University of Edinburgh - Job Description

1. Job Details

Job title: Technical Services Manager 009

School/Support Department: Management Information Services

Unit (if applicable): Technical Services, part of Development Services Group

Line manager: Assistant Director, Development Services Group

2. Job Purpose

The Technical Services Manager has primary responsibility for the development and support of the MIS corporate applications infrastructure. This infrastructure is fundamental to the delivery of the corporate applications which support the University’s business activities.

3. Main Responsibilities

1. To ensure the appropriate corporate applications infrastructure is able to deliver the corporate applications used to support and enhance the University’s business activities. The Technical Services Manager has day to day change control authority for all elements of the corporate applications infrastructure.  

2. To provide overall line management, leadership and focus for the Technical Services Team and ensure staff have a supportive and enabling environment in which they can work effectively whilst achieving a high degree of job satisfaction.

3. To contribute directly to project delivery in a senior technical capacity advising on most appropriate use of infrastructure to achieve business requirements, technical architecture and specialist resource requirements. This is a key role for all projects and particularly critical and/or high profile projects where technical architectural issues are a vital consideration.

4. Develop and maintain appropriate technical/operational standards and quality assurance processes for monitoring team output and ensuring delivery of tasks to agreed standards and within deadlines and budgets.

5. To work closely with senior colleagues in the Development Services Group and MIS to promote and maintain the successful operation of the department.

4. Planning and Organising

- Overall responsibility for the management of the Technical Services Team with particular focus on: leadership, goal-setting, coaching/mentoring, training, appraisals, promotions, recruitment, team building, team identity and working environment.
- Assist the Assistant Director Development Services with detailed and strategic planning including budgeting and financial management.
- Management and planning input to project and service activities managing both own workload and co-ordinating internal and external staff inputs to achieve agreed objectives. For example the implementation phase of projects will typically require participation from staff from across MIS, Computing Services and key business representatives.
- Full contribution to the MIS annual planning process, particularly but not exclusively the Infrastructure business area, producing project proposals and providing primary input on technology and resource estimates.
- Co-ordinating research and development and encouraging innovation to ensure continuous service improvement.
• Monitoring team output to ensure delivery of project tasks to standards within agreed deadlines and budgets.

5. Problem Solving

• Identifying and deploying innovative ways in which technology can be used to continually improve services to customers, e.g. upgrading MyEd to utilise EASE authentication or implementing DNS round robin based load balancing. This is a critical requirement of the role.
• Fault investigation and resolution to deal with performance or other critical service issues, e.g. identification and resolution of MyEd performance during matriculation in October 2005. Success demands both strong technical knowledge and management skills to utilise other key inputs from customers, management, MIS support staff and Computing Services.

6. Decision Making

• The post holder operates with a large degree of autonomy and day-to-day problems are generally handled within the remit of the role, with only more serious issues being escalated to the Assistant Director Development Services for direction/decision as required. To support this process MIS have developed procedures and guidelines, for example Production Services Change Control and Daily Infrastructure Monitoring, which cover most regular team activities.
• Advising on technical priorities for effective budgetary, operational and strategic management. Additionally deputising for the Assistant Director Development Services at internal and external meetings negotiating MIS operational decisions.
• Leading the recruitment and selection process for team members and participating in selection panels for other MIS and University departments.
• Direction and support on strategic issues and longer term priorities is provided by the Assistant Director Development Services via regular face to face communication and formal meetings sometimes with input from other key senior internal and external staff.

7. Key Contacts/Relationships

• Representing MIS in meetings with senior staff and committees across the University e.g. College Computing Committees and ITC Working Parties
• MIS Project Managers and, senior University staff, to review technical issues ensuring at all time that customers remain informed and aware of relevant business and project impacts rather than confused by unnecessary technical detail.
• External suppliers to review hardware, software and service offerings, organise training courses, software evaluations etc.
• Regular liaison with Senior MIS colleagues Applications Support and Customer Services on issues relating to the delivery of production services.
• Edinburgh University Computing Services staff, in particular Unix Facilities Management and Network Services, to review service issues and plan project deployments etc.
• Regular formal liaison with key internal customers with pro-active issue reporting and implementation of corrective action as required
• Leading a committed team of highly skilled staff requires technical and personal credibility, maturity and excellent negotiating skills.

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job

• Degree or equivalent qualification
• Very strong technical competence with a minimum of five years experience working as a Senior System Administrator in a production environment.
• A minimum of two years of proven team leading or management experience managing a team of highly technical staff.
• Good understanding of all University preferred technology components and active interest in technology developments.
• Strong verbal, written, communication and presentation skills with the proven ability to successfully interact with and produce both written and verbal reports to senior non technical staff.
• Knowledge of the structure and business requirements of the University combined with the vision and ability to successfully apply a broad range of technology solutions to bring business benefit to the institution
• Knowledge of project management procedures and methodologies.
• Confidence and flexibility to often work under significant pressure to deliver effective and high quality solutions.

9. Dimensions

The post holder is directly responsible for:

• Managing the Technical Services team of 6 staff
• Managing non-staff budgets with value in excess of £300K per annum.
• Server estate of >30 UNIX database and applications servers with >3 TB of critical University data across >70 business applications.
• Maintaining services, with target of 24*7 availability, for > 35000 MIS customers
• Providing technical guidance to >30 development and support staff in MIS.
• Technical Services resource provision and technical architectural design for the vast majority of MIS projects – typically >60 projects per annum.
• Ensuring that change management and control is enforced across the Corporate Infrastructure and standards and procedures are adhered to.

10. Job Context and any other relevant information