An Imperial College Technical Career Structure

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What do you have?

JOB **VS** CAREER

going to work to earn your pay

Progression and wanting more responsibility
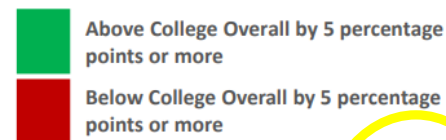
What do you want?

Why the need?

for a specific technical career structure added to the technical commitment?

- Consistent feedback that technical staff don't know how to progress within Imperial, if they can at all

- Technicians often express concern that they feel their roles in Imperial are "jobs" and not "Careers

- a dissatisfaction in the sense of belonging in the college, with the least positive scores

Professional services employees are least likely to know the career progression opportunities available to them

Above College Overall by 5 percentage points or more

Below College Overall by 5 percentage points or more

	Imperial college	Academic & Research (n=1820)	Clinical Academic (n=135)	Clinical Research (n=86)	Learning & Teaching (n=116)	NHS nurses (n=40)	Operational Services (n=304)	Profession al Services (n=2 41)	Technical Services (n=293)
Q15. I know what career progression opportunities are available to me	46%	54%	69%	60%	38%	24%	53%	40%	34%

Learning and Teaching staff (68%) and Operational Services Staff (34%) most likely to feel a strong sense of belonging. Technical Services least likely (53%) Staff 55-65 and over 65 (68% and 75%) most likely to feel a sense of belonging, Staff under 35 least likely (52%)

A little bit of history…

BioEng 'Booklet'

2012
- In response to queries though team members at PRDP KK produces a communication booklet to show skills/competencies and technical career structure
- Positive discussions at Technical Managers forums

PALS

April 2013
- Representatives from various UK universities meet at Bristol to discuss career structure proposal for HEaTED
- HEaTED take the proposal development further and eventually secure funding (Catalyst project)

College

2016 - 2017
- LDC continue to assist in progressing project
- Links with FOGIT career pathway project
- Initial internal discussion with unions etc.

Technical commitment

- 2018+
- Imperial includes action in Technical Commitment
- Interaction with the newly formed and government funded **National Technician Development Centre** (which lead on form the PALS workshop) listed as Partner/affiliate

What is our aim?

It is NOT : to create something new within Imperial!
to alter or review technical pay, JD's or scales

It is:

- to better communicate the technical roles and pathways that **already exist** throughout the college

- Assist technical staff to see the opportunities within college for growth

- Help retain staff, by communicating their opportunities across groups/departments/faculties

"This project aims to develop a clear and communicated framework for technical staff for them to know where they sit within Imperial, with respect to other roles, and to visualise and work towards a career progression route."

It already exists?

Currently on the Imperial website, searching technician, manager:

• Research Technician: NHLI	**2b**
• Research Technician: Dept. of Surgery and Cancer	**2b**
• Research Technician: Department of Medicine	**3a**
• Research Technician in Microbiology	**3a**
• Solar Orbiter MAG Calibration Engineer – Dept. of Physics	**3b**
• Battery laboratory Manager – Dept. of Mechanical Engineering	**3b**
• Teaching facilities Manager – Dep. Of Medicine	**4**
• Minor works project manager – Estates Facilities	**4**

Note: A career is most likely within Imperial and not a single department

Approach

Online tool	Case studies	Workshops	Fulfilment	Monitoring
Accessible tool online range of career paths available to technicians. (with Imperial Career Moves project)	A set of online case studies to support the tool. Displayed online	A Career Moves workshop for those managing technical staff	Fulfilment of the Technician Commitment goal.	Improvement in staff surveys and PRDP's

What could a linear technical career pathway look like?

