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Technical Managers' Forum

13 May 2019

Agenda

1. General news and updates
2. Technicians Skill Survey – Background & Key Trends
3. Coffee
4. Group discussion 1
5. Group discussion 2
6. Wrap up

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General news and updates 1

- **THE Technicians' Award**
  - Applications have opened for first ever [Times Higher Education Outstanding Technician of the Year Award](#)
  - Open to technicians working in any discipline in UK HEIs and research institutes
  - Applications close on **5 June 2019**

- **WISE Technician Award**
  - [Nominate an inspiring female technician](#)
  - Applications close on **7 June 2019**

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General news and updates 2

- **Mental Health Awareness Week**
  - Activities across campuses - places still available
  - Please encourage your teams to communicate about the event and participate in activities

- **Craft and Graft Exhibition**
  - Exhibition about the vital work of technicians supporting research at the Francis Crick Institute
  - Runs until **30 November 2019**

General news and updates 3

- **Higher Education Technicians Summit 2019**
  - Free event
  - aims to share best practice and promote a professional identity for technical staff in HEIs and research institutes
  - **25 June 2019**, University of Birmingham

- **Verbal updates:**
  - UBMA Conference
  - Working Towards Professional Registration (Ailish)
  - Mentoring Scheme (Nick)

1. Background

- Developed by the HEFCE-funded **Technical Development and Modernisation** project
  - Three-year research project (2014-2017)
  - Aimed to produce solutions to issues affecting the technical workforce within the HE sector
  - Precursor to **National Technicians' Development Centre (NTDC)**
- Survey was designed to help HEIs **better understand their technical workforce**, identify skills gaps and inform future planning.

2. Survey Distribution

- Imperial ran pilot in **summer 2017**
- Distributed by email link to 750 staff
  - 550 staff in Technical Services job family
  - 200 other staff with technical roles
- **149 responded overall** (response rate of 20%)
- **49 responded from Medicine** (response rate of 19%)
- Too few respondents for results to represent views of technical community at large– but nonetheless a useful snapshot

3. Medicine Respondents

- **Gender**: majority female (78%)
- **Age range**:
  - 14% below 25 years
  - 59% between 26 and 40 years
  - 24% between 41 and 55 years
- **Department**:
  - 41% Surgery and Cancer
  - 35% Medicine
  - 12% NHLI

4. Technical Careers

- Majority of respondents at **level 3a or 3b**
- Career trajectory:
  - **41% have always worked in HE**, 27% worked in industry before, 8% started as postdocs
  - **Not common to move across departments**, even within Medicine: 76% have always worked in same department and role, 12% have been in the same department but different roles, 10% have worked across various departments
- **Career aspiration of many is to become a manager**

5. Education and Skills

- **Highly educated**: 45% have Masters, 20% have PhD
- 24% have a **health and safety qualification**
- 86% using **demonstrating** skills – *but less than half have had formal support or training for this*
- 37% using **teaching** skills and 53% **supporting teaching**
- 84% **supporting research**
- Key areas of expertise: **lab science, use of equipment, animal handling, ICT, clinical skills, bioinformatics**
- Wide range of **personal and pastoral support** being provided by technicians (to colleagues and students)

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6. Support and development needs

Development requested	What College is doing
Interpersonal skills	Promoting existing provision through network e-newsletter
Management skills	ILMDP, Calibre, IMPACT New pilot level 3 ILM Diploma
Health and safety	Request refresher courses-Safety Training Team
Mental health awareness	Promoting MHFA, MHAW Theme for 2019 Network Event

Development requested	What College is doing
Career planning	*Career Moves* Career planning sessions Coaching, mentoring
Mentoring	Faculty of Medicine scheme New PTO scheme
Lack of recognition	Technician Commitment objectives
Training skills	Promote internal resources e.g. Supporting Learning and Teaching programme (EDU) and Training the Trainer (LDC)

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7. Your thoughts on the survey

10 minute discussion in small groups

Does anything stand out from the survey that you feel we need to address?

Group Discussions

Group Discussion 1:

Who do we classify as a Technician?

e.g. do Research Associates count? (many post docs may find themselves going down the lab management route eventually)

Group Discussion 2:

What does the title 'Technician' actually mean?

Should we lose it from job titles or is it important to include?