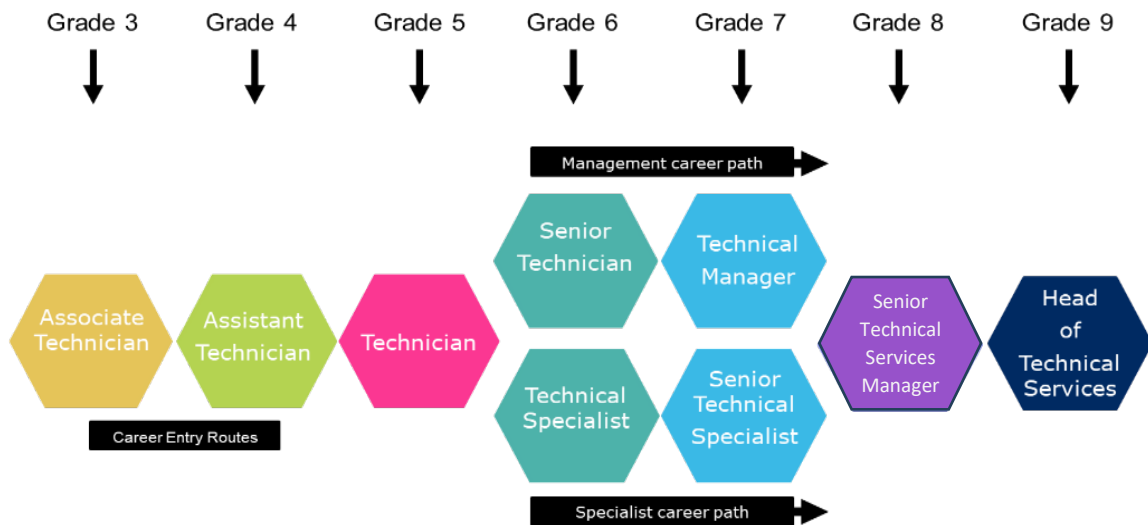
The Head of Technical Services role sat outside of these divisions under the Director of University Operations. There was a period time between 2021 and 2022 whereby the Head of Technical Services role was vacant. In 2022, the role of Head of Technical Services moved under the Information Services department to provide the role effective and adequate support. The Head of Technical Services title changed to Head of Embedded IT and Technical Services and took leadership of a team of IT staff under Information Services and embedded within Divisions alongside taking on responsibility of Head of Profession for Technical Services.

Since the new Effectiveness and Efficiency (E&E) restructuring (2023/2024), for which the modifications are still on-going, this has since changed.

Divisions are replaced with a collection of ten Schools. The academic structures have now been implemented to reflect this organisational change.

Schools	Acronym	Subjects
School of Computing	SOC	Computing
School of Engineering, Mathematics and Physics	EMP	Engineering Mathematical Sciences Physics & Astronomy
School of Arts and Architecture	SAA	Architecture, Planning, Spatial Interior Design, Drama, Film, Graphic Design and Media
School of Psychology	SOP	Psychology, Tizard
School of Economics and Politics & International Relations	EPS	Economics and Politics, International Relations
School of Social Sciences	SSS	Child Protection, CHSS, Criminology, Philanthropy, PSSRU, Sociology, Social Policy, Social Work
Kent Law School	KLS	Law
School of Humanities	SOH	Classics, English and History
Kent Business School	KBS	Business
School of Natural Sciences	SNS	Biosciences, Chemistry, Conservation, Forensic Sciences and Sports & Exercise Science

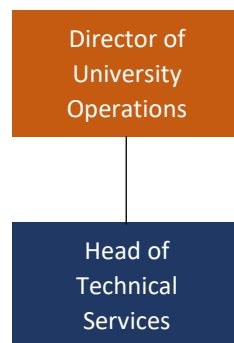
IT and Technical Services staff have been removed from the academic structure with IT technical staff moving centrally under the Information Services department structure and technical services staff being moved to a centralised structure under University Operations. The newly reprised role of Head of Technical Services (November 2024) along with the role of Technical Manager – Technician Commitment (January 2024) were recruited to under University Operations so that they would be within the same structure and directorate as all technical services staff. The new structure creates a direct line to the Head of Technical Services and re-establishes the original technical career path. The IT and Technical Services Managers have changed to Senior Technical Services Managers and reduced in numbers from six (for the six academic divisions) to three for whom now cover technical services staff in a collection of Schools who utilise the skills, expertise and knowledge of technical staff. The three senior technical services managers no longer have operational oversight of or are responsible for IT technical staff but instead concentrate on the technical managers and technical staff working within schools.



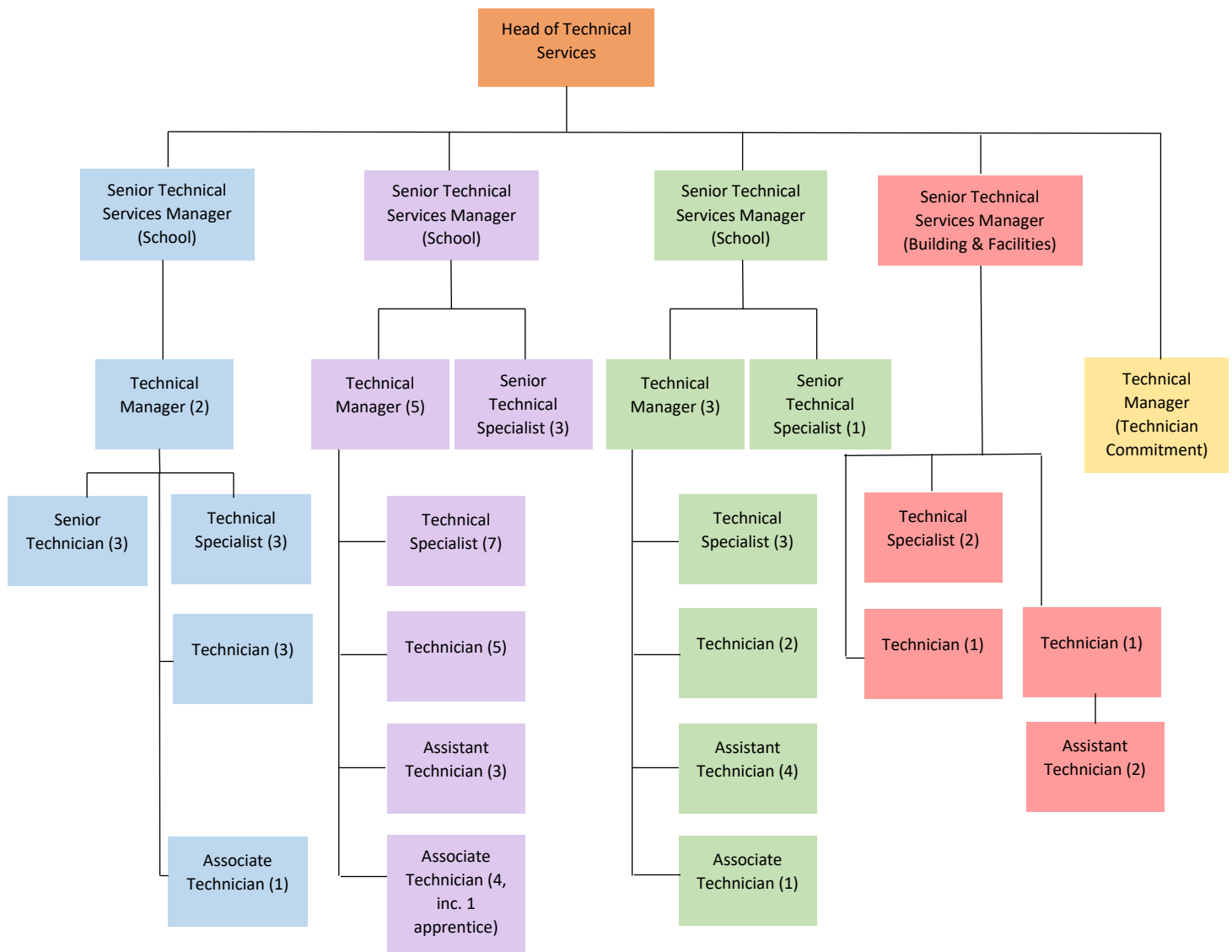
*Kent Technical Services Career Path*

Technical Services staff will remain located where they are currently based within schools however their line management and departmental structure changes in accordance with the move under University Operations.

The Head of Technical Services reports to the Director of University Operations. Technical services now sits within University Operations. University Operations sits within the scope of the Office of the Vice-Chancellor providing core business support across a wide range of critical functions.



The full structure of Technical Services is still being worked on and whilst we cannot share the final version of this structure, at this point in time, it is hoped that the structure will look similar to the following diagram.



2. Please provide an overview of the governance, leadership and reporting lines of the Technician Commitment at your institution, along with details on how it is resourced, and information on how your organisation has engaged with the wider community within and beyond your institution. How has this developed since you became a signatory?

## Governance

The Institutional Sponsor (Director of University Operations) oversees the Technician Commitment at Kent. Regular reporting and updates are provided to ensure full strategic oversight of the Kent Technician Commitment Initiative. The Head of Technical Services reports directly to the Director of University Operations. The Director of University Operations, the Head of Technical Services and the Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) make up the leadership team for the Technician Commitment at Kent.

The [Executive Group](#) at Kent are an integral part of the Technician Commitment and their involvement and support is actively sought for any initiatives, activities or funding required that would have a far reaching and significant impact on the institution, its staff and its students.

We actively engage with the 'Joint Staff Negotiating & Consultation Committee (JSNCC)' for any initiatives and activities that would have a significant impact on staff (e.g. implementation of the NTDC Technical Skills Survey and subsequent report). JSNCC is the main forum for consultation between the University of Kent and its staff, on all matters of mutual interest.

## Resources

The University Operations teams are an integral support system and resource to the Technician Commitment activities at Kent (e.g. financial, administrative etc.).

The [Technician Commitment Working Group](#) are a valuable and necessary resource when it comes to Kent's Technician Commitment activities, initiatives and implementation of our action plan. Their knowledge, expertise and experience feed into initiatives and are key to ensuring that our plans, actions and activities are aligned with the Technician Commitment and the needs of our talented technical workforce.

The role of Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) is a welcomed and much needed dedicated resource for Kent's Technician Commitment. The activities of the Technical Manager translates Kent's action plan into reality and coordinate support for technical staff across the university, as well as manage a portfolio of projects. The Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) oversees a small technical budget that is utilised to support Kent's Technician Commitment activities and resources (e.g. membership to the [National Technician Development Centre](#) and [HEaTED](#)).

The technical workforce across Kent (IT, Technical Services & Library Services) and the wider university community are essential resources and sources of invaluable knowledge, expertise, skills and experience to ensure that Kent's Technician Commitment aligns with their needs and expectations under the pillars of visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability. Their engagement, feedback and voice are a critical resource to our success.

Kent's Technician Commitment and action plan have a shared institutional and community responsibility. Kent's Technician Commitment leadership team are accountable for the delivery and accessibility of our Technician Commitment action plan, initiatives and activities. Our technical community are responsible for their engagement with this initiative and related activities (internally and externally) to guarantee its success.

Local and national networks, committees and working groups are key to building strong connections and collaborations amongst the technical community and amongst signatories of the Technician Commitment. Our attendance and participation in these networks allow us to better support and connect the technical workforce, share resources and collectively promote initiatives, activities and opportunities available.

## Engagement of wider community

### 1. University Engagement

Engagement with the wider university community has been seen through the increased incorporation of technical staff representatives on local and institutional level working groups and committees.

Localised level technical representatives have been recorded as being on:

- School level course and module meetings
- School level EDI committees
- School level Health & Safety meetings
- School leadership team meetings

Institutional level technical representatives have been recorded as being on:

- University EDI operations group
- Athena SWAN Institutional Self-Assessment Team group
- [University Council](#)
- People Committee

Library Services have signed up to Kent's Technician Commitment. They have a representative on our Technician Commitment Working Group and have their own internal working group. The Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) and Head of Technical Services are working closely with the Library teams supporting and including them in Technician Commitment activities and initiatives.

