



# Job Share Guide

**HR & Recruiters**



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**FLEXIBLE WORKING**

A quick reference guide to the factsheets available for HR and recruiters. Some of these are specific to HR/recruitment actions, while others are in order to provide support to line managers and employees.

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# What is job share and how does it work?

This factsheet will help you to explain what job share is, and some of the ways it is typically structured.

Job share is a full-time role that has been divided into multiple job roles. It's typically undertaken by two or more employees, who are paid and earn leave entitlements on a pro rata basis for the part of the role each employee completes<sup>1</sup>. It's a type of flexible working more commonly seen in organisations with established flex work cultures.

From the employer's perspective, it's a full-time role that's shared, with all the advantages of continuous coverage that comes with that. From the employee's perspective, it's a part-time role that gives them genuine time off, knowing someone else has it under control the times that they're not there.

Job share roles can be designed in a number of different ways, depending on the needs of the role and the business, and the needs and capabilities of the individuals.

The two most common models are the islands model (where the job is effectively split) and the twin model (where both employees complete the same tasks but work different days). The model used can evolve as the needs and requirements of the role do.

Standard agency processes for employing job sharers apply, as do recruitment and selection procedures. Job share can be used for any employment arrangement, whether ongoing, temporary, casual or term/contractor.

## What makes a good job share pair?

Not everyone is cut out for job share; it requires specific attributes to do it well. The basic traits needed for job share are:

- **Trust**

Be able to trust another individual to do the work when it's not 'their day'.

- **Commitment**

Be committed to the arrangement, to their role, and to making it work.

- **Team player**

Be able to work as a team, appreciating the whole as more valuable than the parts, and avoid competition with each other or a clash of egos.

- **Organised**

Have great attention to detail and be able to provide clear notes and advice on the work in progress to each other (handover).

- **Respect**

Even if they disagree with their partner's decision, they can present a united front, to avoid destabilising the team around them and undermining their joint authority.

In addition to these basic traits, successful job share pairs typically have complementary skill sets and share similar values. These main attributes, combined with planning and preparation, will increase the productivity of the role.

The logistics of each arrangement can vary, but typically partners work 2.5-3 days each.

<sup>1</sup> WGEA, 'Employee Flexibility Toolkit', 2014

# What is job share and how does it work?



## Twin model

'Classic'



## Islands model

'Job split'



## Hybrid model

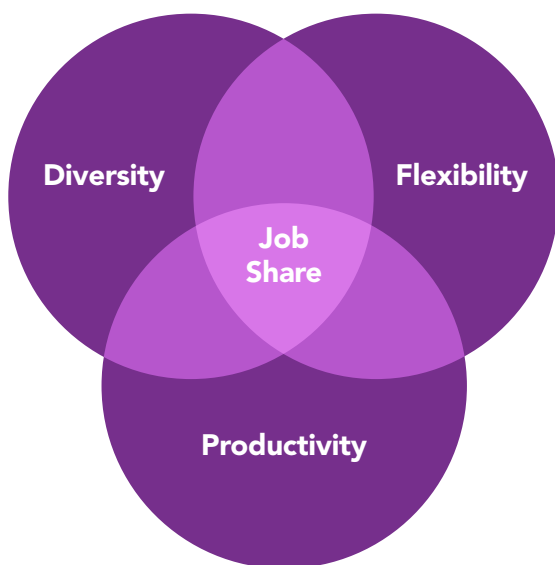
'Combination'

<b>What it is</b>	<p>Involves 2 (or more) employees sharing a role and its workload completing the same tasks but working on different days. They are jointly responsible for all duties and act as a team to complete them. It is essentially 1 full-time role completed by 2 (or more) interchangeable partners on a part-time basis.</p>	<p>Involves 2 (or more) employees sharing a role, but not its workload. Duties are split up between the employees, allowing them to cover different areas of the role. Job sharers have little reliance on each other. It is essentially 2 part-time roles.</p>	<p>The hybrid model is a mix of both the twin and islands model, where 2 (or more) employees share a role with some shared responsibility and some divided responsibility. Role is divided to play to each other's strengths.</p>
<b>What's shared</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business objectives</li> <li>• One job description</li> <li>• Single set of accountabilities, responsibilities and performance objectives</li> <li>• Same level of expertise &amp; capabilities</li> <li>• Shared client/stakeholder</li> <li>• Ownership and team management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance objectives and accountabilities differ</li> <li>• One role description divided into two, although candidates still assessed against all the same capabilities, knowledge and experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business objectives</li> <li>• One role description</li> <li>• Single set of performance objectives</li> <li>• Complementary expertise &amp; capabilities</li> <li>• Shared capabilities</li> </ul>
<b>What's divided up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time – Hours / Day(s) / Week(s) / Month(s)</li> <li>• Geography / time-zone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different expertise and experience</li> <li>• Responsibilities</li> <li>• Activity/Project/Work-stream/ Accountability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complementary capabilities &amp; expertise, with accountabilities divided along relative capability/expertise lines</li> <li>• Possibly divided client or team ownership</li> </ul>
<b>Common variations</b>	<p>A <b>vertical pair</b> occurs where one partner is currently a higher grade and one partner is a lower grade (divided seniority). It can be used for succession planning and development, and the senior partner can perform a mentor/manager function. Vertical pairs work best in the 'twin model', where there are dedicated cross-over periods for the pair to meet together and with team members and check-in on progress.</p>	<p>The <b>Unicorn</b> is a hybrid job share where there is a single set of accountabilities but there is some shared and some divided responsibility based on complementary skill set. While Unicorn pairs can work across the three models of job share, they're best suited to 'islands' or 'hybrid' models of job share because of the divided responsibilities and expertise of the partners.</p>	

# Does job share make business sense?

This factsheet can help you to explain why promoting and enabling job share can solve some common workforce challenges. It can be useful when promoting job share in the agency, advocating with agency leaders or convincing hesitant line managers who have not managed job sharers before.

