

Shadowing Experience - Guidance for Student

Shadowing is a vital part of professional development for students. It enables you to observe the statutory context of social work and the complexity of the work involved. The Universities very much see shadowing as the first step in assessing whether students are aware of the challenges of the social work role and can reflect and learn from what they have observed during the two days shadowing they complete with yourselves.

Flexible working arrangements following covid makes the dynamics of social work teams variable. It is expected that you would do both days in the office or working in the community with the social worker.

Normally we would ask that you are as fully involved in the social workers day to day work as data protection and confidentiality allows. Being able to observe duty, home visits, meetings with other professionals, phone conversations, team meetings and so on is extremely useful experience.

The shadowing will be equivalent to two days, but the exact arrangements will depend on the Team and the individual social worker, ideally this should be in the office, community and working face-to-face with your host social worker.

Ideally the first part should involve a meeting to discuss the social workers role within the team, but we need to be aware that social workers are busy people and we need a certain amount of flexibility. But do try to have a meeting and speak about:-

- The remit of the team
- The client group
- The other professionals who are worked with
- The area that the team covers
- Example of the type of referral that the team would respond to.
- The main roles undertaken in the team
- The most interesting / rewarding aspects of the role
- The most challenging aspects of the role
- The most contentious issues when trying to work and support clients
- To what extent are resources an issue?

In addition, the Social Worker will support you to attend visits meetings, which help you understand the social work role. This could be a combination of team meetings, client meeting or meeting with other professionals. The main need is to be alongside the social worker as they go through their work requirements for that day.

Social workers are expected to feedback any areas of concern that might arise, these include

- Student is late and has not contacted the social worker as to why
- Student appears disinterested and disengaged in the conversation
- The student is unable to reflect on the subjects discussed
- The student is inappropriately dressed for professional practice
- The student does not follow advice e.g. when observing
- The student offers inappropriate comments during conversations or meetings



At the end of your shadowing you must complete the this [FORM](#)

