

## Competency Set – Technicians

### **Task-Focused Competencies**

#### **Applying Technical Expertise**

**Definition:** The core purpose of the Technician's role is to provide the technical assistance and guidance to support the conduct of field or laboratory based research. The Technician must possess a wide knowledge of the processes, tools and templates that are deployed in research and experimental work.

**Elements:**

- Expertise around research methodologies and the technologies that support them.
- Knowledge and expertise in setting up and maintaining the technical protocols for experiments.
- Knowledge and expertise in equipment use and calibration.

**Behavioural Anchors:**

- Demonstrates a wide knowledge of the techniques, processes and technology that underpins applied research.
- Demonstrates a robust understanding of a range of research methodologies.
- Possesses an extensive knowledge of equipment and machine protocols.
- Sources, sets up and maintains equipment to a high standard.
- Uses IT and Computer Applications effectively to support the research process.
- Provides technical advice and assistance to those conducting research.
- Advises on the technical aspects of research protocol.

#### **Analysis and Decision Making**

**Definition:** The Technician must possess the intellectual capacity to rigorously analyse and evaluate the adequacy of methods and protocols. He/she must be of a logical and data driven disposition.

**Elements:**

- The ability to accurately process data and turn it into meaningful information.
- Evaluating the adequacy of methods, protocols and equipment performance.
- A logical and critical appraisal faculty for the evaluation of equipment, technology and methods.
- Willingness to make a technical call on issues.

**Behavioural Anchors:**

- Critically analyses and evaluates the adequacy of experimental protocols, methods and tools.
- Analyses, evaluates and interprets experimental and research data from a methods perspective.
- Recommends the use of specific methods and tools for a particular research purpose.
- Analyses and evaluates equipment specifications and features.
- Critically appraises and evaluates the work of students.
- Appraises and sets the performance of equipment.
- Problem solves experimental issues in an incisive way.

### **Focus on Quality and Compliance**

Definition: It is critical that the Technician's work is of the highest quality. He/she must be consistently conscientious and precise in their approach to work and comply with all relevant procedures.

Elements:

- Being conscientious and methodical in delivery of work.
- Ensuring compliance with procedures.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Works with a high level of precision and attention to detail.
- Demonstrates a methodical and thorough approach in following through on work activities.
- Ensures that core process are conducted to the appropriate guidelines and standards.
- Takes great care in the calibration and maintenance of equipment.
- Ensures that all working practices are compliant with health and safety regulations.
- Follows procedures, instructions and protocols in a rule and method compliant way.
- Delivers work activities to the appropriate quality standards.

### **Writing Skills**

Definition: The Technician must carry out a range of structured and precise writing activities including protocol documentation, activity recording equipment specification and procedural guides. There is a requirement for this work to be done to high standards of conciseness, clarity and precision.

Elements:

- Constructing clear, succinct well structured documents.
- Ensures that protocols and standard operating procedures are precise and clear.
- Writes proposals and technical specifications in a comprehensive manner.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Writes in a clear, concise and accurate way.
- Writes proposals that are succinct, well informed, focussed and persuasive.
- Writes memos and reports in a succinct and timely way.
- Keeps adequate written records for administrative purposes.
- Writes out protocols, specifications and instructions in a clear, accurate and easily understood format.

## **Interpersonal Competencies**

### **Training and Technology Transfer**

Definition: Technicians need to ensure that they convey the benefits of the methods, technology and their applications using formats including workshops, and seminars. They must develop effective tools and templates to enhance the application of this technical information.

Elements:

- Showing a commitment to communicating the technical aspects of research and their benefits.
- Creates frameworks, tools and templates to support methods dissemination in a practical and effective way.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Explains methods and techniques in a clear, logical and systematic way to others.
- Documents the core processes and key stages in projects so that they are transparent and can be better understood by others.
- Summarises experimental methods and protocols in a way that is easily understood by others (contributes to publications and papers).
- Lays out, and effectively demonstrates methods so that they can be practically applied by others.
- Proactively organises events and opportunities to disseminate knowledge and applications to others.
- Looks out for new opportunities to apply methods and expertise.

### **Informing and Communicating**

Definition: Technicians need to ensure that they convey their messages in a clear and accessible way for a wide range of audiences.