There are many sound business reasons to create a job share culture in your organisation:



## a) Diversity

- Job share can help your organisation to achieve its diversity goals. Using it can attract talented but under-represented candidates currently unable to find quality part-time leadership roles, or other roles due to the travel time required or personal commitments.
- If your agency is operating in a competitive labour market, sourcing strategies that include job share can help your agency to attract applications from demographic groups currently applying at significantly lower rates — it expands your potential talent pool.
- It can also form a valuable part of your organisation's retention strategy, as job share can pave a career path for employees who currently cannot progress because their caring responsibilities, medical conditions, or community commitments make part-time their only option. This in turn can enrich your agency's talent pipeline.

## b) Flexibility

- Job share can provide true flexibility to both job sharers without compromising business outcomes. It can ensure total coverage in a full-time role.
- This in turn provides flexibility for job sharers in senior or demanding roles that could not otherwise be achieved in reduced hours. It makes these roles sustainable.
- It can provide an excellent pathway to offer flexibility to employees returning from extended leave – whether parental or illness, without compromising the coverage in the role.

## c) Productivity

- Job sharers are more productive, with optimal matches increasing productivity by up to 30%<sup>2</sup>.
- Job share can be used to retain older workers as they transition to retirement, one of the most commonly cited reasons for requesting a job share arrangement. When matched with a younger worker, job share can be used for succession planning, and role re-structure used to build skills in both employees.
- Job share can improve business continuance and the retention of intellectual property by two people sharing the role.

<sup>2</sup> See BHP case study for more details on the productivity, safety and production accuracy forecasting data achieved through flexible rostering, including job sharing roster lines in mining workforces, [www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workplace-culture---diversity/flexible-working/leading-implementation-of-flexible-working/case-studies/bhp](http://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workplace-culture---diversity/flexible-working/leading-implementation-of-flexible-working/case-studies/bhp). 'Job sharing at senior level: making it work', *The Job Share Project*, pp. 43, [www.thejobshareproject.com/3434hjkv97fjb378fbv/jobsharefullreport.pdf](http://www.thejobshareproject.com/3434hjkv97fjb378fbv/jobsharefullreport.pdf)

# What misgivings exist about job share?

There are a number of misgivings about job share that result in requests being refused, or line managers less keen to consider the arrangement. Almost all can either be resolved or avoided entirely with some planning. In this factsheet, we've collected some of the most commonly expressed and provided suggested responses to address them.

Challenges	How to resolve them
<b>It costs extra because it needs 1.2 FTE</b>	1.2 FTE isn't always a necessity (see Factsheet 1), although is a good idea in a twin arrangement, especially at executive level. However, it is well known that the increase of productivity (double the brain and stamina, double the connections) generally far outweighs the additional 0.2 cost. <a href="#">Research found</a> a typical productivity boost of 30%. Note also that many agencies do not spend their full labour budget due to turnover.
<b>Our clients only want to deal with one person</b>	Contrary to this common perception, job share can be highly effective in client-facing roles, because it allows 5-day coverage, holiday coverage and gives access to two resources instead of one. It just needs to be communicated well to clients. Provide the DPC case study as an example of managing complex stakeholders successfully.
<b>This role requires travel</b>	Job share can help soften the burden of travel by splitting it between two employees. Some roles can even be shared by employees in two different locations. This can cut travel costs and create strong local relationships in both locations.
<b>Our stakeholder interaction is complex</b>	Relationships and interactions with key stakeholders need to be mapped out carefully at the beginning of a job share arrangement via a workplan. Job sharers could meet most important stakeholders together, and split others depending on working days. Provide the DPC case study as an example of managing complex stakeholders successfully.
<b>Decision making around here is fast-paced</b>	Trust is one of the most important attributes of a successful job share pair, and whoever is in that day, makes the decision. It is also critical that the other partner support the decision made, even if they may have done it differently, and handle discussions privately. Provide the Industry case study as an example of how job sharers can successfully trust each other's decisions.
<b>This role requires overtime</b>	Overtime is common in senior job share roles. Monitoring the amount of overtime, and allocating even tasks/days needs to be managed by the partners. Noting how the work ebbs and flows, especially on certain days, can help.
<b>This role has direct reports</b>	Direct reports can be handled by evenly splitting by numbers if there is a high number, splitting by task, or handled together, divided by days in office.  Performance reviews can be handled individually or together partners can take turns. HR systems will need consideration, as payroll systems may need dividing as well. Provide the DPI case study as an example of managing a team as a job share partnership.
<b>Pay and entitlements</b>	Pay and employee entitlements are calculated on a pro rata basis, and subject to the relevant awards.

# The facts on job share in the NSW government sector

Understanding the current state of job share can be useful when promoting it within your organisation. Here is a snapshot of job share in the NSW Government in 2018.

Currently, only a small percentage of the total workforce uses job share in the NSW government sector, with 3,669 reporting using job share in the 2018 People Matter Employee Survey (with a total survey response rate of 170,832). The vast majority are women. The current full-time equivalent workforce is 329,005 employees.

Gender	Number of job sharers	Job share by gender	Number employees using flex arrangements	Job sharers as % of total flex users
Female	3,218	88%	101,554	3.2%
Male	417	11%	53,003	0.8%
Other	34	1%	2,513	1.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,669</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>157,070</b>	<b>2.34%</b>

Figure 1: Job share user profile

When examined by age, the vast majority of the current job sharers are in the 30-44 age bracket, with an average age in 2018 of 43 years, as Figure 2 shows.

