

	Action	Activities & Outcomes	Visibility	Recognition	Career Development	Sustainability	OU Strategy link	TALENT Commission Recommendation No.
Career paths & job titles	Review technical job titles to reflect the role and responsibility of the grade to more accurately balance external recognition and benchmarking with internal OU policy and practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Draft new technical job titles and role profiles, working with people services to ensure alignment with OU practice and policy. Use best practice examples from other universities (e.g., York, Warwick) as templates. ◆ Present to STEM Management Group for approval and subsequently People Services to implement. 	x	x	x	x	Sustainability – training & development	R1, R9, R11
	Recognition of hybrid technical roles – academic/management responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Explore how to recognise and acknowledge the hybrid roles of technical staff within the STEM Faculty and wider university. 		x	x	x	Culture of respect & belonging; Open & inclusive research	R2, R11
	Develop a clear (documented) Technical Career Progression Pathway to provide technical staff and managers with guidance on the skills and requirements for each technical grade. This will identify development and training requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Create generic technical role profiles that matches the existing grades. ◆ Create a Technical Career Pathway and acknowledge incremental milestones. ◆ Draw on resources from other universities (e.g., RTP CAREER PATHWAY BROCHURE (adobe.com) University of Liverpool or Technical Specialists Promotional Pathway Pilot (warwick.ac.uk) University of Warwick) to map out a technical career path progression for the OU. 			x	x	Sustainability – training & development	R1, R2, & R9

Staff sustainability	<p>Succession & workload planning in areas in which staff recruitment & sustainability is challenging.</p> <p><i>Context: Core facilities underpinning research and other lab activities (mechanical/electrical workshops, preparation labs, etc.) do not have capacity to train apprentices and also lose skilled engineers and technical staff to industry. A strategy is required to ensure continuity of service and knowledge transfer.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Consult with the technical staff and engineers to determine how succession planning and knowledge transfer can be implemented in areas without increasing workload. 			x	x	Sustainability – training & development	R1, R2, R8
	<p>Reduce single point of failures where expertise is provided by only one technical staff member, by rotation of core technical staff within the faculty. Enables cover when required and provides staff development opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide a sustainable framework for rotating of core technical staff under consideration of demand, workload and feasibility. 			x	x	Sustainability – training & development	R1 & R10
	<p>Create a sustainable technical staffing model that balances the financial, workload, expertise knowledge and career development demands.</p> <p><i>Context: Skilled technical staff are not easily replaced. To support ongoing research and specialised instrument/lab areas a close fit replacement is essential. This requires timely recruitment to allow sufficient handover and will aid to reduce the risk of a single point of failure. However, this needs to be balanced with financial constraints and long-term strategic orientation.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Create a sustainability plan for roles in which staff (1) have attained the top of their salary scale to provide opportunities for career development; (2) are approaching retirement to allow for recruitment of replacements ahead of time to transfer knowledge and skills. ◆ Explore informal apprenticeships with shadowing and working together to ensure continuity of skills & specialised knowledge. ◆ Work with the Faculty Management Team to address the challenges of technical talent sustainably due to highly skilled staff deterred from 		x	x	x	Sustainability – training & development; Sustainability – financial resources	R1, R2, R7,

		applying for two-year fixed term roles.						
Broaden technical staff & Technician Commitment visibility at the OU	Increase visibility of technical staff within the organisation so that members of school (academics, teaching, school staff) know who they are. Highlight the contribution technical staff make to the scientific research endeavour at the OU and their central position in its delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Develop a signage (e.g., banner or button) that allows technical staff to be easily identifiable in existing staff boards (for both digital and physical boards). ◆ Have a STEM PD session to introduce the STEM labs and technical staff supporting them. ◆ Design and print banners and place where they will be seen by visitors to the OU (Berrill Reception, Hub, Library). ◆ Communicate to academic staff that OU Technical staff are Professionally Registered, which can be used in research grant and instrument bid submissions. 	x	x			<p>Open & inclusive research;</p> <p>Diverse teams;</p> <p>University of choice</p>	R11
	<p>An up-to-date internal and external website to showcase capability and contact details</p> <p><i>Context: To showcase the STEM laboratory capability, to inform the 'Fit for Future' plan, academic recruitment, and external collaboration</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Assign technical staff as the contact on homepages. ◆ Ensure technical staff have a current OU Profile page and cross link with instrument/lab webpage. ◆ Have a member of the technical staff test the new People Profile System to provide feedback on suitability for technical staff. ◆ Contact the Commercial Laboratory Manager and STEM Research Infrastructure Lead to discuss synergies. ◆ Investigate administrative support to create and maintain the website. ◆ Update search terms on existing websites to ensure content is easy to locate. 	x			x	<p>University of choice;</p> <p>Open & inclusive research</p>	R11

