

# **Understanding Your Technical Workforce Skills, Roles and Responsibility Capture Tool**

# Background

## What are the issues?

- A need for greater strategic technical workforce planning and talent management
- A need for technicians to actively capture CPD to support career planning

For HEIs to take this forward they need a clear understanding of:

- What their technicians actually do (their skills, roles and responsibilities )
- Any skills gaps (current and future)
- The development needs of their technical staff to ensure a professional workforce and opportunities for individual career development

# Our Work

To help HEIs address the lack of understanding about their current technical workforce we have created a **Skills, Roles and Responsibility Capture Tool** - a survey that can capture:

- The breadth of technical skills and level for each staff member, skills they currently use and skills they have but are not currently using
- The breadth of a technician's role and responsibilities e.g. teaching and research support, teaching, management, other internal and external roles

The tool can provide management information at both an organisational and local level as well as provide a detailed report for technicians themselves.

The survey tool has been designed to use as part of a strategic process to support HEIS to understand their workforce.

It provides a pool of questions focusing on roles, responsibilities and skills with demographic questions to support analysis.

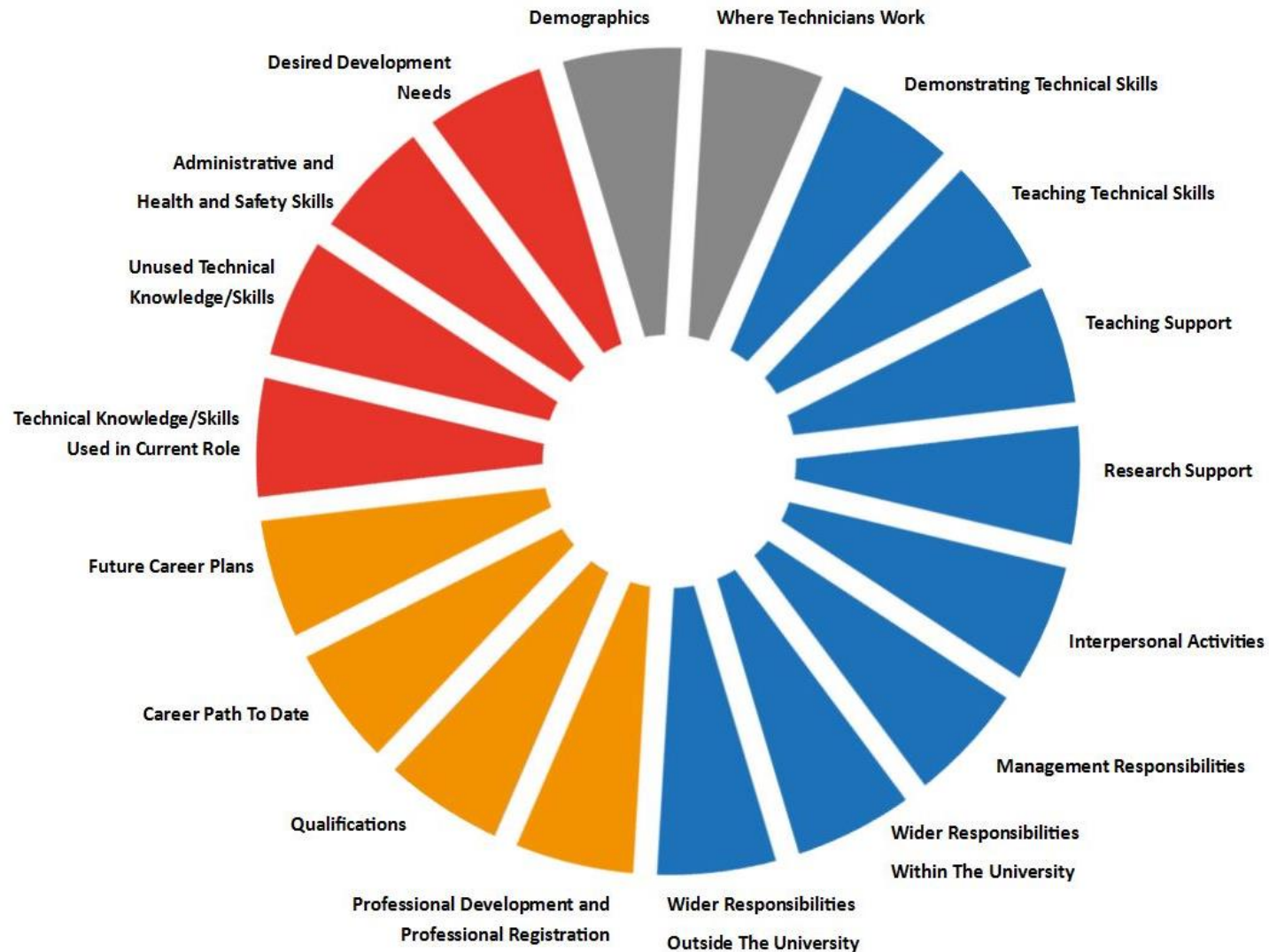
The guidance supports the survey by providing a 'How-to-Guide':

- A process which starts with 'Identifying the need to understand the community', and works through each stage to 'Reporting and action planning'.
- It includes advice on a communication strategy, with supporting tools.

We recognise that each HEI will need to adapt the survey to fit their needs depending on the nature and breadth of information it needs to understand and which questions it wants answers to.

The survey and related processes can be used at an institutional level, or by a faculty or any meaningful business unit.

# Areas covered by the Technician Skills, Roles and Responsibilities Capture Tool



# Approach Taken

## Development of the survey was:

- Informed by previous research and similar work
- Refined through discussion and testing with project and technical management, and staff at Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam, Exeter plus 1 other institution.

## Development involved and reflects the views / needs of:

- HR
- Senior management (well-informed strategic planning)
- Technical / operational managers (what do they want to know?)
- The wider technician community (what do they feel others should know about them and why?)

## Testing in Practice has resulted in:

- Capturing over 2000 technical skills covering all STEAM areas
- An extensive roles / responsibilities section which reflects the breadth of a technician's role

# Testing

## Testing in practice:

The survey has been tested in 3 institutions and will shortly be launched in the 4<sup>th</sup>. Each survey has been run using Qualtrics, a well respected web based survey platform

Using an iterative staged approach, each pilot built on learning from the previous pilot and involved working closely with the local technical community to ensure:

- The roles and responsibilities section captured the breadth of their technical role
- The skills section reflected the skills used across their institution - we have built up a database of over 2000 skills

## Each pilot

- Was run with technical staff involved in teaching research and service management across each institution.
- Enabled the team to test out and improve on the guidance detailing how to use the tool