Technical operations manager	5	
		Deputy technical operations manager
Technical manager	4	
		Assistant technical manager
Laboratory/facility/workshop coordinator	3b	
		Senior Technician
Technician	3a	
		Technical assistant
Aide / trainee	2b	
CPD and assessment points		
Apprentice	2a	
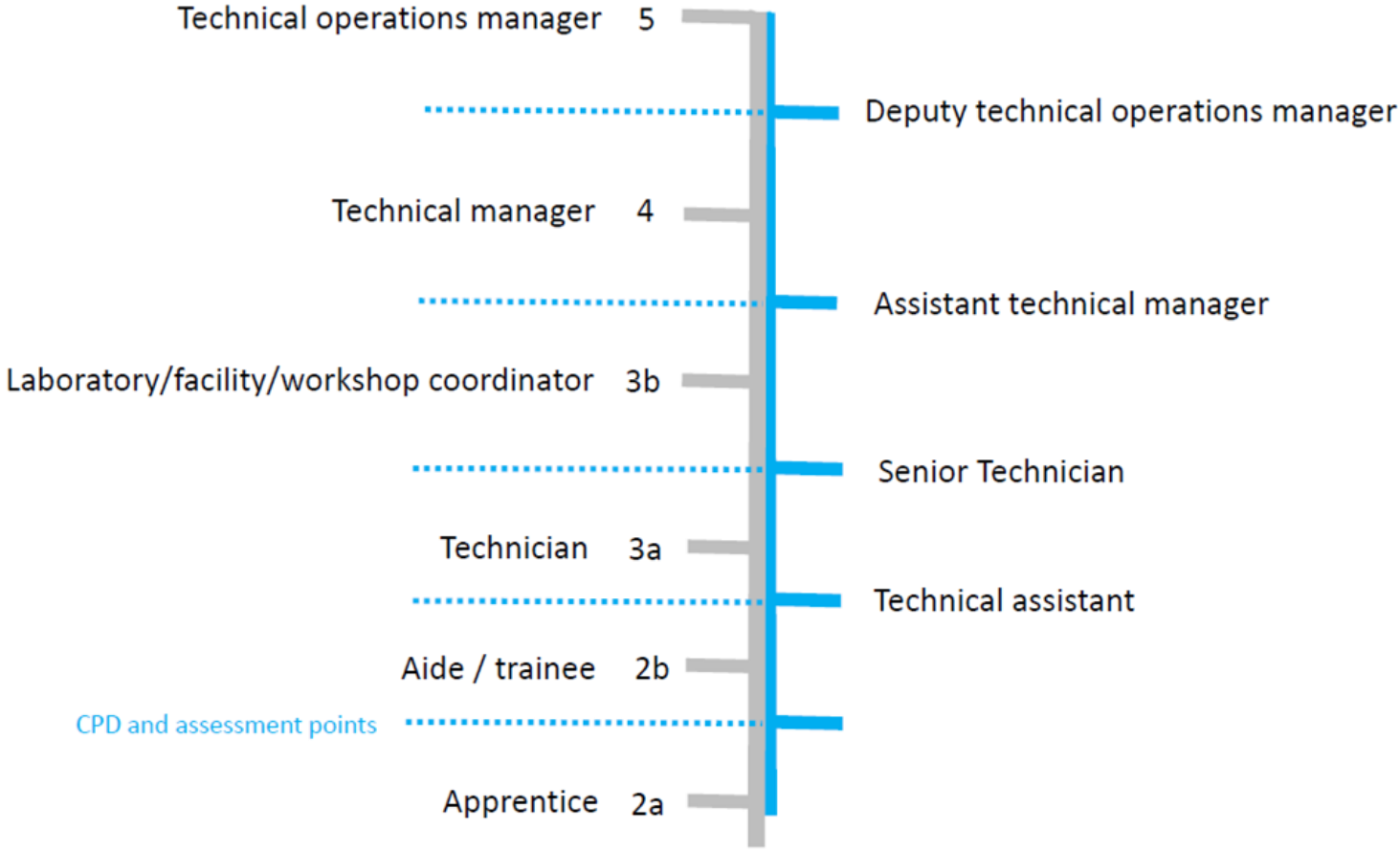
Generalised titles used noting that each individual role will vary

Clearly communicated skills and competences per grade

Trainee, apprentice, aide (Grade 2) - Competencies

First stage Technician competencies
(trainee, apprentice, aide)

Technical support
Providing day to day technical support for laboratories, workshops and specialist areas

Planning
Feedback to supervisor and assist in own work scheduling . Carry out to meet deadlines. Communicating with team members on this

Stock Control
Ensure that central supplies, stock items and facilities are maintained on a day to day basis

Content knowledge
Provide daily support in relevant area of work to all researchers. Assist researchers internally and externally in this area.

