

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR POTENTIAL PARTICIPATING MANAGERS

'MANAGERIAL WORK AND PRACTICE' UNDERGRADUATE MODULE 2015/16

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS MODULE?

'Managerial Work and Practice' is a final year undergraduate module at Warwick Business School. It was successfully piloted in 2014/15, with highly positive feedback by all participating managers. The module aims to examine complexities of managerial/executive work in rich detail, based on academic studies, but also direct observation by students of local managers in different industries. We believe the best way to prepare students for their careers is for them to observe work as it happens today, via shadowing of experienced managers over a shorter period. Through this, we hope they will be better informed, more reflective, and therefore also better managers and leaders in the future.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME IF I TAKE PART?

Your participation will entail you being 'shadowed' (observed) by one or two final year undergraduate students over a course of 3-5 working days per student. This would normally take place over a two to three-week period in February 2016. In (rare) case of two students, this would mean students shadowing you at the same time, or one after the other, as convenient. It would include observation of meetings, conversations, office work, and any other activities normally undertaken (i.e. like a 'fly on the wall'). To minimize disruptions, the student(s) would agree with you ahead of time a way of collaborating that suits your needs and addresses any concerns (e.g. going over your diary and agreeing not to observe certain sensitive meetings). Your primary contact would be with the student(s) directly, who you would be put in touch with in mid-January, and who would share their CVs and answer any questions. We would still be available at any time to answer any queries or concerns.

WHAT ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY?

The observations undertaken are explicitly *not* intended to make any kind of judgment – the question is *how* you do your work. All information will be kept in strictest confidence. At the core of our approach lies very careful handling of any and all information gathered. We will communicate the

same conditions to the students. Both you and your organization will be anonymised in the reports students write for purposes of assessment. The information will be used solely for academic ends. The module leaders are university employees with extensive experience conducting such research, and subscribe to a strict professional code.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF TAKING PART?

Shadowing as a method allows not just learning for the students doing the observation, but through reflections stimulated by their presence, potentially valuable learning for the manager being shadowed as well. However, we recognise the value of this may be limited for short engagements like this one. As such, the two module leaders will be offering a half-day workshop at WBS in spring 2016 on leadership and management in practice, based on a recently completed study of chief executive work in complex settings, which participating managers will be invited to attend. This session will also summarise the students' learning from their observations. Finally, as alumni of the School, this is also an ideal opportunity to give back in a meaningful way, which would be greatly valued by current WBS students.

WHO IS ORGANISING THE MODULE?

The module is run by Professor Davide Nicolini and Dr. Maja Korica, who recently successfully completed a large-scale funded research project looking into daily working practices of seven chief executives in the English NHS. Conducted over the course of two years, with a minimum stay of five weeks with each CEO, the project is the most extensive scholarly study of executive work in practice since Henry Mintzberg's *The Nature of Managerial Work*, published in 1973. First publications from this project have already been published, including in practitioner-oriented outlets like MIT Sloan Management Review. Both are also experts on shadowing as a method.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Dr. Maja Korica
Maja.Korica[at]wbs.ac.uk
Warwick Business School