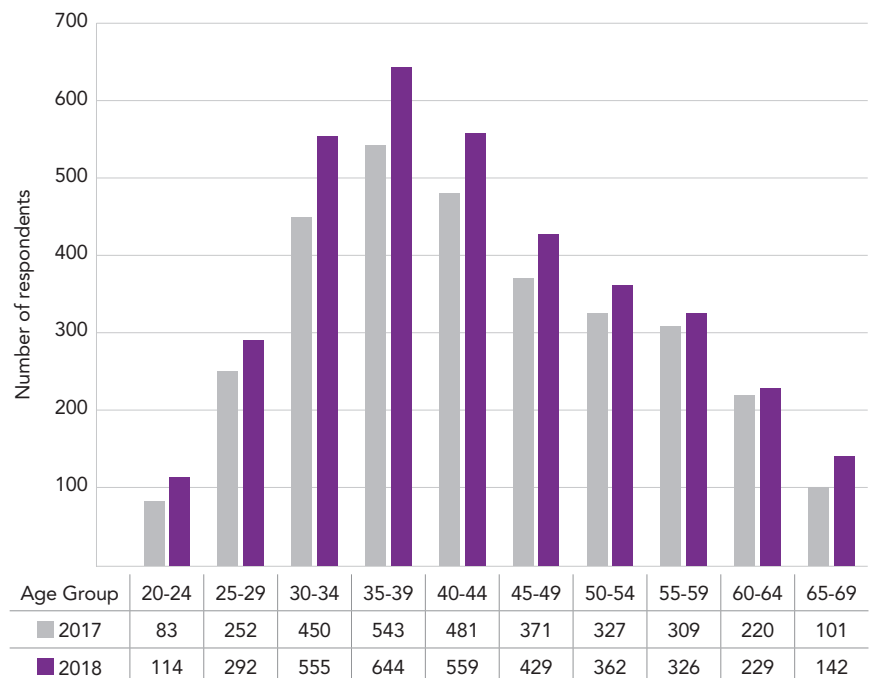


Figure 2: job share by age

Source: People Matter Employee Survey 2018



# The facts on job share in the NSW government sector

The majority of job sharers in the NSW public sector worked in the Education and Health clusters, as shown in Figure 3.

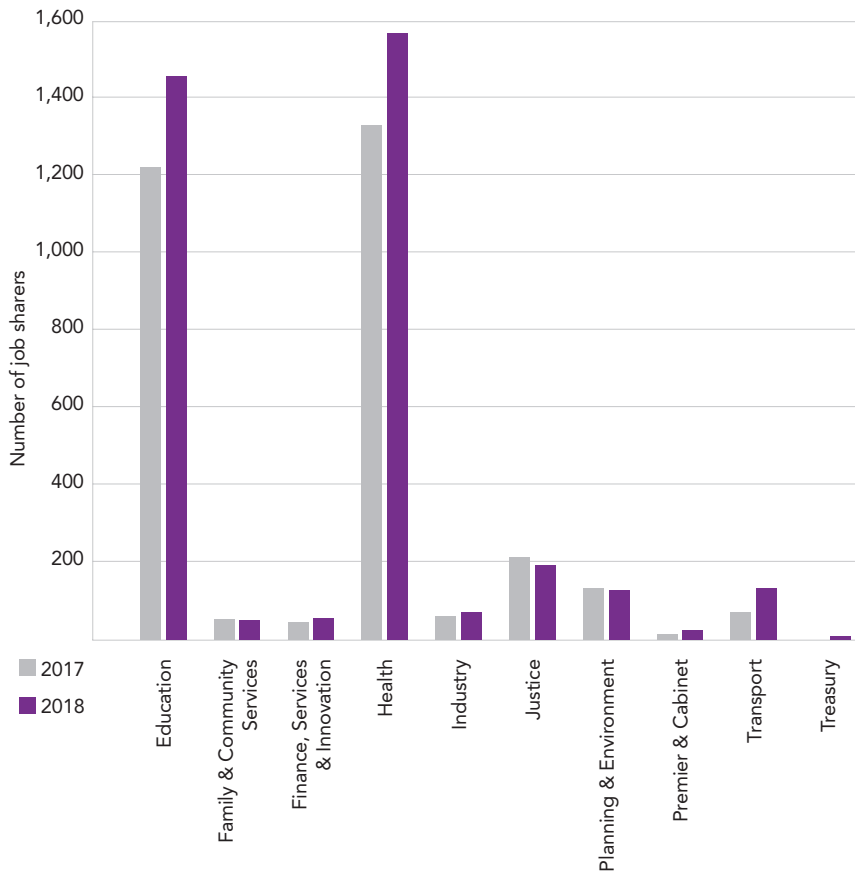


Figure 3: Job share by cluster  
Source: People Matter Employee Survey 2018

The average salary for a job sharer in the NSW public sector in 2018 was \$74,800.46<sup>3</sup>, compared to average salary of \$90,215.99 for the sector overall in this survey.

In 2018, the majority of job sharers in the NSW public sector worked in roles where they engaged in 'service delivery involving direct contact with the general public' (64% or 2,316), and most were employed on an 'ongoing or permanent (other than senior executive)' basis (65.5% or 2,382).

Engagement scores and satisfaction with flexible working options were slightly higher for job sharers compared to employees not using job share but using other flexible working options, and significantly higher than the sector overall. This shows the potential of flexible working, given its correlation with engagement scores, as engagement across the sector has remained steady overall for the past three years.

	Engagement with organisation	Satisfaction with access to flexible working	Perceives manager as supporting flexible working
Using job share	70%	74%	75%
Not using job share but using a different flexible work options	67%	72%	75%
Overall sector scores	65%	59%	63%

Source: People Matter Employee Survey 2018

<sup>3</sup> Note the PMES question asks people to quote their full-time equivalent salary band.

# How do I support a job share request?

As a recruiter or HR business partner, there are two main ways a job share typically crystallises and could need your support:

- 1** New employment, for example, two job sharers jointly apply for a role currently structured as 1 FTE, and the line manager has not previously encountered this request. Alternately, a line manager may pro-actively elect to make a role job share as part of the analysis done when filling it.
- 2** Modified current employment: for example, a current job share partnership dissolves, a part-time employee wanting to manage growing workload/commitments, or a full-time employee wanting to scale back their commitments or return from long-term leave, and work part-time.

Of course, a line manager may approach you wanting to fill a long-term (aged) vacancy that is for a niche skill set or for any other number of reasons has become hard to fill. It would also be useful to coach them to consider whether job share could be a solution for these trickier situations. Low awareness of job share as a flexible working option often means that managers have just not considered it as a solution before, and they will have a lot of questions. This factsheet (and others) will help you to provide the support required.

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## **New employment: what do we do if we receive a joint application requesting a job share?**

While current Human Capital Management (HCM) recruitment modules do not typically support two separate but linked applications in their systems, you may receive a single application from two individuals, or two individual applications that reference each other. For legal reasons, your agency may need all applicants to apply separately but clearly reference each other until the HCM recruitment modules are refreshed.

Treat these as you would a single application, that is; apply the same recruitment and merit selection process.

If both job share applicants meet the requirements, the assessors then determine the best person, or in the case of the job share applicants, people, suited to the role.