Technical team member
A key member of the technical team ensuring that daily activities are carried out and services maintained. Working closely with, and learning from, peers and senior members of the team.

Aim to register within a suitable professional body, obtain RSciTech and continue CPD

Team working
A team player providing front line service and support, working closely with the technical staff

Customer service
Provide good clear and efficient communication and service.

Communication
the ability to listen and express and articulate information and issues effectively.

Performance management
Assisting the technical staff with feedback on how the service is running

Resilience
With support the ability to sustain focus, effort and motivation, often in the face of repeated setback.

Results focus
Getting the job done in an effective way through good communication. Continually developing good time and task management while minimising risk.

Current status: Enrolled National Technical Development centre

- NTDC resources, and including pathway tool, available to us now:

  Created since 2013 by a collaboration between a number of UK institutions, including Imperial, to share a large data set of JD's, competencies and skills required in headline topics:

  - Equipment Management
  - Health and Safety
  - Management
  - Leadership and Strategy
  - Stock control and ordering
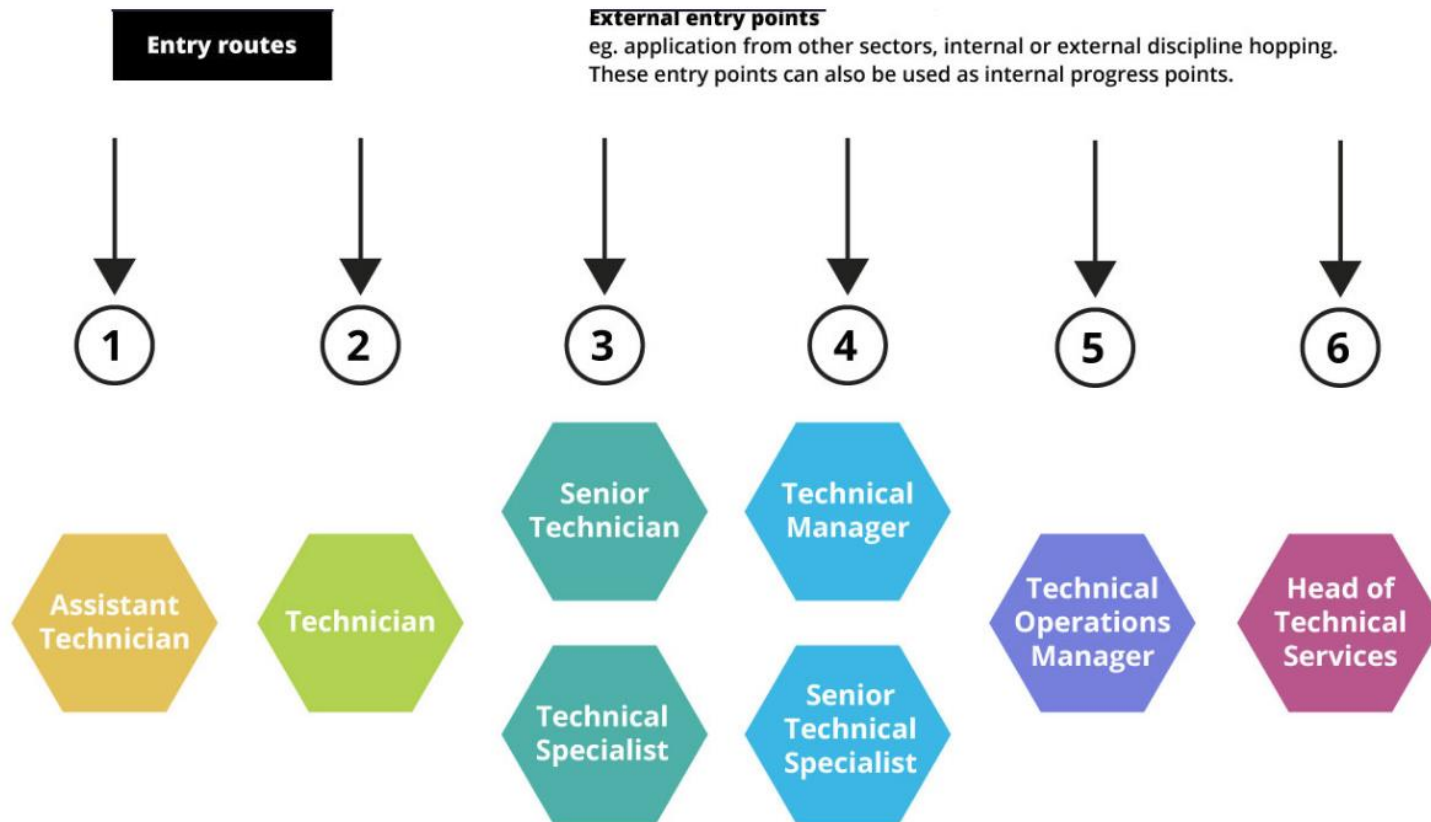 - Facility and Service work
  - Training

