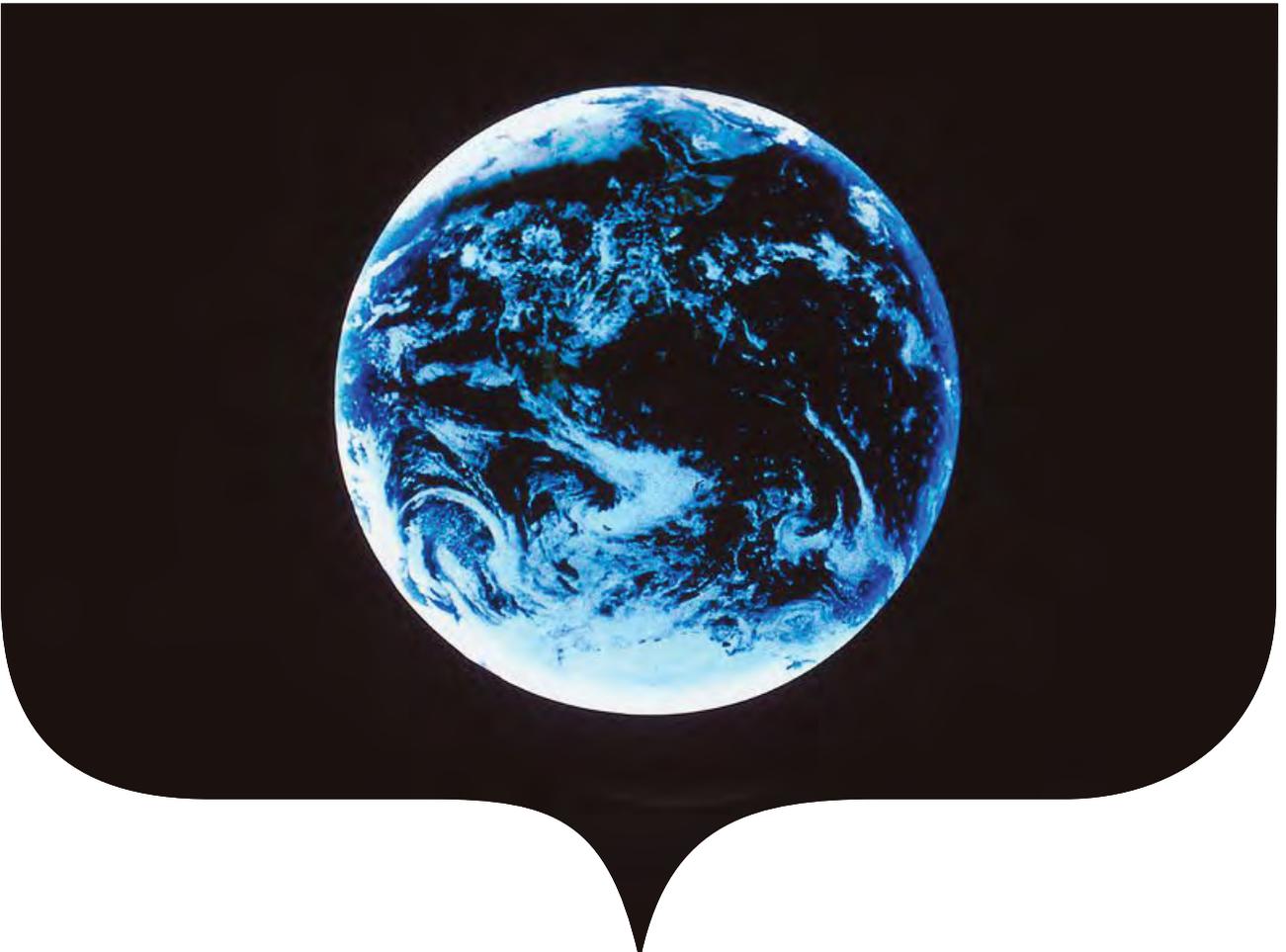


# *Developing people for health and healthcare*



Toolkit for the collection of evidence of knowledge and skills gained through participation in an international health project

Dr Kondo and Mr Horgan Photo credit : Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust



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## Acknowledgement

The toolkit was created by Brenda Longstaff (Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust) and prepared for publication by members of the NHS Volunteering Group including Brenda, Caroline Waterfield (NHS Employers), Dan Ritman (Tropical Health & Education Trust (THET) and from Health Education England Sue Ambler, Pat Saunders, Gaye Jackson and Fleur Kitsell who also represents NHS Thames Valley and Wessex Leadership Academy.

