



# Technician **Commitment**

Update

Simon Breeden

 @SWBreedden  @techscommit

**Technicians** make it happen



# Technician **Commitment**

## Staff Team

- Kelly Vere MBE - Technician Commitment Programme Director
- Simon Breeden - Associate Lead (on a part time secondment from the University of York)
- Clare Stevenson - Associate Lead (on a part time secondment from the John Innes Centre)
- Carly Dellar - Project Manager
- Holly Chetan-Welsh – Communications Consultant (Science Council)
- Plus support from the Gatsby Foundation and Science Council teams





# Technician **Commitment**



*Who is in?*



Technician Commitment  
*~ 100 HEIs and Research Institutes have signed the Technician Commitment*



# Technician Commitment



PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE  
Technician Commitment

#TechsCommit

**VISIBILITY**

Ensuring technicians are **visible** within and beyond higher education and research institutions



PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE  
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**RECOGNITION**

Supporting technicians to gain **recognition** through registration




PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE  
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**DEVELOPMENT**

Enabling career **progression** for technicians through clear pathways



PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE  
Technician Commitment

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**SUSTAINABILITY**

Safeguarding technical skills across the organisation by **using** and **developing** expertise

PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE Technician Commitment

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DEVELOPMENT

Enabling career progression for technicians through clear pathways

# Technician Commitment

University of BRISTOL Staff Development

Current students | Current staff | Alumni

Professional Services Staff Development

Courses, workshops and programmes

Online learning opportunities

Help staff resources

Technical staff resources

- Technician Commitment
- Workshops
- Events
- Technical Apprenticeships
- Career Framework for Technical Staff
- Professional registration
- Peer learning communities
- Job Shadowing
- Guidance for remote working

**Career Framework for Technical Staff**

**Purpose of the Framework**

The overall purpose of the Career Framework for Technical Staff® is to provide a multi-functional tool. It gives clarity to the different levels of technical work, provides supporting information to describe those levels, informs individuals to help them manage their careers, and guides future workforce planning. It also introduces some consistent language when describing various technical roles.

The Framework was approved by UPARC (University Planning and Resources Committee) in June 2017. It will be gradually introduced over an extended period as the career framework for all our technical resourcing. It is expected to have a slower, more considered overall impact on the shape of technical services as this tool starts to

