

Job Description

Senior Technical Services Manager

Salary:	Grade 8
Contract:	Full time, ongoing
Location:	Canterbury
Responsible to:	Head of Technical Services
Responsible for:	Technical Services Teams and Staff
Job family:	Administrative, professional and managerial

Job purpose

The Senior Technical Services Manager will provide leadership and operational oversight for a Technical Services team potentially covering multiple Schools, provide input into overall School strategies and is a key leading role in Health & Safety within the Schools allocated. They will bring together the technical community within each School to deliver an excellent, effective and efficient technical workforce, equipped with the knowledge, skills and training to enhance and enable the educational and research activity taking place there. Working for the Head of Technical Services, the Senior Technical Services Manager will deliver consistent and coherent technical provision and processes for staff, students and visitors. They will also ensure that technical staff within Schools are able to take advantage of the recognition and career development opportunities afforded through the Technical Commitment. The role holder will also need to work with the Heads of IT, Technical Facilities, Operations, Health & Safety, Business Continuity & Incident Management and Estates in fulfilling the role.

Key accountabilities

The following are the main duties for the job. Other duties, commensurate with the grading of the job, may also be assigned from time to time.

- Provide strategic direction and leadership of Technical Services support across the Schools to facilitate the smooth operation of education, research facilities and innovation and administration for all disciplines. This will necessitate a full review of existing provision and the development of an operational plan to ensure that all the Schools' disciplines benefit from parity of provision and that single points of dependency are removed wherever possible thus providing resilience within the team.
- Strategic management of the Schools' technical infrastructure, including all equipment and relevant infrastructure, to meet the operational and technical demands of the Schools' distinct disciplines' education, research and civic mission requirements. The Technical Services Manager will contribute to technical tasks as appropriate but ordinarily they will be discharging these responsibilities with the support of team members.
- Contribute to the running of research facilities as personal expertise and other duties permit. Using best practice to gain an understanding of all of the work that each of the facilities can offer so that this can be communicated on to academic and support staff and external stakeholders.
- Manage all equipment budgets including research facilities budgets ensuring value for money and delivery against the operational and strategic needs of the Schools within the Technical Services and Health & Safety remits.
- Ensure consistent and robust health and safety related procedures are in place across all Schools such that they are compliant with policy developed by the Health, Safety and Environmental Sustainability department so that staff, students and visitors are able to conduct education and research in a safe, effective and compliant manner.

- Engage productively with the Information Services directorate and colleagues in other teams in order to enhance existing working relationships to the benefit of all and participate in communities of professional practice as required.
- In partnership with Estates, the Heads of Operations and other key staff, manage and develop infrastructure to ensure that the Schools' strategic ambitions can be supported through the necessary expansion of spaces to support growth and the continued enhancement of facilities in order to provide an appropriate working environment for all.
- Lead on the technical aspects of major projects (e.g. building refurbishments, moves, transfers and relocations) liaising with key stakeholders internally and externally in order to ensure delivery of efficient and effective services as well as continuity of service.
- Ensure the compliance with University policies and regulations as well as external regulations and law, developing local School policy in the areas of Technical Services and Health & Safety and put in place mechanisms to deliver against those policies and to monitor and ensure compliance.
- Lead, motivate and develop relevant staff, providing clear objectives and managing performance against these, to ensure that staff are appropriately motivated and trained to carry out their responsibilities to the required standards in terms of service expectations.

Key challenges and decisions

The following provide an overview of the most challenging or complex parts of the role and the degree of autonomy that exists.

- As a wide ranging and strategically important role, the post holder is a senior member of the professional services team and will oversee a variety of key activity and need to be able to use their influence and persuasive skills across a range of stakeholders.
- Managing a complex workload with competing demands and deadlines, the role holder will agree objectives and overall priorities with the Head of Technical Services (who will be advised by the Heads of Academic Operations) but is expected to manage the work of their team and/or enter into positive negotiations with stakeholders to ensure targets are met.
- The post holder will use their expertise and experience to identify best practice and strategic opportunities which can be shared with the wider community of practice in order to inform institutional priorities. This also applies to the related Heads of IT, of Health, Safety and Environmental Sustainability, of Business Continuity and Incident Management and for Estates.
- While the role manages one strand of activity – technical services – the term is used to describe one of the most varied and wide-ranging staff groups at Kent. As such the variety of technical skills and range of professional expertise is wide, covering semi-skilled, skilled, academic and expert level staff. Technical staff are both core and grant funded, and roles range across research and research facilities, teaching, stores, workshops and specialist roles. The Senior Technical Services Manager has to provide coherent and effective leadership that brings together this group of staff into one community with a shared goal and common purpose despite these differences.
- The University is going through a significant period of change. As academic Schools are re-aligned under the auspices of the Kent 2030 transformation programme, there will be a significant amount of work required to deliver consistent and coherent processes. These will touch a number of professional services (e.g. Estates, IS, Health and Safety), and Heads of Professions and the role holder will have to negotiate and deliver consistency in the face of likely challenge.

