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King’s is committed to encouraging, supporting and delivering development for staff throughout the university using a wide range of learning opportunities. Work shadowing is an excellent self-development tool, which provides an opportunity for career development, networking and sharing best practice. Work shadowing has many potential benefits for King’s. It can help improve communications across departments, directorates and faculties.

This guide is for members of staff interested in gaining a better understanding of another role within the university and aspects of the work involved in it. These guidelines are designed to provide clear step-by-step instructions of work shadowing to ensure it is a valuable and enjoyable experience. A planning tool and evaluation form have also been designed to complement this guide.

**What is Work Shadowing?**

Work shadowing is an opportunity to work alongside another individual for a period of time, in order to gain insight into their role or department, learn from a more experienced colleague, and enhance performance. It can be used as a networking tool and an opportunity for sharing best practice.

The type of shadowing can differ depending on the objectives for the experience. This guide is designed to be flexible so that objectives and practicalities can be discussed and decided between the shadow and host beforehand to ensure both parties get the most out of the experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Shadowing Principles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Opportunity to take part in a learning exchange</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Learning method to enhance personal development</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Fully inclusive scheme open to all</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ No direct costs or payments to be involved</td>
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# Benefits of Work Shadowing

Work shadowing has a number of benefits for King’s as an organisation, for the individual Shadow and their Host.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>King’s</strong></th>
<th><strong>Shadow</strong></th>
<th><strong>Host</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Development of Shadow and Host</td>
<td>• Gain insight into the roles and responsibilities of other members of staff and other departments</td>
<td>• Network with colleagues from different areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sharing best practice</td>
<td>• Reflect and learn from the experiences of colleagues</td>
<td>• Share best practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Networking tool – facilitate the breaking down of internal barriers across the organisation</td>
<td>• Networking</td>
<td>• Review and reflection on work practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve communication across departments, faculties and sites</td>
<td>• See the bigger picture and understand more about how the university functions</td>
<td>• Develop mentoring skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Different perspectives</td>
<td>• “Test out” possible career options</td>
<td>• Learn from the experiences of colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inclusive culture - gaining fresh perspectives from diverse range of people</td>
<td>• Clarity on career opportunities</td>
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Key Roles

**Shadow**
A Shadow needs to firstly consider how and what they hope to achieve from a shadowing assignment. They are responsible for discussing and updating their manager, arranging the shadowing assignment, updating the Organisation Development team and ensuring their work is not impacted by preparing a time planner in advance. The Shadow also needs to report on their experience by completing a reflection log. The Shadow has overall responsibility for arranging and coordinating their assignment.

**Host**
The Host is responsible for planning, preparing and carrying out key shadowing activities, which will provide the Shadow with learning opportunities. This involves completing and agreeing an activity and time planner and ensuring the assignment is structured and time bound. A Host should consider the time they have available to dedicate to the assignment and they should choose activities that would provide the best experience for the Shadow.

**Manager**
The line manager should firstly discuss the objectives, key activities and timelines with their team member who is undertaking the work shadowing assignment. They should consider if work shadowing is relevant to the Shadow’s work or development and if it fits in with their workload and commitments. Line managers should provide guidance on possible Hosts or set up the shadowing opportunity using their internal and external network. However, the Shadow is responsible for arranging the assignment and coordinating the assignment.

**Organisation Development**
Organisation Development at King’s is committed to ensuring development and learning opportunities are available to all staff, add value and support professional and personal development. In order to ensure value is gained from work shadowing opportunities, all Shadows and Hosts must complete an evaluation form and submit to od@kcl.ac.uk at the end of the assignment. Organisation Development is available to provide advice and guidance on work shadowing before, during or after the assignment.
Types of Work Shadowing

Observation

- The Shadow will spend an agreed period of time observing the host during their day-to-day activities.
- This type of shadowing works best when a Shadow is looking to gain a greater understanding of what a Host’s job role actually consists of.
- The Host will provide opportunities for questions and debrief to ensure that both parties benefit from the shadowing.

