

Cross-Agency Task Placement Framework

Skilling our procurement and contract management practitioners

Office of the Chief Advisor - Procurement



Queensland
Government

The State of Queensland (Department of Housing and Public Works) 2020.



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Contact us

We are committed to continuous improvement. If you have any suggestions about how we can improve this guide, or if you have any questions, contact us at betterprocurement@hpw.qld.gov.au.

Disclaimer

This document is intended as a guide only for the internal use and benefit of government agencies. It may not be relied on by any other party. It should be read in conjunction with the Queensland Procurement Policy, your agency's procurement policies and procedures, and any other relevant documents.

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Background

The *Procurement Capability and Workforce Development Strategy 2018-2022* commits to delivery of a cross-agency skill development program.

Objective

The Cross-Agency Task Placement Framework (C-ATPF) delivers on this commitment. Placements seek to:

- build procurement and contract management expertise, and
- support career advancement goals.

The placement framework also supports individuals and leaders by enabling a skills growth pathway that can:

- address identified individual skill gaps
- meet succession planning needs in the home agency
- develop expertise across a broad range of category contexts
- develop expertise across the spectrum of procurement value, risk and complexity.

Context

The task placement approach aligns to the good practice 70-20-10 learning and development model. It focuses on the 70-component which emphasises practical experience on the job.

The placement approach differs from other mobility or exchange programs in two ways:

- it is task-oriented rather than time-oriented
- it provides access to applied experience and expertise outside the constraints of traditional public sector HR policy requirements.

The placement enables motivated practitioners to access this applied experience across the discipline, even when their agency program of work cannot or does not align. At any given time, a team in government will be applying the skills that a practitioner is seeking to build or strengthen. Consequently, the approach is viable across all work disciplines and across all agencies.

Benefits

Implementation of the task placement framework delivers several benefits to participating agencies:

- **Accessibility:** individuals and supervisors can look beyond the work team and the broader agency program of work to source targeted, relevant skills growth from applied experience
- **Efficiency:** 'On the job' application of practical knowledge and skills, where feedback can be provided in real time, is the most effective way to develop expertise
- **Affordability:** As a 'nil cost' initiative, it is particularly attractive when there is significant budget pressure
- **Productivity:** Investment in learning and development that aligns to enhanced job performance or supports further career progression promotes increased productivity.
- **Enhanced reputation:** Building a consistently high level of expertise enhances the reputation of government with industry and suppliers
- **Resilience and inter-operability:** Skills growth from an agile, mobility initiative increases resilience and interoperability.

Principles

The placement program is a principles-based initiative. Implementation does not require application of a specific HR policy or practice. This framework identifies six principles that underpin its successful implementation.

Principles	Practices
Principle 1: It is relevant	Aligns to a development plan objective/succession planning requirement
	Adopts a practical task-focus rather than a timeline
Principle 2: It is transparent	Participants formally commit to their respective roles
	Drivers and motivations are shared openly between the stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the participant ○ the supervisor of the participant ○ the participant's host supervisor
	Objectives are agreed and commitments are documented
	All reasonable avenues are explored to overcome emerging challenges
Principle 3: It is fair and inclusive	The host agency has 'good intentions' aligned to a willingness to contribute to the build of sector-wide procurement and contract management capability
	It is not motivated by a desire to simply augment limited agency resourcing or to use the placement as a 'trial secondment to ensure job fit'
	Maintains compliance agency Codes of Conduct, ensuring principles of fairness and the behaviours of inclusivity are adhered to by stakeholders
Principle 4: All parties benefit	Outcomes are beneficial to all parties
	Participant makes a personal commitment to return after completion of the placement for a reasonable time to embed the new skills
Principle 5: It is simple to implement	Placement does <u>not</u> require any official HR system-related changes
	Participant works inside the host agency for agreed periods of time to experience effective, hands-on learning
	Host agency provides functional IT connectivity services for the participant
	Activity is 'organic' – it arises from a genuine identified skills gap that is met by an agency willing and able to offer authentic skills growth
	Home agency maintains a flexible approach to workload expectations and accommodates the participant's absences
	Stakeholders can choose to end the arrangement
Principle 6: It is cost neutral	It is cost neutral – no budget is needed, as the framework requires only the release of the participant for the agreed periods of time