<p>Celebrate technical staff (skills, interests, achievements, etc) internally to enhance visibility and more widespread knowledge of technical staff's work for example via e.g., the STEM newsletter, social media, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Submit short write-ups to STEM newsletter (for the Weekly Welcome). ◆ Encourage individuals to submit contributions to the STEM newsletter via e.g., line managers, during CDSA's and email to stem-labsupport (list). ◆ Submit regular posts to STEM Comms to share on multiple platforms. ◆ Liaise with STEM Comms teams for innovative ways on how to showcase the work of the technical staff and the services offered within the university's social media policy. 	x	x		x	Culture of respect & belonging	R11 & R15
<p>Dedicated webpage presenting case studies of technical careers.</p> <p><i>Context: Role models are important in motivating technical staff and illustrating alternative career pathways.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Create a draft for a webpage to illustrate different career pathways. ◆ Collect case studies from current and alumni technical staff. ◆ Contact STEM Comms team to request this is included on the existing pages. 	x		x		Sustainability – training & development; Diverse work teams	R7
<p>Ensure that the technical staff and OU facilities are appropriately acknowledged on research outputs by updating and promoting our fair attribution policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Update the existing policy by adding CRediT (Contributor Roles Taxonomy; https://credit.niso.org/). ◆ Inform technical staff & researchers that such a policy exists and where do find it. ◆ Annually send out the STEM Fair Attribution policy to all Schools and the STEM newsletter. ◆ Make it easily accessible on STEM homepage. ◆ Create email template for technical staff to send lab users when they commence the work. 	x	x			Open & inclusive research; Culture of respect & belonging	R11

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Liaise with Head of Research and Enterprise Support to instigate a tick box during grant submission to alert the researcher that the Policy should be adhered to. 							
	Explore how research output e.g., external or commercial research, which are not in the form of publications or openly communicated research can be recognised and celebrated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Create a focus group to explore in which form the work of technical staff on such research can be recognised and celebrated within the Faculty and University. 	x	x	x			Open & inclusive research; Culture of respect & belonging	R11
	Internal and external visibility of Technician Commitment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Liaise with STEM Comms to discuss update of internal webpages. ◆ Liaise with digital services to help with setting up external webpage. 	x	x				University of choice	R11
	Broaden the Technician Commitment at the OU by including other staff groups in technical roles across the university.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Identify areas or teams where staff maybe considered as technical staff. ◆ Introduce the Technician Commitment to them. ◆ Extend the Technician Commitment working group to include staff from newly integrated areas. 	x	x			x	Culture of respect & belonging	R1, R2, R3, R11, R15
	Encourage two-way dialogue between technical staff and senior management to get technical staff more engaged and embedded in wider university priorities and business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Increase representation of technical staff on decision making committees (e.g., OU Senate and Council) to encourage technical representation on OU governance bodies. ◆ Promote technical engagement with the CAMPUS 2030 project. ◆ Produce 2-3 seminars annually (e.g. delivered through STEM PD) to introduce STEM labs and capability. ◆ Increase communication between technical staff and their 	x	x	x		x	Culture of respect & belonging; Diverse work teams	R10, R11, R12, R15