The Technician Commitment leadership team are working closely with the Talent and Organisational Development (T&OD) team of Kent's HR department on vital provisions from apprenticeships to technical training provisions. There are key technical representatives on the working group for the professional services career framework initiative and key technical staff have input on this HR project. Their insight, knowledge and expertise have been valuable in this project. Meetings have been set up regularly so that we can feed into their provisions and get their knowledge and insight into ways we can support.

The Technical workforce at Kent has actively engaged with the employability and careers team to showcase technical careers to students through their '[Employability Points Scheme](#)'. This has proven to be very popular amongst students with requests for further opportunities outside of the Employability Points Scheme. The Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) and the Head of Technical Services are looking into other possibilities for students at all levels to engage with technical staff and get hands-on experience and learning. Kent has also worked with the Science Museum with their Technician's Live Programme to showcase technical careers to young people at the Technician's Gallery.

### 2. Partner & External Engagement

Kent is one of the four universities who make up Eastern ARC; Universities of Kent, Essex, East Anglia and Sussex. Eastern ARC (EARC) technical staff have come together and formed the [EARC Technicians' Network](#) which is run and chaired by a technical representative from each of the four universities. They have an annual symposium to bring together the technical workforce from all of



the universities. EARC actively invites technical staff (ensuring they use inclusive language to encourage participation from the technical community) for all EARC related events and activities. Technical representatives also have a voice at and sit on the [equipment sharing group](#) and [Imaging Platform Alliance \(IPA\)](#). EARC understands the importance of including technical staff and the role they play within education, research and innovation. EARC's Technicians' Network came together to create and successfully apply to an EPSRC funding call for Strategic Technical Platforms called the [Technical Platform for Innovation and Knowledge Exchange \(T-PIKE\)](#) with technical staff becoming Co-I's on this grant.

Kent is an active member of the Kent Technician Network (KTN), EARC Technicians' Network and the London and South East TCI Network. Invitations are sent around within these networks for conferences, symposiums and events. In 2025 it is Kent's turn to host the Kent Technician Network. We have also yet to host the EARC Technicians' Network. An opportunity was therefore identified to host a conference at Kent that was a collaboration between the Kent Technician Network (KTN) and the EARC Technicians' Network (EARC TN). On 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025 Kent will host the KTN and EARC TN Technical Staff Conference within our Sibson building at our Canterbury Campus. The Technical Staff Conference will bring together two established technical networks for a day of collaboration and networking. This full-day event will be hosted by the University of Kent for technical staff from across the six universities that make up these networks (the universities of Kent, Canterbury Christ Church, Greenwich, Essex, East Anglia and Sussex). This event is for IT, Technical Services, Library Services, anyone who has a technical role and interested colleagues. A warm welcome and invitation has been extended to members of the London and South East Technician Commitment Initiative Network and Norwich Research Park for this event. The conference is centred around the idea that collaboration inspires innovation through diversity of the individual coming together and creating. The day aims to celebrate successes and collaborations. The Technical staff conference provides a forum for discussion, networking, workshops and communication between Technical Staff and interested colleagues. The event has been co-created with representatives from all of the universities to celebrate the successes of our technical staff, promote training and development, the sharing of knowledge, skills and best practice among technical colleagues and increases the awareness of the opportunities for all Technical Staff.

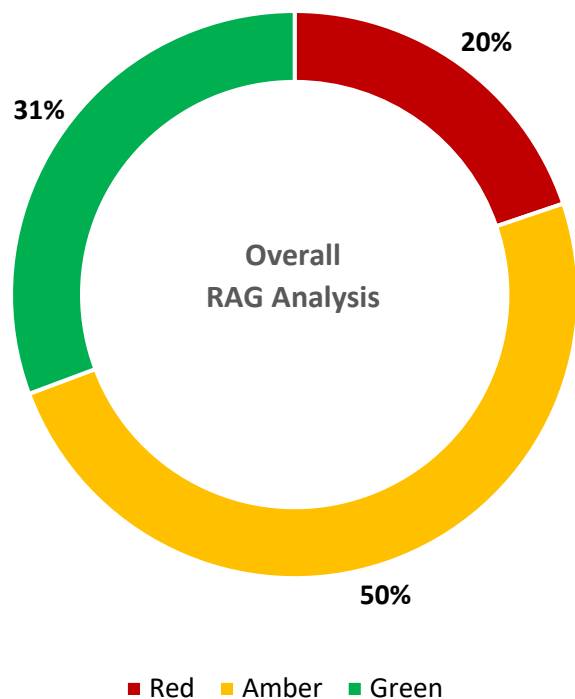
The Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) has actively engaged and collaborated with numerous networks, working groups, organisations and forums across the UK on behalf of Kent. Here are a few examples of these activities:

- Advocating for and supporting the Herschel Programme
- Leading a session for MI TALENT's WinterFest
- Leading sessions at other HE technical conferences (e.g. QMUL's technical conference)
- Leading sessions for the NTDC's Partner Forums
- Being an NTDC Specialist Advisor
- Was Co-Chair for MI TALENT's National EDI Committee for Technical Staff and has been invited to interim chair the new ITSS UK Technical EDI Network Committee
- Been a member of the NTDC Education Technical Professional (ETP) Career Pathway Working Group

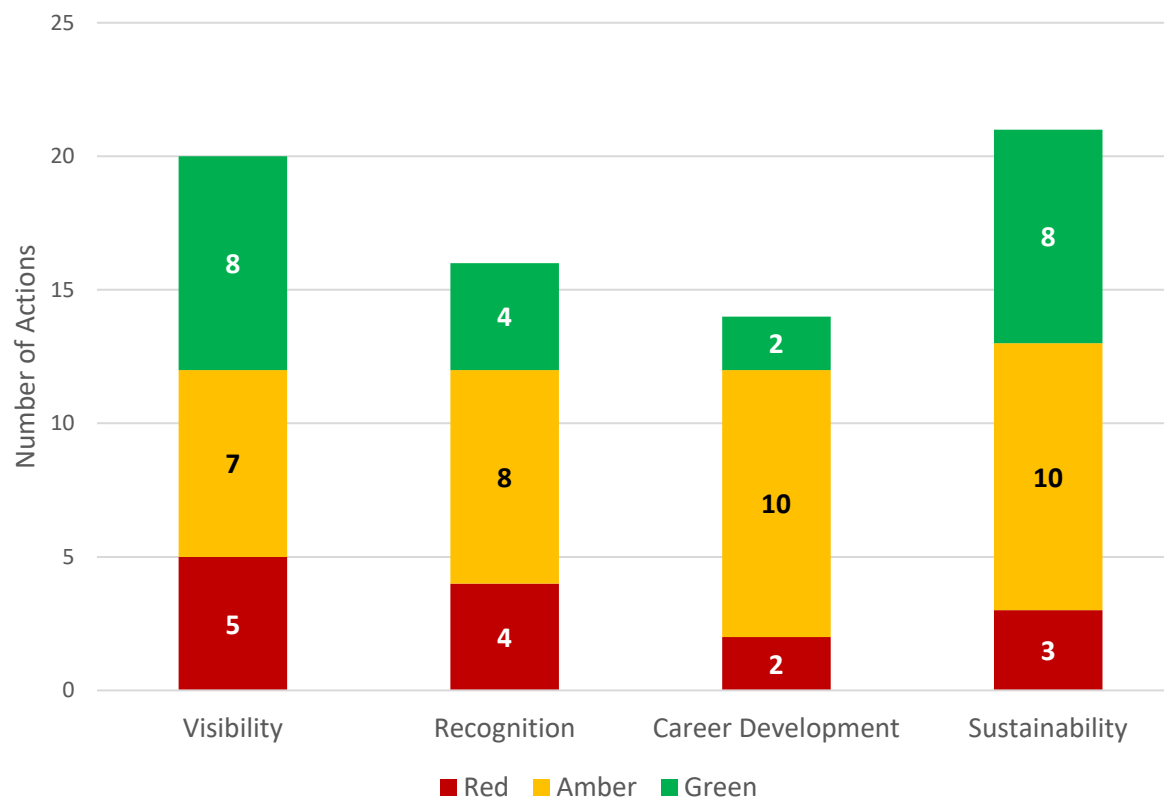
External opportunities are advertised routinely to the wider technical community from MI TALENT, ITSS, NTDC, HEaTED, other Strategic Technical Platforms etc. Engagement with these opportunities is encouraged.

3. Please provide a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) analysis on your institutional 36-month action plan indicating which activities you have undertaken and completed (green), which are in progress (amber) and which are still to be carried out (red). Please provide an explanation for those categorised as red. This may be detailed here or attached to this document as an appendix.

## RAG Analysis Overview



Action Plan RAG Analysis per TC Pillar



The University of Kent has 71 actions on its 2021-2024 action plan (**14 Red**, **36 Amber** & **21 Green**).

15 actions were dependent on the NTDC skills survey data before they could progress. Thanks to the NTDC Skills Survey we have been able to change two actions from amber to green (S11 & S12), leaving us 13 actions to continue working on that will be supported by the data collected from the survey.

TC Pillar	Number of Amber Actions	Amber Ref	Number of Red Actions	Red Ref
Visibility	2	V12, V13	0	
Recognition	1	R10	2	R09, R14
Career Development	5	C01, C02, C03, C07, C08	2	C13, C14
Sustainability	1	S03	0	
<b>Total =</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>4</b>	

## RAG Status of Action Plan

### Visibility

Ref	Actions	Collaborators	Success Measures & Impact	Status	TCR	RAG
V01	Create an online Microsoft Teams presence for the technical service and IT community to collaborate. Create an extended community of both technical services and IT colleagues, with a collaborative focus on delivering an excellent experience for students and staff.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	The creation of an online environment where communication leads to strategic and operation benefits.	The Kent IT and Technical Services Teams site has been created and has over 150 members of staff collaborating. The site has been used to advertise internal staff vacancies, publicise IT and Technical incidents, share Technician Commitment initiative opportunities for technical staff and share information and best practices.		
V02	Develop an intranet web presence for Technical Service staff including information on career development, professional registration, rewards, and recognition. Continue to enhance the external internet presence for technical service staff.	Project Management Office, Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Web site analytics support high levels of interaction. Feedback from staff allows for the continuous review of content.	SharePoint site has been created, populated and shared with technical staff. It is actively being used by technical services staff to engage in career development opportunities. Content is being reviewed and updated as and when required and when changes inevitably arise.		
V03	Use social media to create wider social participation and promote technical services to the wider community.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager	Developed a significant base of followers including influential organisations and individuals. Provide frequent publications	Due to resource constraints, technical news stories and promotion of technical services is currently being sent to the University's communications team to share via the main university account, until such time as the resources can be found. We are currently using the public facing technical		

