



Full Programme Description

Overview

This **10-week programme** will help you to achieve your intended placement outcomes using collaborative approaches and by developing your skills, capabilities and confidence.

The how2glu approach is **practical, responsive and action-oriented** – i.e. **‘What works in the real world, not the ideal world’**. Using accessible methods, glucard™ visual tools and resources and supported by peer learning, you will create successful placement strategies and achieve your intended outcomes. Your training facilitator will create graphics in real-time during workshops to demonstrate tools and capture your findings.

This programme aims to help you to identify and move beyond barriers to proactively maximising placements benefits. This programme might be most useful if you have limited workplace experience but it will also focus on how to maximise opportunities during very short timeframes. how2glu will take an inclusive and sensitive approach and understands that the process can be challenging for a wide array of reasons (e.g. fear of failure, imposter phenomenon, rejection sensitivity, social anxiety, confidence, etc.). The content will therefore respond to potential / perceived barriers throughout.

About your facilitator, Dr Sabina Strachan, how2glu

Sabina is a partnership developer, collaboration expert and business advisor who founded how2glu in 2018, a consultancy and training provider that helps people work together better to achieve greater impacts (www.how2glu.com). She is a strategist and expert problem solver, who has worked with strategic stakeholders for 25 years.

Sabina has put together this programme as someone who has first-hand experience as a student placement holder, created internship programmes and policies, hosted interns, advised universities on developing placements, and designed training for PhD placement hosts and placement holders.

Recent projects include culture strategy development for Glasgow and Sheffield, developing business models to enable the design sector in Scotland to deliver greater impacts and to extend support for the sector, providing development consultancy to a museums service to deliver capital projects valued at over £10 million, advice on organisational resilience for a range of cultural organisations in across the UK, career and leadership training development consultancy for Durham University and RMIT Melbourne, research translation programmes for University of Manchester researchers, clinicians and professional services teams, and a broad range of doctoral training such as on collaborative practice, research translation, giving and receiving feedback, project management and imposter phenomenon for institutions in the UK, Europe and Australia.

Sabina was previously a University of Glasgow research developer and headed up the Scotland office of an international research & management creative economy consultancy. She is on the board of an autism charity and an arts & education trust, a researcher developer mentor, a business advisor for cultural organisations and SMEs, a graphic facilitator, and coach. Sabina studied architecture and architectural history and holds a PhD from the University of Edinburgh.



Programme structure and content

The programme has three main components: 1] x4 online workshops, 2] supporting 'skill packs' and 3] a self-led component.

1] The programme consists of four 2-hour 15-minute **online graphically-facilitated workshops:**

1. How2 create a collaborative workplace experience

- **When: Thursday 5 March 2026, 10.00am-12.15pm GMT**

- **Focus:** How to craft a collaborative experience, understanding placements in the context of Knowledge Exchange, benefits, challenges and effective approaches.

- **Description:** We will start with a clear definition of 'Knowledge Exchange' and the ways in which placements are an effective form of Knowledge Exchange. We will consider what types of knowledge and skills you have to offer, to whom, and what types of ideas, research, expertise or skills you are looking for in exchange and how you can use these to improve the depth and quality of your research as well as your understanding of how your research can generate research impact.

Placements are a great opportunity to understand your own value, share that value, understand your agency in shaping your placement experience, create boundaries and exert choice, challenge yourself, grow skills, try out strategies, contexts and experiences to find those that work for you, and experiment with different ways of doing things.

We will explore what a 'collaborative approach' is and highlight key strategies for effective collaboration and cooperation through placements. Specifically, we will take you through a glucard™ collaborative planning tool to help you get the most of your placement. We will also use a scenario planning model to reflect on different outcomes and how you can plan your responses to them to maximise your personal development and the benefits of your partnership-working experience.

2. How2 navigate different workplace cultures

- **When: Tuesday 24 March 2026, 1.00-3.15pm GMT**

- **Focus:** What workplace culture is, what are the characteristics of workplace cultures in different sectors, and how to interact with and negotiate culture.

- **Description:** We will provide a clear definition of 'culture' and its component parts, describe key characteristics of different types of workplace culture, how to identify these characteristics in different sectors – public (including sub-sectors such as higher education), private (including corporates and SMEs), and charitable (including social enterprises) – and explore ways to identify and align your own values with workplace values. We will look at placements as an effective way to develop your understanding of different sectors and practise decision-making and adaptability through your PhD experience.