National Technician Development Centre

for Higher Education

The NTDC career pathway

National Technicians Development Centre (NTDC)

Entry routes

External entry points
eg. application from other sectors, internal or external discipline hopping.
These entry points can also be used as internal progress points.

1 2 3 4 5 6

Assistant Technician

Technician

Senior Technician

Technical Specialist

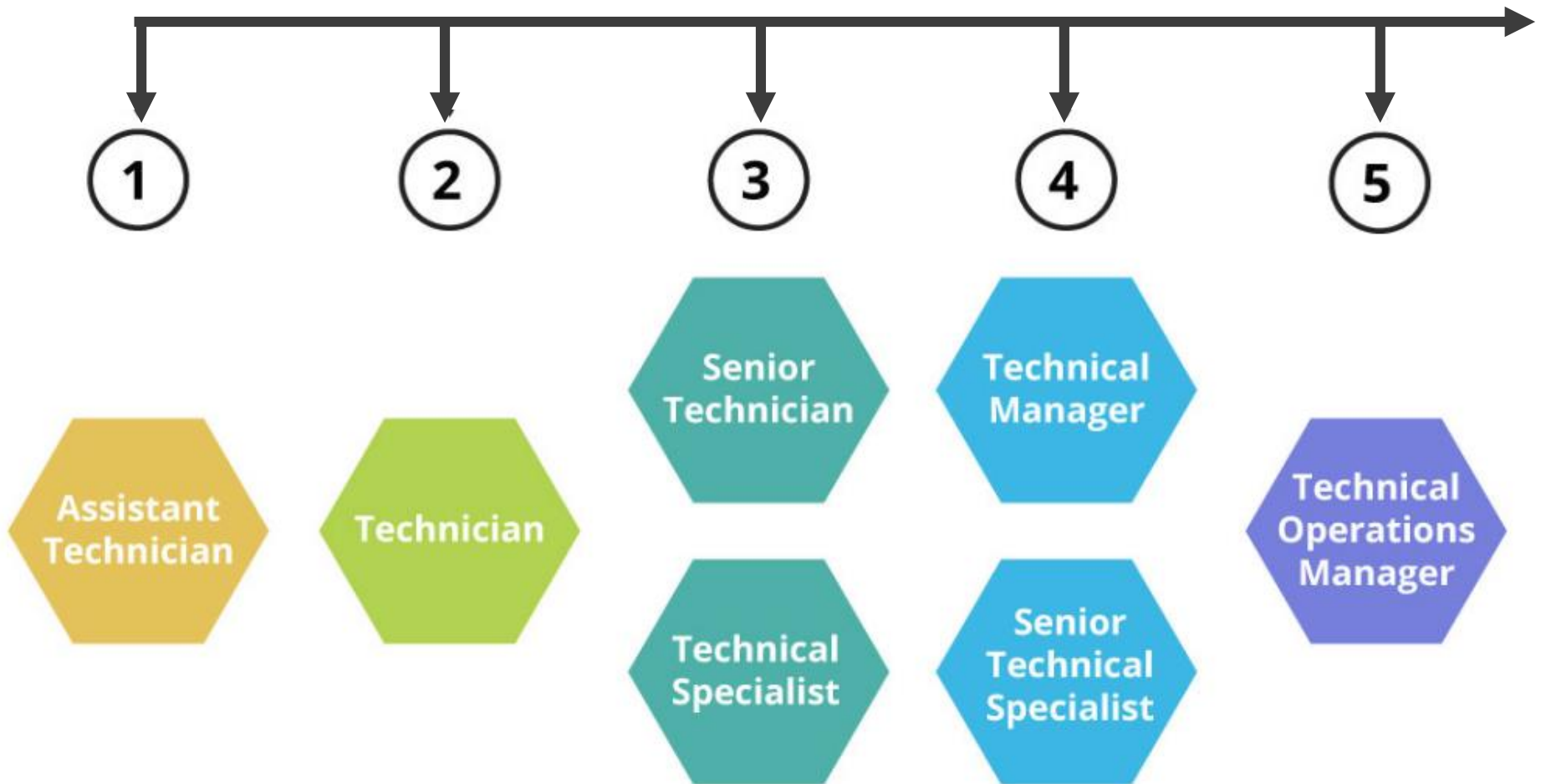Technical Manager

Senior Technical Specialist

Technical Operations Manager

Head of Technical Services

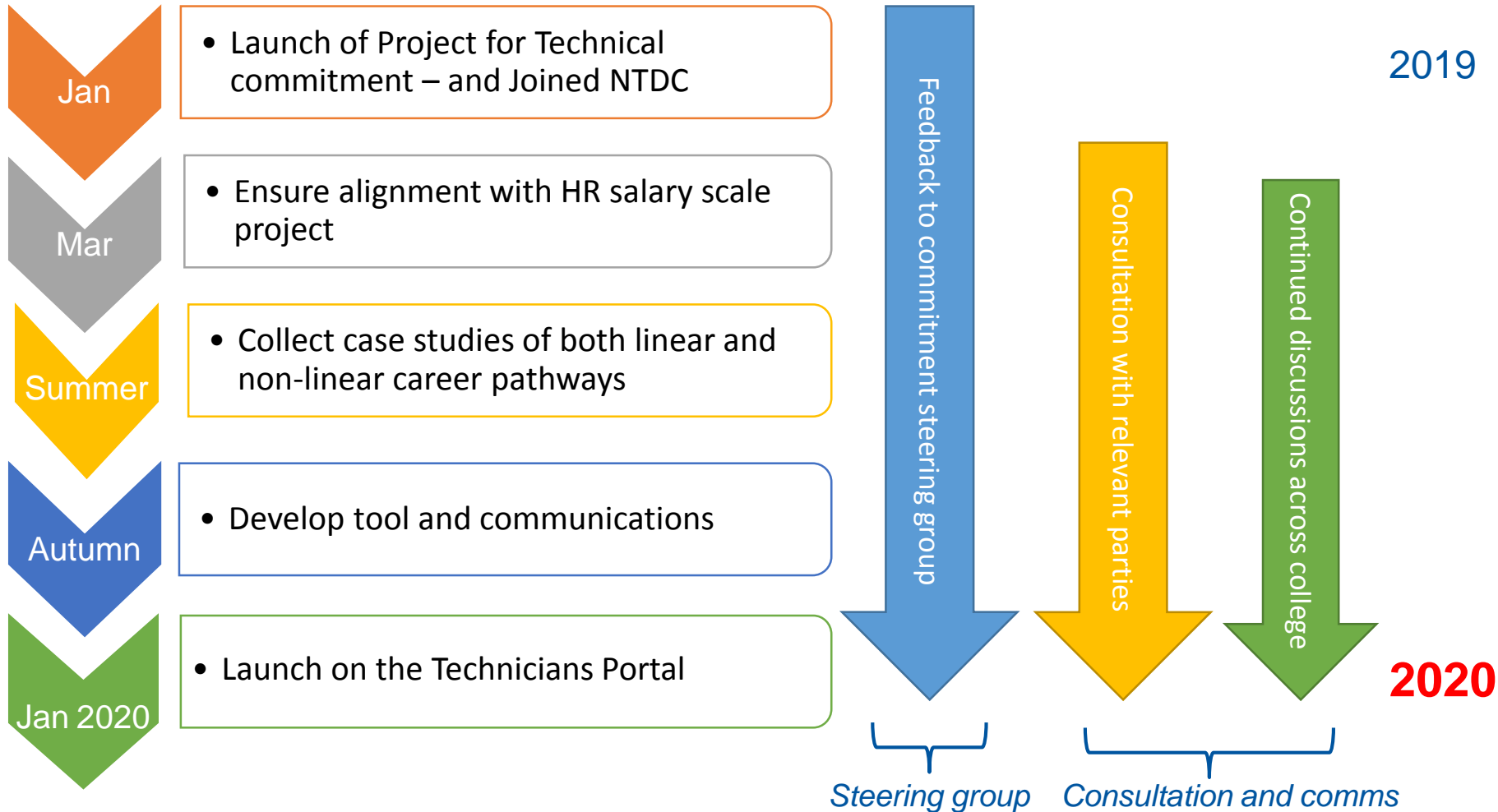A number of routes into the service exist. The Assistant Technician role could provide a convenient entry point for those completing apprenticeships or traineeships etc.