		(Technician Commitment)	which enhance the profile of University and Technical Services.	services website news feed and the University's news and social media feeds.		
V04	Hold an annual Technical Service conference focused on all themes of the Technician Commitment, promoting community engagement, and delivering strategic benefits to the University.	IT and Senior Technical Services Management Group, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Create an annual event which is recognised by attendees for bringing together the technical community, creating positive networks and recognising success.	<p>This is being planned for 2025 and will be a collaborative technical staff conference by the <a href="#">Eastern ARC Technicians' Network</a> (EARC TN) universities (Kent, Essex, UEA &amp; Sussex) and the Kent Technician Network (KTN) universities (Kent, Greenwich &amp; Canterbury Christ Church). Invitations will include members from the London &amp; Southeast TCI network and Norwich Research Park.</p> <p>The Technician Commitment was introduced to colleagues who are a part of the <a href="#">GOETEC community</a> by attending one of their 'GOETEC Best Practice Community of Interest' meetings in October 2024. There are opportunities to do further work with colleagues from the community, especially with the FE colleagues involved.</p>	R11	
V05	Support the current Kent TechTalk events hosted by Information services, encouraging technical service staff across the University engage. Through the event support networking and knowledge sharing opportunities for both technical services and information services staff.	IT and Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Technical Staff attend and present at the University TechTalk events. The Head of Technical Services delivers a Technician Commitment TechTalk.	A call for participants to give talks and workshops at these events has gone out (emails, Teams posts, TS SharePoint post and news articles) to the Kent technical community but there has been no up take in this. Further work and investigations are required to be carried out to find out why TS staff are not engaging with this and where possible, put support in placed based on their response.	R11	
V06	Promote the Technician Commitment to non-divisional technical staff. Provide greater clarity of the non-divisional structures and	Head of Technical Services, PSD's, Technical	Broaden the engagement of non-divisional staff with the Technician Commitment.	Other professional services departments have been introduced to the Technician Commitment. The Gulbenkian technical staff have now moved over to the TS structure and JD's and have been invited to apply for TC opportunities such as Kent's KE fund. The Templeman Library has signed up to the TC and	R2 R11	

	alignment against the Technician Commitment principles.	Manager (Technician Commitment)		<p>conversations have been had to discuss what the TC can do for them. They have also been invited to apply for TC opportunities such as Kent's KE fund. A representative from the library sits on the TC working group as the Visibility champion. The Technical Manager (TC) will be doing talks, presentations and sessions with library staff to support TC activities in this area.</p> <p>The Technical Manager (TC) has attended Divisional Academic Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meetings to provide an overview of the TC, what the impact is and how they can support and get involved. These talks and subsequent conversations have been beneficial in supporting Divisional SLT and with getting their support with the work being carried out with our TC action plan. An offer to attend school meetings to provide academic colleagues information on the Technician Commitment was extended at the SLT meetings.</p> <p>Non-divisional technical colleagues were identified and invited to participate in the Kent NTDC skill survey. This included staff from Estates, Information Services, Library Services etc.</p> <p>All those identified as being technical staff are invited to be a member of the IT &amp; Technical Services Teams channel. We have seen an increase in non-divisional technical staff joining this Teams channel.</p>		
V07	Support the provision of IT and Technical Services branded clothing to all relevant Technical Service staff. Providing an operational identity and enabling greater visibility of	IT and Technical Services Management Group,	Significant uptake from Technical Services staff across divisions and supported by senior divisional leaders. A positive impact on the visibility of technical staff by students and staff.	There has been significant uptake on IT & TS branded clothing being procured and issued to IT & TS staff across the university.		

	front-line technical staff for students and staff.					
V08	Provide University of Kent IT and Technical Services branded lanyards for all technical services staff.	IT and Technical Services Management Group	Significant uptake from Technical Services staff across divisions. Increase brand awareness and visibility	Specially designed lanyards have been procured and issued to IT and Technical Staff across the University.		
V09	Engage with the student community to have increased awareness of Technical Service roles at the University. Showcase the expertise of Technical Service staff through networking events, activities, and publications.	IT and Technical Services Management Group, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	The delivery of key events, with high levels of attendance. Positive feedback from attending students and staff.	<p>Work has been going on between technical staff and Kent's employability scheme to offer work experience placements to our students, but more work needs to be done in this area. A list of all career opportunities and programmes that are offered to students has been collated and will create a 'one-stop-shop' of information for technical teams and managers to use and to promote offering students experience of technical careers.</p> <p>We are currently looking into creating volunteer roles for technical staff called 'Technical Careers Volunteers' so that they can attend and participate in student careers events that occur during the year where they will have the opportunity to talk with students about technical careers, their personal careers and offer workshops/taster sessions based on technical careers.</p> <p>There is opportunity for our EPSRC funded Eastern ARC <a href="#">Technical Platform for Innovation and Knowledge Exchange</a> (T-PIKE) work packages with regards to outreach activities for technical careers as well as offering placements to cover roles when technical staff get involved with T-PIKE.</p> <p>We want to investigate creating technical staff profiles and a catalogue of technical careers within the University with some information that students can read and take away with them. More work is needed in fully realising how this would work and look.</p>	R6 R7	

V10	Publish a Technical Services newsletter to all University staff and wider stakeholders, promoting the latest developments across the Technical Services community.	Head of Technical Services, Head of Comms, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Provide a content rich newsletter, supported by community editors. Received by both the technical community and University staff.	Due to resource constraints, a technical newsletter is currently on hold. We are currently using the public facing technical services website news feed and the University's news and social media feeds.  There has also been a call for a London & SE TCI network newsletter from institutions within this network. Currently there has been little movement on this it has been highlighted that everyone is struggling to find the resources to engage with this initiative.		
V11	Create and publicise an online directory detailing the technical resources, facilities, and skills available across all subject areas of the University, supporting the more efficient use of University technical resources.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Increase the efficient use of facilities and resources across divisions and departments. Reduce the replication of facilities and resources. Reduce unnecessary expenditure. Provide greater visibility of technical assets to the wider University, improving decision making.	A list of facilities and equipment has been generated for the use in the cross-institutional <a href="#">Eastern Arc equipment sharing initiative</a> . This is still on-going but is now getting some traction.  Eastern ARC has successfully piloted their <a href="#">Image Platform Alliance</a> (IPA) equipment/facilities sharing initiative.	R3	
V12	Provide University level support in the establishment of cross departmental/divisional agreements for the shared use of resources, technical skills and facilities. Ensuring the relevant overheads are appropriately distributed whilst delivering the required operational benefit.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Actively brokered agreements for the shared use of equipment, resources, technical skills, and facilities. Demonstrated benefits for all parties and ensured fair distribution of costs.	The Eastern ARC equipment sharing initiative has gone some way towards this goal however work still needs to be done to create inter-departmental/school agreements for sharing resources, skills and facilities. This would better link with job shadowing and technical training initiatives so may be looked at as a package rather than in their individual elements.	R2 R3 R5	



V13	Ensure the relevant Technical Service oversight of major University projects where there are significant technical service elements. Establish a framework with professional service departments to ensure Technical oversight is included in the planning, design and implementation stages of a project.	Head of Technical Services	Successfully delivered technically significant projects enabling appropriate oversight of decision making and specialist technical knowledge.	<p>The Head of Technical Services oversaw the 4-million-pound refurbishment of the Jennison Engineering and Design Hub building.</p> <p>School/Divisional Senior Technical Services Managers are consulted with when any major changes are taking place to technical spaces and facilities. They work closely with the estates department and their space management team who will liaise with the Senior Technical Managers. Other technical staff's expertise are also utilised when planning and implementing any changes to these spaces.</p>	R12	
V14	Support the creation of cross divisional special interest groups to raise the profile of specialist technical areas. Promote the sharing of knowledge, skills, and opportunities for collaboration.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Delivered multiple technician led special interest groups across divisions supporting specialist areas, providing effective networking and knowledge transfer opportunities.	<p>This has been incorporated into the Technical Staff Conference being held in June 2025 as previously mentioned. The tours will be encouraging network level special interest groups and connections.</p> <p>There are initiatives already that our technical staff engage with such as <a href="#">BarCamp</a> and local student communities such as <a href="#">TinkerSoc</a> where technical staff run and are involved in activities linked to this. They open facilities and facilitate this student society.</p>	R12 R15	
V15	Create a new lecture series inviting presentations from prestigious and esteemed technicians within both the higher education and commercial sectors.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Delivered a series of guest lectures with positive uptake from internal and external communities, raising the profile of the technical service as a career.	Financial constraints have made this unachievable at this present moment in time. Therefore, this is paused but will remain as an action.	R10 R15	
V16	Support technical staff to create internal and external publications which are aligned to the themes of the Technician Commitment,	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager	Evidence publications from technical authors	More work needs to be done in this area however we have been able to share some of the amazing work our technical community have done through our news feed <a href="#">here</a> .	R11	

	demonstrating the impact of technicians across all areas of the University.	(Technician Commitment)		We will also be working closely with our Library Services staff who have worked on this wonderful collaborative piece of work called CRediT, more information about this can be found <a href="#">here</a> .		
V17	Create Technician Commitment champions, providing governance and oversight of promoting engagement in the key themes across the University.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Technician Commitment Champions are at the forefront of providing oversight and governance of the delivery and forward momentum of the Technical Commitment action plan.	<p>The <a href="#">Technician Commitment Working Group</a> has included Technician Champions from the technical community at Kent. Each champion represents each of the TC pillars as well as the technical community across the university. Their voice is essential to ensure the TC work and initiatives are relevant to technical staff across the university. Technicians were invited to register their interest in being a Technician Champion for the working group and received several applications.</p> <p>All Technician Commitment Working Group members have their photographs and short biographies added to the TS website and the TS SharePoint site so that they are identifiable to the technical community.</p>	R12 R15	
V18	Support Divisions to create a culture of inclusivity. Where the relevant subject specialist technical service staff are included in research activities such as the attendance at research seminars and included in the distribution of information. Technical staff are active in the delivery of the University's key strategic research themes.	Divisional Directors of Research and Innovation, Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Technical staff are routinely involved in areas of research discussion, including planning and delivery. Are invited to group seminars and presentations. Are represented in the teams delivering the key research themes.	<p>Conversations have happened around the inclusion of technical staff in training, knowledge exchange and language used around research provisions. This is now being addressed and looked at by the Research and Innovation team around culture and governance. They have agreed that technical staff can access everything that academic and PhD students can and will ensure the use of inclusive language so that technical staff can identify the opportunities, and all opportunities will be advertised to the technical workforce as well. This is a work in progress.</p> <p>The Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) and the Research and Innovation Support Manager (Culture &amp; Governance) are in regular communication with one another regarding improving research culture and the inclusion of the technical workforce. They have had meetings and are sharing resources and information.</p>	R11	

V19	Champion the inclusion of technical staff in the recruitment of new technical service colleagues.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Technical services are represented on all recruitment process for technical service staff. Head of Technical Services is present at the recruitment of all senior technical service staff.	Technical staff are on and head recruitment panels for technical roles. The Head of Technical Services is present at the recruitment of all senior technical services staff.	R8	
V20	Champion the inclusion of technical service colleagues on key committees and work groups.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Technical staff are represented on many significant committees and groups within the University. Contributing to strategic and operation discussion. The Head of Technical Services represents technical staff at events and meetings across all key University strategic areas.	<p>During meetings with Divisional SLT it was mentioned and suggested that having a technical representative at academic and school meetings and working groups, that are looking to add or change modules and taught sessions that technicians support. It was communicated that this would be beneficial to ensure that technician knowledge and expertise is represented at all stages and for any potential challenges to be identified and resolved at the design stage.</p> <p>More work needs to be done to have technical representation on and across institutional committees and working groups.</p> <p>There has been improvement in the inclusion of technical staff on committees, working groups and meetings. The skills survey report also recommends the inclusion of technical staff on key decision-making groups across the university.</p>	R12	

## Recognition

Ref	Action	Collaborators	Success Measures & Impact	Status	TCR	RAG
R01	Create an annual University of Kent technical service award programme.	Head of Technical Services,	Multiple Technical staff are recognised for the contribution they have	We have not yet been able to resource, or fund dedicated technical staff award programme at present, but this is	R11	