Download the full Technical Career Framework document

Technical Role Types Information Toolkit

\*Definition of in-scope staff

**WARWICK**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

**University of Nottingham**  
UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

**University of Glasgow**

**University of BRISTOL**

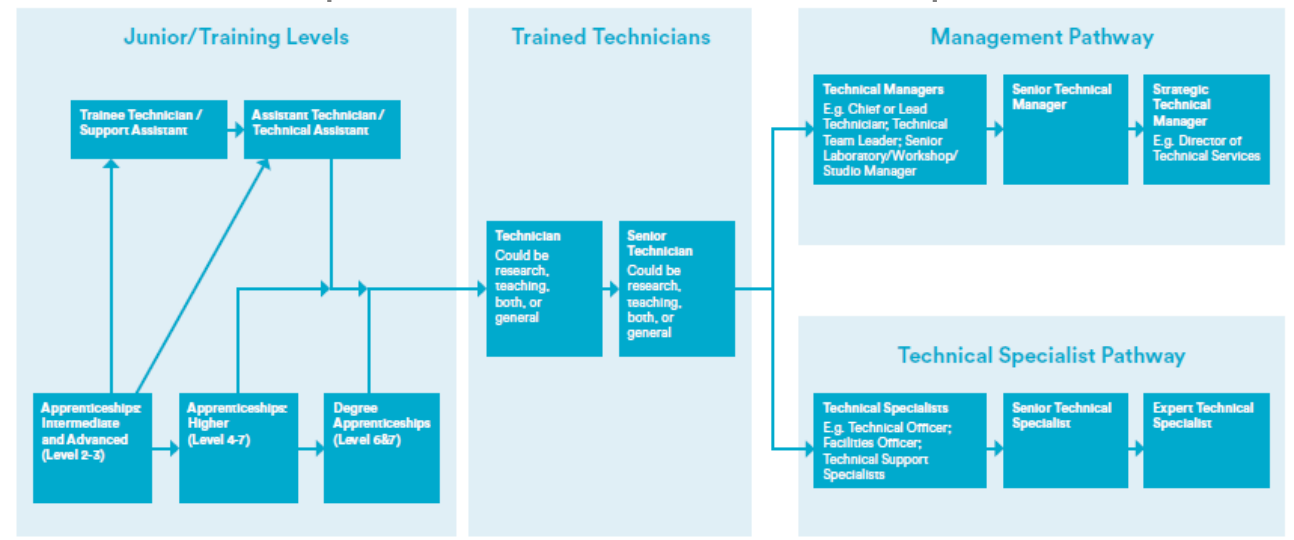
**CAREER PATHWAY FOR TECHNICAL STAFF**

We've outlined the typical technical career pathways from Levels FA1b to FA9. The roles at these levels correspond to the job family profiles in the following pages, giving you a clear overview of what's expected at each level - so you know what to focus on and you're able to prepare for opportunities that will arise in the future.

TRAINING LEVELS	TRAINED TECHNICIANS	MANAGEMENT STAFF PATHWAY
Support Assistant (FA1)	Technical Assistant (FA2)	Technical Officer (FA3)
Apprenticeships/Degree Apprenticeships (FA2-3)	Technician (Specialist) (FA4)	Senior Technician (Specialist) (FA5)
	Senior Technician (Specialist) (FA6)	Technical Manager (FA7)
	Senior Technician (Specialist) (FA6)	Senior Technical Manager (FA8)
	Senior Technician (Specialist) (FA6)	Strategic Manager (FA9)

**TECHNICAL SPECIALIST PATHWAY**

Technical Specialist (FA4) → Senior Technical Specialist (FA5) → Expert Technical Specialist (FA6)





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IMPACT

Assessing the impact of **actions** to support  
the commitment

Technicians:  
Providing frontline and vital support for student mental health and wellbeing

# TECHNICIANS

Providing frontline and vital support for student mental health and wellbeing

# Technician Commitment

## Sector Impact of the Commitment



The Impact on Technicians in UK Higher Education & Research

WONKHE

ABOUT US · EVENTS · CAREERS · JOBS · SUBSCRIPTION · SIGN UP

### Technicians are a vital component of UK higher education

Kelly Vere explains the important role of a new national policy commission into the UK's higher education technical workforce.

COMMENT | 28/05/21

### The Role of Technicians in Knowledge Exchange

An explorative study

UKRI Research England MI TALENT Technician Commitment Research Consulting



## Funding Technical Staff in Research



**BE INFORMED.**

**BE CONNECTED.**

**BE A SUBSCRIBER.**

Stay ahead of UK higher education

FINCHOUTLOOK

**Shiny shiny, bad times behind me**

Often in our sector we talk about emerging technologies and the "shiny kit" we need to drive innovation – but rarely do we consider the needs – the secret



**Kelly Vere**  
MI TALENT Director of Technical Skills and Strategy at the University of Birmingham and Higher Education and Technical Government at the Skills Council

Technical expertise is critical to the success of UK research, innovation and higher education – and in turn vital to the growth of the UK economy.

Technical colleagues across our sector underpin the primary activities of universities and research institutes – providing the technical excellence to underpin research, teaching, knowledge exchange and innovation. Many technicians are researchers and teachers in their own right, teaching and training students at every level.

There are estimated to be in the region of 20,000 technicians working across higher education and research. This technical community has a vast range of job titles – including technicians, skills specialists, research technology professionals, technologists, experimental officers, laboratory managers and more.

Despite their vital role, the technical community has frequently been described as an "invisible workforce", and is a relatively understudied occupational group in higher education and research, both here in the UK, and globally. As a consequence, the UK higher education and research sector lacks an effective understanding of the technical workforce – roles are ill defined, and little is known about future technical skills requirements.

