

Work Shadowing: Process & Guidance

Introduction

Work shadowing allows staff members to see colleagues in action and apply what they learn in their work and to their career development.

There are many advantages to work shadowing including:

- Development opportunities for both the shadow and the host
- Sharing good practice across the University
- “Testing out” of possible career options
- Breaking down barriers between central Professional Services and those in Schools/Institutes by creating networking and understanding processes from a different angle

How the shadowing happens will depend on the needs of the shadow, but could involve observing particular tasks, or observing a representation of what the host does over a day or number of days.

The roles of participants in work shadowing

The shadow is responsible for:

- Identifying what they hope to achieve from a shadowing experience
- Identifying potential hosts, in the first instance using existing contacts or contact pages accessed via Connected. There is also a list of generic email departmental addresses in the appendix to this document.
- Realistically estimating timeframe and other commitments (in most cases shadowing should last no more than 1-2 working days total; this may be broken up into shorter activities over the space of a few weeks).
- Agreeing details of the shadowing experience (including length of time) with their line manager and the host’s line manager.
- Ensuring that normal business arrangements in their own team are not negatively impacted by their absence, and/or that cover is arranged when necessary.
- Coordinating with the host to arrange details of the placement.

- Reporting back on their experiences, both formally so that there is a log of activity, and in sharing good practice with their team.
- Remaining aware that the host is likely taking time out of their role to support this activity and be respectful of their time. In addition, there may be occasions where the shadow is exposed to confidential information: shadowing comes with an expectation of confidentiality on the part of the visitor.

The host is responsible for:

- Understanding the shadow's aims and suggesting activities which will be most relevant.
- Setting time aside for pre- and/or post-shadowing briefing meetings (which may be very brief, depending on the activity shadowed).
- Identifying any specific concerns regarding confidentiality or health and safety which may be relevant to the visit(s).
- Liaising with the shadow to ensure that any issues of access or disability requirements are addressed in advance of the placement.

The line manager will:

- Discuss the potential for work shadowing with the staff member and identify whether this is likely to be beneficial and possible given the team's existing time commitments.
- Understand and agree the objectives and activities that the staff member is aiming to achieve through the work shadowing.
- Agree a timetable and length of time that it is reasonable for the shadowing to take place (in most cases this should be no more than 1-2 working days total; this may be broken up into shorter activities over the space of a few weeks).
- Support the shadow in identifying potential hosts.
- Ascertain whether shadowing is the best way for the staff member to gain the desired experience or skills, as opposed to other forms of learning and development e.g. training.