(Note: This may vary in non-public service agencies that are not required to comply with Part 3 of the Government Sector Employment (General) Rules, 'GSE Rules').

# How do I support a job share request?

***The selection process should be the same as it is for any other applicants; that is, a line manager should avoid additional or unique questions for the job sharers that would not be otherwise asked of a single applicant.***

A canny applicant will know to reference job share in any behavioural interview questions, if this assessment is used; after all, they will have direct experience of collaboration, and possibly influencing and negotiating as they navigate situations of potential conflict.

If it is a public service role, the role must be offered to the most suitable candidate/s, contrary to the misconception that job share, candidates need to finish 'first and second'. There is no prohibition from offering the role to two people as a job share, as you are offering a part-time role to two applicants. Your payroll system may require creating two part-time roles/position identifiers for the purposes of paying benefits; it depends on the system.

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## **Modified employment: how do we handle backfill, part-time or return to work?**

You may be approached by a manager who has an employee who wishes to return to work part-time after extended leave (illness or parental), or an employee who may be planning retirement or study and generally wants to scale back commitments. Here is what you can do to support them.

- Ask the manager if the employee has outlined how a job share arrangement might work, how it could meet business requirements (including stakeholder or team management), what the proposed working arrangements could be, any costs possibly incurred (additional laptop or desk and salary, if a twin model) and any health and safety implications, where relevant. Use Factsheets 10 and 11 to guide the discussion.
- Work with the employee or manager to analyse the current role's core responsibilities to first determine if they remain relevant, then establish if job share can be made easier through the way responsibilities are allocated. For example, are they best shared entirely (twin model where all responsibilities shared between two employees) or split (island model where responsibilities are split between partners) or a mix of both. Use Factsheet 6 for more details. Use the PSC's guidance for role analysis for support.

# How do I support a job share request?

- If more than 1 FTE is needed (e.g. a twin model), then consider the budget impacts of allowing a handover process time between partners. When responsibilities are entirely shared, a minimum of 0.5 day handover time each week is optimal.
- If budget and role implications can be satisfied, then:
  - If the request is supported: Verbally notify the employee and allow them to proceed in finding a partner internally through the job share matching tool if they don't already have a potential partner through their own connections, although of course they will need to meet the capability requirements of the role through whatever assessment means your agency has determined.
  - If the request can't be supported: Line Manager and Human Resources partners to align prior to refusing any request and consider any alternative arrangements that meet both business and the employee's personal requirements.

If it is an existing job share role where one of the pair is moving on, then you will need to advertise the role as per your normal process. Consider targeting the advertisement to part-time employees, or using recruiters that specialise in fractional employment.

You should also discuss it with the remaining half of the pair; they may wish to use their networks to help find a suitable partner, or even vary their own arrangements to return to full-time.

But while making the partnership work is primarily their responsibility, the employment process is the responsibility of the agency, which must recruit and assess as usual, but then factor in time for the potential job sharers to meet and establish if they might be compatible. Refer a potential job share pair to the PSC's Employees Guide to Job Share for advice on what to consider if they are new to job share. You will also need them to consider what alternative solutions are available if a new partner cannot be sourced (e.g. a return to the role full-time, re-design the role to be part-time, or a move to a different part-time role).

***Refer a potential job share pair to the PSC's Employees Guide to Job Share for advice on what to consider if they are new to job share.***



# How do I support a job share request?

## When a job share proposal is unlikely to be successful

A job share is unlikely to succeed if:

- a minimum of 0.5 day handover is needed, and budget doesn't allow for over 1 FTE (noting that many agencies do not spend their full labour budget due to turnover).
- analysis (see Factsheet 6) shows too many key responsibilities can only be performed by one person.
- the output required relies too heavily on one individual's tacit knowledge/style and can't be continued by another person.

It is also possible that one of the pair (or the employee proposing it to their manager) cannot demonstrate the individual values or characteristics necessary to succeed; for example, their challenges with being a team player, their ability to let go and trust others, and their time and task management skills. Ideally these would have been documented in a performance discussion, if an existing employee.

In this case, the line manager will need to discuss this with the employee, as these concerns are valid.

However, client facing roles and managing teams, or the fact that it has not been done before are not reasons to deny a job share arrangement: see the case studies for FACS, Industry, DPI and DPC to see how these common dilemmas have been successfully addressed.

In any event, ensure the employees are provided a written refusal, and the manager discusses this with them in the context of seeking an alternative flexible working arrangement (for example, part-time with role re-design to remove components, compressed hours, flexible start and finish times or working from different/remote locations).

# Analysing whether a role is suitable for job share

This factsheet provides a framework for determining whether a NSW government sector role may be suitable for job share. It is a useful discussion guide for employees and managers exploring job share, to alert them to the decisions necessary.

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Role analysis can be instigated in two ways: as part of a role analysis process before a vacant or new role is filled, or where a role is identified as potential job share (i.e. an employee request or employee decision).

In the first instance, use the PSC's guidance on how to structure an approach. This form of role analysis is an opportunity to consider reshaping the role to open it up to a new pool of candidates.

Where a job share arrangement is created for an existing role, then the following steps can apply.

- Analysing each of the key accountabilities for a role is the most important step in deciding if a role is suitable for job share and, if so, what type of job share arrangement would be best for the role.
- Both job share employees must be assessed as meeting the requirements for the role (in accordance with the Government Sector Employment Act 2013, 'GSE Act' and the GSE Rules if these are applicable to your agency).
- Although both job share employees may be able to competently perform the role, each has strengths, and using these strengths to design the job share will help it to work.

Importantly, note that the changing nature of work and technology mean that the examples relevant today may not hold, and there are always exceptions. Each role will need to be examined based on the arrangement proposed, and the top five key responsibilities of the role, and whether they can be shared or split.



# Analysing whether a role is suitable for job share

## Structure the job share based on the role analysis

If you are unable to undertake a full role analysis, then use the process in the worked examples on pages 16-17 to help determine the optimal job share model for the role. [Information on role analysis is also available on the PSC website](#). If the analysis score it produces is less than 1.4, the role is probably unsuitable for splitting or sharing. This is because the transfer of knowledge is too great, and it would not be efficiently performed as a result.