The principles at a glance

Cross-agency task placement program (C-ATPP) Infographic

Six principles – both agencies



Cost neutral



Relevant



Simple to implement



Benefits all parties



Transparent



Fair and inclusive

Practices via agency



Mutual agreement



Aligns to ADP



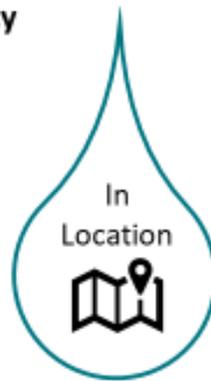
Commitment to outcome



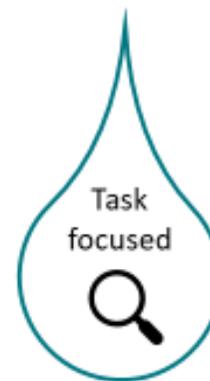
Flexible workload approach

Home agency

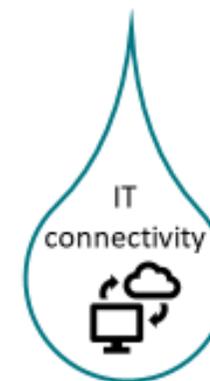
Host agency



In Location



Task focused



IT connectivity



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Placement Documents

A suite of documents supports the streamlined implementation of the placement, comprising:

Documents	Purpose
Cross-agency task placement framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outlines framework for implementation of a cross-agency task placement initiative• Includes 12 principles to deliver a successful task placement where all stakeholders can benefit from the initiative• Notes key steps to implement an initiative• Notes key responsibilities of participant, home agency and host agency
Cross-agency task placement application form	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Captures applicant's skills, expertise, and expectations for development• Plans for sharing of knowledge on return to home agency
Cross-agency task placement agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agreement between stakeholders: participant, home agency supervisor and host agency supervisor• Outlines the key development focus areas
Cross-agency task placement feedback form	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Captures participant, host agency and home agency manager feedback and suggestions for improvement of framework• Reviewed by Office of the Chief Advisor-Procurement (OCA-P) to identify continuous improvement opportunities
Cross agency task placement Lessons Learned Log	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Captures lessons learned to be incorporated into:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ planning of subsequent cross-agency task placement initiatives○ updates to the framework or supporting tools and templates.
Process Flow Charts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Process initiated by the applicant from the home agency• Process initiated by the host agency

Timing

A placement could be as lean as a couple of hours each week over an agreed period up to a full-time multi-week placement over an agreed period. The quantum of time for the placement will be driven by the nature of the task.

There are no prescriptive timelines imposed in applying this placement framework. The timeline that is appropriate for each task placement will be determined by:

- the nature of the skills gap being addressed
- the complexity of the task being leveraged to deliver applied experience
- the resourcing the host agency has assigned to deliver that task.

Implementation process

Implementation approach

Trigger	Key Actions
Routine performance development conversation	Individual and Home Supervisor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> agree there is value and mutual benefit in pursuing an upskilling opportunity through applied experience in another work team review the placement principles in the framework agree in good faith, that a placement can actively be sought commit to seeking a suitable opportunity through respective professional networks
Participant is looking to deepen their expertise in a skill area	
Host Agency has an opportunity	Host Agency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> calls for Expressions of Interest leverages networks to advise of opportunity: Queensland Government Yammer, Chief Procurement Officers, Category Councils, professional networks, OCA-P, etc
Host agency and supervisor are identified	Individual, Home Supervisor and Host Supervisor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participate in an initial meeting to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> collectively review the principles confirm and agree the skill-development that can be targeted in the placement review the implementation process scope and agree to structural supports to promote success of placement, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> time commitment needed, routine work hours host agency work locations plan access to building and IT at host agency
Documents are compiled to capture the elements of the cross agency, task placement agreement	Individual, Home Supervisor and Host Supervisor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal completion of the cross-agency task placement agreement by stakeholders
Placement Commencement date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the initiative
Placement in progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule regular review sessions throughout
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint monitoring of progress and concerns
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboratively resolve issues or dissolve if needed
Placement end date approaches	Individual, Home Supervisor and Host Supervisor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> capture the benefits gained celebrate success with host agency team close-out the work capture lessons learned close out the placement agreement
Applicant returns full time to home agency NB: A minimum of agreed period back in the home agency to be agreed up front to reduce the risk of disadvantage to the supportive home agency	Individual: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> transfer new knowledge at the home agency support up-skilling of others on the team look for new opportunities

Two process workflows are attached:

- placement initiated by the applicant
- placement initiated by the host agency.

