

Guidance for Students on Shadowing Experience

Since the advent of the social work degree, the opportunity to shadow a qualified social worker has been a beneficial and integral part of the social work programme.

Shadowing is a technique in which a person wishing to learn a skill follows and observes another whilst that person's expertise is being displayed. It is a common developmental tool. Shadowing usually involves the learner following the role model around for a period of time. The expected period for shadowing a qualified worker is two days. The shadowed social worker should work in a statutory service and not be a relative.

Your University will arrange the **2-day shadowing opportunity** for you. You will be advised when this will take place according to your University programme and your student group. You will be notified of the contact details of the social worker concerned when they become available. **Please arrange for your shadowing opportunity to occur on days when you are not in University**

The shadowed social worker is asked to complete a form confirming your attendance and stating whether any concerns arose during the shadowing. You are also asked to complete a structured reflection.

1. Prepare for the experience – some background research on the service, ensure you know where the office is and how to get there on time, be professional in your early contact with the office and social worker.
2. Arrive punctually, smartly but not over-dressed. **TAKE A PRINTED OUT COPY OF THE SHADOWING EXPERIENCE – STUDENT RECORD FORM** for completion on the day.
3. You must at all times bear in mind the requirements of **confidentiality**. In most cases the social worker will have ensured that you can participate and observe most of the activities that take place during the shadowing days – but you may be asked not to be present for some. Service user and carer requirements always come first.
4. Be prepared to ask questions and participate in appropriate activities, but be sensitive to the workload of the shadowed social worker – there will still be things they have to do even though you are there.
5. Thank the Social Worker especially, but also the administrator and Team Manager if they have contributed to your day.
6. Complete the structured reflection soon after attending the shadowing days.
7. The social worker will complete and sign a Confirmation Statement. Please retain this document as you will need it as evidence for your assignment.