If the analysis score is between 1.5-2.4, the role is ideally split, but a twin model can also be considered.

### Reallocate responsibilities with score of 1

If role has a responsibility with a 1 score, consider if it can be removed/reallocated from the role. It is possible to allocate it to one person only, but note the risk of creating imbalance in the job share partnership.

### Split responsibilities with score of 2

Balance carefully responsibilities with score of 2. Ask the pair and manager to propose a fair and efficient split. Both partners will still need to be across responsibility and ensure continuity on their working days.

### Share all responsibilities with score of 3

All these responsibilities should be shared and pass from one partner to the other during handover days. It is important partners are compatible and can perform these responsibilities together.



#### Consider twins if:

- Role is better performed in team.
- Role needs five-day coverage.
- Responsibilities have high interaction with other team members.
- Responsibilities are interrelated. Therefore, performance evaluation should be done as one.



#### Consider islands if:

- Role can be performed autonomously.
- Role doesn't need five-day coverage, but could be handled as individual part-time with some crossover/consistency required, e.g. some rostered roles.
- Most responsibilities can be performed discretely.
- Performance evaluation is more efficient separately.

If the analysis score is more than 2.5, the role is ideally shared as a twin model. If any of the key responsibilities have a low score within the overall score, you could recommend the manager re-consider them.

# Analysing whether a role is suitable for job share

See the following worked examples, which shows one way to analyse and rate the suitability of job sharing. Note these examples do not mean any roles like these must be structured the same way; it depends very much on the context and nature of the work.

## Worked example 1: Senior resource analyst

Top five key responsibilities, listed in order of importance	Indicates the % of total annual work time typically spent on this area	Based on the definitions above, choose if 1. Responsibility can't be split or shared 2. Preferably split 3. Preferably shared
KRA	A % of work Sum should add to 100%	B Rate (1 to 3)
1 Manage resource assessment and modelling projects undertaken in-house and delivered through external providers	40%	3
2 Testing integrated modelling software	25%	2
3 Use modelling to interrogate policy options and analyse outcomes to formulate clear advice on a range of issues	20%	3
4 Assist in maintaining and strengthening role as custodian of models	5%	3
5 Provide technical advice to inform the entitlement framework and policy	10%	3
<b>Result for Senior resource analyst</b>		<b>2.75*</b>
Less than 1.4: role should not be split or shared		
Between 1.5-2.4: role is preferably split		
More than 2.5: role is preferably shared		

\*Calculation consist of the percentage of work in column A multiplied by the rate in column B for example 40%X3=1.2 for row #1. Result for each row are then summed to give the overall results for the role taking into account each job function time and rate.



# Analysing whether a role is suitable for job share

## Worked example 2: Executive assistant

Top five key responsibilities, listed in order of importance	Indicates the % of total annual work time typically spent on this area	Based on the definitions above, choose if 1. Responsibility can't be split or shared 2. Preferably split 3. Preferably shared
KRA	A % of work Sum should add to 100%	B Rate (1 to 3)
1 Provide a range of support functions to the Regional Director including, diary management, meeting co-ordination, management of correspondence, etc.	50%	2
2 Prepare correspondence, briefing and notes	30%	2
3 Lead projects and investigations, and research issues on behalf of the Regional Team	10%	2
4 Identify and respond to opportunities to improve the efficiency of systems	5%	2
5 Build and maintain strong, collaborative relationships with executives and staff	5%	3

**Result for Executive assistant**

**2.05**

Less than 1.4: role should not be split or shared

Between 1.5-2.4: role is preferably split

More than 2.5: role is preferably shared

# Analysing whether a role is suitable for job share

## Support the hiring manager to allocate appropriate budget for the role

Job share, particularly a twin or hybrid model, may sometimes require additional budget beyond 1 FTE, and the manager may need your advice in proposing it:

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### Islands

1 FTE with an additional hour or two for handover. The role should be clearly split between the partners but it is still recommended to have some handover time for details to be exchanged, and joint meetings with the line manager.



### Hybrid

1.1 to 1.2 FTE is recommended when partners are sharing some of the tasks. Half a day would be the minimum to allow them to share all details necessary and have joint meetings with line manager, reports or key stakeholders.



### Twin

1.2 FTE to allow a full day cross over between the partners. This full day is highly important when completely sharing the role. It allows to have an efficient handover time, joint meetings with teams but more importantly to take joint decisions. The productivity increase seen in job share wouldn't be possible without this handover time.



# Supporting job sharers through their decision making

This factsheet will help you to explore some of the considerations for job share. You can use it to encourage potential sharers and their hiring managers to think through how it might work, the implications of the arrangement and whether they're likely to be successful at job share. It also provides some typical scenarios you can discuss with a job share pair to explore their perspectives. These can also be used as part of the onboarding process.

These questions are designed to inform job share arrangements rather than being part of the assessment process, unless the role is specifically designed for job share applicants only.

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## Sample discussion questions

### Logistics

- Why is job share a good solution for you?
- What days do you prefer working?
- Are you flexible?
- How long would you like to job share?
- Would you consider progressing your career in job share roles?

### Background

- Have you job shared before?
- What do you know about job share?
- Tell me about a time when you were part of a team working together to deliver an outcome.
- Tell me about a time when you have been acknowledged or rewarded as a team rather than individually.
- Tell me about a time when you have had to trust others to deliver an outcome for which you are accountable.

### Preparation

- What do you know about job share arrangements?
- What do you think are the challenges of job share?  
Tell me about a time you have dealt with similar challenges.
- How do you see the handover process working?
- What are your expectations of your potential partner?
- What strengths will you bring to this partnership?  
How have you demonstrated these strengths in prior roles?

# Supporting job sharers through their decision making

## Typical scenarios

Below are some scenarios that can be used to explore how ready for job share an individual may be.

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### 1. Your job share partner is sick and he/she was to deliver a presentation to a client today. What would you do?

- a. Re-arrange your day so you can present to the client.
- b. Suggest rescheduling, as your partner is the strongest in presenting.
- c. Suggest rescheduling, as it is complicated to change days at the last minute.

Ideally, we want candidate to answer (a) and support the other partner when possible and be committed to team outcomes. Re-schedule is possible, although ideally client service would be smoothly maintained.

