

IMPERIAL

Technician Commitment Steering Group

Tuesday 25 June 2024

09.30 – 11.00

Hybrid: Meeting Room 2, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus and Online

Minutes

Meeting #22

Attendees

Present:

Tim Venables	Institutional Lead for the Technician Commitment (Chair, TV)
Ailish Harikae	People & Organisational Development Consultant (AHR)
Kenneth Keating	Technical Operations Manager, Bioengineering (KK)
Joel Abrahams	Biological Research Officer, Surgery & Cancer (JA)
Naweeda Ahmad	People & Organisational Development Coordinator, POD (NA) <i>Minutes</i>
Rakesh Patel	Head of Maintenance, Property Division (RP)
Russell Stracey	RSM Workshop Supervisor, Materials (RS)
Dr Sharron Stubbs	Senior Laboratory Manager, Infectious Disease (SS)
Angela Williams	Learning and Development Officer, Property Division (AW)

Apologies:

Paul Brown	Mechanical Workshop Instrumentation Manager, Physics (PB)
Allison Hunter	Technical Operations Manager, Life Sciences (AH)
Ellen Pengelley	Interim Head of Business Operations, Bioengineering (EP)

Agreed Actions

- Technicians' Festival 2024:
 - Exhibition rota to be circulated to Members (NA)
 - Breakdown of registrations by Department to be circulated to Members (NA)
 - Registered delegates from the Property Division to be shared with AW (NA)
 - Contact Central Biomedical Services to promote the Festival (JA)
 - Send AW a Festival poster template for printing (AHR, AW)
 - Prepare President Hugh Brady's welcome address (AHR, TV)
 - Ask President to mention the Festival at the next 'In conversation' event (TV)
 - Target teams that have not yet registered (All)
- Request an update on professional registration assessment (SS)
- Reach out to Audrey Fraser in HR regarding PTO salary scale review (TV)

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies (TV)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Paul Brown, Allison Hunter and Ellen Pengelley. The Steering Group recorded its thanks to Teri Barham, interim Apprenticeships and Technician Commitment Lead, and welcomed Ailish Harikae back from maternity leave.

2. Minutes and matters arising from the last meeting (TV)

The Chair confirmed that all actions arising from the last meeting would be updated under Agenda item 3. It was noted the Estates Department was now called the Property Division.

3. Update on Technicians' Festival & Conference 2024 (NA)

Technicians' Conference, 9 July 2024

NA provided an update on the number of registrations received for the Technicians' Conference and the breakdown by Department (where known). In total, 63 Imperial staff and two guests had registered for the one-day event. A link to the [Conference Programme](#) was shared. NA also reported that speakers had been sent a calendar invitation, with the exception of President Hugh Brady, whose participation was being coordinated by TV. Speakers had also received a PowerPoint template for creating presentation slides. NA explained that the slide deck needed to be finalised in advance as the Conference would be live streamed via YouTube.

Technicians' Exhibition, 10 July 2024

The Group was advised that eight exhibitors had been confirmed, including Health and Wellbeing, People & Organisational Development, the Safety Team, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Centre, the Royal Society of Chemistry, HEaTED, the Science Council and Student Services, a photography stall as well as a sweet cart and refreshments. She encouraged members to sign up to a rota to support the Technician Commitment stall for 30-60 minutes, which would be circulated. **(Action: NA)**

Career Development Workshops & Tours

NA told the Group that MS Forms had been used to manage bookings this year, resulting in a higher number of registrations. She shared the number of registrations:

1. How to make yourself Transferable, 12/16 places filled
2. Career Development for Technical Staff, 11/16 places filled
3. Building Engineering Management System (BEMS) workshop, 6/25 places filled

Facility tours were also planned and would take place at the Advanced Hackspace on 10 and 11 July. It was reported that registrations were currently lower than expected and would need to be promoted further.