## Foreword

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Volunteering can provide real benefits for NHS staff, giving them a fresh perspective, new skills and approaches that can be applied to their work in the health service and help them and the wider health service improve the quality of care we provide. As a witness to the International Development Select Committee in September 2014, former Chief Executive of the NHS, Lord Crisp described overseas volunteering as a 'a great potential win-win'. The Committee cited that individuals who volunteer often acquire personal and professional skills that are transferable to the NHS. This can only lead to benefits for staff and for patients.

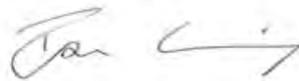
This toolkit gives volunteers and local staff the opportunity to learn from each other to develop future practice – particularly in areas such as public health, primary care and community services, all of which are priority areas for the NHS. For this reason, Health Education England continue to promote volunteering to staff, partners, countries and the wider healthcare community to encourage greater take-up.

This volunteering toolkit is a landmark step forward in these efforts. It seeks to provide staff and employers with a framework for recording their skills and competencies achieved as part of their international health project and to reflect on how these can be best applied when they return to work. It will enable

staff and employers to learn from each other's experiences from across the globe and strengthen local engagement in the future.

The toolkit reflects our vision that these placements will be 'the norm' for healthcare staff and managers. The first of its kind, it has been developed by the NHS Overseas Volunteering Group, following and in response to the Department of Health and the Department of International Development's publication *Engaging in Global Health: The Framework for Voluntary Engagement in Global Health* by the UK Health Sector. This toolkit focuses on volunteering abroad, however, it could be used to collect skills and knowledge evidence for placements in the UK.

We would like to thank all those who supported us in the development of this document and encourage employers and employees to make the most of what we hope will become a valuable resource. Working together with our partners, we will continue to promote the benefits of voluntary engagement and look forward to seeing these translate into the care we provide.



*Professor Ian Cumming OBE,  
Chief Executive Health Education England*



# Introduction

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Research has shown that participation in international health projects can and does provide opportunities for professional development in terms of new knowledge, skills and behaviours which are learned when working in challenging, resource-poor environments<sup>1</sup>.

Within the NHS, to date, it has proved difficult to provide evidence in a format which is helpful to employers. This toolkit has been developed to support the collection of such evidence.

## Background

In recent years, the UK Government has recognised the value of NHS staff participating in international health projects and has sought to evidence the benefits to the partner organisation/country, and to the individual and the UK healthcare sector, as individuals return to the health service in the UK with fresh perspectives and new skills and approaches to their work within the NHS.

The toolkit has been developed to enable participants in international health projects to provide NHS employers with evidence of their professional development. It provides a framework to collect evidence of knowledge and skills gained from participation in international health projects in a way which links to the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) for annual appraisal, the NHS Healthcare Leadership Model (2013) and the requirements of the Royal Colleges for accreditation of international project work for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and revalidation.

Whilst the Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) was used as the framework for this toolkit, your organisation may have developed its own appraisal system so you may wish to adapt the headings used here to reflect that system.

We encourage you to share information collected in the toolkit with line managers and international health managers.

It is important for Health Education England to know how volunteering placements are improving your ongoing performance. An online survey is available for you to complete after your first appraisal with your manager, a link to the survey can be found on page 16 of this toolkit. THET will be analysing the data drawn from the survey on Health Education England's behalf.

The toolkit can be used as a mechanism for individuals to collect and present evidence of continuous

professional development. It has been designed to help you focus upon, and record, your key activities and achievements in a format which may be used for a number of purposes, including for appraisal and presentation of CPD and revalidation evidence. You may find it helpful to keep a daily journal diary of your activities and experiences during your international visit to aid completion of the toolkit upon your return to the UK.

This toolkit can be used by anyone volunteering in global health. Doctors, especially trainees, may also be interested in the 'Alma Mata Global Health Portfolio', a toolkit designed to document and evidence the knowledge, attitudes and skills they develop whilst working in global health. You will find this complementary portfolio on the Alma Mata website ([www.almamata.org.uk](http://www.almamata.org.uk))

## Guidelines for completion

The toolkit contains a number of sections each of which has a particular focus. The section headings relate directly to the core elements of the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF), these can be mapped across to the domains required for medical revalidation:

**Domain 1** – Knowledge, skills and performance

**Domain 2** – Quality Assurance

**Domain 3** – Communications, partnership and teamwork

Some of the sections may not be relevant to you, however, please do complete as many sections as it is possible for you to.