### 2. As part of the role, there are two direct reports. What would you suggest to your job share partner on how you manage the team?

- a. Both of you should take a dual lead in managing the team, including performance management, coaching and training.
- b. Your partner is new to people management so you suggest he/she take the lead role in people management, with you supporting and coaching them.
- c. You are more experienced and naturally strong in people management so you take the lead.

Ideally, we want candidate to answer (b) so one partner gains experience from the other. This is one of the strengths of job share, the ability to learn from each other.

### 3. It's your handover day and your partner is not very organised. You realise they have left incomplete details crucial to a key project. What is your reaction?

- a. Ask him/her how you can work better together.
- b. Suggest you both prepare a handover process sheet to share, taking time to explain the productivity benefits of this approach.
- c. Ask more questions to get the missing information. During your days of work you can work it out with the team.

Ideally, we want candidate to answer (b) so both in the pair becomes efficient and organised.

# How to prepare a job share requisition

There are two forms of job share advertising relevant:

- for a full-time role that can be filled by a job share pair
- for a part-time role to match a current employee seeking to job share or replace a former partner.

**The first needs only a statement in support of flexible working, noting that this includes job share.**

For example, the Department of Premier and Cabinet uses this text:

*Our commitment to flexibility: At DPC we endeavour to make roles flexible. While this role is advertised as full time, we will consider requests to undertake the work on a flexible part-time or job share basis. Further, the position is location agnostic – applications are encouraged from regional areas. Occasional travel to Sydney to co-locate with the team; however, all operational skills support employees to work from DPC Regional Offices.*

**A job share-specific advertisement simply needs additional information:**

- Briefly explain that this role is a job share, and what that entails.
- Clearly identify if you are looking for one candidate or two.
- Clarify potential days needed.
- Explain how to apply as individual or joint application (where relevant).

Below is some text that can be used to explain job share, amended according to the role:

*Job share is when two people share one full time role. Job share is one of the flexible working options we offer and support within our organisation. Job share benefits our employees by providing more part-time roles and allowing them to pursue a flexible and meaningful career. We encourage anyone looking for a part time role who works well in a team to consider applying.*

*To allow better handover and integration of this role, the company requires both employees to work three days per week each, with a face to face handover on Wednesday.*

# How to prepare a job share requisition

## Posting a job share role

All suitable roles can be advertised as potential job share roles. Roles can be advertised on regular channels (Internal site, LinkedIn, SEEK, etc).

For those agencies using Taleo, 'job share' can now be selected as one of the available work types. This will allow candidates to search specifically for job share roles on the I work for NSW website.



# Formalising a job share arrangement

Here are some of the elements to consider when preparing a job share employment offer. The recommendations provided are based on interviews with HR and job partners, although your own agency may need to include its own specific processes.

## Definition

Job share is a formal arrangement where two employees are sharing responsibilities of a full-time role. The partners also share remuneration, benefits and holidays on a pro rata basis of the FTE.

## Duration of employment

Where relevant, job share contracts are treated as two individual ongoing part-time or temporary fixed term contracts.

## Probation time

The usual probation periods apply, although a line manager new to the arrangement may want to informally suggest more frequent checkpoints while it is established, based on clear objectives and goals. Any arrangements are subject to the probation periods set out under the employment legislation, e.g. GSE.

## Back-fill plan

If the job share arrangement has a defined duration, clarify the backfill obligations are met under the current employment legislation.

If the job share is only a temporary arrangement, clarify whether each partner's employment is ongoing or temporary as well, and what this will mean once the term of the arrangement expires.

## Job share schedule

Define the days or work and hours in the employment contract for each individual, as you would for casual or part-time contract.

The work days should be defined in the contract. Example of job share agreements include:

- half or split week - each person works 2.5 to 3 days per week
- half or split days - one person works mornings and the other afternoons
- alternate week - each person works for 1 week, then takes a week off
- unequal ratio splits - one employee works more time than the other (e.g. 3 days per week and 2 days per week)

Job share (not split) arrangements should allow a minimum of 1hr weekly overlap to account for handover between the partners.

Ensure the arrangements comply with the applicable award or enterprise agreement.

## Place of work

Job share can still be performed from different locations. Define the location, especially if it differs for each partner.

# How to onboard a job share arrangement

This factsheet can help you to support managers to onboard job share partners.

The first step is for the job sharers to set aside time to get to know each other before formally starting the arrangement. Too many pairs wait until challenges arise to see their individual reactions and discuss it. Here are some tips you can provide to new job share partners who haven't worked together before.

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## 1. Discuss potential challenges early

Use these discussion starters to understand the likely reactions of each partner in a challenging situation:

- Your partner gets all the praise for the work you have prepared.
- Your partner has made a decision during your day you disagree with.
- Your partner is looking to move up the corporate ladder but you are not looking for a promotion.
- Your client prefers to deal with one person rather than the other.
- Your reports complain they have to repeat the same thing twice.

## 2. Share any other psychometric tests results

It can be useful to share any psychometric tests used during recruitment or development to better understand each other's personality. They can help to understand each other's strengths and weaknesses, and consider how certain tasks could be best suited to one or the other.

## 3. Use coaching and mentoring

Meeting with experienced job share partners can help to understand challenges first hand. It is very beneficial especially when the other pair is from the same company and can provide advice on how to communicate and work better within your agency environment. If you don't know any job share pairs you can connect them with in your agency, contact the PSC to be connected with successful job share partners outside the agency.



# How to onboard a job share arrangement

The second part of the on-boarding process is about understanding the relationship between the role, the team and other key stakeholders. In the case of job share, it is important for pairs to communicate early and consistently how the arrangement works. Use the below job share plan to clarify arrangement details, and communicate with the team and key stakeholders.

## Job share plan

Planning and writing down the job share arrangement and structure will align partners and help communication with other stakeholders. Share this template with job sharers and their managers so they can consider the important details of any arrangement. Sections 1 to 9 can be used as a summary to share with key stakeholders (teams, clients, as appropriate) to ensure these act as protocols for working with them.

