**National Technician Development Centre**

**Technician Survey (2024 Version)**

This is the National Technician Development Centre’s research project, the *Technician Skills, Roles and Responsibilities Survey*. Before taking part in the survey, it is important you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

**What is the National Technician Development Centre?**

The National Technician Development Centre (NTDC), funded by HEFCE and the University of Sheffield, was launched in 2017. The Centre aims to enhance the excellence and efficiency of the technical workforce in Higher Education (HE) and address the growing skills gap which threatens our future success in high priority subject areas.

The NTDC aims to help HEIs address the skills gap in a number of ways, including the use of the Technician Survey.

**What is the NTDC Technician Survey?**

The NTDC Technician Survey is a comprehensive workforce-planning research tool, designed to help HEIs capture relevant information needed to support workforce planning. It is designed to enable each HEI to capture relevant information to understand their technical workforce, and for the NTDC to understand the sector technical workforce on a wider scale. The survey captures information related to technician roles across an institution.

A Technical Services Working Group\* at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) has worked closely with NTDC staff to develop this version of the survey. The findings of this survey, and resulting feedback, will be used to inform future versions of the tool.

Every participant will also receive a copy of their responses to aid their future development.

**Why are we running the NTDC Technician Survey at LJMU?**

Whilst we have a good understanding of the skills that we currently use to deliver support to teaching and research at the University, it would take us some time to document and demonstrate such an extensive repertoire of capabilities.

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LJMU is a signatory of the Technicians’ Commitment which is a university and research institution initiative, led by a steering board of sector bodies, hosted within the UK Institute for Technical Skills and Strategy.

The NTDC survey complements the Technicians’ Commitment which “aims to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for technicians working in higher education and research, across all disciplines. Universities and research institutes are invited to become signatories of the Technician Commitment and pledge action to tackle the key challenges affecting their technical staff.”

Our technical teams support highly specialised diverse disciplines. Whilst we have a good understanding of the skills that we currently use to deliver support to teaching and research at the University, it would take us some time to document and demonstrate such an extensive repertoire of capabilities in-house. In addition, many of us have additional skills that we have acquired, sometimes from working elsewhere, or in working in different roles at the University. These skills may not currently be in use and therefore may not be apparent but are just as important when considering the extensive skills sets that we hold. The NTDC survey will enable us to collect, document and understand the full skills profile of the Technical Services team. The survey also collects information on those skills that we as technicians would like to acquire. Having such information will be extremely useful when we are considering training and development, succession planning and when developing new opportunities for current staff members.

**Who should complete the survey?**

We are inviting all Technical Services staff at LJMU to complete the survey.

**What will I be asked?**

The survey will ask questions related to your role as a technician, your areas of responsibility, and the technical skills and techniques you commonly use in your job.

**What will happen with my responses?**

Once the survey has closed you will receive a Personal Report - a copy of your responses which we recommend you keep, to be used as part of your professional development.

Faculty/Service Reports of your personal skills profiles will be made available to your Technical Manager and the Head of Operations.

A University-wide anonymous report will also be available to demonstrate the in-house skills that are available. This will inform discussions around identifying skills gaps, training and development opportunities, succession planning, and discussions when researchers are considering buying out technician time from Technical Services for grant applications and contracts.

The survey and all responses will be housed on Qualtrics, a well-respected online survey platform. To read about Qualtrics and their data storage policies please visit this link: <https://www.qualtrics.com/uk/platform/gdpr>

Your responses to the survey will be held confidentially and securely, aligned with data protection guidelines and 2018 Data Protection Act legislation, by the NTDC team. The data will be analysed to evaluate this version of the survey. All wider project reporting by the NTDC will be done using anonymised data. This will allow us to further understand the technical sector skills gaps at a national level.

NTDC will provide this data to the Organisational Development department at LJMU.

**What are the benefits of taking part?**

You will have the chance to spend time recording your skills and reflecting on your role. You will then receive a copy of your responses which you may find useful for your own personal career development. The goal of this work is to have a positive impact on the career development and progression of all technical staff in higher education. Your feedback will help us ensure that this is achieved.

**How long will it take?**

The survey should take approximately 40-60 minutes of your time. Once you have started the survey you can return to it at any time using your original link. This will allow you to complete the survey in more than one sitting.

**Will there be a progress bar?**

Due to the structure of the survey, there will not be a progress bar demonstrating how far you are through the survey. A progress bar showing you the percentage of questions you have completed would be inaccurate because the selections you make during the survey will not take you through every question.

**Can the survey be accessed off-site?**

Yes. The survey is accessed through Qualtrics, which is available online anywhere.

**What is the union’s position on this?**

The unions at LJMU are aware of the survey and Unison and UCU have responded positively to the survey.

*“I value and understand the importance of technicians and their contribution to the success of the university. The NTDC survey is a platform to provide all technical staff with a voice to highlight their skills, knowledge and aspirations. The results will be used to shape a brighter future for technical staff. I am proud to support the Technician Commitment and encourage all technical staff to engage with this survey.”*

**Tina Purkis, Executive Director of Human Resources**

**How long will the survey be open for?**

The survey will be open for 4 weeks from Monday 26th February 2024.

**Has ethics approval been given for this project?**

This survey constitutes a service evaluation for Technical Services at LJMU similar to other LJMU staff surveys. Any data used outside of Technical Services will be anonymised and Research Ethics Committee review, either at Faculty or University level is not required.

Please see ‘What will happen with my responses?’ above for an outline of what will happen with the data collected in this survey.

**Further information**

If you require any further information or wish to ask any questions regarding this study or the storage of the captured data please contact Jason Boulter, Organisational Development Manager at LJMU (email j.boulter@ljmu.ac.uk) or Ollie Manton, Survey Officer at NTDC (email o.manton@ntdc.ac.uk).

For more information on the National Technician Development Centre, please visit [www.ntdc.ac.uk](http://www.ntdc.ac.uk).

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your responses are invaluable and greatly appreciated.**

* Science: Katie Farrance, Alan Simm, Kehinde Ross
* Engineering and Technology: Ian Fitzpatrick, Alec Robinson
* Health: Sam Fossard, Liam Pope
* Arts, Professional and Social Studies: Lee Browne, Paula McNulty
* Business and Law: Track Dining, Alison Lui
* Library Services: John Germain, Tracy Westergren
* Organisational Development: John Trantom, Jason Boulter