



UNIVERSITY OF
LIVERPOOL

Technicians Supporting Student Wellbeing Webinar

Thursday 12th November 10am-
12pm

Office for
Students



ofs

Technician
Commitment

#TechniciansCare



Purpose of webinar: To explore with technical managers and the technical workforce the role of technicians in improving research culture, and the mental health and wellbeing of students in particular. This event will report the findings of a [recent report](#) and explore, with the technical workforce, how they can best support each other in providing invaluable pastoral care, whilst looking after the health and wellbeing of the technical community.

10:00 *Welcome, Kate Jones, University of Liverpool*

10:05 – 10:30 **Technicians providing frontline and vital support for mental health and wellbeing**
Maizy Jenner, University of Liverpool
Report overview with opportunity for Q&A

10:30 – 11:10 **Panel discussion: sharing experiences from the technical community**
A series of short presentations that highlight experiences of Technicians supporting on the frontline and the impact of the report. This will be followed by an opportunity for Q&A.
Panellist 1: Rebecca Hoyle, University of Liverpool
Panellist 2: Kerry Truman, Nottingham Trent University
Panellist 3: Heather Reeve, University of Bradford
Panellist 4: Paul Gilbert, University of Liverpool
Panellist 5: Jiteen Ahmed, Aston University
Panellist 6: Valerie Gordon, University of Edinburgh

5 minute comfort break

11:15-11:45 **Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of students and colleagues**
Presentation on general mental health awareness training and resources available from the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust
Jackie Williams, Charlie Waller Memorial Trust

11:45-11:55 **How the Technician Commitment can support and promote the wellbeing agenda within the technical community**
Simon Breeden, University of York

11:55-12:00 **Closing thoughts**
Kate Jones, University of Liverpool

Key Contact

Maizy Jenner, PGR Wellbeing Manager, M.jenner@liverpool.ac.uk,
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Speaker biographies



Kate Jones, University of Liverpool

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Kate is Head of Research Development & Delivery for the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences at the University of Liverpool. She works with the Faculty's APVC for Research & Impact to support the sustained improvement in research administration; driving an inclusive research culture; and ultimately improving our research performance for societal impact. In her role Kate is also responsible for the Faculty's Postgraduate Student Experience Team. Prior to this role Kate was Head of Operations in one of the Faculty's institutes and supported a successful gold Athena Swan award and led an Office for Students & Research England funded catalyst project on PGR Student Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Maizy Jenner, University of Liverpool

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Maizy is the PGR Wellbeing Manager for the Liverpool Doctoral College. Maizy has worked in frontline student mental health support for 6 years working with a range of students from FE to HE level. She started out at the University as the Project Manager for an Office for Students & Research England funded catalyst project with the focus of PGR wellbeing improvement. She has continued the work from this project and elevated it from institute to now institutional level. In her role she is responsible for the University level PGR Peer Ambassador scheme, academic training on PGR mental health and wellbeing, PGR wellbeing training and development, PGR events and PGR wellbeing communications and engagement.



Rebecca Hoyle, University of Liverpool

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Rebecca is currently a 2nd year PhD student based at the Leahurst campus within the Institute of Infection, Veterinary and Ecological Sciences at the University of Liverpool. Prior to commencing her PhD studies, she worked in the Institute as a research technician. During her time as a technician she worked across different sites, within different research groups. Working alongside and supporting students made her increasingly aware of PGR wellbeing issues and the important role technicians can play in supporting these students. This experience led her to applying to become a PGR Wellbeing Ambassador during her PhD to work towards improving and promoting wellbeing, not just amongst her peers but throughout the University community.



Kerry Truman, Nottingham Trent University

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Kerry started working at Nottingham Trent University, then Trent Polytechnic, in 1987 as an indentured technical apprentice in what was the Department of Manufacturing Engineering. He has since developed wide-reaching and detailed knowledge of working within technical education and has a diverse background in hands-on learning and teaching across numerous disciplines; Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, Product Design, Secondary Education Teacher Training, Civil and Construction Engineering.

Some 33 years later and a newly appointed Technical Team Leader with responsibility for 12 technical staff, his core role is to support and deliver practical workshop 'making' sessions for 3000 UG and PG students.