The following processes offer an approach that supports effective implementation of a cross-agency task placement initiative. It requires a minimum of three stakeholders: an interested participant, the home agency supervisor and the host agency supervisor.

Key responsibilities and tasks to implement a cross-agency, task placement initiative are noted below.

Responsibilities of the Home Agency

Responsibility	Actions
Identify skills gaps	Identify skills gaps in core business delivery through succession planning, Achievement and Development Planning (ADP) processes or self-nomination from interested staff
Identify possible candidates for placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high potential staff seeking activities to meet identified skills gaps • staff looking to progress their professional career • high performing officers rewarded by a placement to gain new perspectives
Manage high demand for placement opportunity in a fair and transparent way	If interest is very high, consider the following variation in approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use an Expression of Interest selection process • use selection criteria linked to the home agency’s rationale for seeking an individual on task placement • meet priority business needs, supporting succession gaps, etc
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a skills and knowledge audit with individual applicants using their responses to the Participant Application Form
Participate in exploratory meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant and home agency managers attend introductory information session with host agency team representative
Complete supporting documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful participant, manager and host agency manager formally complete and sign the Cross-Agency Task Placement Agreement
Advise OCA-P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report all agreements established to skills2procure@hpw.qld.gov.au
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include the primary stakeholders to the agreement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite OCA-P representatives to in-progress placement review meetings
Manage staff workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust workload of participant to accommodate task placement upskilling demands and requirements from host agency, including time spent ‘on the job’ with the host agency
Promote knowledge transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support participant’s return to role at the end of the initiative, including conducting de-briefing sessions with participant and fostering transfer of knowledge and skills back into relevant home agency team.

Responsibilities of the Host Agency

Responsibility	Actions
Identify placement opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify subject matter experts (SMEs) and teams with knowledge and skills that will benefit other agencies.
Identify SMEs and work projects	<p>The following staff could be potential host agency supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> staff with extensive experience in a niche specialist area, who are keen to mentor and share knowledge
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High performing teams with embedded processes and capacity to offer participant 'on the job' training experience.
Define scope of opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly define expected outcomes, support mechanisms, reporting hierarchies, etc for the 'in-house' aspect of the initiative's tasks or projects
Define roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly define roles and responsibilities
Complete supporting documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discern, agree and document key expectations to implement a cross-agency task placement initiative.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant, manager and host agency manager formally complete and sign the Cross-Agency Task Placement Agreement
Advise OCA-P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report all agreements established to skills2procure@hpw.qld.gov.au
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include the primary stakeholders to the agreement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite OCA-P representatives to in-progress placement review meetings
Communicate for success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure effective and ongoing communication between the participant, their manager, the home agency and the host agency team.

Responsibilities of the Office of the Chief Advisor-Procurement

OCA-P is committed to enabling capability development. It is responsible for maintaining currency of this framework and the supporting tools.

During the implementation phase of this framework (2020), OCA-P will take a larger role in:

- building momentum for its use by agencies
- monitoring its application for lessons learned and continuous improvement opportunities.

This could include:

- connecting a placement 'prospect' with a suitable contact in a potential host agency, or
- communicating to known interested officers regarding an opportunity for a placement with a specific agency looking to host a placement.

Responsibility	Actions
Promote the release of the framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the communications plan Execute the communications plan
Advocate for the framework and support agencies to implement the framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief the Public Service Commission Keep Heads of Procurement and Category Councils informed on implementation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief the Heads of Human Resources (Strategic Workforce Council)
Establish a register of task placements in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Populate and maintain the register of all placements under the framework
Coordinate and/or contribute to in-progress placement review meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pro-actively contribute to in-progress placement review meetings and discern improvement opportunities
Coordinate and/or contribute to post-placement feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all feedback forms from participating stakeholders Hold focus group discussion with stakeholders as required
Establish a Lessons Learned Log	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain the Lessons Learned Log Incorporate lessons learned into updates of the task placement framework and supporting tools
Communicate for success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver effective and ongoing communication of the success of the program at sector level

Further Resources

A process flow chart is located at **Attachment 1 and 2**. These flow charts capture the key steps based on either:

- applicant-initiated request for a cross- agency task placement, and
- host-agency initiated request for a suitable officer to participate in a cross-agency task placement.