#	Elements	Description	Job Share Partner 1	Job Share Partner 2
1	Job share pair purpose	Describe your common purpose in your role. <i>For example, "Provide an outstanding service to our client".</i>		
2	Duration and time commitment	If the role is not permanent, write the details of the arrangement. <i>For example, 2-year contract including 6 month trial.</i>		
3	Job share model and impact for key responsibility areas	Twins – share same KPIs Island – separate KPIs Use the job share design tool to help chose the ideal model for the role, and outline who will 'own' each responsibility area, or if shared.		
4	Working days	Detail each partner's working days. <i>For example, each work 3 days with cross-over on Wednesday.</i>		
5	Handover process	Detail your handover process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes to be taken and shared through common X program</li> <li>• Update shared in work in progress (WIP) document</li> <li>• 1hr WIP face to face meeting on Wednesday morning 9am</li> <li>• 30min WIP on the phone Monday morning</li> </ul>		

# How to onboard a job share arrangement

#	Elements	Description	Job Share Partner 1	Job Share Partner 2
6	Task lead	Clarify if one of the partners will lead specific projects.		
7	Stakeholders	Detail the key stakeholders who will be working with both partners and if any would be working more or less with one. <i>Internal: Sales director, marketing director</i> <i>External: Main client contact</i>		
8	Communication & key meetings	Detail your communication tools. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Use of a single email and phone number internally and externally.</i></li> <li>• <i>Sales meeting to be attended by X, Marketing briefing by X.</i></li> </ul>		
9	Reporting lines	Align on reporting lines and performance reviews. -Assistant to have WIP with both partners but performance review to be conducted by one partner.		
10	Supporting technical resources	List important technical resources used <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Hardware: 2 computers, 2 phones</i></li> <li>• <i>Software: share cloud</i></li> <li>• <i>Note if any costs will incurred if there is a crossover time necessitating two laptops, phones, desks, etc.</i></li> </ul>		
11	Job share KPIs	Agree how you will mentor the performance of your arrangement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Regular discussion with manager on performance against KPIs</i></li> <li>• <i>Use 360 survey results showing internal and external key stakeholder high level of satisfaction with job share performance.</i></li> </ul>		

# How to onboard a job share arrangement

#	Elements	Description	Job Share Partner 1	Job Share Partner 2
12	Performance management and job share arrangement review processes	<p>These are done as per normal agency process. For job sharers, they can be done together or separately. Ideally define your preference at the beginning of the relationship. It's a good idea to check-in and review how the job share arrangement is working. Regular check-ins with colleagues, direct reports and manager can be built into regular performance management review meetings and 1 on 1s.</p> <p><i>Performance to be reviewed (individually/together) twice per year with line manager</i></p>		
13	Development plan	<p>List resources and training provided by HR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>training: leadership course specific to X, digital course specific to X</i></li> <li>• <i>mentoring: both partners to be mentored by X</i></li> </ul>		
14	Extra curriculum	<p>Add any extra curriculum taken by one or both partners</p> <p><i>Both participate in social club</i></p>		
15	Backfill/exit plan	<p>Clarify exit plan and backfill obligations are met under the current employment legislation.</p>		

# How to onboard a job share arrangement

## Planning an effective handover

A job share handover process includes how and when tasks will be passed from one partner to the other. Clarifying the process from the start helps partners to be prepared and efficient but also provides reassurance to the team and their manager. Reinforce the importance of this approach, and the need to periodically review it to ensure continues to fit its context (for line manager, team and work underway).

The handover process is important, as partners should be seen as one and their work should be as seamless as possible. The productivity of the arrangement also lies in making sure the work is not doubled up but shared based on each other's strengths.

Not all processes are the same but similar principles tend to apply, especially at the beginning of the relationship. Long-term job share partners often change their processes over time and become extremely efficient. Below is a sample of tools that can be used.

### 1. Create a Work in Progress (WIP) structure

A structured WIP document is essential to create an efficient handover. Below is an example of a job share WIP containing the most important information.

	Campaign X	Campaign Z
<b>Tasks</b>	Brief agency	Create post analysis
<b>Priority</b>	High	Low
<b>Completion time</b>	May 15	June 3
<b>Status</b>	In progress	Not started
<b>Responsibility</b>	Partner 1	Both

### 2. Align on pre-work

To create an efficient face-to-face handover, both partners should come prepared, having read the notes and the WIP documents. Their time is best spent then asking questions on specific details and joining forces to solve more challenging issues. It is also recommended that they prepare a meeting agenda with recurring items and specific projects to be discussed.

Example of a job share handover agenda:

- Notes and actions from last week
- Recurring business updates
- New projects and priorities
- People news
- Check-in on each other and feedback on job share.

# How to onboard a job share arrangement

### 3. Use technology to its advantage

Encourage the use of a single email address for both partners to avoid duplication. This will facilitate communication with team members and avoid having to go through hundreds of emails when returning to work.

A common note taking platform such as OneNote can also be useful. This again minimises the number of emails, creates a structure and helps find notes for future reference, particularly for catching up on key decisions.

There are also multiple WIP platforms such as Trello that can create clear tasks with timelines and responsibilities. This could replace an excel-based WIP document and provide a snapshot of what everyone is doing without having to ask them. It can also be shared across the team.

It is also important that job sharers use a communication tool to help share documents and short discussions. Tools like Slack can help organise and find communication for future reference. See below a list of possible technology applications.

	<b>Applications</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Note taking</b>	One Note	Organising thoughts, to-do lists, and projects. <a href="http://www.onenote.com">www.onenote.com</a>
	Evernote	Taking notes, clipping web pages and recording audio. <a href="http://www.evernote.com">www.evernote.com</a>
	Google keep	Ideal for collecting images, drafting documents, and creating checklists. <a href="http://keep.google.com">keep.google.com</a>
<b>Project management</b>	Trello	Visual boards with project cards given to team members. <a href="http://trello.com">trello.com</a>
	Asana	Create lists of tasks and subtasks that can be used for project management, goal-setting, brainstorming and meeting agendas. <a href="http://www.asana.com">www.asana.com</a>
	Team Ahoy	Simple and visual project management tool. <a href="http://www.teamahoy.com">www.teamahoy.com</a>
<b>Document sharing</b>	Dropbox	Independent cloud storage application. Available across devices (mobile, tablet, computer). <a href="http://www.dropbox.com">www.dropbox.com</a>
	OneDrive	Cloud storage application own by Microsoft. Available across devices (mobile, tablet, computer). <a href="http://www.onedrive.com">www.onedrive.com</a>
	Google Drive	Cloud storage application own by Google. Available across devices (mobile, tablet, computer). <a href="http://www.google.com">www.google.com</a>
<b>Communication</b>	Microsoft Teams	Instant messaging and collaboration system with ability to share documents, images and emails. It is an all in one application.
	Slack	Slack can be used if you don't have Microsoft Teams. It offers similar features. <a href="http://www.slack.com">www.slack.com</a>
	What's App	Informal communication application for quick text and images exchange. Useful for non-office based teams. <a href="http://www.whatsapp.com">www.whatsapp.com</a>
	Yammer	Ability to create private channels and share documents.