University of Nottingham

Engineering and Technology Centre

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

UK Technicians' Experiences During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Technician Commitment Skills Council

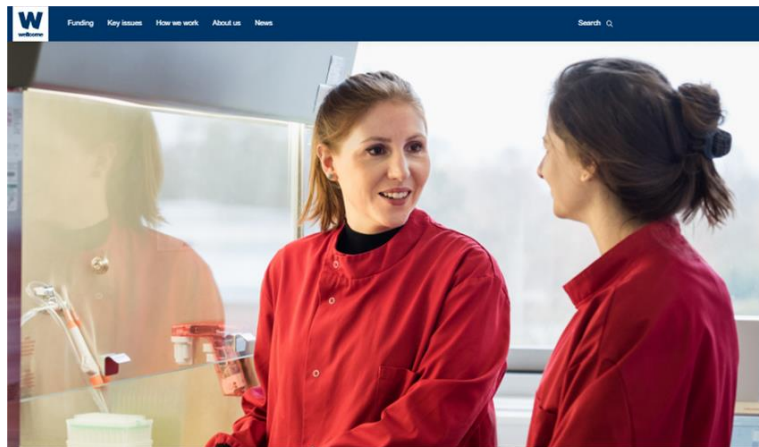


# Technician **Commitment**

## *Sector Impact of the Commitment*



Technician **Commitment**



On this page  
[Make your voice heard](#)  
[Latest news](#)  
[Reports](#)

Research culture: let's reimagine how we work together

Researchers working at the Wellcome Sanger Institute

Opinion | 12 February 2020

### More than 'just a technician': why we need to recognise everyone in the research team

 **Kelly Vere**  
 Director of Technical Skills and Strategy  
 University of Nottingham

I started out as a junior technician two decades ago and though I loved it, I quickly recognised that the culture we worked in needed to change. The results of [Wellcome's survey into experiences of research culture](#) don't surprise me – but by working collectively things can improve.



Credit: University of Nottingham

Kelly Vere: "It's good to say that the sector is finally starting to celebrate technicians and ensure recognition for the technical community."

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 Research culture Impact Investing across the UK Public engage  
 Responding to climate change **101 jobs that change the world**

Home > Our work > 101 jobs that change the world

## 101 jobs that change the world

### Emma Meehan



Video credit: UKRI  
 On-screen captions and an autogenerated transcript is available on YouTube.

Emma Meehan is a Senior Science Support Technician at Boulby Underground Laboratory, located 1.1 kilometres underground in a working potash, polyhalite and salt mine in Cleveland.

Physicists who are trying to unravel the mystery of Dark Matter visit Boulby to run their experiments. These experiments are so sensitive that any background radiation, even from their own equipment, can throw them off.

Emma runs a lab within Boulby that helps scientists minimise background radiation of this kind to give them the best chance of success.