<sup>1</sup><http://www.thet.org/hps/files/innovative-workforce-development-the-case-for-international-health-links>

# Guidance notes to aid reflection for completion of the toolkit

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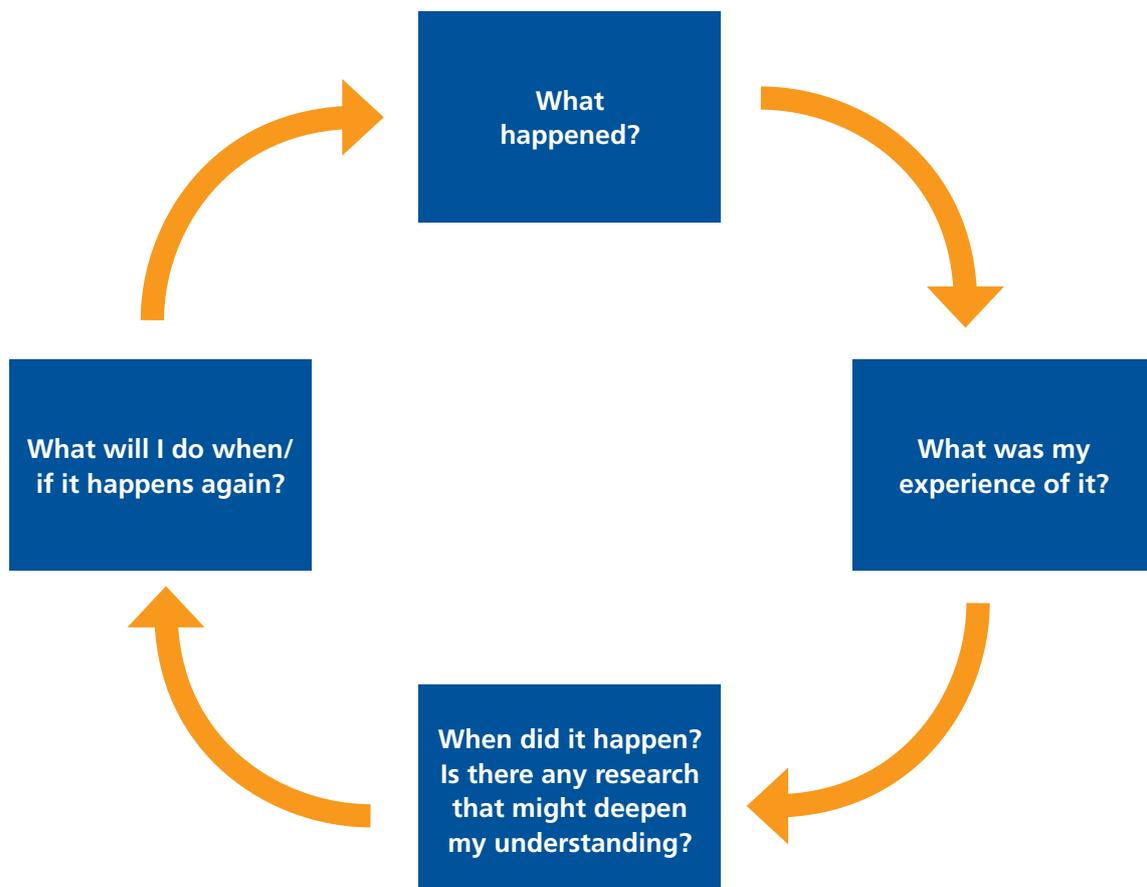
## Reflective practice

Looking back on experiences, thinking about what happened, your experience and role in what happened, why it happened and what you might do were the same things to happen again, can be a useful process which to help you learn from these experiences. "The capacity to reflect on action is to engage in a process of continuous learning" (Schon, 1983).

Describing experiences, talking them through with others, or exploring what others have written about similar experiences and then consciously critically analysing and evaluating what happened, can refocus your thinking on your existing knowledge and can help you generate new knowledge and ideas. As a result, you may modify your actions, behaviours and learning needs.

Taking the time to write down your reflections, following a model such as that described by David Kolb, based on the work of Kurt Lewin below, can help to clarify your thoughts and give some structure to the process. There are many structured models which have been developed to support reflective practice, many have several stages to the process, however, the short and fairly simple model devised by Kolb/Lewin below includes the fundamental stages of the process.