The NTDC career pathway

National Technicians Development Centre (NTDC)

1 — Assistant Technician

2 — Technician

3 — Senior Technician / Technical Specialist

4 — Technical Manager / Senior Technical Specialist

5 — Technical Operations Manager

Our timeline…

Jan	• Launch of Project for Technical commitment – and Joined NTDC
Mar	• Ensure alignment with HR salary scale project
Summer	• Collect case studies of both linear and non-linear career pathways
Autumn	• Develop tool and communications
Jan 2020	• Launch on the Technicians Portal

2019

Feedback to commitment steering group

Consultation with relevant parties

Continued discussions across college

2020

Steering group   *Consultation and comms*

Take home message

The career pathways section of the technical commitment is aiming to:

- Help Technicians to see their relevance within Imperial as a whole

- Assist in technical staff feeling part of a larger technical community with opportunities for growth and development

- Provide clear communication and a tool for technical staff to assess training needs, competencies and transferable skills

- To provide information on non-linear career pathways as well as linear

The project is not aiming to create anything new, just package and communicate what exists to staff.

Any Questions?

Please feel free to contact Ken, k.keating@imperial.ac.uk if you'd like to discuss the career pathway further

Hay Technical Services Job Family Levels

Level 1

Summary: Roles at this level work as part of a team to provide scientific and/or technical support to staff, students and more senior colleagues working on straightforward tasks within well established routines and procedures under regular, direct supervision and sometimes while undergoing formal training.

Level 2

Summary: Roles at this level require specific technical or practical skills and a well-developed working knowledge of technical or scientific practices and procedures acquired through on-the-job and/or through vocational training. Work will involve the application of skills and knowledge to provide a range of technical support activities. Work activities will typically follow an established working pattern. Supervision received is in the form of general guidance on routine work.

Level 3

Summary: Roles at this level display an in-depth knowledge of technical or scientific practices, methods and procedures gained through either experience and/or formal qualification and apply this knowledge to provide a range of technical support activities.

Level 4

Summary: Role holders at this level have recognised technical expertise. They may have supervisory responsibility for a technical service or team, where the primary focus will be on planning, overseeing and reviewing the work of the team and/or will operate as individual technical advisers, supporting teaching or research activity through the provision of specialist support activity.

Level 5

Summary: Roles at this level will have recognised technical OR managerial experience and will EITHER have management responsibility for the delivery of a technical service OR will operate as individual technical advisers supporting teaching or research activity through the provision of specialist activity. Whilst all individuals at this level will be technically up-to-date, individual specialists will be seen as experts.

https://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/salaries-terms-and-conditions/job-family-grading-structure-summary/technical-services/