

De Montfort University Technician Commitment

Action Plan Steering Group - Minutes

Academic Year 2019/20

Minutes	1st meeting of the academic year
Time and date:	Monday 23 rd September 2019, 10.30-11.30am
Location	GH3.57
Present:	David Mba, PVC/Dean (Chair) (DM) Jennifer Penfold, Interim Director of POD (Deputy Chair) (JP) Georgina Hill, Director of Faculty Operations CEM (GH) Marcella Avis, Director of Faculty Operations HLS (MA) Gavin Kew, Faculty Operations Manager ADH (GK) Manbir Singh Sambhi, Technical Services Manager CEM (MS) Warren Pilz, Technician CEM (WP) Randolph Arroo, Professor HLS, (RA) Alistair Duffy, Professor CEM (APD) Ian Coleman, Academic Learning & OD Consultant (IC)
Secretary:	Lou Moore lmoore@dmu.ac.uk , ext: 7091

001 Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair thanked colleagues for attending the first meeting of the Technician Commitment Steering Group, and formally recognised the importance of this work in support of our technicians.

Apologies for absence had been received from Christine White, Angela Ferguson, Lou Moore, Ram Basra

002 Technician Commitment – overview of the work being undertaken at DMU

GH updated the Steering Group on the background to the Technician Commitment which is supported by the Science Council and the Technicians Make it Happen Campaign which is backed by Lord Sainsbury's Charitable Gatsby Foundation.

The Commitment was founded in 2017 so that HEIs and research institutes can pledge their support to their technical work force. The Commitment aims to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for technicians, and by becoming a signatory of the Commitment an institution pledges to take action against the key challenges affecting their technical staff.

DMU signed up to the Commitment in 2018 and in the same year a formal project sitting in the university's strategic programme and project portfolio was founded. The purpose of the "Technician Development and Advancement at DMU" project is to ensure the objectives and principles of the Technician Commitment are delivered and realised at DMU, the focus being on the development and implementation of a technician development framework and the preparation of the Technician Commitment self-assessment submission. At DMU at this stage, the Commitment focuses on faculty-based technicians in ADH, CEM, HLS, and ITMS. Both the Technician Commitment and the Project were formally launched in November 2018.

The self-assessment submission to the Science Council was submitted in the summer of 2019 and had to be accompanied by a 24-month action plan via which the university must demonstrate how it will further its commitment to its technicians. At DMU the action plan is managed by the project board and steered by Technician Commitment Steering Group.

The Self-assessment, 24-month action plan, and Steering Group information can be found on the DMU website. This web page will be developed further with support from MarComms. **Action:** GH to circulate the web link.

003 Technician Commitment Steering Group – Terms of Reference and Constitution

GH informed the Group that further technician members were due to become members. JP supported the idea that after the formal project closes, the project board will become the operations group, the responsibility of which will be to continue to deliver activities 'on the ground' to facilitate technician advancement and development activity. Reference was made to technician input to innovation and technical demonstrators in ITMS; the action plan addresses these points.

The Steering Group approved the Terms of Reference and Constitution.

004 24-month action plan

GK introduced the action plan, and informed the group that senior technicians from the faculties and ITMS had recently met to consider a schedule for the completion of actions.

Consideration by the group was given to the workforce planning elements in the action plan; JP recommended the Project Board continue with this work notwithstanding the fact that DMU is embarking on a workforce planning journey more widely.

The Chair suggested that Apprenticeships need to be given more focus. With reference to Zero Based Budgeting and salaries, the Chair recommended that the Chief Finance Officer be informed of discussions taking place. **Action:** GH to speak to Peter Cross.

The Group also considered there might be an opportunity, when pursuing the IST memberships, to negotiate a discount. **Action:** GK to pursue.

The following 24-month action plan items were discussed.

Steering Group recommendations/specific points to note from the meeting held on 23rd September 2019:	
Action 12. Review of training and development needs identified in MyAppraisal and propose activities that can take a 'joined-up' approach.	The question was posed how we monitor this. JP informed the Group that reporting will be available in the future. GK and the senior team will capture this manually for the time being. IC is also exploring how to evaluate the framework as a whole. Action: GK to reflect this in the action plan and set up system to capture training and development needs.
Action 17. Establish how the contribution of technicians is recognised in publications and impact submissions for REF, acknowledgements in enterprise and the learning experience for TEF.	With specific reference to research and enterprise, we need to ensure technical staff are better included for example citations and also formal buy-out; Research Services and Enterprise Services need to be minded of this. Action: GH to follow up.
Action 18. Strengthen interactions with students via better support/training	PGR students to be included in this, not just taught students. Action: GK to reflect this in the action plan
Action 19. Involve staff in consultation on, for example, new lab spaces, new modules, purchasing new equipment. Technicians to lead on projects.	To ensure this happens, technician engagement needs to take place early on for example at validation stage and formally captured within validation and other relevant planning documentation. Action: GH to follow up and GK reflect in the action plan.
Action 21. Athena Swan and Race Equality plans	Re-word the action: "Technicians to be encouraged to engage in local plans, for example being a role model for under-represented groups." Action: GK to reflect this in the action plan
Action 24. Nominate a Technical colleague to take part in the Aurora Programme	JP confirmed that there will be a call for nominations again during 2019/20.

<p>Action 29. Technicians to be involved in formal stakeholder engagement and communications</p>	<p>Ensure technicians are involved in formal meetings such as the CEM Industrial Liaison Committee. Action: GK to reflect this in the action plan</p>
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005 One year anniversary event, 7th November 2019

GH informed the Steering Group that a small events team had been meeting to make the arrangements for the one-year anniversary of the Technician Commitment and Project launch. DM will be opening the proceedings and Steering Group members will be invited.

006 AoB

None

007 Date of the next meeting

The dates of future meetings will be circulated by the Secretary.

Technician Commitment Action Plan Steering Group

23 September 2019 - ACTIONS

Item reference	Action	Timescale	Lead	Status
002	<p><u>Technician Commitment – overview of the work being undertaken at DMU</u></p> <p>GH to circulate the link to the Technicians page on the DMU website</p>	ASAP	GH	New action
004	<p><u>24-month action plan</u></p> <p>GH to speak to Pete Cross regarding Apprenticeships for Technicians in relation to ZBB and salaries</p> <p>GK to speak to IST to negotiate discount for multiple memberships</p> <p>Action 12: GK to reflect this in the action plan and set up system to capture training and development needs.</p> <p>Action 17: GH to follow up.</p> <p>Action 18: GK to reflect this in the action plan</p> <p>Action 19: GH to follow up and GK reflect in the action plan.</p> <p>Action 21: GK to reflect this in the action plan</p> <p>Action 29: GK to reflect this in the action plan</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>After Nov 2019</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p>	<p>GH</p> <p>GK</p> <p>GK</p> <p>GH</p> <p>GK</p> <p>GH/GK</p> <p>GK</p> <p>GK</p>	<p>New action</p> <p>New action</p> <p>New action</p> <p>New action</p> <p>New action</p> <p>New action</p> <p>New action</p> <p>New action</p>