If you are new to the practice of reflection, perhaps this explanation and diagram below will guide you through the process.



*(David Kolb/Kurt Lewin's model of reflection)*

### Reference:

Schön, D. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner, How Professionals Think In Action*, Basic Books.

# Skills and knowledge transfer CHECKLIST

**When completing your portfolio of evidence please try to collect as many documents as possible from the following list:**

- Approval of activity from NHS employing organisation (business case/letter of authorisation from NHS CEO/line manager)
- Correspondence from overseas partner organisation (eg letter of invitation from international partner)
- Training plans/project plans agreed by overseas partner organisation
- Pre-placement personal development plan (think of 2 or 3 things you may like to achieve during your visit)
- Post-placement reflections on personal development plan

**Other documents which may be useful:**

- Student attendance record for training delivered (if appropriate)
- Training activity schedule delivered and signed off by international partner (host ward/department/executive director)
- Completed KSF/Leadership development evidence forms (see appendices)
- Visit feedback report
- Assessor feedback
- Presentation of learning outcomes/experiences to relevant NHS Business Unit (copy of PowerPoint presentation)

## Prior to departure:

Complete 'before' section of self-assessment form



## Preparation for volunteering:

- Document pre-departure training
- Document tasks undertaken to prepare for project (eg preparation of lectures)
- Confirm and document project/activity plan
- Obtain formal letter of invitation from international partner



## Volunteering experience:

- Document evidence of activities/learning
- Collect student attendance records



## Following return to the UK:

- Reflection
- Complete 'After' section of self-assessment form
- Complete toolkit and send to external assessor for comments.
- Present completed toolkit at annual appraisal, as part of CPD submission or as evidence for revalidation.



## After appraisal:

- Please complete a short online survey [here](#) to inform HEE of the impact of your volunteering placement on your performance at work.

# Skills, knowledge and behaviours

## SELF-ASSESSMENT

**The toolkit has been designed to illustrate the impact on your personal skills and knowledge that your participation in the international health project has had. In order to demonstrate the impact in each core area, please would you undertake a self-assessment of your current level of skill within each section of the toolkit.**

Healthcare professionals who engage in international health project work already have a highly developed skill set as they may operate as teachers and trainers

within the NHS setting. It can therefore be difficult to quantify any additional skills which are gained from your experience of working overseas. With this in mind please assess your current levels of performance within each section, prior to your participation in the international health project and consider any additional benefits you feel you have gained from this international work.

On a scale of 1-10, with one being the lowest, can you indicate where your skills lie within the following areas, before and after international health links experience.

Scale of 1-10	Before	After
<p><b>Communication</b></p> <p>Do I communicate honestly, appropriately and at the right time with people at all levels, using verbal, written or other means; taking into account the message and the situation?</p> <p>Do I modify my way of communicating to deal with the more complex and difficult issues?</p> <p>Do I listen carefully and thoughtfully to all views and opinions?</p>		
<p><b>Personal and People Development</b></p> <p>Do I take personal responsibility for my own performance?</p> <p>Do I give balanced and effective feedback and support to help others improve their performance?</p>		
<p><b>Equality and Diversity</b></p> <p>Do I notice negative or unsettling emotions in those I work with and act to put the situation right?</p> <p>Do I pay close attention to what motivates those I work with so that I can support each person effectively?</p>		
<p><b>Service Improvement</b></p> <p>Do I support my colleagues make changes to their way of working to improve services?</p> <p>Do I have the self-confidence to question the way things are done in my area of work?</p>		
<p><b>Project Management</b></p> <p>Do I act as a role model and ambassador for NHS values and commitment?</p> <p>Do I ensure that the services or projects that we seek to improve are planned, implemented and evaluated appropriately?</p>		
<p><b>Developing Leadership Skills</b></p> <p>Do I contribute to creating a positive and supportive environment at work?</p> <p>Do I encourage a climate of high expectations in which everyone looks for ways for our services to be even better?</p> <p>Do I build networks and work with others to help achieve better outcomes for patients and the team?</p>		
Use the Department of Health's NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework and NHS Healthcare Leadership Model (2013) as your guide.		

# Skills and knowledge transfer

## COMMUNICATION

Please try to complete as many sections as you are able to. It will provide a clearer understanding of your experiences. Perhaps two or three sentences for each as a guideline. You may wish to add more detail under some of the headings.

Give an example of how you adapted your communication style in order to overcome a communication barrier? (eg have you made any changes to how you convey messages to take into account language differences?)