The flow charts can be used to guide stakeholders to implement a task placement that is aligned to this framework.

OCA-P has available a research paper on best practice approaches to a general job placement program. The report offers more detailed advice and thought leadership on task-placement programs when they are used to achieve up-skilling. The report can be accessed by emailing skills2procure@hpw.qld.gov.au.

More Information

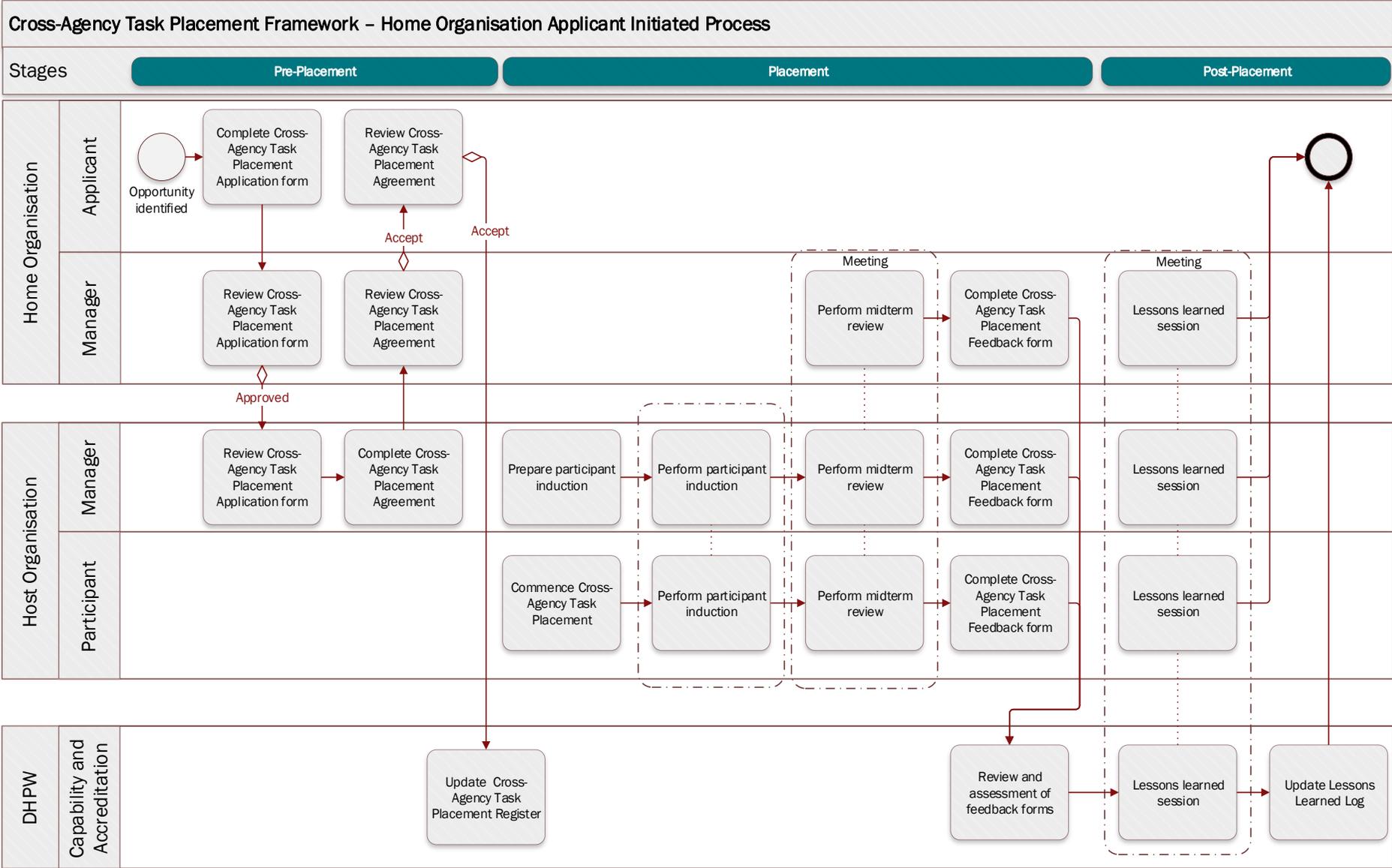
For more information please email skills2procure@hpw.qld.gov.au or call 07 3215 3603.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Process Flow Chart - Cross-agency, task placement initiated by the applicant

