Action Plan 2025 - 2027

Technician Commitment

University of Northampton

Objectives		Actions	Outcome/Impact	UON Strategy Priorities				UON Strategy Values				Time Frame
				Our Staff	Student Experience	Learning and Teaching	Research	Inclusivity	Sustain-ability	Aspiration	Trust	
VISIBILITY												
Support and motivate technicians to participate in relevant local and national networks, conferences, and meetings to broaden their professional connections and knowledge base.	V1	Support and encourage technical staff to take advantage of external knowledge exchange and networking opportunities	Create networking opportunities by increasing attendance at conferences and trade fairs.	✓				✓	✓	✓		Q1-Q2 2025
	V2	Negotiate protected time to enable technicians to attend networking events.	Increased attendance at all technical events, as well as a UON presence at external events.	✓					✓	✓		Q2 2025
Revamp the UON external webpages to champion technical commitment. Cultivating a cohesive community by establishing a user-friendly, informative, and regularly updated online forum for technicians.	V3	Ensure that the UON external website includes representation of technical staff.	Improve the visibility and representation of the technical staff and the Technician Commitment on the UON website.		✓	✓				✓		Q1–Q3 2025
	V4	Develop student facing technician resources website using MyPAD.	Students and staff engage with internal platforms to better understand technical staff and facilities.		✓	✓				✓		Q1-Q3 2025
	V5	Update images of technical staff. Photography of technical staff to be featured throughout the university's web presence.	Greater visibility of technicians, making them more recognisable by students and ensuring their work is visible.		✓	✓				✓		Q1-Q2 2025
	V6	Develop resources for technician development on UON Staff Intranet.	Develop a clear understanding of areas of technical growth and associated resources.	✓			✓		✓	✓		Q2-Q3 2025
	V7	Work with PR/marketing for better representation of technical news stories in Unify (UON Internal Communications).	Technical staff and services news stories are regularly represented in internal communication to the UON community.	✓						✓	✓	Q2-Q4 2025
	V8	All technician's staff profiles and their expertise to be made visible on Staff Directory.	Technical staff and their expertise should be locatable on the staff directory.	✓	✓			✓			✓	Q1-Q2 025

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Foster opportunities for technical knowledge to be shared within UON to enhance Teaching, Learning and Research.	V9	Create networking and knowledge sharing opportunities such as technical masterclasses for other technical staff/professional services/academics at UON.	Creation of a technical shared practice activity day, where all staff can sample activities in specialist areas at UON.	✓						✓		Q2-Q3 2026
	V10	Host an annual event/conference focused on UON technical staff or tie in with an existing event such as the Teaching and Learning Conference.	Create an annual event that either links with an existing event or it is a standalone activity. Consider time and financial implications.	✓					✓	✓		Q1-Q4 2025
Foster professional networks beyond the University to facilitate ongoing learning and collaboration opportunities for technicians.	V11	Investigate networking opportunities with other Higher Education institutions.	Increased engagement with other HEI's to create a skills network and knowledge exchange opportunities.			✓	✓	✓				Q1-Q4 2026
	V12	Work with Schools Liaison team about inclusion of technical team in outreach activities – school visits etc.	Increased presence of Technical staff at Outreach activities, evidenced by UON's Access and Participation tracker	✓				✓		✓		Q2 2025
Improve the representation of technician voice on relevant University and sub committees and curriculum design.	V13	Technical staff to be included on relevant working groups and committees within UON.	Better representation of the technician voice in decision-making at UON.	✓		✓		✓			✓	Q1-Q2 2025
	V14	Ensure technical staff are represented in course design decisions that involve technical elements.	Inclusion in portfolio reviews, curriculum development and PSRs, fostering greater integration with traditional academic staff.		✓			✓			✓	Q1-Q2 2025
	V15	Hold meetings between academic and technical teams to discuss technical support and actions for the next academic year.	Increased collaboration that improves the organisation of teaching delivery.		✓						✓	Q3-Q4 2025
	V16	Create case studies of technical staff impact on students or other staff members in UON.	Showcasing the impact technicians have made on students to further drive collaboration with academic staff.	✓	✓						✓	Q1-Q2 2026
	V17	Ensure technical staff are included in major University projects that have technical elements, for example IT and estates.	Technician contribution is sought and considered when significant institutional project are undertaken.		✓			✓			✓	Q2-Q3 2025