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Give an example of how you communicated a difficult message, to a group/individual, while being sensitive to the message, as well as how it might impact on that individual/group.

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Have you been required to modify your language or way of communicating to add clarity to messages or teaching? (eg have you changed your teaching style or content to accommodate cultural differences?)

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Have you had the opportunity to negotiate or influence in an international setting? (if so, how have you been able to get your viewpoint across?)

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Have you been required to communicate in a formal setting as an ambassador of the NHS? (eg have you been required to meet with senior healthcare professionals as a representative of your NHS trust or organisation?)

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Comments from external assessor

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**Once you have completed this section please return to self-assessment pages 7-8 and complete the 'after' section of the form.**

Name ..... Date .....

Name of international institution .....

Country ..... Signature of external assessor/link supervisor .....

# Skills and knowledge transfer

## PERSONAL AND PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

Please try to complete as many sections as you are able to. It will provide a clearer understanding of your experiences. Perhaps two or three sentences for each as a guideline. You may wish to add more detail under some of the headings.

Has your international experience had any effect on your personal confidence or self-esteem? Please give an example.

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Have you been involved in skills training within a service or department overseas (eg hands on training, teaching by example) If so, what did you do and in which service areas?

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Were you involved in mentoring healthcare professionals during your experience (do you work individually with professionals to develop their skills and knowledge?) Please give an example.

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Comments from external assessor

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Have you contributed to, or personally delivered, teaching or lecturing at a college or hospital overseas? If so, what did you teach and to which students/ healthcare professionals?

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Once you have completed this section please return to self-assessment pages 7-8 and complete the 'after' section of the form.

Name ..... Date .....

Name of international institution .....

Country ..... Signature of external assessor/link supervisor .....

# Skills and knowledge transfer

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Please try to complete as many sections as you are able to. It will provide a clearer understanding of your experiences. Perhaps two or three sentences for each as a guideline. You may wish to add more detail under some of the headings.

Do you think you have gained any new insights or cultural awareness by working overseas in a different cultural setting? If so, please give an example.

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Has your experience made an impact on your attitude towards cultural differences? (eg has it changed the way you view and react to different cultural behaviours and customs?) If so, please give an example.

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Are you more able to effectively interact with people from different cultures as a result of involvement in international work? How could you explain this?

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Comments from external assessor

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Once you have completed this section please return to self-assessment pages 7-8 and complete the 'after' section of the form.

Name ..... Date .....

Name of international institution .....

Country ..... Signature of external assessor/link supervisor .....

# Skills and knowledge transfer

## SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

This domain is applicable to those people who are involved with the development/or improvement of services, particularly where there is a need for considerable collaborative working (beyond normal team working). This includes increasing the capability of workers by facilitating and empowering people to take on new roles and/or work in different ways to improve services.

**Please try to complete as many sections as you are able to. It will provide a clearer understanding of your experiences. Perhaps two or three sentences for each as a guideline. You may wish to add more detail under some of the headings.**

Have you undertaken an analysis of service capacity during your overseas experience? (eg did you undertake an assessment of the work area and identify key areas for development or change?)

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Have you worked with others to plan development programmes? (eg did you have discussions with overseas colleagues to consider training needs associated with building capacity within the service?)

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Have you agreed to support and/or work with the team responsible for change? (eg have you agreed methods of contact/new visit dates to follow up development plans?)

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Have you continued to communicate with and monitor progress of any agreed plans when you return to the UK?

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Have you planned to carry out audit and evaluation on the progress of plans?

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Comments from external assessor

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**Once you have completed this section please return to self-assessment pages 7-8 and complete the 'after' section of the form.**

Name ..... Date .....

Name of international institution .....

Country ..... Signature of external assessor/link supervisor .....

# Skills and knowledge transfer

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Please try to complete as many sections as you are able to. It will provide a clearer understanding of your experiences. Perhaps two or three sentences for each as a guideline. You may wish to add more detail under some of the headings

During your overseas placement, did you work alone within a project or as part of a team? Please give an example.

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During your overseas placement did you lead or provide support to an area of activity within the agreed international project? If so, please give an example.

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Within your current job role would you normally gain experience of project management or did your overseas experience provide you with a unique opportunity to develop these skills?

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What impact has your overseas experience had on your ability to work with others on collaborative projects, now that you are back in the UK?

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Have any lessons you learned from your overseas international project experience (including research projects) been of value since you have been back within the NHS environment? If so, please give an example.

