

Technical Skills Survey 2022 – Frequently Asked Questions

Why are we running the Technical Skills Survey?

The University of Manchester has some of the best teaching, research, and technical facilities in the world. These are led, operated, and supported by exceptionally talented and experienced staff with an abundance of sector leading specialist skills and knowledge.

The University of Manchester's Technical Skills and Development Team and the Directorate of People and Organisational Development's Workforce Planning and Talent Team are introducing a Technical Skills Survey to allow us to gain a snapshot of, and to better understand, our diverse technical staff's skills portfolio, career aspirations and development needs. The survey will allow for a clearer understanding of our current and future technical skills and, importantly, provide an opportunity for our technical teams to identify and raise the visibility of their skill base (allowing us to reflect to senior management just what technicians do).

An aspiration of the skills survey is to review and develop collective and individual training plans and to build a skills catalogue to meet the needs of both our technical staff and our institution. Analysis of the data captured by the survey will allow us to better support you in **your** development and career progression.

What is the National Technician Development Centre?

The [National Technician Development Centre](#) (NTDC) is a not-for-profit entity that provides organisations with everything they need to support the delivery of high-quality and sustainable technical services across all sectors. It was established in 2017 by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (now the Office for Students) to provide expertise and tools to the HE and related sectors to create a sustainable future for technical staff and services. This includes increasing the visibility and recognition of technical staff nationally.

What is included in the Technical Skills Survey?

The NTDC's [Technical Skills Survey](#) captures information on every aspect of a technical workforce, from their specialist technical skills to their future career plans and development needs. They have created a bespoke version of the survey for us based on over 3,700 skills, specifically tailored to support, and enable our strategic workforce planning, and to help us get the most out of our technical staff.

[Complete the Technical Skills survey.](#)

Who should complete the survey?

All technical services staff including technicians, project managers, operations, experimental, infrastructure and facilities staff should complete the survey. If you are unsure if you should be included, please check with your line manager or contact: Technician.Commitment@manchester.ac.uk

What will I be asked?

The survey comprises a suite of bespoke questions that have been tailored to find out more about you and your skills (both used and unused), qualifications, career path to date, future career plans and desired development needs. There are also several questions to help us better understand the demographics of our technical staff population.

What will happen with my responses?

Collated and anonymised responses will be analysed by the Technical Skills and Development Team and the Workforce Planning and Talent Team who aim to develop a strategy to address any skills gaps identified, develop collective and individual training plans, and build a skills catalogue to meet the needs of both our technical staff and our institution. Staff will also receive their own custom report to assist in planning their development and career progression.

Where will my data be stored and who will have access?

The skills survey will be conducted using the Qualtrics survey platform by the NTDC. Once complete initial analysis will be undertaken by NTDC with the raw data being transferred to a University of Manchester Qualtrics space for further data analysis. Qualtrics has been evaluated by the Information Governance Office (IGO) and is an approved platform.

Access to the raw data will be limited to NTDC. Bulk statistical data will be anonymised before being shared with the University of Manchester teams.

Will reports of my skills be made available to my manager?

The survey is confidential; your personal information and data will only be seen by you and NTDC. Your manager will only have access should you wish to share it with them. The University will only have access to anonymised data to assist in the identification of current and future skill gaps.

What are the benefits of taking part?

The skills survey will, for the first time, give the University team a true snapshot of our current technical staff skills base, demonstrating both its breadth and depth. It will also allow us to identify areas where we have key skills shortages and consistent themes and trends in our staff development requirements. It will also provide a valuable opportunity for our technical teams to identify and raise the visibility of their skill base.

The information gathered will aid in building career pathways and mechanisms to customise key learning and development needs across the entire technical population.

By completing the survey, you will be entered into a weekly draw to win one of four Amazon vouchers worth £50.

How long will it take?

NTDC estimate that the survey will take less than one hour and can be spread over multiple sittings. The actual duration will vary depending on the number of categories you identify as being relevant to your skills background.

Will there be a progress bar?

The form of the Qualtrics platform will vary depending on the number of categories you identify during the survey. This, combined with the continuous improvement of the platform, means that at this point it is unclear how progress through the survey will be displayed.

Can the survey be accessed off-site?

Yes. The survey is web based and accessed via a personal email invitation.

How long will the survey be open for?

The survey will run for four weeks from August 15 2022.

Has ethics approval been given for this project?

The University of Manchester Research Ethics team have reviewed the project and our intended outcomes and are happy that there are no ethical issues with the survey.

Where can I find further information?

The [NTDC's website](#) has information on the survey with case studies and example outcomes from other participating universities. You can also contact your line manager or email a member of the survey team at: Technician.Commitment@manchester.ac.uk