	Recognise the contribution of technical service staff in areas such as teaching, research, community, infrastructure, and teamwork.	Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	made to key strategic areas. Awards are linked to an increase in engagement, attainment, and career development.	<p>something we are keen to put in place and will remain on our action plan.</p> <p>There are currently numerous staff awards at Kent whereby all staff can be nominated. Technicians have been nominated for and won some of these. These awards include: Staff Teaching Awards, The <a href="#">Staff Recognition Awards</a>, <a href="#">Above and Beyond Awards</a> and a Research and Innovation Award for <a href="#">Technician of the Year</a>.</p> <p>Internal awards have been collated and are advertised and communicated continuously to technical leaders, managers and staff. We have added these to our IT &amp; Technical Services SharePoint site for easy access.</p>		
R02	Promote the inclusion of Technical Service representatives supporting University reward and recognition processes. Where possible contributing to relevant committees and groups, providing professional support in the interpretation of technical aspects of applications for awards and regrades.	Head of Technical Services, HR, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Head of Technical Services provides support to HR colleagues in assessing applications made by technical staff, providing guidance around technical language and relevance.	This is related to the previous action point (R01) and will remain on the action plan until we are able to implement this.	R12 R15	
R03	Increase the number of applications for national technician recognition awards, including nominations to the Papin Prizes and The Times Higher awards. Ensure technical	IT and Technical Services Management Group, Technical Manager	To have achieved nationally recognised awards for the impact and contribution of technical staff. To encourage increased	<p>External awards have been collated and are advertised and communicated continuously to technical leaders, managers and staff.</p> <p>We have added a list of awards that has been made available to our IT &amp; Technical Services staff on our SharePoint site for easy access.</p>	R15	

	managers are recognising staff, identifying external recognition opportunities, and submitting applications.	(Technician Commitment) Head of Technical Services	engagement through success.	A member of technical staff was among the 100 technicians who won the <a href="#">2023 Hauskbee Award</a> for their work with the Science Museum's Technicians gallery. We have also had technical staff nominated for a 2023 Papin Prize and a team who won a <a href="#">2021 Papin Prize</a> .		
R04	Disseminate details of the awards and prizes available for application by technical staff. Publish these on the internal Technical Services website. Provide guidance to staff on how to make an application.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Details of technical award nominations and applications are visible to all technical staff. Increase in applications from staff and support from managers.	External awards available for application and how to apply for each has been collated and added to the IT & TS SharePoint page. A document listing internal and external awards for applications to be made has also been put together and shared on our SharePoint page.  Our University Communications team offer support in applying for these awards.	R15	
R05	Showcase technical service staff through a communication strategy which includes publicised case studies and initiatives such as Kent People profiles.	Head of Technical Services, Corporate Communications, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	The profile of technical services contribution to university operation is raised across the University. A programme of case studies and people profiles are established.	Work on this has started but is at the beginning phases. We want to showcase technical staff from all levels and disciplines. We are currently working with our staff communications, EDI and our data protection teams to create the questions and resources needed.  Profiles have been added to the Kent Technical Services webpage news and announcements page for our previous <a href="#">Head of Technical Services</a> and <a href="#">Head of Endpoint IT and Technical Services</a> . We will create another one for our new Head of Technical Services in due course.		
R06	Develop a mechanism for divisional and departmental marketing teams to tag/categorise news stories where they relate to technical achievement. Those stories should then	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Divisional and departmental marketing teams are actively recognising the impact of technical staff in news stories.	Currently we are unable to get traction with this action as we require collaborations between, technical, marketing and communications teams to achieve this. The significant changes happening across the university and subsequent impact of this has meant that we have not been able to work on this. We are waiting for things to settle before working on this.		

	automatically appear on the technical services website.					
R07	Arrange for professional membership bodies to present to Technical Service staff and provide support and guidance on making a successful application.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Professional membership bodies are actively engaged with supporting the professional registration of University of Kent Technical Staff.	<p>We have dedicated resources within the university that offer support for technical staff to obtain HEA Fellowships.</p> <p>We are inviting the following professional bodies to our Technical Staff Conference in 2025 to exhibit and talk to technical staff from the universities of Kent, Canterbury Christ Church, Greenwich, Essex, East Anglia and Sussex:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institute of Science and Technology (IST)</li> <li>• HEA Fellowships</li> <li>• Science Council</li> <li>• Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET)</li> <li>• The Chartered Institute for IT (BCS)</li> </ul> <p>An academic from the School of Engineering advertised a presentation from the IET to academic colleagues. The presentation would introduce the IET, IET membership and professional registration. After advising the academic of the benefits this presentation would have on the engineering technicians, the invite was extended to the technical team as well. Future invites will include technical staff going forward.</p>	R10	
R08	Ensure that professional membership is a desirable personal specification on all Technical Services roles and recognised by recruiting panels. Encourage the importance of professional recognition of skills and experience.	Head of Technical Services, HR, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Job descriptions have professional membership as a desirable personal specification item. Interview panels support the importance of professional recognition in technical staff.	The job descriptions for technical staff have professional registration listed as a desirable personal specification and can be found in all technical job descriptions as standard.	R10	

R09	Create professional membership champions to give advice and guidance on the benefits of membership and how to make a successful application.	Head of Technical Services, Professional membership holders, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Technical staff have access to colleagues to support the process of obtaining professional registration; the benefits and how to make an application.	<p>There is a list of professional bodies available to technical staff to apply for professional registration on the IT &amp; Technical Services SharePoint page. There is also a professional registration guide available alongside this list to support technical staff in their applications.</p> <p>We have supported individuals in funding their first year of professional registration. An example of this can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Due to the cost-of-living crisis and the issues across the HE sector we have not been able to progress this further.</p>	R10	
R10	Develop guidance on the inclusion and acknowledgement of technical service staff in research outputs such as papers and journals. Work with academic colleagues to encourage the recognition technicians and the impact they have made.	Divisional Directors of Research and Innovation, Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Technical staff are frequently recognised for their contribution to research outputs. Identify examples of this practice through research publications.	<p>The university library team in collaboration with the Research and Innovation team have worked on the creation of a standardised and transparent approach to authorship through the use of <a href="#">CRediT</a>. More information on this can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>An agreement draft with initial feedback and support from our Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation has been created and is in progress. However, it will need adjusting to incorporate the CRediT framework.</p>	R11	
R11	Introduce a framework to support academic staff in appropriately costing technical service staff time, the use of facilities, and the use of equipment in research applications. Promote the inclusion of technical staff in the process of accurately identifying the technical	Divisional Directors of Research and Innovation, Directors of Operation, Head of Technical Services, Technical	Technical service time, facilities and equipment are appropriately costed in research and innovation applications. Increase of funding to support the appointment of specialist technical staff, the maintenance and renewal of	The Head of Technical Services and the Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) spoke at the <a href="#">2022 Research and Innovation Conference</a> . The talk was titled 'How are technical staff funded on research projects? It looked at who technical staff are and how do their roles, skills and experience feed into research? The talk highlighted why costing technical staff into grants is advantageous for research projects. An overview was provided of the different ways technical staff are costed into grants and the various challenges each path presents. The talk led onto a discussion with the audience to get their perspective	R5	



	requirements for a given proposal at an early stage.	Manager (Technician Commitment)	equipment and the ongoing support of specialist facilities.	<p>on the subject. Questions were asked about whether there a 'one size fits all' approach that could work or does the individual needs, of the research project, dictate the route technical staff are costed in? Are their alternative routes to consider? Has anyone found an approach that could be used as 'best practice'? What are the audiences' thoughts and feelings on the processes in place? Can the processes be simplified? What else is missing in the process?</p> <p>Our Head of Technical Services has worked with the Research and Innovation team to provide current estimates for costing technical staff, facilities and equipment. Senior Technical Services Managers (STSM's) have been given access to the Worktribe platform that our university utilises for research management. The STSM's have been added into the process so that they can check and ensure that research grant bids adequately and fairly cost in technical time, equipment and facilities before grant applications are processed.</p> <p>Technical staff can now be recognised as Co-I's and P-I's on research grants that have a technical focus however more work will need to be done for this to be applied to other academic focussed grants.</p>		
R12	Establish support for the engagement of technical staff in the application of research opportunities which are aligned to their specialist area and/or in the broader area of technical services. Ensure this is aligned to the strategic and operational	Divisional Directors of Research and Innovation, Directors of Operation, Head of Technical Services, Technical	A framework in which technical staff can work with divisional leaders to pitch and gain support for research publication ideas. A robust process to identify benefits of the research and how time and resources would be allocated.	The Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) visited each of the divisional Senior Leadership Teams (SLT) that have technical staff within their schools and highlighted the changes happening across research funding bodies involving the Technician Commitment and the benefits of this work on their schools, divisions, research and innovation work and the university. They were encouraged to support technical staff applying for research opportunities and the responses from the senior leadership teams was both encouraging and positive.	R11 R15	



	requirements of the division and University.	Manager (Technician Commitment)		<p>Kent is a part of Eastern ARC (EARC) which is made up of the universities of Kent, Essex, East Anglia and Sussex. The <a href="#">EARC Technician's Network</a> Steering Group (which is chaired and led by technicians from each of the universities) successfully applied to the EPSRC call for strategic technical platforms with their Technical Platform for Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (<a href="#">T-PIKE</a>). This was encouraged and supported by mentors at each of the universities.</p> <p>We have encouraged and supported further applications, that are currently in progress, for the <a href="#">UKRI Digital Research Technical Professional Skills NetworkPlus</a> and the <a href="#">EDI Caucus</a> funding calls.</p> <p>We are working towards getting Senior Technical Services Managers on the Senior Leadership meetings across all schools with technical staff to ensure technical representation. Currently some of the divisions have this in place but others do not.</p>		
R13	Establish opportunities for Technical Services staff to engage with commercial innovation and developing new business partner relationships for the benefit of divisions. Recognise the importance technical service innovation and commercial activities has on delivering new income streams and knowledge transfer opportunities.	Divisional Directors of Research and Innovation, Directors of Operation, KEI, Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Technical staff can work with divisional leaders to pitch and gain support for innovation and business partnering. A robust process to identify benefits of initiatives and how time and resources would be allocated.	EARC T-PIKE is a platform for Technical Staff / Research Technical Professional to engage in training, development, and activities around Knowledge Exchange (KE) with businesses, councils and charities across the Southeast region. It was created to provide opportunities for technical staff to work in collaboration with industry and organisations directly. This will enable and provide opportunities to technical staff to lead and be directly involved in innovation and knowledge exchange activities with industry, businesses, councils and charities around the themes of 'AI and Data Digitalisation' and 'Net Zero'. T-PIKE was created by technical staff for technical staff and has technical Co-I's.	R11 R15	

				<p>Technical teams are working with businesses that are commercialised projects. More information on these need to be obtained as they are not widely known about.</p> <p>We funded a closed group cohort online training course for our technical staff on '<a href="#">Generating Income with Technical Facilities and Services</a>' which is offered by HEaTED.</p>		
R14	Develop clear guidance on the scope and responsibilities of technical service staff when undertaking technician led teaching. Work with technical managers and academics to establish a clear definition of technical led teaching and the expectations of technical staff.	Head of Technical Services, Director of Education, Directors of Operation, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Publish a definition of technical led teaching with clear and agreed guidance on the scope and responsibility of technical service staff undertaking this activity.	<p>Discussions are happening about technical staff's responsibilities within teaching. This has yet to be actioned. A clear definition of the role of technical staff within education activities needs to be created and agreed in the first instance.</p> <p>Kent is one of numerous institutions who are a part of the <a href="#">NTDC National Educational Technical Professional (ETP) Career Pathway</a> working group. The working group is working on the development of an ETP pathway that has parity with the Research Technical Professional (RTP) pathway. A pathway for education technical staff does not currently exist and therefore it was felt that a pathway was needed to run in parallel with RTP pathways.</p>	R2 R9 R10	
R15	Support technical staff in the application for the University Teaching Small Support Awards. Encourage technical staff to develop new ideas and approaches to enhance teaching, learning and the student experience.	Head of Technical Services, IT and Technical Services Management Group, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Awards received delivering positive impact on student experience and teaching operation. Increased applications from technical staff supported by senior managers.	<p>This initiative has been discontinued. However, there are two awards which we could look to work on:</p> <p>Teaching Awards Above and Beyond Awards</p>	R2 R9 R15	