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RECOGNITION												
Improve the acknowledgment of technicians' contributions in publications and impact submissions for the Research Excellence Framework (REF), the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), and the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF).	R1	Enable support for technical staff wishing to engage in research opportunities.	Guidance provided on how technical staff can be included in research outputs, working with academic colleagues to encourage and facilitate this recognition.				✓	✓				Q4 2025-Q2 2026
	R2	Technical staff to work closer with enterprise/knowledge transfer schemes within the University, supported by the KE team.	Inclusion of technical staff on working groups and projects associated with knowledge exchange.	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	Q1 2025-Q4 2025
	R3	Technicians to be listed as co-authors alongside academic researchers with detail of author contribution provided.	Technicians who contribute to grant proposals gain the recognition they deserve by listing them as collaborators or co-investigators where allowed by the funder. Technicians should be credited as co-authors for subsequent research that leads to publications in high-impact journals. This recognition should also include participation in national and international conferences.	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	Q1 2025-Q4 2025
	R4	Identify routes in which technical staff can engage in events and publicise research output.	Greater attendance and inclusion of technical staff in exhibitions or research conferences/events.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	Q1 2026-Q3 2026
Support the teaching component of the technician role at UON.	R5	Gather knowledge from subject areas about how technical workshops/support are arranged, identify best practice, and showcase.	Improved planning and delivery of module workshops, tutorials, and practical's through shared knowledge.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Q3 2025-Q1 2026
	R6	Offer opportunity for academic staff to refresh or develop their technical skills with support of technical team.	Written guidance to academic colleagues for staff to refresh their technical skills. Clear scope and responsibilities of technical staff regarding taught theory and practical demonstrations.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q1 2026-Q3 2026
	R7	Offer opportunity for technical staff to develop their knowledge	Technical staff able to use learning and teaching strategies to enhance									Q1 2026-

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		of learning and teaching through existing UON structures such as Library and Learning Services (LLS).	their provision, increased engagement with HEA accreditation.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		Q3 2026
	R8	Support individual applications for accreditation of teaching practice through the Higher Education Academy (Advance HE).	Technical staff given protected time (comparable to academic colleagues) to complete applications, supported by HEA fellows. As more Technical staff achieve fellowship status, develop internal mentor processes bespoke for Technical staff.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		Q3 2025-Q4 2026
Identify and endorse opportunities for technical nominations for both internal and external awards that recognise the impactful contributions of technical staff.	R9	Audit the existing processes for inclusivity of external technicians' award nominations.	Audit the existing processes for inclusivity of technicians' award nominations.	✓				✓		✓	✓	Q3 2025-Q1 2026
	R10	Investigate UON's existing awards formats and advocate for inclusion of a technical staff award. Contact Student Union about STAAR Awards.	Inclusion of an award for technical staff within UON as part of one of the University's existing formats. Nominations of technical staff.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	Q1 2025-Q1 2026
Create consistent and transparent guidance on professional membership where appropriate.	R11	Create a list of those seeking professional registration, create guidance on professional registrations and technician managers to support staff through PDR. Bring in external professional registration mentors.	Increased numbers of technical staff who achieve professional recognition.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q3 2025-Q1 2026
Support and encourage technicians to establish collaborative links with other universities or research institutes for knowledge exchange and CPD.	R12	Support and encourage technicians to establish collaborative links with other universities or research institutes for knowledge exchange and CPD.	Technicians will be able to spend time at domestic or international locations to gain additional experience and knowledge (or to pass on those attributes) whether as a research partner or teaching role for an agreed period of time. Technicians are encouraged to apply to the ITSS on their competitive placement scheme.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q3 2025-Q4 2026

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CAREER DEVELOPMENT												
Provide clear guidance and signposting of professional development opportunities that align with career pathways for technicians.	C1	Optimise the utilisation of the training budget by aligning career development opportunities with pathways ie. Teaching and Learning, Research, Management.	All training and professional development reported to line management and benefits reviewed. UON to choose an App to standardise the recording of CPD among technical staff.	✓						✓		Q1 2025
	C2	Promote HEaTED (Higher Education and Technician Education Development) continuous development and training opportunities to enable technicians to enhance their knowledge and skills.	All technical staff are aware of the HEaTED training opportunities and are encouraged to engage in HEaTED CPD activities. Establish Regular Technician news bulletin to include HEaTED and other training opportunities.	✓					✓	✓		Q2 2025-Q4 2026
	C3	Encourage technicians at all levels to participate in an apprenticeship program, utilising the apprenticeship levy.	Presentation to technical staff around the apprenticeship levy, technical managers to promote to staff in PDRs. Ongoing engagement with apprenticeships as a means of CPD.	✓				✓	✓			Q3 2025
Facilitate career progression for technicians through a transparent and equitable framework that documents clear career pathways.	C4	Identify gaps and current challenges to career progression.	Research job roles at other institutions and identify best practice. A career pathway for the next phase of the Action Plan will be developed from this work.	✓				✓		✓		Q1-Q3 2025
	C5	Explore the possibility of creating parity regarding technical management structures across UON's faculties.	Adopt a clear and consistent technical management structure at UON to improve opportunities for progression past Grade 6. Develop a career pathway from this work.	✓					✓		✓	Q1-Q2 2026
	C6	Ensure UON establishes well-defined career pathways and standardised job descriptions for all technical roles.	Clarify all job roles and avoid over-simplified categories, including career pathways for technical roles that are not teaching-focused. Develop a career pathway from this work.	✓					✓	✓		Q1-Q2 2026
	C7	Technical Managers to include a relevant member of technical staff	Technical staff included in all technical colleague recruitment.	✓				✓		✓	✓	ONGOING