Actions:

- Exhibition rota to be circulated to Members (NA)
- Breakdown of registrations by Department to be circulated to Members (NA)
- Registered delegates from the Property Division to be shared with AW (NA)
- Contact Central Biomedical Services to promote the Conference (JA)
- Send AW a Festival poster template for printing (AHR, AW)
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5. Technician Commitment: next steps for impact report & action plan (AHR)

AHR reminded the Steering Group that Technician Commitment signatory institutions were required to submit a self-assessment and refreshed action plan every three years to renew their involvement with the initiative. Imperial's next submission was due in January 2025. The

[self-assessment process and format](#) were the same as in previous years and would require us to submit:

- A Red, Amber, Green analysis on the current action plan
- A written report, evidencing the impact of activities
- Details of how Imperial planned to enact the recommendations of the [TALENT Commission report](#)
- A new 36-month plan, structured around the existing four themes of visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability

AHR said she would be gathering impact data and preparing the draft submission over the summer. The Steering Group would then be invited to review the draft at the Autumn Term meeting, and to agree the next action plan. AHR said that she was also planning to run a series of Technician Focus Groups in the Autumn Term, to give technical staff an opportunity to input. Once the Steering Group had approved the Impact Report and plan, these would go to University Management Board (or one of its subgroups), before being submitted to the UK Institute for Technical Skills and Strategy.

6. Update from the London and Southeast Institutional Leads Group (SS)

SS told the Steering Group that re-introducing face-to-face assessments for Professional Registration was an ongoing topic of discussion with partners. SS was herself an assessor and was supportive of establishing a regional assessor pool. She said that she would try to find out where the plan for a Professional Registration assessor pool had got to as the project lead, Stephen Franey (King's College), had been unwell (**Action SS**). SS also mentioned that there were a number of networking events and conferences happening across universities in the Group, and that a cross-institutional event was planned at the Science Museum (date to be confirmed).

7. Any Other Business (TV)

Launch of Career Pathways Action Group (AHR)

AHR made the Steering Group aware that the UK Institute for Technical Skills and Strategy (ITSS) had launched a [Technical Career Pathways Lab](#) funded by Research England to support the development of technical career frameworks for HEIs. They had put a call out for 'pairs' of Senior Technical Managers and HR or Learning and Development professionals to participate in this work through their Career Pathways Action Group. KK and AHR had applied.

Techs Today (AH, NA)

AHR reported that the final 'Techs Today' cross-institutional networking event of 2023-24 had taken place on 12 June. AHR and NA had received some data from the Francis Crick Institute on attendances and feedback and would be reviewing whether to renew the partnership. The Steering Group was encouraged to share any feedback with AHR or NA.

Professional Registration (AHR)

AHR told the Group that Imperial was not able to run its usual annual programme of support for Professional Registration with the Science Council this year, as Stephen Franey (Applicant Support Mentor) had been unwell. However, AHR had secured five funded places for Imperial on the Science Council's new 'application sprint' one-day course, taking place in person on 1 July. Two places had been taken and Steering Group members were encouraged to share the

opportunity with their teams. AHR also flagged that there was a speaker from the Engineering Council at the Technicians' Conference and professional bodies attending the Exhibition.

Assessing & enhancing competencies (RP)

RP informed the Group that he was looking at how to assess and enhance maintenance competencies. He also acknowledged that his team was under-represented at events for the technical community at Imperial. He had encouraged maintenance staff to engage with the Technicians' Festival but had received some feedback that the programme was geared more to those in laboratory-based roles.

Technical staff pay (AW)

AW flagged that pay was an important strand of recognition and wondered whether the Steering Group should represent technicians as part of institutional-level discussions on remuneration. The Chair said that salaries were reviewed and benchmarked on an annual basis and that a review of Professional, Technical and Operational job family salary scales was planned, although he did not know the timeframe for this work. It was agreed that TV would reach out to Audrey Fraser in HR to find out more about the timeframe for the planned review. **(Action: TV)**