R16	Through HEA Fellowships recognise the contribution Technicians make to teaching and supporting students.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Supported the successful HEA fellowship applications of technical staff.	<p>We have dedicated resources within the university that offer support for technical staff to obtain HEA Fellowships, and this is being advertised to all technical staff.</p> <p>We have technical staff who have <a href="#">achieved HEA Fellowships</a> and some who are currently working through their applications with the help of our dedicated university support team and mentors.</p>	R10	
-----	--	---	--	--	-----	--

## Career Development

Ref	Actions	Collaborators	Success Measures & Impact	Status	TCR	RAG
C01	Develop technical led teacher training and development opportunities. Providing technical staff engaged with teaching the appropriate skills and experience to deliver the very best experience to students.	Head of Technical Support, HR - Talent & Organisational Development, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	There are recognised teacher training and development opportunities for technical staff. Technical staff are actively engaged with these opportunities, and this is supported by senior management.	<p>The NTDC skills survey report has recommendations highlighting the need for technical staff to access teacher training. Currently they do not meet the university's criteria to access this type of training (e.g. PGCHE).</p> <p>A training opportunity was created for technical staff within schools by the University's Centre for Study of Higher Education whereby they have developed a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme designed specifically for technical staff called 'Developing Learning and Teaching for Technicians'. The programme aims to enable technical staff to build their knowledge and skills in teaching and supporting student learning to be most effective in their interaction with students.</p>	R1 R10 R15	
C02	Support the professional development of technical service managers. Establish management skills training	Head of Technical Support,	There is a clear framework of management training opportunities for	IT and Technical Service Managers, Technical Managers and Senior Technicians were invited to be the first cohort to undertake the new online HR Management training programme.	R1 R10	

	and development opportunities.	HR - Talent & Organisational Development, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	technical managers across the University. All IT and Technical Service Managers and Technical Manager roles have been supported to undertake relevant training opportunities.	<p>It is recommended and expected that all technical managers do the 'Foundations of Management' course offered at the University. Managers are also expected to do the IOSH Managing Safely H&amp;S course.</p> <p>We have a senior technical services manager currently doing a management apprenticeship.</p> <p>A clear framework of training and development opportunities for all technical staff from all levels and disciplines is currently being looked at.</p>		
C03	Promote the allocation of budgets in academic divisions to support the training and development of Technical Service staff.	Head of Technical Services, Directors of Operation, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Technical staff are supported to undertake necessary and relevant training. This is evidenced by development activities undertaken by technical staff. Technical staff are supported by their line managers to identify training and development opportunities, e.g. through the annual RPD process.	Budgets have been allocated to schools under professional services however these budgets have often been insufficient to cover the usually higher cost of technical training or have been absorbed by the schools. The current financial climate has meant that funding is not available for such activities. Internal training and development are available to all staff however these do not specialise in technical training. External funding through applications to the university's QR allocation has been sought for the past couple of years to provide technical staff the funding they require to carry out specialist training and knowledge exchange activities. The NTDC technical skills report recommends dedicated central budgets for technical staff to go on specialist and/or certified training courses and to engage in knowledge exchange activities. More work is required around this to secure the necessary funding on a permanent and on-going basis.	R1 R10	
C04	Ensure the mentoring programme supports new and existing technical service staff and recognises the specialist activities	IT and Technical Services Management Group,	All new technical staff are allocated a mentor on starting with the University. Clear guidance and support are	New technical staff are provided with support from other technical members of staff and there is now a newly introduced mentoring platform for students and staff. However, more work is required in this area to ensure continuity.	R1 R10 R15	

	undertaken within technical roles.	Head of Technical Support, HR, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	available for technical staff to become both a mentor to others and request a mentor to support themselves.	Eastern ARC (EARC) offers a <a href="#">mentoring scheme</a> amongst its universities that all staff can sign up to. This has proved popular and successful and has been advertised to technical and professional staff alongside academic colleagues.		
C05	Promote awareness and uptake of apprenticeship training programmes for existing technical staff. Support technical line managers to identify opportunities for staff and make the appropriate business case to senior managers.	Apprenticeship Manager Head of Technical Services	IT and Technical Service Managers have received guidance on apprenticeships for existing staff. Technical staff are undertaking apprenticeship training which is aligned to divisional and departmental needs.	We have technical staff undertaking apprenticeships from <a href="#">Chartered Manager Apprenticeships</a> to <a href="#">Coaching Professional Apprenticeships</a> .  These are advertised to technical staff and can be discussed with line managers. There will be some work to be carried out when changes are made to the levy funding.	R15	
C06	Introduce a new “technician to technician” training and development scheme. Support the creation of specialist training events run by technicians for technicians. Enable the transfer of specialist knowledge to support the development of staff and enhancement of the student and staff experience. Enable one to one opportunities for technical staff through job	IT and Technical Services Management Group, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	A programme of technician-to-technician training events is created across multiple subject areas. A job shadowing programme is developed with supporting documentation. Technicians are actively undertaking job shadowing opportunities and providing feedback on their experiences.	Conversations have started but were paused due to a university wide restructure. We are hoping to re-engage and work on these once new structures and processes are agreed, in place and settled.	R1 R10 R15	

	shadowing initiatives embedded across all subject areas and at all levels.					
C07	Develop a technical development framework aligned to the Kent Technical Services Career path, enabling staff to identify relevant and targeted development opportunities.	Head of Technical Services, HR - Talent & Organisational Development, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Published development framework aligned to the technical services career path which details specific opportunities for staff at all levels.	Work has started on this task, but it was paused due to a university wide restructure. We are hoping to re-engage and work on these once new structures and processes are agreed, in place and settled.	R9	
C08	Review the Kent Technical Services Career Path and associated job descriptions to ensure roles remain fit for purpose and align to need. Establish a process to gain feedback from staff and recruiting managers. Develop new roles within the career path where appropriate.	Head of Technical Services, IT and Technical Services Management Group, HR, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	An annual review of the career path is created with feedback from the IT and Technical Services Managers, Divisional Senior Leadership team and technical staff. Feedback is reviewed and incorporated into changes within the career path.	Work has started on this task, but it was paused due to a university wide restructure. We are hoping to re-engage and work on these once new structures and processes are agreed, in place and settled.	R9	
C09	Support the development of other professional service career frameworks across the University. Identify relevant opportunities for synergy and provide feedback.	Head of Technical Services, HR, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	The Head of Technical Service is actively involved in the creation of a new professional service career framework. Recognised synergies are embedded in the new framework	A professional services career framework (PSCF) is being creating with the hope of it being ready to go live next year. This has been a collaborative piece of work and process whereby various leads within various areas of professional services across the university have been involved. The Head of Technical Services and the Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) have been working on the IT and Technical Services areas of this piece of work.	R12	

			and where beneficial changes are made to align both pathways.	<p>There is a technical representative who now sits on the PSCF project steering group to create a Professional Services Career Framework for professional services staff. The project team invited the Head of Technical Services to be involved.</p> <p>The creation of the career framework is a specific commitment in the new People &amp; Culture Strategy, as part of Kent's strategic focus on growing diverse talent. The overarching aim of the project is to create a framework that will aid in talent development and succession planning for professional services (including technical) staff at Kent - providing clarity on sideways as well as vertical opportunities.</p>		
C10	Represent technical services staff in the review of the Reflect, Plan, Development (RPD) staff appraisal programme within the University and, where possible, develop links to the Technical Career path and technical development framework.	Head of Technical Services, HR,	The Head of Technical Service is actively involved in the review the RPD process. The principles of the Technician Commitment are embedded in the RPD process for technical staff. Guidance is aligned to technical service line managers.	Work has started on this task, but it was paused due to a university wide restructure. We are hoping to re-engage and work on these once new structures and processes are agreed, in place and settled.	R8	
C11	Develop opportunities that provide graduates a pathway into the technical services profession. Establish the operational needs of academic divisions. Investigate the required skills for technical roles and how these align to	Careers and Employability, Head of Technical Services, IT and Technical Services	Implemented a pathway for graduate students to technical services roles.	The EARC T-PIKE programme has incorporated the sustainability of technical careers into its design with routes into the technical profession which will be offered to those looking to start their technical career journey. Alongside career progression experience being offered to existing technical staff where others have engaged in the T-PIKE programme. The programme will look to create opportunities for apprentices, UG and PG students and recent graduates to work as Technical Development Assistants (TDAs) on activities	R7	

	undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.	Management Group, Directors of Operation, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)		linked to the key strategic themes. The TDAs will directly support by freeing up time for other existing technical staff to undertake knowledge exchange activities. They will be line-managed and trained by relevant technical staff (particularly those working towards gold or silver awards within the T-PIKE programme).  Work in this area is on-going.		
C12	Support an inclusive recruitment process for Technical Services staff ensuring vacancies are promoted to all technical service staff.	Head of Technical Services, HR, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	New and vacant technical roles are promoted to all technical staff within the divisions. Divisions and departments are supported to establish whether vacant roles can be advertised to internal applicants prior to external candidates.	New and vacant roles are automatically linked to and advertised on the IT & Technical Services SharePoint site. They are also advertised on the Kent IT & Technical Services Teams channel.	R8	
C13	Develop a programme of Technical Service Mental Health Allies, to support those front-line technical staff to identify and support those students who might need additional help and advice.	Occupational Health, Student Support & Wellbeing technical lead, Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Each academic division has a least one trained mental health ally providing support to students and colleagues.	Only 8% of our technical workforce are Mental Health Allies (MHAs) and 10% are Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs). Front-line technical staff with frequent interactions with students would benefit from MHA training. More work needs to be done to determine why we have a low uptake on MHA training and to increase the communications around this training to encourage engagement from our technical workforce.  This is a particular priority for the Technician Commitment Sponsor.	R4	
C14	Equality, diversity, and inclusivity training is	EDI team,	All technical staff have undertaken EDI	There is a collection of training available to all staff with some being a mandatory requirement to all and some being a	R4	



	undertaken by all technical services staff and positive impact is recognised and supported by technical managers and senior leaders.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	awareness training and have access to additional training and development opportunities. All recruiting technical managers will undertake unconscious bias training.	<p>mandatory requirement for specific roles within the university (e.g. recruiting managers must undertake unconscious bias training). All management within the university are directed to and asked to complete EDI training modules provided by the university's eLearning pages.</p> <p>Mandatory EDI training for all staff: Challenging racism, Diversity in Higher Education &amp; LGBTQI awareness.</p> <p>EDI training available for staff: Inclusive line managers, active bystander, digital accessibility, EDI in promotions, inclusive allyship programme, menopause awareness, mental health awareness, my best self, reasonable adjustments, transgender awareness, unconscious bias, managing stress and conflict, taking care of yourself, equality impact analysis, relaxation, responding to student disclosures of sexual violence, domestic abuse and stalking.</p>		
--	--	---	--	--	--	--

## Sustainability

Ref	Actions	Collaborators	Success Measures & Impact	Status	TCR	RAG
S01	Create partnerships with further education colleagues and secondary schools to support the sustainability of technicians across the education sector and promote technical services as a career choice.	Head of Technical Services, Marketing, Outreach, recruitment, and Admissions (MORA), Technical Manager	Successfully create a technical network of further education and secondary Schools in the local community. Technicians visit network members and promote both their specialist subject area as well as the Technician	<p>Work on this has started, there is a network within Information Services working with HE &amp; FE colleagues in IT. This group is called <a href="#">GOETEC</a>.</p> <p>Further work on this has been temporarily paused due to a university wide restructure. We are hoping to re-engage and work on these once new structures and processes are agreed, in place and settled.</p>	R6	