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Ensure technician expertise is utilised and valued in all aspects of technical staff recruitment and onboarding.		either on interview or presentation panel when recruiting technical staff.	Technicians are to be offered Interview training.									2025-2026
	C8	Ensure that technical staff are included in the induction process for all new roles within their area of expertise.	Instigate an investigation into current technical staff induction. Create an improved and more specific technical staff induction to be implemented by technician managers.	✓				✓	✓		✓	Q1 2026
SUSTAINABILITY												
Mitigate risks associated with single points of failure in skills and expertise through effective succession planning for technical roles alongside measures put in place to help with staff retention.	S1	Review any single points of failure in the technical staffing structure.	Improve the management and gap-analysis and skills audit of staffing and technical training. Ensure that succession plans are in place for each specialist area.	✓					✓			Q2-Q3 2026
	S2	Review out of hours working requirements to improve staff welfare.	Clarify expected working hours and TOIL entitlement and adopt best practice across all relevant areas.	✓		✓			✓		✓	Q1-Q2 2025
	S3	Skills survey across all technical staff by completing NTDC Staff Survey or similar exercise.	Have data available that will allow the institution to Identify gaps and current challenges to career progression and sustainability.	✓					✓	✓		Q1-Q2 2026
	S4	Review technician workload. Gather staff feedback on working conditions and resources and the impact this has on their role.	Find common issues and potential solutions. Review and consider technician workload in relation to student numbers and resources.	✓					✓	✓	✓	Q1 2025-Q2 2026
	S5	Review resource availability to technicians, measured against student numbers and equivalent institutions. Compare inventory to current and projected student numbers, alongside data sourced from other universities.	Produce an audit document to influence future decision making.	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		Q1-Q3 2026

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	S6	Capture details of wellbeing issues from staff, contrast current data with past data from surveys, bring to relevant committees and working groups.	Address wellbeing issues through the appropriate services, create periodic review.	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	Q1-Q3 2025
Harness legacy working practices by implementing peer-to-peer knowledge transfer to foster collaboration among technicians.	S7	Develop a buddy system designed for new members of the technical team, investigate current mentoring schemes and guidance within UON.	Have a buddy system in place to support new members of technical staff.	✓				✓	✓			Q1-Q2 2026
	S8	Investigate existing structures for knowledge sharing within UON. Identify any opportunities for shadowing and peer observation of other technical staff.	Provide informal options for technical staff to shadow each other and make staff aware of the scheme.	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		Q2-Q3 2025
	S9	Investigate the feasibility of using the apprenticeship levy to train future technicians by creating a working group comprised of technical staff and HR.	Report on the possibility of running an apprenticeship scheme and start the planning and approval process if appropriate.	✓				✓	✓	✓		Q2-Q4 2026
Fostering greater cohesion between technical staff and academic staff, to integrate the technical knowledge and skills into broader teaching.	S10	Technician Commitment champions for 4 key areas identified, work groups established and leadership team agreed.	Technician and additional leads for each strand of the commitment identified and actively engaged. These act as ambassadors for the Action Plan for UON.	✓				✓	✓		✓	Q1 2025
	S11	Technician staff to be invited to Subject meetings/Staff development and meetings relating to teaching and learning delivery.	Technical skills and knowledge are embedded in curriculum planning and design.	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		Q1-Q3 2025
Create a positive environment, culture and structure of technical learning, to allow technicians to further their knowledge and practice.	S12	Encourage attendance at Technician Commitment events and other conferences and networks for technical staff.	Secure the appropriate funding or time to ensure that staff can attend the Technician Commitment events. All events attended require feedback and sharing of knowledge gained.	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Q1-Q3 2025
	S13	Explore the best approach to creating protected time for technicians to engage with professional development.	Technicians use their time to expand their skills and knowledge, and the record can be used in future auditing and planning.	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q2-Q4 2026

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	S14	Create opportunities for peer-to-peer knowledge transfer from external learning where appropriate, through platforms such as the technician forum.	Staff evaluate the effectiveness of new knowledge and share learnt knowledge with others in the team.	✓						✓		Q1-Q3 2025