Elements:

- Clear and concise communication.
- Adapting style to suit audience.
- Listening and clarifying.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Imparts information to others in an accurate and timely way.
- Communicates in a clear and concise way.
- Takes the time to clarify and check the understanding of others.
- Listens well to others and checks back to ensure full understanding.
- Easily finds the right communication level for different audiences.
- Follows up diligently on electronic communication (e.g. doesn't make assumptions that communication is effective).
- Communicates efficiently by using a variety of methods (oral, phone, electronic etc).

### **Teamwork and Collaboration**

Definition: Technicians need to adopt a positive and flexible approach to working within others.

Elements:

- Adopting a supportive and open approach to others.
- Working flexibly to achieve 'win-win' outcomes.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Respects, values and appreciates the views and contribution of other team members.
- Provides assistance and support to others on the team.
- Shares information readily.
- Consults others on a frequent basis.
- Adjusts his/her approach to fit in with the work style and activities of others.
- Addresses disagreements and conflict openly and positively.
- Is prepared to compromise to achieve 'win-win' solutions.

### **Building Relationships and Networking**

Definition: The Technician works within a multi-disciplinary environment where effective work is enhanced by building up a wide variety of networks and working relationships. He/she must be skilful at both building and maintaining effective working relationships.

Elements:

- Building effective working relationships with others.
- Builds a network of contacts.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Looks out for opportunities to build relationships with colleagues from other disciplines.
- Easily develops rapport and understanding with others.
- Is persuasive in eliciting full cooperation from others.
- Builds up a network of contacts across the organisation and the industry.
- Builds a good mutual working understanding with suppliers and contractors.

## **Personal Qualities Competencies**

### **Personal Mastery and Resilience**

Definition: The Technician is frequently managing multiple priorities. They need to be able to find ways to work smarter rather than longer and to develop positive ways of coping with pressure. They need to be able to sustain performance and composure when under demand.

Elements:

- Managing themselves effectively by focusing on priorities.
- Being resilient under demand levels.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Maintains a positive performance level when working under high demand.
- Adopts a positive, “can- do” mentality to work.
- Maintains composure when working under heavy demands.
- Keeps calm and collected in a crisis or when experiments go wrong.
- Remains calm and self-disciplined in difficult interpersonal situations.
- Responds in a professional way to criticism and learns from feedback.
- Uses effective means to manage work – life balance.

### **Drive and Action Orientation**

Definition: The Technician must provide input on a range of projects and activities. He/she must be proactive, results focused and determined to develop his/her contribution.

Elements:

- Focus and determination to achieve results.
- Energy and initiative in application.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Delivers the most critical work to high time and quality standards.
- Puts most attention and effort into the most important aspects of the job.
- Shows a focus and determination in pursuing key goals and targets.
- Critically measures and evaluates own contribution on a regular basis.
- Engages in their work with enthusiasm and energy.
- Adopts a positive ‘can-do’ mentality and works on own initiative to progress issues.
- Proactively handles issues (rather than waiting to be told what to do).

### **Continuous Professional Development**

Definition: Keeping abreast of current and leading edge trends and thinking is important to the contribution of the Technician. They need to invest time updating their knowledge base and expertise.

Elements:

- Pursuing professional development.
- Investing time in the Personal Development Planning process.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Keeps up to date with recent technical developments in his/her area.
- Maintains an active interest in new developments in relevant areas.
- Puts time into updating own knowledge base and expertise (ensures that he /she maintains a high level of accreditation and personal certification).
- Identifies and effectively follows through on relevant development plans from the PMDS process.
- Takes an active interest in the work of colleagues and other research projects.
- Maintains an awareness of the broader research agenda within Teagasc.
- Attends learning events and seminars and actively contributes.
- Practises new skills until they are well honed.

### **Flexibility and Adapting to Change**

Definition: On a day-to-day basis Technicians need to be adaptable in dealing with changing requirements and shifting priorities. In addition they need to be open to new service initiatives, the introduction of new systems and processes or other organisational changes.

Elements:

- Openness to change.
- Adapting to change.
- Providing suggestions for improvement.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Adopts a positive approach to change and new challenges.
- Tries new ways of working with an open mind.
- Adapts work style and pattern to meet changing circumstances or demands.
- Shifts fluently and quickly from one activity or priority to another.
- Responds quickly to urgent demands or needs.
- Helps others to adapt to change and new challenges.
- Actively looks for new challenges and better ways of doing things.