		<p>advocate(s) who attend committees (e.g., drop-in sessions or other events that facilitate communication and to have the technical staff voice heard).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Encourage technical staff to attend School, Faculty and OU wide town hall meetings to improve understanding around wider Faculty and university business. ◆ Introduce a regular STEM technical team update at Faculty Assembly. Discuss the format with the EXEC Dean's Office. 						
Networking	<p>Develop a technical staff network between the Open University and Cranfield University for knowledge exchange, collaboration and shared resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Identify lab and research topics to be joined in 'lab twinning' scheme. ◆ Establish contact between technical staff and encourage meetings/visits. ◆ Explore opportunities to share technical training. ◆ Long term: scope out potential for shared equipment bids. 			x	x	<p>Open & inclusive research;</p> <p>Diverse teams;</p> <p>Sustainability – training & development</p>	R10, R15
	<p>Promote technical staff to engage in the mentor scheme to develop themselves and assist in the development of others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Encourage uptake of internal STEM mentoring scheme as both a mentor and a mentee. ◆ Investigate other external technical mentoring (e.g., Royal Microscopical Society, etc.) and cascade. 	x	x	x			R1, R2, R7, R10, R15
	<p>Reinstate the previously successful Tech Tea @ 3 to increase communication and networking among technical team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Organise a monthly gathering of the technical team in the Venables cafe. Encourage bakers to bring cake. 	x	x			Culture of respect & belonging	R15

	Organise or take part in technical conferences to show case the OU STEM labs and technical staff to the wider OU staff and interested public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Create a road map on how this can be achieved with minimal effort to not place too much workload on technical staff with already high workload. ◆ Explore opportunities to contribute to other events and have some dedicated posters or show cases submitted by technical staff. 	x	x			<p>Open & inclusive research;</p> <p>University of choice</p>	R6, R7, R11, R15
Funding & Grants	Technical staff submitting grant/funding applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Discuss with AD Research in the context of REF2029. ◆ Create an accessible list of possible funding sources. ◆ Circulate funding calls regularly via e.g., stem-lab support (list). ◆ Encourage Directors of Research to include technical staff emails with funding calls. 		x	x	x	<p>Open & inclusive research;</p> <p>Culture of respect & belonging</p>	R2, R5, R10
	<p>Technical staff on Grant applications and Award Management System</p> <p><i>Context: Technical staff are currently not usually aware they have been included on research bids, though this information would be useful for Professional Registration and CDSAs. A communication route by which technical staff are informed in which bids they have been included (even if not successful) is needed.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Clarify how and where technical staff are included in grant bids. Contact the Head of Research and Enterprise Support requesting an overview to share with technical staff. ◆ Contact the Head of Research and Enterprise Support to discuss options for a communication route by which technical staff are informed of their inclusion into bids. ◆ Encourage Lab Managers to cascade information on submitted grant applications to the relevant team members. 	x	x	x		<p>Open & inclusive research;</p> <p>Culture of respect & belonging</p>	R5, R11

	Funding for technical training opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Advertise and encourage application for internal and external funding to attend conferences and training. 			x	x	Sustainability – training & development	R10
Apprenticeship	Develop opportunities for Level 6 apprenticeship degree for technical staff alongside their existing job role to increase career development opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Investigate where level 6 apprenticeship degrees are offered. Determine who this may be of interest to. 			x	x	Sustainability – training & development	R1, R7, R13
	Retain existing apprentices we have invested in wherever we can.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Support apprentices to apply for open positions (e.g., through STEM mentorship program). 			x	x	Sustainability – training & development	R1, R7, R10
	Promote the STEM apprentice journey during National Apprentice Week to celebrate the achievements of OU apprentices internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Communicate via intranet, STEM newsletters, and social media. Including interviews/blog posts/videos. ◆ Arrange career talks for apprentices; Invite alumni apprentices to talk about their career route. ◆ Celebratory coffee and cake showcase with other lab staff and relevant academics. 	x	x		x	Sustainability – training & development	R 11
Awards	Encourage nomination for national awards for technical staff to recognise excellence at UK wide level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Identify appropriate award launches (e.g. Papin prize and THE technician awards) and communicate that nominations can be made by academics, line managers or peers. ◆ Add opportunities to homepage/teams channel with links to award schemes and notes about nomination windows. ◆ Develop a workshop to illustrate how to write a successful award nomination. 	x	x	x	x	Culture of respect & belonging; University of choice	R11