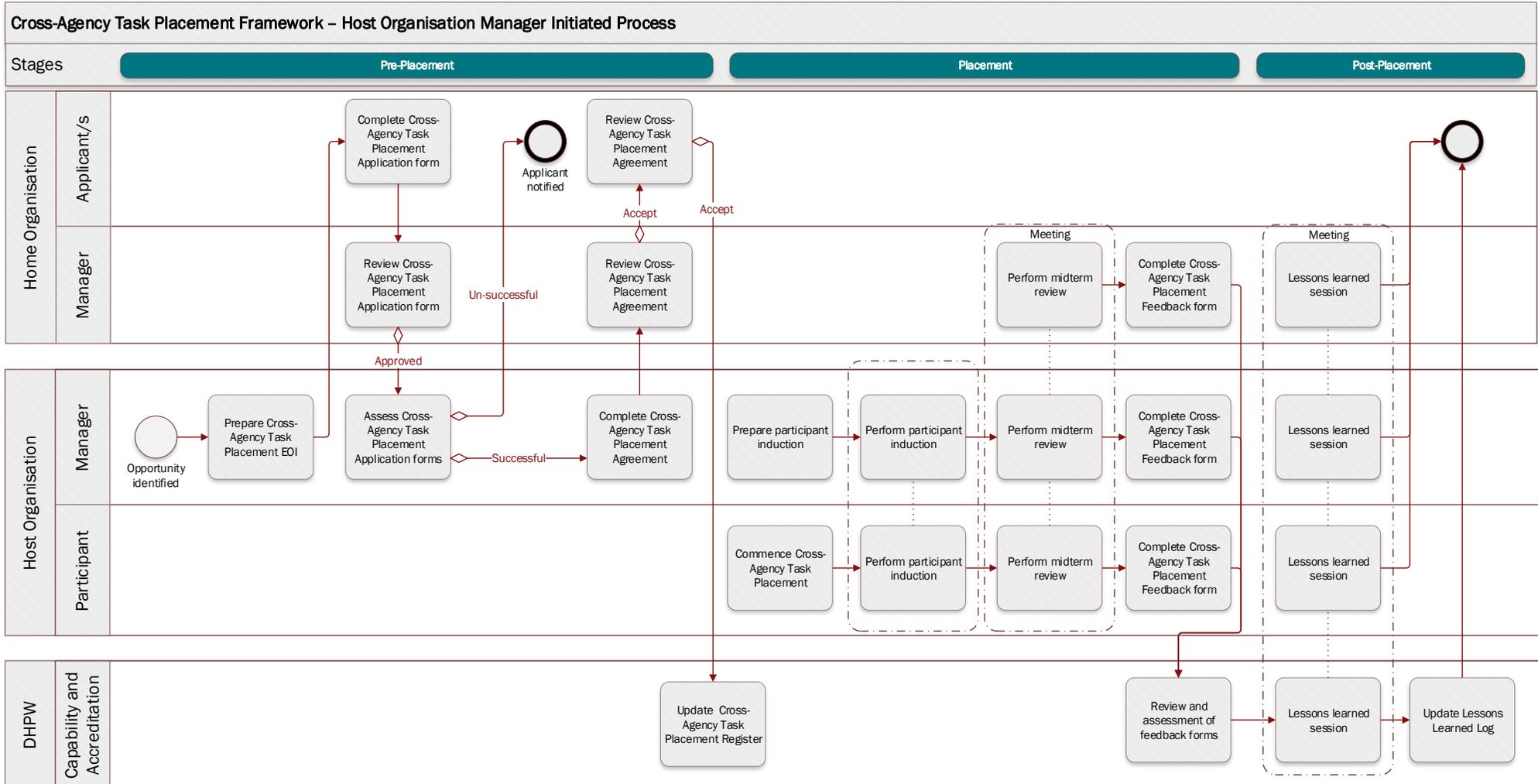
Attachment 2: Process Flowchart - Cross-agency, task placement initiated by the Host Agency

Attachment 1: Process Flow Chart - task placement initiated by applicant



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Attachment 2: Process Flowchart - task placement initiated by host agency



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