Change One Thing: An Introduction to Action Research for Technicians

Tim Savage Consulting
Technical Learning. Strategic Impact.

About Your Trainer

Dr Tim Savage is a leading authority on technical education and workforce development in higher education. With over 25 years' experience at the intersection of technical teaching and learning, academic strategy, and institutional governance, leadership, and management, Tim brings unrivalled expertise to his consultancy and training.

As an AdvanceHE Principal Fellow (PFHEA), Tim's work has shaped national and institutional approaches to recognising, developing, and integrating technical staff into the heart of teaching, learning, and research. As a TALENT Policy Commissioner (UKRI), a member of the Technician Commitment Steering Board, and an Advisor to the UK Institute of Technical Skills and Strategy, he has contributed to national recommendations on the future of the technical workforce in higher education.

Tim's leadership credentials include his role as Director of Technical Learning at the University for the Creative Arts, where he built and led an award-winning team, recognised as the *Best Technical Team in UK Higher Education* at the Higher Education Technicians Summit. His teams have been recognised for exemplary sector-leading practice delivering outstanding outcomes in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and contributing to positive Graduate Outcome Survey (GOS) success through transformative technical teaching and institutional practice.

Tim's educational approaches are built upon his successful teaching career, having taught at West Dean College since 2003, where his courses have been recognised in the Adobe Educators Global Choice Awards and translated into pedagogic textbooks.

As a published researcher and speaker, Tim's work focuses on technical teaching, professional identity, and pedagogical development. His forthcoming book, "Technical Teaching in Higher Education," published by Routledge in 2026, builds upon and extends his doctoral research, that explored and conceptualised how technical staff teach and support learning.

About This Course

This practical one-day course introduces technicians and professional staff to action research and reflective practice, equipping them with tools to improve their work and evidence their impact.

The course presents a real-world authentic case study and uses it to introduce attendees to the ITDEMS model of action research (Identify, Think, Do, Evaluate, Modify, and Share) before guiding them to apply it to their own professional context. Participants will reflect on their current practice in relation to learning, teaching and research, explore opportunities for meaningful, small-scale change, and develop the confidence to design, implement, evaluate and share their own intervention. The course facilitates a culture of curiosity, reflection, and continuous improvement, equipping participants with a structured, empowering approach to professional development and educational enhancement.

Who is it for:

- Technical staff
- Library and learning support staff
- AV/IT and digital learning teams
- Early career academic-related professionals
- Anyone curious about educational research in universities but unsure where to start.

Outcomes:

- Reflect on their own professional context to identify an area of practice for meaningful improvement;
- Use the ITDEMS model to structure and undertake a small-scale, practice-based intervention;
- Gather evidence and evaluate the effectiveness of their change;
- Articulate the rationale, process, and impact of their intervention with clarity and confidence;
- Recognise how reflective practice contributes to professional growth, student outcomes, and positive educational culture.

Lesson Plan (indicative)

Introduction ■ Discussion/debriefing ■ Break ■ Reflection ■ Activities

Time		Session
9:30 AM		Introduction: Welcome & Orientation
9:50 AM		Action Research In Theory: ITDEMS
10:20 AM		Action Research In Practice: Technician Case Study
11:00 AM		Break
11:15 AM		Action Research As A Framework For Career Development
11:25 AM		Step 1: Your Project: Identifying a Problem/Paradox/Issue/Difficulty
12:10 PM		Step 2: Thinking Of Ways To Tackle The Problem
12:30 PM		Lunch Break
1:30 PM		Research Ethics
1:50 PM		Step 3: Creating & Implementing A Research Plan
2:25 PM		Step 4: Evaluating Your Data
2:55 PM		Break
3:10 PM		Step 5: Modify Future Practice
3:20 PM		Step 6: Sharing Your Findings
3:35 PM		Closing Session & Next Steps
4:00 PM		End

Client Benefits

This course promotes a culture of critical reflection, continuous improvement and sharing best practice. Benefits to institutions and individuals include:

- **Improved Teaching Quality:** Empowers non-academic staff to enhance learning environments and student experiences through evidence-led practice.
- **Cultivates a Culture of Continuous Improvement:** Builds institutional capacity for reflective, agile practice across professional services.
- **Bridges Academic and Technical Worlds:** Brokers shared language, pedagogical understanding, and collaborative working between staff groups.
- **Accelerate Improvement with Actionable Strategies:** translates data insights into practical, evidence-led interventions that drive immediate gains in student satisfaction within technical resources.
- **Empower Evidence-Based Decision Making:** builds confidence in analysing NSS data and qualitative insights, enabling leaders to make strategic choices about investment and resources.
- **Enhance Recognition and Career Development**: helps technical staff articulate their impact, supporting professional recognition, progression pathways, and institutional visibility.

Extension Options

Optional additions (by negotiation):

1. Follow-Up Coaching Package

- **Offer**: One-to-one or small group coaching (online) after the course to support implementation.
- **Structure**: 2–3 monthly 60-minute sessions.
- **Value**: Increases success rates and embeds reflective practice.

2. Action Research Project Review & Feedback

- **Offer**: Written or recorded feedback on participants' drafted research questions, ethics reflections, or final reports.
- **Structure:** Half-day or full-day sessions.
- **Value**: Supports confidence, sharing best practices, and scholarly dissemination.

3. Showcase Event / Internal Conference

- **Offer:** Curated presentation day where participants share findings and impact stories, with optional keynote.
- **Value:** Celebrates success, boosts visibility, aligns with TEF/NSS ambitions.

4. Professional Recognition Support (AdvanceHE Fellowship)

- **Offer:** Coaching to link participant action research to AFHEA/FHEA/SFHEA/PFHEA applications.
- **Value:** Aligns with institutional KPIs and individual development.

Prices and Delivery

1. Pricing

- **Development packages start at £1,495 per course** (plus reasonable travel and accommodation expenses if required).
- **Flexible/blended delivery:** via negotiation.
- **Value**: Save 10% when booking three or more courses within 12 months

2. Tiered Options

Each course can be booked as a standalone workshop or scaled up through extension options:

- Core course: one-off delivery (in person, online, or blended)
- Enhanced package: Core course plus two extension options (e.g. coaching, clinics, or deep diver workshops)
- Institutional package: Core course (s) plus four or more extension options, with tailored institutional report or showcase event to maximise visibility, impact, and leadership alignment.

3. Extension Options

- Coaching, workshops, reviews, showcase events, reports — priced by negotiation.
- Can be combined flexibly into Enhanced or Institutional packages.

4. Delivery

- **Group size**: Courses can be delivered to groups of up to 14 participants.

5. Contact

For availability, bespoke packages, and booking details:

- **Website:** www.timsavageconsulting.co.uk
- **Email:** tim@timsavageconsulting.co.uk
- **Telephone:** 07956 663 275