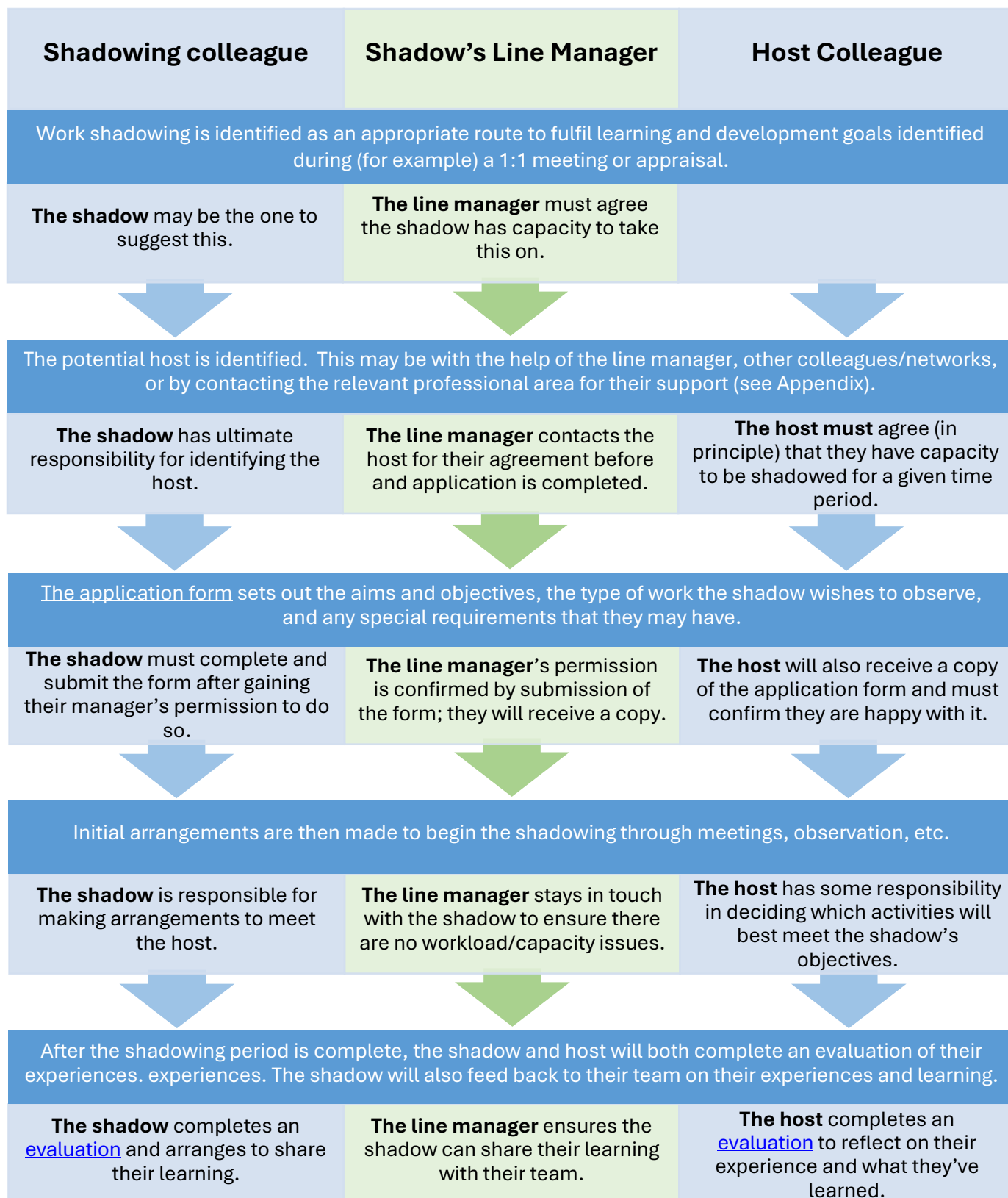
Evaluation and data collection

A short pilot in 2018/9 established that a central application and matching process places disproportionate strain on its administrators while offering few if any benefits to the shadow, host or line manager. The learning objectives of any prospective shadow are likely to be too specific to the individual to be properly met within a limited pool of potential hosts.

Therefore, while an [application form](#) is provided, this is to help those involved to formalise the arrangement and define its scope in terms of time commitment and expectations of learning. Similarly, the evaluation forms are provided to assist in self-reflection and recording of outcomes, which may be useful in (for example) appraisals or applications for future roles.

Application and evaluation data will be held centrally by the Organisational & Professional Development team, in order to monitor uptake and outcomes.

Flowchart: Work Shadowing Process



Appendix: Contacts

In order for the shadow to identify a host, queries about job shadowing should be sent to the contact addresses below in the first instance; it is the recipients' responsibility to forward these queries to the appropriate colleague or team.

Department	Sub-category	Email address
Academic Registry and Council Secretariat	Council Secretariat	councilsecretariat@qmul.ac.uk
Academic Registry and Council Secretariat	Quality Assurance	qualityassurance@qmul.ac.uk
Business Development Team		degreeapprenticeships@qmul.ac.uk
Doctoral College		doctoralcollege@qmul.ac.uk
Estates & Facilities	Non-Residential Cleaning	cleaning.services@qmul.ac.uk
Estates & Facilities	Directorate Support	estates-directoratesupport@qmul.ac.uk
Estates & Facilities	Estates and Facilities Health & Safety Department	ef-hsd@qmul.ac.uk
Estates & Facilities	Whitechapel Facilities Management	facilities-office-whitechapel@qmul.ac.uk
Estates & Facilities	Housing Services	housingservices@qmul.ac.uk
Estates & Facilities	Maintenance Admin	maintenanceadmin@qmul.ac.uk
Estates & Facilities	Mile End Post Room	postroom@qmul.ac.uk
Estates & Facilities	Capital Projects	Projects@qmul.ac.uk
Estates & Facilities	Residential Services	residences-reception@qmul.ac.uk
Estates & Facilities	Security	security@qmul.ac.uk
Estates & Facilities	Sustainability	sustainability@qmul.ac.uk
Estates & Facilities	Venues and Sales	venues@qmul.ac.uk
External relations		rebecca.cox@qmul.ac.uk
Finance		t.skeen@qmul.ac.uk
Health & Safety Directorate	Helpdesk	hs-helpdesk@qmul.ac.uk
Human Resources		hr-helpdesk@qmul.ac.uk
IT Services	Copy Shop	thecopyshop@qmul.ac.uk
Organisational & Professional Development		opd@qmul.ac.uk
QM Academy		qmacademy@qmul.ac.uk
Research Services		research.governance@qmul.ac.uk
Strategic Planning Office		catherine.murray@qmul.ac.uk
Strategy Delivery Office		strategy-delivery-office@qmul.ac.uk
Student Experience Directorate	Careers and Enterprise	careers@qmul.ac.uk
Student Experience Directorate	Student Enquiry Centre	s.l.finney@qmul.ac.uk
Student Experience Directorate	Library Services	student-experience@qmul.ac.uk
Student Experience Directorate		student-experience@qmul.ac.uk
TechNet	Technician Commitment Steering Group	Technet.admin@qmul.ac.uk