		(Technician Commitment)	Commitment. Identifying synergies and opportunities for collaboration are explored further.			
S02	Extend an invitation to local Universities, further education colleagues and secondary School technicians to the annual Kent Technical Services conference.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Technicians from the further education and secondary school network attend the Kent Technical Services Conference.	<p>Work on the secondary schools and further education element of this task has been temporarily paused due to a university wide restructure. We are hoping to re-engage and work on these once new structures and processes are agreed, in place and settled.</p> <p>We have however invited technical staff from local universities for the Kent Technician Network &amp; Eastern ARC Technicians' Network Technical Staff Conference. Including invitations to the London and South East Technicians Commitment Network and Norwich Research Park.</p>	R6	
S03	Promote the inclusion of technicians in the development and implementation of university outreach activities. Raise the visibility of technical staff to outreach partners increasing the profile of technicians, and technical services as a career.	Head of Technical Services, Marketing, Outreach, recruitment, and Admissions (MORA), Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Technical Service staff are represented in university outreach activities. The work of the Technician Commitment at the University of Kent is promoted by technicians both directly and indirectly through outreach activities.	<p>Kent participated in the Science Museum Technician Live Programme whereby a 40-minute workshop about technical skills was created and delivered to school groups and family groups. You can read about this <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Further work is needed regarding participation in localised outreach.</p>	R6	

S04	Be an active partner in national technical services networks. Represent the University of Kent at Technician Commitment events, supporting high impact initiatives. Increase the participation of Kent Technical Service staff on national committees, working groups and advisory boards.	Head of Technical Services, All Technical Staff, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	The University of Kent is represented at all major Technician commitment events. Technician Commitment events are publicised to all technical staff across the University.	<p>Kent plays an active role in the following networks: London &amp; Southeast TCI Network, Kent Technician Network, Eastern ARC Technicians' Network and ITSS UK Technical EDI Network. We also have various technical staff who are members of the TMU, TSN and ATSiP networks. National networks are promoted and listed for technical staff to see on the IT &amp; Technical Services SharePoint page. Technical staff are encouraged to be a part of the networks.</p> <p>Kent attend the <a href="#">Technician Commitment signatory events</a> and associated events (e.g. the launch of the <a href="#">TALENT Commission Report</a>). Kent's Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) spoke at the most recent Technician Commitment event to introduce the newly formed ITSS UK Technical EDI Network and its committee and has been appointed the interim chair of this network's committee.</p> <p>Kent sits on and is an active member of the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Eastern ARC Technicians' Network Steering Group</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Eastern ARC Equipment Sharing working group</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Eastern ARC Imaging Platform Alliance (IPA)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">NTDC Education Technical Professional (ETP) Career Pathway working group</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">X-CITED</a> Technical Platform Advisory Board member</li> <li>• <a href="#">NTDC Specialist Advisor</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Technician Commitment Peer Reviewer</a></li> </ul> <p>The Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) has participated in and been actively involved in supporting the ITSS Herschel Programme for Women in Technical Leadership by being on discussion panels, being a case study for the</p>	R1 R14	
-----	--	--	--	--	-----------	--

				programme and co-facilitated the 2024 Culture & Context module.		
S05	Be an active member of the South East Technician Network and the Kent Technician Network. Continue to support the Kent Technician Symposium in partnership with the University Greenwich and Canterbury Christ Church University.	Head of Technical Services, All Technical Staff, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	The University of Kent is represented at all major Technician Commitment events. Technician Commitment events are publicised to all technical staff across the University. University of Kent continues to support local HE Technician Commitment partnerships and events.	<p>Kent supports and is an active member of the London and Southeast TCI Network, the Kent Technician Network and the newly added Eastern ARC Technicians' Network.</p> <p>We have supported, contributed to and been a part of the symposiums for the Kent Technician Network and the Eastern ARC Technicians' Network. As Kent is a part of both networks and it is our turn to hold a symposium for both, we have decided to hold a collaborative conference by Kent Technician Network and Eastern ARC Technicians' Network to be hosted by Kent in June 2025. The two networks have joined forces for this conference and are working together. An invitation has been extended to the London &amp; Southeast TCI Network and the Norwich Research Park for this Technical Staff Conference.</p>	R14	
S06	Review and develop sector memberships. For example, HEATED and the affiliate membership of the National Technician Development Centre (NTDC).	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Funding is established to continue the association with leading sector groups. Impact of membership is reviewed annually.	Funding has been established to support the continuation of the HEaTED & NTDC service. Training credits were purchased to provide targeted training to technical staff. These were all utilised by technical staff. HEaTED has been renewed since but without credits.	R10	

S07	Work with the University sustainability and procurement team to establish environmental sustainability as a factor when selecting specialist technical equipment, suppliers, and services.	Head of Technical Services, Procurement, Safety, Health and Environment Unit (SHE), Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Environmental impact and sustainability are actively considered when purchasing all science and technology equipment and services. Energy consumption and long-term costing data of new services and equipment provides evidence of positive change.	Head of Technical Services is in the process of setting up a meeting with the newly appointed Health, Safety and Environmental Sustainability Lead. Discussions are taking place around sustainability outside of the LEAF program.	R12	
S08	Participate in the LEAF - Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework, improving the long-term sustainability and efficiency of laboratories across the University.	Head of Technical Services IT and Technical Services Managers Group, Safety, Health and Environment Unit (SHE), Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Implementation of the laboratory Efficiency and Assessment Framework in key laboratory environments. Sustainability working group across key divisions formed.	LEAF preliminary audit to commence for teaching labs in late January to early February 2025. Initial aim is for bronze but will be working towards silver.  LEAF “champions” to be identified in the research labs to kick start accreditation process.	R12	
S09	Identify new opportunities across non-laboratory subjects to develop and/or improve environmentally sustainable practices.	Head of Technical Services, IT and Technical	The Estates sustainability team to provide support, training, and guidance on reviewing sustainability within technical	Head of Technical Services is in the process of setting up a meeting with the newly appointed Health, Safety and Environmental Sustainability Lead and Coordinator to discuss sustainability outside of the LEAF program	R12	

		Services Managers Group, Safety, Health and Environment Unit (SHE), Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	environments. Evidenced impact on reducing cost and environmental impact.			
S10	Undertake a series of focus groups to gain feedback on the views of technical service staff.	Head of Technical Services, IT and Technical Services Managers, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	IT and Technical Services Managers to facilitate all staff team focus groups based on the Technician Commitment themes. Feedback used in improve the day-to-day operation of technical service activities in divisions. The Head of Technical Services to regularly attend divisional technical team meetings. Information from focus groups collated and used to support future technical strategy and operational plans.	Head of Technical Services will set up focus group meetings with the school technical teams and Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) once new structures and processes are agreed, in place and settled.	R3	
S11	Undertake a skills survey to capture the technical skills, future career plans and	Head of Technical Services,	A skills survey is undertaken across all areas of the University.	The NTDC skills survey was launched in March 2023 and ran for approximately 6 weeks. Unfortunately, the skills survey was launched while the university announced that it would be	R3	

	development needs of technical service staff across the University.	HR, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Results from the survey provide advanced knowledge of the skills and diversity of technical services staff, informing future strategic plans. Areas of interest include skills gap analysis, staff development planning, diversity, and inclusivity.	<p>going through another restructure. As such, take up and responses were limited, and it was difficult to get IT &amp; TS staff engaged during this time. We therefore took the action to pause the survey and re-open it in February 2024. This has now concluded, and the data is being used to support areas of our action plan that was reliant on this data to progress further.</p> <p>A report of the skill survey findings has been created and shared with the technical workforce. It identifies skills gaps, succession planning and provides 7 areas with targeted recommendations: Career development, career pathways and succession planning, EDI, health and safety, technical voice and communication, identity and research.</p> <p>All participants of the survey were provided with their survey data so that they can use this to inform planning and development conversations.</p> <p>The recommendations and information from the skills survey has been used to inform the next 36-month action plan.</p> <p>All technical skills being used by respondents, as highlighted in the survey, is in the process of being listed on the IT &amp; Technical Services SharePoint page so that technical staff can see what skills there are within the technical workforce. This page will be linked to within the Professional Services Career Framework project.</p>		
S12	Create EDI technical services champions to raise the profile of EDI across the technical community. Technical staff are	Head of Technical Services, EDI team, Technical	A Technical Services champion is appointed in each division to represent technical services. Technical	The technical staff have joined and will champion other technical staff joining the following networks at Kent: Women's Staff Network Women Researchers' Network (WReN) Staff Disability Network	R4	

	represented on EDI committees across the University	Manager (Technician Commitment)	Services EDI champions contribute to the University EDI strategic plan.	<p>Allies Network</p> <p>Technical staff have themselves got involved and volunteered to be in their local divisional/school EDI Committees and have contributed to Athena SWAN applications. When the new academic structure is finalised and in place it will be encouraged to have technical representation on these groups and committees locally.</p> <p>A discussion was had with EDI professionals where the need for technical staff to have 'a seat at the table' when it comes to decision-making groups and committees was had. Key technical staff are now being invited to sit on institutional level EDI groups and committees such as the EDI Operations group (Head of Technical Services) and the Athena SWAN iSAT group (Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)).</p>		
S13	Promote positive action to support the recruitment of underrepresented minorities, including the use of positive action statements on advertising and reviewing where vacancies are marketed. Review the language used within technical service job descriptions to ensure it is inclusive.	Head of Technical Services, EDI Team, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Increase applications from underrepresented minorities in technical support roles.	<p>Recruitment processes include a list of positive statements that recruiting managers can use as standard when advertising for roles. These are now being used within recruitment practices. All recruitment panels need to be gender balanced as standard. All short-listing is done without any names associated to the applicants. All job descriptions advertised within recruitment provide indicators against each of the essential and desirable criteria as to whether these will be asked about at application stage, interview, through a test/presentation or a combination of all of these.</p> <p>The Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) has recently led recruitment for a role within T-PIKE. In looking at the recruitment process, from a neurodivergent perspective, all candidates were provided the interview questions being asked ahead of their interview with the proviso that any follow up questions could not be available ahead of time as they are a</p>	R4	



				<p>response to the candidate's answers. There did not appear to be any difficulties faced with this approach and did not stop responses being organic in nature.</p> <p>With 82% of respondents from our NTDC Technical Skills Survey being ethnically white with 76% identifying as white British there is a lot to do in increasing the diversity of our technical workforce. The data matches with the demographics highlighted in the Canterbury District Council Equality Impact Assessment. This presents a challenge in attracting an ethnically diverse pool of individuals to roles when recruiting. Recruitment and roles would need to attract individuals from further away to increase diversity. We do not meet the national average (60% male and 40% female) when it comes to gender balance as 63% of respondents were male with 16% being female, 2% non-binary and 18% of respondents preferred not to say. However, within the division of NATS there is a more equal split of genders across the board and within technical manager posts.</p> <p>Below are the EDI focussed recommendations made within the survey report to address EDI related challenges, including within recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing job specifications and requirements locally to see if flexibility can be introduced (e.g. job share, flexible working etc.) to attract a wider range of demographics and meet their needs.</li> <li>• Consideration of the inclusion of the following recruitment sites when advertising roles externally, to attract diversity of talent: BME Jobs, Disability Jobs, LGBT Jobs, Indeed, Total Jobs.</li> </ul>		
--	--	--	--	---	--	--