Regular Briefings

- The Shadow shadows the Host for specific activities over a period of time.
- This type of shadowing provides short periods of focused activity.
- This works best when the individuals work near to each other and the Host can then advise of dates and times of specific activities which are of value to understanding the role.

Hands On

- This is an extension of the observation model detailed above.
- The Shadow starts to undertake some of the tasks they have observed.
- This provides the Shadow with hands on experience of the role whilst being supervised by the Host.
- This type of job shadowing is not always possible and would need to be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

All shadowing assignments must:

- Involve the line manager and Organisation Development
- Be time bound
- Have agreed objectives
- Be confidential
To help you get the most out of this experience, here are a few tips to use in preparing for the shadowing assignment:

**Capacity and Time**
Work shadowing will involve some time spent away from work activities. Careful timing and planning is required to ensure it does not become disruptive.

**Confidentiality**
Some information learned during the shadowing arrangement may be classified as confidential to the Shadow and the Host. This must not be divulged to any other parties.

Some confidential information will be defined as such by the person being shadowed. An element of discretion must be used by the shadow and it may be necessary to withdraw from the shadowing arrangement from time to time because of confidentiality.

However, colleagues are encouraged to share 'good practice' and to engage in the art of positive feedback.

Note: some activities can never be 'shadowed', for example, job interviews, disciplinary hearings or appraisal interviews.

**Accessibility**
Check whether your Host or Shadow has any specific requirements you need to be aware of and take into account throughout your work shadowing.

‘No Fault Divorce Clause’
If either party is unhappy with the relationship, it can be terminated without blame by either party.
At the end of the shadowing experience, it is important that the Shadow and the Host both reflect on what they have learned.

- What were the main things you learned from the experience?
- What did you enjoy about it?
- What did you least enjoy?
- How can the lessons learned assist in you in your current role?
- Was the experience what you expected?
- Has the shadowing identified any future areas for development?

The reflective log is designed to capture and record this feedback. Debriefs with line managers should take place after the assignment for both the Shadow and the Host. This debrief should focus on addressing these questions and completing the reflection log.

Completed logs should be sent to Organisation Development (od@kcl.ac.uk) who will review and make recommendations on next steps.
If your team member is a Shadow, that will benefit them in their current role by potentially exposing them to the experience of more senior colleagues. They will gain new skills that will help them with their current role and build contacts that may be of use to them and other team members. They will also gain an understanding of other departments and roles within the university, which they can feed back, and share with your team.

What should I do first?

You should be involved in discussions with the Shadow when setting up a work shadowing placement to ensure that the placement is relevant to the Shadow’s work or development; that it fits in with the Shadow’s/team’s current workload and commitments and that the potential benefits are more significant than the potential disruption being absent from work may cause. You might be able to help your team member decide on a Host by using your internal and external network.

Focus initial discussions on how this will provide your team member with skills and personal development and align this assignment with the Personal Development Review.

Consider:

- **Relevance:** The relevance of the shadowing arrangement to your staff member’s current and/or future role.
- **Workload:** The member of staff’s/team’s workload.
- **Benefits:** The weight of the perceived benefits of the work shadowing arrangement versus time out from their contracted role.
- **Equity:** Are team members receiving equal access to work shadowing?

What should I do during the assignment?

You will need to agree to the Shadow’s involvement in a work shadowing assignment, to ensure that the information and skills gained from the placement are transferred back to the workplace and to support them if there are any problems. It is the line manager’s responsibility to become involved if there is a problem on either side of the relationship.

What should I do after the assignment?

Spend some time debriefing with your team member. Focus on:

- How did the placement meet its purpose and the specific objectives set out?
- Were there any specific objectives that were not met? If so why and how could they be met?
- How do you plan to use the learning from the placement in your current/future role?

Encourage your team member to complete their reflective log and send to Organisation Development (od@kcl.ac.uk) to review and make recommendations.