Last updated: 28 October 2021



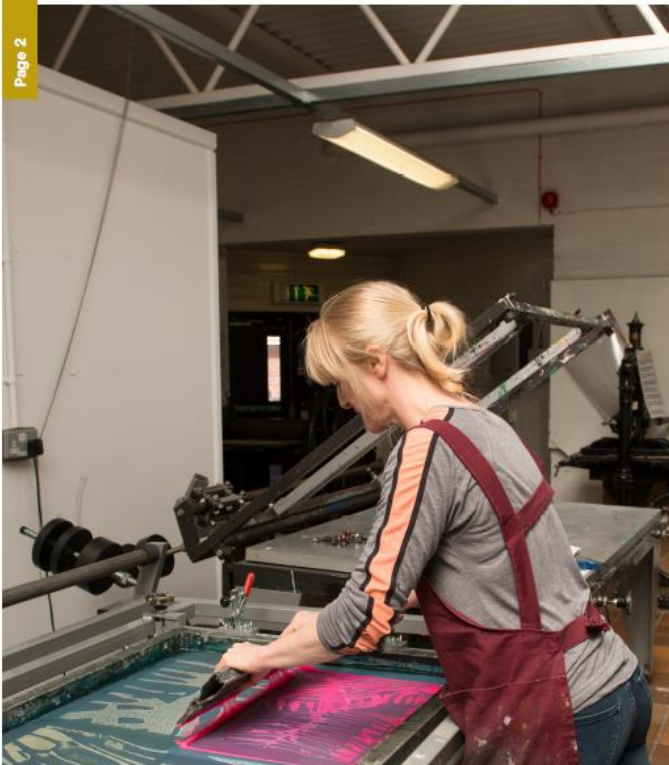
# Technician Commitment

## Sector Impact of the Commitment

# TECHNICIAN COMMITMENT

Progress and Impact

Technician Commitment 2021



Page 2

### Foreword

We are delighted to share the findings of a recent independent review of the Technician Commitment. The Technician Commitment was established in 2017 to create a more positive culture for the technical community in higher education and research by working collaboratively across the sector to advance visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability of technical skills, roles and careers.

Since its inception the Technician Commitment has secured over 100 signatory and supporter institutions and unlocked significant inward investment into the community from signatory institutions, with many providing new financial and in-kind support to develop and deliver Technician Commitment related activities. The initiative has triggered cultural change at higher education and research institutions across the UK and leveraged several millions of pounds worth of external funding to support the higher education and research technical community through other sources/grants. Alongside this the Technician Commitment has established partnerships and engaged a range of learned societies and professional bodies to raise the profile of, engage and support the technical community.

There is of course more work to be done. The Technician Commitment is not yet five years old and we recognise that culture change like this does not happen overnight. We welcome the findings of this review and will ensure we build on these strong foundations to strengthen further the Technician Commitment's reach and effect on technical roles across the UK and ensure that the principles of the initiative become embedded in the everyday processes of these organisations.

The Technician Commitment is a collaborative endeavour that would not be possible without the input and contributions of many across the sector. We would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone that has worked collectively to get the initiative to this stage and we look forward to continuing our work together in the future.



Helen Pain CSci CChem FRSC  
Chair of Technician  
Commitment Steering Board



Kelly Vere MBE RSci FRSci FHEA  
Technician Commitment  
Programme Director



## VISIBILITY

More than 1 in 3 technicians surveyed agreed that they have felt technicians are more visible internally at their institution because of the Technician Commitment



## RECOGNITION

1 in 3 of technicians surveyed agreed that technicians were more recognised within their institutions because of the Technician Commitment



## CAREER

1 in 5 technicians surveyed agreed that career development for technicians had improved within their institutions because of the Technician Commitment



## SUSTAINABILITY

1 in 5 technicians surveyed agreed that sustainability of technical skills and expertise of technicians had improved within their institutions because of the Technician Commitment

# Technician **Commitment**

## *Sector Impact of the Commitment*

- Technician Commitment Collaboration Fund 2022
  - [Four successful bids awarded:](#)
    - **Heriot-Watt University**
      - Technical Services Resource Hub
    - **Kings College London and University of Reading**
      - Regional campus-based network meetings
    - **University of Leeds and University of York**
      - Yorkshire Technicians Exchange Partnership (YoTEP)
    - **Newcastle University**
      - Support for the Technician Partnership Conference, Newcastle 2022
      - Save the date (already circulated!) 6th July 2022



# ADVOCATION AND POLICY



GATSBY

# Technician **Commitment**

## *Policy Impact of the Technician Commitment*



Much more detail to follow later in the agenda but to highlight recommendation sixteen of the TALENT Policy Commission

16. The TALENT Commission advises the creation of a new collaborative entity, provisionally to be called the **UK Institute for Technical Skills & Strategy** [working title] that builds on the multi-stakeholder approach of the Technician Commitment, to represent and provide a conduit to the technical community, advising government, sector initiatives, funding bodies and other organisations



