

Freedom of Information Request – Response – 27815

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding your organisation's approach to employee shadowing, experiential learning and internal mobility.

I would be very grateful if this request could be forwarded to the person or team best placed to provide a knowledgeable response, which may include colleagues in Organisational Development, Learning and Development, HR, Talent, Workforce Development or Resourcing.

Please could you provide the following information:

1. Current arrangements

1. Does your organisation currently operate a formal or informal employee job shadowing scheme, framework or process?

Suffolk County Council operates informal shadowing arrangements. We also offer 10 days shadowing for social work students prior to them undertaking their 70 and 100 day placements.

2. If so, please provide a brief overview of:

- o how the arrangement works*
- o who is eligible to participate*
- o the typical duration or format of shadowing*
- o whether participation is available across the whole organisation or only within particular services, professions or employee groups*
- o whether employees receive an annual allowance of time for shadowing or other experiential learning*

Shadowing opportunities and arrangements are managed within teams and will be in response to discussions between the employee and their line manager. There are no formal arrangements or annual allowance for shadowing or other experiential learning. The duration of shadowing will depend on the specific circumstances. Shadowing would be available to all employees across the organisation and is seen as a valuable element of induction for new staff. Shadowing counts as 'off the job training' for employees undertaking apprenticeship programmes.

3. If you do not currently offer shadowing, have you previously operated such an arrangement, or are there plans to introduce one?

No

2. Policies, guidance and documentation

4. Please provide copies of any current policies, frameworks, process documents, guidance, forms, templates, toolkits, intranet content or communications relating to:

- o job shadowing or work shadowing*
- o experiential or workplace-based learning*

o internal mobility or career mobility

o short-term development assignments, stretch opportunities or project marketplaces

We do not have formal policies in relation to shadowing as we do not operate a formal shadowing programme

5. Where shadowing is covered within a wider learning and development or internal mobility policy, please provide the relevant policy or extract.

Extract from our apprenticeship guidance:

In order for learning to count as off-the-job training, the activity must be directly relevant to the apprenticeship framework or standard and could include:

- The teaching of theory (e.g. lectures, role playing, simulation exercises or online learning),
- Practical training: shadowing, mentoring, industry visits,
- Support and time spent writing assessments/assignments.

3. Management and governance

6. Which team or function owns and administers the shadowing arrangement?

None as we do not operate a formal process. Arrangements will be managed within teams.

7. How are shadowing hosts and opportunities identified, advertised or matched with interested employees?

As above, shadowing needs identified between employee and manager, and then someone within the team will make contact with other teams who may be able to offer suitable shadowing experience

8. What approvals are required from the employee's substantive line manager and the host manager?

As above, agreement between employee and their line manager

9. Can a line manager decline or prevent an employee from participating? If so, what criteria, guidance or escalation arrangements apply?

No formal policy or guidance. Shadowing needs and opportunities discussed between employees and managers and a number of factors likely to be weighed up, including benefits of that specific shadowing, the employee's workload and the business needs and priorities of the team.

10. Are learning objectives agreed before the shadowing takes place, and is there any structured reflection, feedback or evaluation afterwards?

Informally only. Expectation is that any shadowing opportunities and reflection forms part of employee/line manager discussions in supervision.

11. How are confidentiality, data protection, safeguarding, health and safety, conflicts of interest and access to sensitive systems or information managed?

We do not currently have a formal framework or process in place for managing these aspects but have separate overarching policies that would cover separately the elements of confidentiality, data protection, safeguarding, health and safety, conflicts of interest.

4. Technology and administration

12. Is any technology used to advertise, request, match, approve, record or evaluate

shadowing opportunities?

No

13. If so, please provide:

- *the name of the system or platform*
- *whether it is an existing HR, learning or recruitment system, an internally developed solution, or a separate product*
- *a brief explanation of how the technology supports the process*

N/A

14. If no dedicated system is used, please explain how opportunities and participants are administered, for example through email, an intranet page, Microsoft Forms, spreadsheets or local team arrangements.

Local team arrangements.

5. Participation, accessibility and evaluation

15. If the information is held, please provide the number of employees who have participated in shadowing during each of the last three available financial years.

Not formally recorded

16. How does the organisation seek to ensure that opportunities are accessible, inclusive and distributed fairly across different services, locations, working patterns, grades and employee groups?

We do not currently have a formal process in place to ensure that opportunities are systematically monitored and distributed across different services, locations, working patterns, grades, or employee groups.

17. What measures, feedback or outcomes are used to evaluate the success of the arrangement?

Not formally recorded as local arrangements.

18. Please provide details of any identified benefits, challenges or lessons learned from operating the approach.

N/A as no formal approach.