# How to onboard a job share arrangement

## 4. Manage duplication

Reinforce that handover time should be used efficiently to make sure each partner has the right level of detail on every project. They should avoid going to meetings together unless absolutely necessary. Partners should trust each other and communicate all important messages. Being seen together might also be perceived as potential duplication in their arrangement.

Where duplication happens, partners should address it privately. It is the responsibility of the partners to organise themselves and structure their work for efficiency and minimise duplication.

## 5. Communication during day off

Job share partners should agree on potential communication during days off. Most job share pairs communicate during their day off to align on important and urgent issues, and can agree in advance on the ideal type of communication (call, text, email) and timing.

## 6. Communicate working protocols and day-to-day parameters

It is useful for the job sharers, particularly if working in a team or leading one, have an initial conversation with that team about how it will work, the protocols for ensuring both are across what they need to be, and what they will need to make it work. Further details in useful ways to do this are included in the job sharers' guide.



# How to evaluate the success of a job share arrangement

## Advice for job sharers

They can consider using a 360-degree feedback-type survey to capture the feedback from the internal and external key stakeholders prior to reviewing the arrangement. An example of how to review and evaluate the success of a job share arrangement periodically is included in the job sharer and manager guides.

## Advice for managers

All job share arrangements can be reviewed as part of a normal probationary process where new, and as part of a normal performance process if they are existing employees. Where a twin model is used, performance goals should be identical, although the development goals can be customised. Island models can have goals relevant to the scope of each person's work. It is critical that managers differentiate between performance as job sharers, and performance in general. Job sharers require additional effort in communication and planning, and this can be noted in the feedback provided.

Like all employment arrangements, performance and development goals, and who owns what, should be agreed early on. This is also a good opportunity to identify any additional training requirements needed by the broader team (e.g. if administrative support will need new software skills for Trello or OneNote).

Encourage managers to think creatively about performance and productivity, to guide them away from measuring based on presence.

Traditional productivity measures are based on: output of work/hours of input. Encourage them to consider alternative measure, such as:

- Value of a person's work = benefits to others x quality x efficiency;
- Benefits to others: contributing to your business area, your team, your manager, a colleague, clients/customers;
- Quality: degree of accuracy, insight, novelty, and reliability of work output; and
- Efficiency: time taken, resources used (note: this is a significant opportunity associated with flexible work).<sup>4</sup>

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## Evaluation of the job share arrangement

Use the planning template provided to partners at the beginning of the arrangement and confirm the arrangement still meets their objectives and the objectives of the business.

<sup>4</sup> Framework based on: Hansen, M. T. (2018). *Great at work: How top performers do less, work better and achieve more*. London: Simon & Schuster.

# How to support the exit of a job share arrangement

Job share partners should have a clear understanding of length of the contract and potential exit strategy in the event of their circumstances changing, and this should be understood from the commencement of the arrangement. The exit strategy should have been thought out and described in the job share planning section. Refer to Factsheet 12 on formalising the job share arrangement for more details.

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## What if the job share relationship doesn't work?

All job share arrangements can benefit from a trial period that mirrors the probation period, with suggested checkpoints woven into standard catch-ups or 1:1s. This should provide enough time and opportunity for a line manager to determine if the job share relationship is working as planned.

Where challenges arise, it is up to partners to manage any conflict in the first instance, by talking and working together to resolve it. If it continues not to function effectively, and becomes a performance issue, then your agency's usual performance issues apply, whether for one (if not performing effectively) or both (if the conflict is mutual).

In the case of poor performance from one partner, the job share arrangement should be evaluated to understand the cause of the poor performance. If the cause comes from the relationship between the partners, encourage the partners and hiring manager to understand and resolve the specific issues. If unsuccessful, the arrangement can be reconsidered. If the cause is from a lack of skills, then a development plan should be created in consideration with the other partner. For public service employees, the provisions under the GSE Act and Rules dealing with unsatisfactory performance must be taken into account. It is important that all parties act quickly, as this situation can create tension and potential competition between the pair that can affect the broader team.



# How to support the exit of a job share arrangement

## Managing poor performance from one partner

### Continue with the arrangement, but set individual development goals

It is really important to understand if the pair are getting along well. If they still have a good relationship and are willing to continue, each individual should have their own development goals and their performance should be followed closely.

### Redesign the role to become a job split instead of a job share

This is the most common choice, where the job gets redesigned to give each individual specific tasks to perform. In a job split, partners still have to work together, but they are no longer accountable for the same work. This option can help to resolve any tension between a pair.

### Commence performance management/termination

Exiting the arrangement could mean a change of employment for the remaining partner; they may want the role full-time. The other option is to look for another more suitable partner for the partner meeting expectations.

## What if one of the job share partners is moving to another role?

Sometimes, the best-laid plans for job sharers can be derailed if one part of the pair is offered an opportunity elsewhere and needs to leave the agency. The remaining employee provides at least partial coverage while recruitment takes place, unlike a full-time employee's departure, where often their remaining team needs to cover all of it.

You can encourage the remaining employee and their line manager to explore the following options:

- Seek another person to job share with internally, then undertake the normal agency recruitment assessment process to determine if they're suitable for the role. After assessment, build in another step for the current employee to meet potential candidates to see who they might be compatible with, using the job share test to guide discussion.
- Advertise the role externally as a job share, and use the process described above.
- Discuss whether the employee is interested in changing their hours.
- See if the role can be re-designed to be done with available hours, and the remainder allocated elsewhere.