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Comments from external assessor

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**Once you have completed this section please return to self-assessment pages 7-8 and complete the 'after' section of the form.**

Name ..... Date .....

Name of international institution .....

Country ..... Signature of external assessor/link supervisor .....

# Skills and knowledge transfer

## DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Please try to complete as many sections as you are able to as it will provide a clearer understanding of your experiences. You may wish to add more detail under some of the headings.

Please describe any impact that your overseas experience has had on your problem-solving skills.

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Have you learned whilst working overseas skills which may help you to champion change and innovation since you have returned to the UK? If so, what changes would you consider?

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Are you more aware of wider management issues outside your work area which may impact on healthcare delivery while you are overseas? (eg were there financial constraints, personnel shortages and/or conflicting priorities?) If so, please give an example.

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Has your international experience affected your attitude to financial management of health services and the use of healthcare resources? If so, is your approach to resource management different since you have returned to the UK? If so, please give an example.

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Can you give an example of dealing with or seeking support with a challenging situation in delivering services?

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Can you give an example of managing your time and workload effectively when under high-pressure or difficult circumstances?

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Comments from external assessor

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Once you have completed this section please return to self-assessment pages 7-8 and complete the 'after' section of the form.

Name ..... Date .....

Name of international institution .....

Country ..... Signature of external assessor/link supervisor .....



## Additional information

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### Case study

This example shows how information may be summarised from the completed sections of the toolkit to provide an overview of the development experiences gained from international volunteering.

**Name:** Alastair Hayes

**Profession:** Surgical Registrar

**Country visited:** Tanzania

**Date:** March 2012 and 2013

### Key opportunities for learning and development

- Delivered lectures to large groups of undergraduates (local and international)
- Organised and delivered laparoscopic simulator training to surgical registrars
- Updated laparoscopy surgical database and retrieved audit data for research
- Delivered lectures on laparoscopic cholecystectomy and Lichtenstein repair to course delegates
- Assisted Faculty on national laparoscopic surgery course
- Developed a laparoscopy module for the undergraduate curriculum in medicine
- Learnt to tailor materials and techniques according to available resources

### Comments:

- The overall process was a fantastic experience from which I learnt about international development, classroom lecturing and curriculum development. These skills can be difficult to acquire through the standard training programme.
- Trainees who have interviews on the horizon might be interested to know that experience from my international work presented at the national selection centre portfolio station was well received.
- For further reading: Sharing key skills in East Africa, Surgeons News



Alastair Hayes - Surgical Registrar



A.S. Zain / Shutterstock.com

## Guidance for managers on assessing the value of international volunteering at appraisal

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The Framework for voluntary engagement in global health by the UK health sector, published by the Department of Health in August 2014, recognises that international volunteering can benefit the NHS through staff professional development, including the development of leadership and professional skills, motivation, sensitivity to patients, understanding of global health issues and other competencies.

Evidence from international volunteering experiences is therefore valid for assessing continuing professional development by all clinical and non-clinical staff. It is relevant to the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework, the NHS Leadership Framework and the GMC Good Medical Practice Framework.

## Post-appraisal questionnaire

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For NHS employers and managers to make consistent, informed decisions about international volunteering, they need robust evidence of whether and how it contributes to staff performance. To help build the evidence base across the NHS, please fill in a short, anonymous questionnaire once you have had your first appraisal/PDR/revalidation following your volunteering experience. It will take 5-10 minutes. To access it, you can **click here** or type this address into your web browser: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VolunteerAppraisal>.

The information you send us will be stored on a database and may be made available to wider partners and referred to in future published research on volunteering and appraisal. All information will be held in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, the Human Rights Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 2000. Any information contained in your response may be subject to publication or disclosure if requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## About this toolkit

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The toolkit is approved by NHS Employers and Health Education England for collecting evidence for submission at appraisal, personal development review and GMC revalidation.

The toolkit is also supported by the Department of Health's NHS International Group which represents the following agencies:

**Department of Health**

**Department for International Development**

**NHS Trust Development Authority**

**NHS England**

**Health Education England**

**Public Health England**

**Public Health Wales**

**NHS Leadership Academy**

**NHS Employers**

**Healthcare UK**

**Tropical Health and Education Trust**

**Welsh Assembly Government**

**Scottish Government**

**Northern Ireland Executive**



Health Education England  
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[www.facebook.com/nhshee](http://www.facebook.com/nhshee)