Your facilitator is an experienced manager who has put together job descriptions and recruited postgraduate candidates, coached PhD researchers in their job searches, analysed skill requirements for different sectors, developed internship programmes, analysed organisational culture, and made recommendations for effective cultural leadership. She will bring appropriate insights from these settings into the workshop to help you navigate workplace culture through placement experiences.



We will work through glucard™ tools that will help you understand different facets of workplace culture such as behaviours, norms and assumptions, proportionate ways to find out about workplace culture when assessing different opportunities, how to align choices with your own values, and ways to understand the intangible aspects of workplace culture.

3. How2 identify transferable skills and development opportunities

- **When:** Wednesday 22 April 2026, 10.00am-12.15pm BST

- **Focus:** How to identify skill strengths and areas that could be practised and furthered through placements and how to co-design ways to demonstrate and grow those skills.

- **Description:** We will understand the relationship between ‘soft’ skills, attitudes, behaviours and ‘hard skills’, what skills and behaviours are sought after by employers, clients or funders and how placements are one way to build these into your PhD experience and evidence them. We will also look at skills relevant to career paths within and beyond academia and understand commonalities and differences.

You will work through glucard™ activities, share experiences and identify your own strengths and transferable skills. We will identify challenges that might affect transitions from research contexts and discuss strategies and actions to overcome them.

We’ll look at different kinds of opportunities that would enable you to develop desirable skills, how to access those opportunities, and how to evidence your skills and strengths. In the placement context, we’ll focus on how to co-design opportunities to utilise and demonstrate strengths, how to co-design those that will help you meet specific development needs, and consider how unexpected challenges have the potential to become beneficial development opportunities.

4. A deep dive into key sought-after skills 1: how2 innovate

- **When:** Tuesday 12 May 2026, 1.00-3.15pm BST

- **Focus:** What ‘innovation’ is and skills that enable innovation, in particular creative thinking skills, inclusive practice and commercial awareness.

- **Description:** Innovative thinking is a valuable and sought-after transferable skill and a great way to overcome obstacles you might face in your research and during your PhD experience. We all have the ability to develop our creative thought processes and discover new patterns, unorthodox and/or surprising conclusions, and new ways of doing things. In this way you will be able to bring a fresh perspective to your work.

To innovate means to introduce changes and new ideas in the way something is done or made. Innovative thinking enables you to consider things in new ways. We’ll look at different kinds of innovative thinking skills – such as creativity, problem-solving, analytical skills, logical thinking – noting existing strengths and development needs.

Placements are a great opportunity to apply and practise innovative approaches. We will identify different examples of what ‘innovation’ looks like in the context of placements and how to apply learning from workshop 1 so that you can co-create these opportunities.

Your facilitator will share several graphic glucard™ tools that will help you to connect ideas in different ways, look at issues and information from alternative perspectives, and inclusive ways to brainstorm with others to unstick, move forward and innovate.



- 2] Each workshop is supported by a '**skill pack**'. Each pack consists of:
- Context that explains how the topic "maximises the benefits of your placement experience",
 - One key glucard™ tool to plan or navigate your placement or practice a specific skill,
 - A rationale that describes the relationship between the highlighted skill and the workshop topic,
 - A step-by-step written guide and 5-minute graphically facilitated video guide to the tool.
- You may complete the skill pack during the programme or save the materials for future use.
 - *If you are unable to attend a workshop at the scheduled time, you will still be able to access the workshop materials, references and related skill packs. Whilst not a substitute for the workshop, you will be able to catch up on some key concepts and practice some relevant skills using these resources. The workshop itself will not be available as a recording.*
- 3] And a fifth stand-alone **self-led component** consisting of three additional skill packs:
- 5. A deep dive into key sought-after skills 2: how2 communicate**
- **Focus:** How to establish others' needs and preferences and communicate your needs and preferences together with practical frameworks for effective two-way communication that adapt to different individuals and different situations including placements.
 - The three packs are:
 - How2 establish communication needs and preferences
 - How2 have productive two-way conversations
 - How2 practise active listening
 - These resources will be made available by workshop 3 and you may work through the three skill packs before or after workshop 4.
- 4] You will have access to all the programme resources and bespoke tools through a dedicated **Google Drive folder** during the programme and for four weeks afterwards (so to 12 June 2026) to review content / download what you'd like to retain. Throughout we will gather your anonymous feedback to improve the programme and future iterations. All workshop-generated content – such as your responses to polls / questions, feedback and live-scribed sketchnotes – will also be shared with you.
- 5] If you are able to attend 3 out of 4 workshops you will receive a **programme completion certificate**. *If you are unable to attend a workshop and the programme runs again in the 26/27 academic year, you are welcome to sign up to missed workshops.*