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouragement of technical staff to engage with EDI networks (e.g. Women's network, Disability network etc.) and committees (Schools and University level) within the University as well as external/national networks (e.g. ITSS EDI Network) and initiatives (e.g. Herschel Programme for Women in Technical Leadership etc.).</li> <li>• The use of positive statements, where appropriate, when recruiting to encourage applications from those with protected characteristics and who are underrepresented (e.g. we welcome applications from women etc.).</li> </ul>		
S14	Promote positive action to encourage participation in training, development, and mentoring opportunities to address under-representation in certain groups. e.g. Promote and support the application of female technical service managers to development initiatives such as the Advanced HE "Aurora" programme.	Head of Technical Services, EDI Team, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Provide routes for underrepresented staff to access management positions within technical teams. Identified training opportunities for underrepresented groups.	<p>The Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) has participated in and been actively involved in supporting the ITSS Herschel Programme for Women in Technical Leadership by being on discussion panels, being a case study for the programme and co-facilitated the 2024 Culture &amp; Context module. We have had participants attend the 2023 cohort for the Herschel Programme and have another Kent technical staff member who has been accepted on and will be attending the 2025 cohort.</p> <p>The EARC Mentoring scheme has participation widened to include professional services staff, including the technical workforce. This opportunity has been advertised to all technical staff at the university and has technical staff involved in this cohorts (2024-2025) mentoring scheme. The hope is that this will support underrepresented groups whereby they can mentor and be mentored.</p> <p>The university is actively encouraging participation in the coaching professional level 5 apprenticeship. Coaching sessions is being made available for staff across the university</p>	R4	

				<p>to support career development by those that have completed and are working towards the completion of their coaching apprenticeship. This is open to everyone. Coaching sessions can be online and/or in-person depending on the needs of the individual making this an accessible option for all staff.</p> <p>National (e.g. NTDC Partner Forum 2023 in Sheffield and Springfest 2024) and local presentations, talks and sessions (e.g. Kent's Women's Network) have taken place on subjects such as Neurodiversity ('ADHD &amp; Me – Working and Networking with Neurodiversity).</p> <p>Technical representation was present at Kent events for Disability month such as the Student Disability Career Discussion Panel. Sharing personal journeys and experiences with UG students.</p> <p>A career Journey session is taking place at the 2025 NTDC Partner forum in Birmingham in January. Showcasing the personal journey of a technical member of staff and how career journeys are seldom linear in nature and can be full of challenges and successes.</p> <p>Kent's Knowledge Exchange Fund's supplement fund initiative allowed technical staff to apply for additional funding to allow them to attend events and training they would not normally be able to access (e.g. those with a disability and/or those with caring responsibilities).</p> <p>The role of Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) was advertised encouraging women to apply for the role. Positive statements for various underrepresented groups are now a feature for all job adverts across the university.</p>		
--	--	--	--	---	--	--

				More work is still needed to increase underrepresented groups into management positions and technical roles where there is limited representation.		
S15	Support the creation of a new University wide Student Technician role, providing students exposure to the role of a technician. A fixed term flexible role designed to fit around student studies, enhance employability and develop skills. Coordinate activities of the Work Study Scheme and divisions to link technical opportunities with students.	Head of Technical Services, Director of Divisions, IT and Technical Services Managers, Careers and Employability, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Where required Student technicians are employed on fixed term contracts to support divisions and departments.	<p>Student Technicians have been utilised within schools to support technical teams during busy periods, offer work experience in technical roles and to cover roles until they can be filled. Student Technicians have had a positive impact on both the technical workforce and on the student's career development.</p> <p>The EARC T-PIKE programme has incorporated the sustainability of technical careers into its design with routes into the technical profession which will be offered to those looking to start their technical career journey. Alongside career progression experience being offered to existing technical staff where others have engaged in the T-PIKE programme. The programme will look to create opportunities for apprentices, UG and PG students and recent graduates to work as Technical Development Assistants (TDAs) on activities linked to the key strategic themes. The TDAs will directly support by freeing up time for other existing technical staff to undertake knowledge exchange activities. They will be line-managed and trained by relevant technical staff (particularly those working towards gold or silver awards within the T-PIKE programme).</p>	R7	
S16	Work with the Employability Points Scheme to offer technical work experience placements across specialist technical areas.	Head of Technical Services, Careers and Employability, Technical Manager	Technical service teams within academic divisions provide work experience opportunities for students engaged in the employability points scheme.	The Technical Services team within the Division of Computing, Engineering and Mathematical Sciences (CEMS) offer work experiences placements through Kent's employability scheme. The technical team provide an overview/short description of the placement being offered, any specific criteria required and outline of the work the student will be carrying out. They offer UG students a two-week job shadowing placement with a	R7	

		(Technician Commitment)		<p>nominated technician within the team. The students will work with a technician on everyday tasks that the technician carries out and where the opportunity arises, they will assist with things such as the designing and prototyping of lab experiments. The technical team also ensure that the students have an opportunity to do a 1:1 electronics build and Arduino coding activity with the technician. This initiative provides students with experience of working within a technical team and access to career-relevant commercial experience. The Natural Sciences (NATS) Division will also be offering placements for students via the employability scheme.</p> <p>The Division of Arts &amp; Humanities offers their 3rd year UG School of Arts students an internship module as part of their course. Students can opt onto the module and will choose and find their placements depending on the nature of the role they want. Some students have chosen technical roles in the industry and is therefore a great opportunity to showcase technical careers within the creative industries.</p> <p>This is a very popular module for students. The challenge has been in finding placements for all the students who have signed up for the module. Kent's career service helps students with preparing for interviews along with their CV's. Students have found technical placements locally at the Marlowe and Gulbenkian Theatres. The module promotes critical thinking and learning in a workplace. It makes students aware of industry challenges and areas of growth providing an overall awareness of the industry.</p> <p>Placements are unpaid and last for approximately 15 days. This can be split up over a set period or the 15 days can be done back-to-back. There is a call for placement opportunities within events and technical roles.</p>		
--	--	-------------------------	--	---	--	--

				There is opportunity to showcase technical careers through networks and within the technical services departments. Students have also been involved with specific projects for their placement such as the Kent refugee project.		
S17	Support divisions and departments to create new apprenticeship roles within their technical services teams. Through apprenticeships provide long term sustainability planning for highly technical, specialist areas.	Head of Technical Services HR – Apprenticeship, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	Technical apprenticeship roles are embedded across academic divisions. Apprenticeship case studies are developed to demonstrate the positive impact of these roles.	The role of Associate Technical Apprentice (Digital Technology) is now present in the CEMS division. The role Associate Technician Apprentice is now present in the NATS and CEMS division.	R7	
S18	Increase the number of applications to technical vacancies by providing guidance to recruiting managers on the most appropriate methods of marketing roles. Create a directory of advertising and recruitment providers for technical posts.	Head of Technical Services, HR, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	When advertising technical roles academic divisions are able to access targeted advertising and marketing options, aligned to the subject or skills area of the role. Applicants meeting essential criteria for roles increase.	Work has been paused on this task due to the University wide restructure and work to address institutional and HE sector financial constraints.	R4 R8	
S19	Technical staff across all subject areas are visible in the marketing and publications of the University. The diversity of Technical staff is	Head of Technical Services, Marketing, Outreach and Admissions,	Technical staff are represented across publications, demonstrating the breadth of activities and positive impact on	Professional photographs were taken of Kent IT & Technical Services staff at work in 2023. These are actively being used for new items and publications.  The communications team have been contacted about covering events. They covered our successful application for		

	represented in areas such as video, photo, and web. Technical staff are visible in materials such as course prospectuses.	Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	student experience and staff. A campaign to capture professional quality photos and video of technical staff in their roles has been commissioned.	the EPSRC Strategic Technical Platforms funding call and the Technical Staff Conference which will be taking place in 2025.  Technical staff successes, achievements and news is constantly updated on the University of Kent's Technical Services webpages.		
S20	Promote new vacancies to Technical Service staff through internal communication channels such as Microsoft teams, email, and social media.	Head of Technical Services, Technical Manager (Technician Commitment)	All new technical vacancies are communicated to the technical service staff via community channels.	<p>New vacancies automatically appear under the 'current technical vacancies' section of Kent's dedicated Technical Services SharePoint site. This can be viewed by all IT &amp; Technical Services staff and takes them to the dedicated technical vacancies section of Kent's job vacancies page with all technical vacancies listed.</p> <p>Vacancies have also been posted on the IT &amp; TS Teams channel, especially as vacancies at Kent are advertised internally before they are advertised externally (e.g. the Senior Technical Services Manager post for the Division of Arts &amp; Humanities).</p> <p>The SharePoint site and Teams channel have worked better at communicating internal vacancies opposed to relying on email so we have therefore stuck to these communication routes. Social media advertisement would not allow us to advertise vacancies internally but is utilised for public-facing vacancies.</p>		
S21	Establish the viability of delivering a Technical higher/degree apprenticeship programme within the University of Kent.	Head of Technical Services, Digital and Lifelong learning team, Technical Manager	Work with academic divisions to report on the viability of delivering technical degree apprenticeships. Through market analysis establish potential areas for further development in	Work on this has been temporarily paused due to a university wide restructure. We are hoping to re-engage and work on these once new structures and processes are agreed, in place and settled.	R7	

		(Technician Commitment)	line with university strategy.			
--	--	----------------------------	-----------------------------------	--	--	--



4. Please provide evidence that your previous action plans are having impact. (For example, you may wish to provide links to initiatives, websites, testimonials, articles/blogs).

## **Introduction and Context**

As signatories of the Technician Commitment (TC), we've taken significant steps over the past few years to align with our action plan, embedding the importance of our technical workforce more deeply into the university.

Initially, funding for TC activities was modest, with just a few thousand pounds annually to cover essential memberships like HEaTED and participation in a handful of events. While departments theoretically had their own training budgets, these were often unadvertised, limited by ongoing budget cuts, and geared towards professional services staff, without factoring in the higher costs of technical training. Recognizing this, we sought additional financial support to make sure we could achieve the bigger goals of our action plan.

This report outlines the steps we took to secure that funding, the activities we carried out, the benefits to our technical staff, and what we plan to do moving forward.

## **Actions Undertaken**

### **1. Securing Additional Funding**

The original TC fund, while useful, was only able to cover core memberships and a few activities. It quickly became clear that we needed more substantial funding to fulfil our goals.

In response, the Head of Technical Services successfully secured funding from the Enhancing Research Culture fund (QR). This allowed us to significantly expand TC activities, including:

- Providing leadership and management training for technicians, such as the Herschel Programme for Women in Technical Leadership.
- Supporting technicians' involvement in outreach activities, like those with the [Science Museum](#), to showcase technical careers.
- Offering financial assistance for [professional registration](#), externally recognizing technicians' skills and knowledge.
- Repairing and maintaining critical research equipment, ensuring technicians had the tools needed to support ongoing university research.

This funding allowed us to bridge the gap that departmental budgets couldn't cover, enabling technicians to access key professional development opportunities.

## 2. Creation of the Technical Manager Role

Another important step in delivering our action plan was the creation of the [Technical Manager \(Technician Commitment\) role](#). Previously, the Head of Technical Services and the Endpoint IT managed TC activities alongside their other responsibilities. But as the action plan was ambitious and activity had been delayed by approximately a year (prior to the creation of the Endpoint IT & TS role), it became clear that a dedicated focused role was needed.

The Technical Manager position, initially created as a secondment, provided focused leadership for both short- and long-term goals. The role:

- Led key initiatives like professional registration support and leadership training.
- Re-established the [Technician Commitment working group](#).
- Organized inter-university conferences in collaboration with the Kent Technician Network (KTN) and Eastern ARC Technicians' Network (EARC TN).
- Piloted an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion ([EDI framework](#)) to ensure training and knowledge exchange were accessible to all technical staff.

The success of this role was evident, and it was made a permanent position within the university in January 2024, following support from technicians across the institution during a restructure activity, ensuring continued leadership and strategic oversight for TC activities.



[KTN Symposium 2023](#)



[EARC TN Launch Symposium  
2023](#)



[EARC TN Symposium 2024](#)

## 3. Knowledge Exchange and Training

A major challenge we identified was the lack of access to conferences, training, and knowledge exchange events for technicians. This was largely due to budget constraints. To address this, we introduced the [Knowledge Exchange Fund](#), which allowed technicians to apply for financial support to attend relevant events. Through this initiative, technicians were able to:

- Attend conferences like the [UK HE Technicians Summit \(HETS\)](#), [the Herschel Programme](#), and AgilePM courses.
- Participate in specialized team training on technical skills, such as mechanical testing techniques for metals.
- Engage in knowledge-sharing at cross-institutional events, including the [Eastern ARC Immersive Technology Workshop](#) and NEBOSH certification programs.