## The TALENT Commission

Technical skills, roles and careers in  
UK higher education and research

# Technician Commitment

## Policy Impact of the Technician Commitment

- TC fully engaged with the Research concordats and agreements review
  - [Interim report published](#) by UKRI/UUK/Wellcome
    - Highest score of all the initiatives in terms of impact on generating a *Positive effect on working environment (72%)*
    - Second only to Athena SWAN on *providing a consistent way of looking at the issue (research culture) across the sector, adding value to my institution/organisation (60%)*
    - Still need to continue to raise awareness of the Technician Commitment
- Working as part of the [UKRI Alternative Uses Group](#) for the 'Résumé for Researchers'
  - Consistent CVs across job families
  - Fair and equitable criteria for advancement
  - Enhance career porosity
- Engaging with the Science Council T Level Workstream

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PUBLICATIONS

### Research concordats and agreements review

Last updated on Wednesday 9 Mar 2022 on 10:59am

CREATED  
9 Mar 2022

TAGS  
Publications

Universities UK, UK Research and Innovation and the Wellcome Trust commissioned Basis Social to gather insights on the adoption and impact of various concordats and agreements currently in place across the UK's research landscape.

Research conduct and working practices					
Concordat to Support Research Integrity	Open research data	Concordat for the Advancement of Knowledge Exchange in Higher Education	Engaging the Public with Research	Openness on animal research	Safeguarding in International Development Research
Staff development		Assessment and evaluation		Equality, diversity and inclusion	
Career Development of Researchers	Technician Commitment	San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment	Leiden Manifesto	Athena Swan Charter	Race Equality Charter

# NEW SIGNATORIES & RESOURCES



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# Technician Commitment

## Welcome to new Supporters



In publishing this statement and professional profiles, **Dr Jessica Gardner, RLUK chair** said that:  
*RLUK is delighted to become a named supporter of the Technician Commitment and to promote its contents and values to the research library community. We look forward to working with our members, the AHRC, and the Science Council to champion the importance of technical and specialist skills contained within research libraries and the essential contribution they make to research and learning.*



**SPOTLIGHT:** Gary Brannan, Keeper of Archives and Special Collections, University of York

The Technician Commitment absolutely applies to my role. Many, on reading it, might feel they disagree with that – but when we look at what we do, we can't deny we play a huge role in the research experience. Often we have been too modest in this, and the commitment's role in visibility of archival professionals, and how our role is not as mere facilitators and box carriers but valued partners in the research process.

[READ MORE](#)

## Welcome to new Signatories



# ACTION PLANS

<https://www.technicians.org.uk/technician-commitment/resources/institutional-action-plans>

Technicians make it happen

## Institutional Action Plans

Technician Commitment

Please see below the current list of organisations who have submitted and had their action plans assessed. Click on the 'Find out More' button of each university to be taken to their public action plan.

< GO BACK TO TECHNICIAN COMMITMENT RESOURCES

Aston University [FIND OUT MORE](#)

University of Birmingham [FIND OUT MORE](#)

Open access online resource of over 100 action plans  
Stage Two Action plans also available



# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



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**Ri** The Royal Institution  
Science Lives Here



## New Science Museum gallery will be a “visually dazzling” tribute to technicians

Opening in 2022, the Technicians Gallery will celebrate the often behind-the-scenes workers and this is what we know about the design so far.

By Molly Long September 30, 2021 2:47 pm





# THE AWARDS 2021

## Outstanding Technician of the Year

.....exceptional practical skills, commitment and vision which have enabled the highest quality teaching, research or knowledge transfer:

**Andrew Filby, Newcastle University**

# THE AWARDS 2022

OFFICIAL SPONSOR

Outstanding Technician of the Year

**Nominations now open**

**close on 08 June so please get your thinking caps on and nominate that technician that you have been 'meaning to recognise and celebrate' for too long.....**



# SIGNATORY EVENTS



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THE WORLD'S MOST EXCITING FESTIVAL OF IDEAS



*Save the date:  
15 June 2022*



# Technician Commitment



 @SWBreedon  @TechsCommit

<http://technicians.org.uk/techniciancommitment/>

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[simon.breedon@york.ac.uk](mailto:simon.breedon@york.ac.uk)



UNIVERSITY  
*of York*

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Technician Commitment



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