Heather Reeve, University of Bradford

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Heather is a support teaching technician at the University of Bradford within the Chemistry Department. Having been through these exact laboratories as an undergraduate within the last 8 years, she knows how mentally challenging and the support needed within the laboratory for all but specifically those with a hidden disability. After being encouraged by other technicians across the country during lockdown, she put her thoughts onto paper for the Technicians Commitment website in a blog. Here she talks about her experiences of supporting students with mental health, learning difficulties and disabilities to whom she shares her own knowledge and how she made it through to show them it can be done. Experiencing mental health and learning difficulties herself, she knows what it can feel like to be unsupported and she never wants to see a student suffer the way she did.

Paul Gilbert, University of Liverpool

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Paul is the Technical Manager for the Institute of Life Course and Medical Science (ILCaMS) within the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences at the University of Liverpool. His role in ILCaMS is to lead the technical team and provide strategic oversight to all technical operations within the Institute. He is dedicated to raising the profile of technical staff and enabling career development opportunities for all technicians.



Jiteen Ahmed, Aston University

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Jiteen Ahmed is the Head of Technical Services and has worked at Aston University for over 20 years. During this time, Jiteen has provided support for teaching and research laboratories which has resulted in being a named author in a couple of research papers and being named as an inventor on a patent. Jiteen is also the University Radiological Safety Advisor and Radiation Protection Supervisor at Aston University.

Externally, Jiteen represents Aston University at the Midlands Innovations Technical Manager group and at the Southern University Purchasing Consortia (SUPC) Laboratory Group of which he is the Chair of the Laboratory group. Jiteen is also the Chair of the STEMEd National Procurement group and is an advisor for Lab Innovations. Recently, Jiteen has been appointed as a commissioner for the Talent National Policy Commission. Jiteen is a member of the

Institute of Safety in Technology and Research, Royal Society of Chemistry, Association of University Radiation Protection Officers, Technical Managers in Universities and University Bioscience Managers Association.

Jiteen is a champion for the Technician Commitment for the College of Health and Life Sciences at Aston University and is very passionate about the Technician Commitment and its impact of the technical staff at Aston University.

Valerie Gordon, University of Edinburgh

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Val is a University of Edinburgh graduate who began her career in endocrinology and blood transfusion laboratories at Edinburgh's Royal Infirmary. She then moved to virology at St Thomas' Hospital, London and from there on to an HIV research post at Glasgow Vet School. Val next enjoyed a break, first travelling with her husband and working in sunny Sydney, Australia then caring for her 2 daughters who are now both Masters scientists themselves. Val returned to work in a learning support role, gaining primary education experience. This led Val to her current job as a Technical Officer at Moray House supporting primary and secondary teacher training. With a keen interest in personal and professional development, Val is a Fellow of the IST, a Registered Scientist and Professional Registration assessor. Val has also been the Scottish coordinator for HEaTED from 2012 until recently. With extensive knowledge and experience of the technician community, in 2018, Val was appointed as UoE's Technician Commitment action plan coordinator, aiming to improve visibility, recognition, career opportunities and sustainability of knowledge and skills for UoE's 1000 technical staff.



Jackie Williams, Charlie Waller Memorial Trust

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Jackie is an experienced counsellor, mental health trainer, clinical supervisor, and former senior academic. She has over 30 years' experience of working within HE sector both in student counselling and Post Graduate Professional training. She is Consultant Trainer for the Charlie Waller Trust University and Colleges Team. She also facilitates Compassion fatigue workshops as an associate of TEND Academy Canada. She has a passion and strong commitment to normalising Mental health work.

Simon Breeden, University of York, Associate Lead of the Technician Commitment

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After a career in research Simon has been Operations Manager in the Chemistry Department at the University of York since 2012 and has recently also been appointed as Head of Faculty Technical Services for the institution as well as being seconded to the Science Council as Associate Lead of the Technician Commitment. In these roles he has been a passionate supporter of technicians both within and outside of the University of York empowering the teams he works with to deliver excellent technical support and develop skills through continuing professional development. Simon is a passionate advocate for networking and engaging with colleagues at all levels of an organisation, believing that the most effective way to learn is from understanding other's successes and, often his own failures.