The Knowledge Exchange Fund has been a crucial resource, with over 20 applications approved in the past two years. Feedback from technicians emphasized how vital this funding was, given that alternative sources of support were often unavailable or hard to access. Line managers have also praised the initiative for boosting team capabilities.



[WiSEAN Conference 2024](#)



[ENFSI Conference:  
Visualising the Future 2024](#)



[Supporting Professional  
Women's Football Team](#)

## Impact and Benefits

The initiatives we've introduced have had a noticeable impact on the development and recognition of our technical staff. Here are a few of the key benefits:

### 1. Professional Development

With additional funding and leadership opportunities, our technicians have been able to pursue certifications, attend training sessions, and develop new skills that have directly enhanced their roles. This has positively impacted both individual careers and the broader teams. For example, participants in the Herschel Programme for Women in Technical Leadership have helped close the gender gap in technical management, while others have earned certifications in agile project management, safety, and data analysis.

We surveyed those who secured funding to be able to attend conferences and training opportunities. This is what they had to say about being about the funding opportunity:

*"It is currently the only training funding open to technical teams"* – Phil Marsh, Senior Technical Services Manager (attended the AgilePM® Foundation and Practitioner Course)

*“Not sure I would have received funds otherwise”* – Tracey Davies, Technical Manager Buildings & Facilities (attended the AgilePM® Foundation and Practitioner Course)

*“There is consistently a lack of training funding available for technicians. Training is usually company wide and on the soft skills rather than technical specialism. There is never budget available so funding such as this is a must!”* – Ryan Morrow, Senior Technical Services Manager (a part of the mechanical engineering team who attended a bespoke Mechanical Testing Techniques for Metals course)

*“I think it would have been unlikely for me to gain access to training and skills without the funding provided”* – Rhiannon Chappell, IT Technician (attended the Herschel Programme for Women in Technical Leadership)

*“It was useful because it allowed me to network out, gain some CPD and clearly the technical commitment to its staff is a positive one.”* – Chris Payne, Assistant Technician Sports (attended the Elevate Expo)

*“Chris gained a lot from the conference style technical presentations that were delivered and is now considering undertaking a PhD. It was fantastic to be able to use KE funding. Funding availability to attend training courses, conferences and events is something that has been lacking within technical services. This makes technicians feel valued and allows them to develop their CPD in line with the Technicians Commitment Action Plan. It also benefits the work that they do for the university. We would definitely take advantage of other KE funding opportunities in the future.”* – Andrew Wickens, Technical Manager Sports (Manager of Chris Payne and Eunice Olowu who attend the Elevate Expo)

## **2. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)**

A priority within our action plan has been ensuring that all technicians have equitable access to opportunities. The EDI framework piloted by the Technical Manager has made this possible by:

- Increasing the representation of women in leadership programs.
- Introducing a confidential supplement to the Knowledge Exchange Fund to support technicians facing access barriers like disabilities or caring responsibilities.
- Making sure training and development opportunities are accessible to all technical staff, particularly those from underrepresented groups.

By focusing on inclusivity, we’ve ensured that all technicians have a fair chance to advance in their careers.

EDI is an important consideration in the initiatives and activities we carry out. As such, we have technical representatives on the University of Kent’s Athena SWAN Institutional

Self-Assessment Team, EDI Operations Group and local school level EDI committees. We are also pleased to report that our Technical Manager (Technician Commitment), through her work with and as co-chair of MI TALENT's National EDI Committee for Technical Staff and related activities (e.g. national talks on working and networking with neurodiversity and advocacy of as well as involvement in the [2024 Herschel Programme](#)), will be interim chair of the newly formed [ITSS UK Technical EDI Network Committee](#) which replaces the National EDI Committee for Technical Staff.

### **3. Community and Collaboration**

Technicians have also become more visible within and beyond the university. Through participation in [outreach programs](#) and inter-university conferences, they've helped raise the profile of technical careers. We have now embarked on our journey of [hosting T-Level students](#) within our University. This initiative has a positive impact on the young people who are participating in the T-Level placements by providing them with practical skills and hands-on experience and it benefits the technical staff who they are working with as it provides them with supervisory and management skills and experience that they may not have previously had the opportunity to do.

Internally, the re-established [Technician Commitment working group](#) has provided a platform for technicians to influence decision-making and help shape the future of technical services.

## **Technician Involvement**

Technician involvement has been key to the success of these initiatives. From the outset, we made sure to put in place robust feedback mechanisms to give technicians a say in shaping these initiatives.

### **1. Feedback Mechanisms**

We've regularly gathered input through surveys, working groups, and direct consultations. The [NTDC Skills Survey](#), for example, played a crucial role in identifying skills gaps and informing our training priorities. Technician input has been central to tailoring initiatives to their needs.

### **2. Working Group Participation**

The Technician Commitment working group has been instrumental in driving these initiatives. Technicians have taken an active role in shaping funding allocations, identifying training opportunities, and supporting outreach activities. Their participation has ensured the relevance and effectiveness of these programs.



## Lessons Learned and Future Directions

While we've made strong progress, there are still areas for improvement. Looking ahead, we're focusing on:

### 1. Increasing Engagement

One challenge has been securing higher engagement with the NTDC Skills Survey. The timing of the survey, which coincided with university restructuring, likely contributed to concerns about how the data might be used. We paused the initial survey and re-opened it at the start of 2024 to allow technical staff to participate after the restructuring. In the future, we plan to launch the survey with clearer communication and better timing to increase participation and gather more comprehensive data.

### 2. Securing Core Funding

Currently, many of our initiatives rely on external funding, such as the QR fund. While this has been instrumental, our goal is to secure permanent core funding for these activities. This would provide ongoing support for technician development, ensuring consistency and stability for training programs. We hope that our NTDC Technical Skills Survey report and its recommendations will aid us in obtaining core funding from the university. The report is currently with the Executive Group to review with particular focus on the recommendations made which includes dedicated funding for training and knowledge exchange activities.

### 3. Expanding Collaboration Through T-PIKE

Looking ahead, we're excited to continue working with the EPSRC funded Strategic Technical Platforms that Eastern ARC secured for our Technical Platform for Innovation and Knowledge Exchange ([T-PIKE](#)). This initiative will open up more opportunities for technicians to collaborate with external partners, strengthen relationships across institutions, and exchange knowledge that benefits both individuals and the wider technical community.

5. Please provide details of how your institution is enacting the recommendations of the TALENT Commission (<https://www.mitalent.ac.uk/theTALENTcommission>).

All actions highlighted in our action plan have been mapped to the TALENT Commission report recommendations with any items missing being added. There is a column called 'TCR' (TALENT Commission Report) in the action plan RAG analysis showing which of the 16 recommendations each action aligns to. Each recommendation is referred to as R1, R2, R3 etc. depending on which of the recommendations it aligns with. We have also included this column in our new 36-month action plan. The recommendations

from our recent NTDC Technical Skills Survey have also been included in the new action plan to ensure that it is relevant and up to date for our technical workforce.

6. Please provide a 36-month action plan; detailing plans to ensure your organisation continues to address the themes of the Technician Commitment and details of how impact will be evidenced, and initiatives resourced. This may be detailed here or attached to this document as an appendix.

In 2021 the University of Kent set out an ambitious action plan to address the key themes of the Technician Commitment. During this period of time we faced challenges such as, COVID, institution wide structural changes and a period of time where the Head of Technical Services role was vacant. This impeded our progression with the action plan. Therefore, a lot of items from the previous action plan have been rolled over to the new action plan. Due to the amount of progress we have made on the outstanding items that were recorded as 'amber' in the RAG analysis, we feel that these can be completed without issue during the new 36-month period.

Our new Technician Commitment Strategy and Action Plan (2024-2027) can be found here: [Kent Technical Services webpage](#)

7. Please evidence how the 'technician voice' was present in the development and formation of the 36-month action plan.

### **Technician Commitment Working Group**

The [Technician Commitment working group](#) is comprised of IT, technical, library services and professional services staff representatives (RIS, HR and EDI) from across the University and from a wide range of disciplines. The working group was established to promote the 4 principles of the Technician Commitment: visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability. The group works with all IT, technical services and library services staff within the University to deliver the Technician Commitment action plan. All members of the working group contribute to the development and formation of the action plan and offer their insight, expertise and experience throughout. All proposed initiatives, activities and projects are shared with the working group along with the impact of these on the IT, technical services and library services community. All members have access to the action plan as it develops through access to our project planning workspace Monday.com.

## Feedback

National and local initiatives, opportunities and activities that are linked to our action plan are shared with the wider technical community through in-person/hybrid consultations, email, dedicated Teams channel and SharePoint site. Feedback is sought from the technical community to allow us to measure short and long-term impact, successes and opportunities for improvement. We have requested feedback for initiatives such as the Knowledge Exchange Fund ([as highlighted earlier in this document](#)), HEaTED courses, technical structure changes (e.g. a call for action was sent out to the technical community, via the Kent IT & Technical Services Teams channel, to obtain support for the role of Technical Manager (Technician Commitment) in the new structure) and after any event such as the Kent Technician Network and Eastern ARC Technicians' Network symposiums. The new 36 month action plan will be shared with and accessible to the technical community for feedback.

## NTDC Technical Skills Survey

The survey was communicated to staff via the following channels:

- Staff Communications newsletters sent to all-staff email group
- A specially created survey SharePoint site
- Email communications to Technical Managers and department leads to be cascaded down to technical teams
- [Posters around Canterbury and Medway campuses](#)
- Kent IT & Technical Services Teams channel (Technician Commitment thread)
- Hybrid Q&A session for all technical staff
- Technical Services news feed
- Technical Services SharePoint site

All staff invited to participate in the survey had the opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions about the survey throughout this period via Kent's Technician Commitment or NTDC email address.

This was a valuable feedback tool, enabling the NTDC team and Kent survey lead to address concerns as they were raised. Minimal queries were raised during the survey, which suggests that guidelines/FAQs provided from the outset were sufficient and comprehensive.

Any feedback provided was utilised in the following ways by the NTDC survey team and Kent survey lead:

- To provide personalised responses to individuals as and when queries and concerns were raised
- To tailor subsequent university-wide communications to include responses to the most common queries (i.e. "Is the survey linked to Kent's Effectiveness and Efficiency (E&E) work" and "is my role relevant to the technical skills survey")



- To update the FAQs to ensure that they were reflective of questions being asked
- To create a bespoke video tutorial on how to complete and get the best out of the survey
- To plan in drop-in sessions for staff to ask questions whilst completing the survey

The survey data, communications and feedback directly informed our current and newly formed 36-month action plan.

### **Kent Staff Conference**

There will be a Technician Commitment segment at the annual Kent Staff Conference going-forward (the next one will be taking place at the start of the academic year 2025-2026) whereby we can update the technical community about the Technician Commitment (TC), our action plan and associated TC initiatives/activities and get feedback and insight from Kent's technical workforce. These are a great way for us to continue to get technical staff voices to directly contribute to and measure impact of the action plan. From these conferences we will establish a 'You Said, We Did' set of work to be communicated and shared amongst the technical and university community. The action plan is a structured set of work for us to carry out for the benefit of the technical workforce, university and wider community, but it is also something that will adapt and develop throughout depending on the needs of technical staff, wider community and the national technical landscape. The continual input and voice of the technical community is key to ensure the action plan is relevant and fit for purpose.

8. Please confirm that your Technician Commitment status and 3-year action plan is published on your organisation's website and provide the relevant URL here:

Our new Technician Commitment Strategy and Action Plan (2024-2027) and our Stage 3 Technician Commitment Self-Assessment can be found here: [Kent Technical Services webpage](#)

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

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025

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

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025