	Encourage nomination for internal awards for technical staff to recognise excellence and contribution to the OU's mission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Encourage nominations of technical staff for STEM / OU RE awards from within the team. ◆ Develop a workshop to illustrate how to write an award nomination. ◆ Advertise successes internally and externally via STEM Comms. ◆ Enquire if a specific category for technical staff can be created among the STEM and OU RE award. 	x	x	x	x	Culture of respect & belonging	R11
Training & development opportunities	Promote and develop a range of CPD activities available to technical staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Instigate peer-led 'Practical Skills' programme. There is potential for collaborating with Cranfield University via the 'Technical Staff Collaboration Network' that is gaining momentum. This would widen the subjects covered. ◆ Provide specific opportunities for training. STEM PD Advisory group now has a technical staff representative (Barbara Kunz) who will help to expand the curriculum to have more technically relevant training. ◆ Liaise with H&S team to establish in-house training provision and what is possible externally (e.g., IOSH Working Safely & Managing Safely Provision, Effective Risk Assessment writing, etc). ◆ Promote staff development opportunities via stem-labsupport (list). ◆ Encourage attendance at technical conferences and explore the possibility of a technical conference at the OU. 			x	x	Sustainability – training & development	R10

<p>Encourage staff to take advantage of the half day training scheme in other laboratory areas. This will aid skills development and knowledge retention within the technical team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Communicate the half-day provision and opportunities within the STEM Faculty. ◆ Create a notice board for training opportunities and requests. Investigate what format created the best engagement. ◆ Document the staff who have attained training and in which area. ◆ Identify reluctance to take up this opportunity. 			x	x	<p>Sustainability – training & development</p>	<p>R10</p>
<p>Support and offer technical staff with leadership development opportunities and training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Advertise and promote attendance of leadership courses (e.g., Aurora Women in Leadership, HEaTED/IST New Technical Leadership Programme, Oxford University's 'Technical Team Leadership (online)', or ITSS leadership schemes). ◆ Participate in public outreach events such as e.g., Soapbox Science MK, British Science Week, Ri Christmas Lectures. ◆ Create opportunities for technical staff to gain short-term project management and leadership experience within the Faculty or University. 			x	x	<p>Sustainability – training & development</p>	<p>R2 & R6, R10</p>
<p>Encourage and provide support for technical staff to obtain Professional Registration.</p> <p><i>Context: Professional Registration provides an independent recognition of technical skills, experience and willingness towards professional development and personal integrity. It</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Increase communication on benefits for technical staff (why should people make the effort). ◆ Run professional registration surgeries – by advertising internally and linking with career progression. ◆ Create concise guidelines and case studies of professional registration 	x	x	x	x		<p>R10, R11, R15</p>

	<i>benchmarks the skills and competence of the OU technical staff.</i>	<p>and communicate via homepage or newsletters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide support for completing professional registration via the apprenticeship route. 						
Technical staff records	<p>Centralise training records to enable technical staff to identify training needs and list achievements in preparation for CDSA, Professional Registration and compliance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Contact My Learning Centre team to arrange for technical staff to add training events (internal & external, with evidence for training uploaded alongside) to their record. This will assist promotion cases, identifying areas of further development or apply for new opportunities. ◆ Line managers to continue to collate CDSA training requirements in a central spreadsheet for the Head of Laboratory Facilities to identify common training needs. 			x	x	Sustainability – training & development	R3, R10
	<p>Skills audit to determine existing in-house skills and identify areas of weakness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Identify the full range of technical skills available in the team (including skills not currently utilised in role). ◆ Identify areas where technical staff can expand their skill sets to enhance career progression, whilst ensuring continuity of service. 	x	x	x	x	Sustainability – training & development	R3, R11
Environmental sustainability	<p>Increase efforts to move labs to more environmentally sustainable practices.</p> <p><i>Context: The sustainability of scientific research is a key goal of the STEM Faculty and the wider Open University.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Continue to maintain ‘My Green Lab’ certification of accredited labs. ◆ Scope out the potential for other labs to become certified and create a road map for suitable labs to work towards ‘My Green Lab’ certification. 		x	x	x	Sustainability – environmental resources	N/A