Facts & figures

The Senior Technical Services Manager will be responsible for all technical provision for a number of allocated Schools, managing a multi-disciplinary team of technical staff across a range of academic disciplines. In agreement with the Heads of Academic Schools the Senior Technical Services Managers will be responsible for managing relevant budgets relating to the delivery of technical services. The Technician Commitment includes 4 key areas including visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability of technicians within higher education.

Further Technical Specialisms

The following provide an overview of the most challenging or complex parts of the role and the degree of autonomy that exists.

- Scientific experience in Biosciences and/or Chemistry
- Extensive experience of working in a scientific laboratory environment
- Practical experience of using and maintaining scientific equipment.

Internal & external relationships

Internal: Students, academics and professional services staff within the Schools; as well as staff in other professional services departments.

External: Stakeholders from external bodies including professional bodies relevant to the disciplines in the allocated Schools, suppliers, contractors, consultants, local, regional and national technical networks, industry and funding partners and visitors.

Health, safety & wellbeing considerations

This job involves undertaking duties which include the following health, safety and wellbeing considerations:

- Regular use of Screen Display Equipment
- Repetitive limb movements
- Conflict resolution
- Pressure to meet important deadlines such as might be inherent in high profile projects
- Ability to occasionally travel in a timely and efficient manner between campuses

Depending on the allocated Schools, given that the Technical Services Manager oversees a wide range of technical activity, some limited exposure to the following is likely to apply:

- Noisy working environment (above 80d)
- Working with machinery
- Working with chemicals
- Potential exposure to asbestos or other dusts
- Biological Agents/Scientific Hazards (experiments/lasers etc, and waste/sewage)
- Working with radiation
- Working in confined spaces
- Working at heights
- Exposure to animals
- Contact with Human fluids (blood, saliva etc)
- There may be a requirement to work evenings and weekends

Person specification

The person specification details the necessary skills, qualifications, experience or other attributes needed to carry out the job. Applications will be measured against the criteria published below.

Selection panels will be looking for clear evidence and examples in an application, or cover letter (where applicable), which back-up any assertions made in relation to each criterion.

Essential Criteria:

- Degree in a relevant technical discipline, or equivalent qualification or experience (A)
- Significant experience successfully managing a technical team or an equivalent specialist subject area, proactively delivering positive change and improvements (A)
- A comprehensive understanding of Health & Safety practices and procedures in a technical and/or educational setting. For example, Health and safety law, COSHH, risk management. (A, I)
- Extensive experience of ensuring the safe operation of practical facilities. For example, laboratories, studios, theatres and production environments (A, I)
- Clear understanding of student experience requirements from a technical perspective and a commitment to align University processes and procedure such as to enhance this experience (A, I)
- Significant experience providing technical support to research & innovation projects along with an understanding of the requirements of research facilities and research project funding (A, I)
- Significant experience managing large budgets and financial planning to meet strategic objectives and operational requirements (A, I)
- A successful track record of developing and translating strategic plans and decisions into operational practice, in line with divisional and wider University strategy (A, I)
- Excellent and effective negotiation, influencing and communication skills, particularly the ability to persuade and inspire colleagues to work collaboratively and to explain complex technical concepts to non-specialists (I)
- Ability to produce clear and concise written materials for technically and nontechnically literate audiences (I)
- The ability to think and act strategically and to work both consultatively and at pace (I)
- The ability to enable those at Kent to reach their full potential (I)
- Firm commitment to achieving the University's vision and values, with a passion for a transformative student experience and multidisciplinary, impactful research (I)
- Commitment to deliver and promote equality, diversity and inclusivity in the day to day work of the role (I)

Desirable Criteria:

- Professional registration (A)
- Knowledge and experience within the core subject areas of the recruiting team (A, I)
- A relevant Health and Safety management qualification (A)
- Cognisant of the challenges and strategic issues facing higher education (I)

Assessment stage: A - Application; I - Interview; T - Test/presentation at interview stage