



## Probationary Employment Procedure 2023 - 27

	Date	Signed
Agreed by Trust Board:	July 2023	Chair of Board James Hargrave
Lead:	HR Committee	
Review date:	July 2027	

# Probationary Employment Procedure

## Rationale:

The probationary period is complementary to the induction process. During this period, line managers will be responsible for assessing the employee's performance and liaising with and supporting the employee to ensure that they are reaching, or are capable of reaching, the required performance standard to undertake the job.

Employees must be made aware of the purpose of a probationary period, have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and receive constructive feedback on their performance.

Full support, feedback, training and instruction as necessary must be given to the new employee to give them a complete opportunity to achieve their maximum performance.

## Aims:

The aim of the Probationary Procedure is to provide a framework within which employees are helped to reach and maintain acceptable standards of performance and conduct. It aims to deal fairly and consistently with employees during their probationary period. It helps to ensure that new employees are inducted successfully into their jobs as soon as is reasonably possible.

It also helps to ensure that action can be taken both during and at the end of the probationary period if progress appears unsatisfactory, through for instance further training, counselling, an extension of the probationary period, or non-confirmation of appointment.

## Objectives of the Induction Process:

- To provide the best possible environment for new employees to learn their job and to prove their suitability for permanent employment.
- To provide a framework within which employees' line managers can judge the suitability of the employees, discuss shortcomings and agree action needed to remedy any situation.
- To ensure that, where it is not intended to confirm an appointment, termination of employment takes place no later than or as soon as possible after the end of the probationary period (occasionally it may be necessary to terminate an appointment on capability grounds during the probationary period).

- To ensure that management actions are reasonable and defensible and employees have been given an adequate chance to improve, undergo training, etc.

### **Duration of the Probation:**

The recommended probationary period is six months (26 weeks). This can be extended, usually for no more than three additional months (13 weeks).

Where the employment pattern includes breaks in continuity, the period should be related to actual working weeks.

### **Recommended Steps to meet Objectives:**

1. Periods of notice applicable to probationers can be reduced to one week for the duration of the probationary period.
2. All new employees should be properly inducted in their jobs, including providing information about their rights and responsibilities on matters such as health and safety, safeguarding children, and equal opportunities. The processes should include an introduction to the duties and objectives of the job (preferably expressed in writing) with some criteria of performance related to the Performance Review process. Employees must be made aware that there is a probationary period and that a judgment will be made during or at the end of this period about their suitability for continued employment.
3. The difficulty of judging the suitability of new employees is well known. It is important to make judgments on facts and not opinion. However, within the period set down, assessments should be possible on the personality aspects of new employees as well as on their work achievement. In particular, reference can be made to the job and person specifications, NVQ standards or other competencybased indicators for the particular job. From these, development needs can be assessed and met. Any doubts may be accommodated by extending the probationary period.

### **Interim Reports on Probationary Employment:**

A first interim report of a new employee's progress should normally be completed after approximately 8-10 weeks of service. It should be completed by the line manager, following an interview with the employee. An appropriate template is attached to this policy as Appendix A.

A second interim report should normally be completed after approximately 16-18 weeks of employment. Once again, this should be completed after interview with the employee. An appropriate template is attached to this policy as Appendix B.

A final probationary report should be completed just before the end of the 26 week probationary period. This should be completed after interview with the employee. A copy of an appropriate template is attached to this policy as Appendix C. Also attached to this policy, as Appendix D, is a list of potential questions to aid in preparing for a review.

When completed, each report must be shown to and discussed with the employee. It is important that all points included in the reports are covered, not just those where improvement appears necessary.

The completed form should be shared with the Head Teacher or relevant member or the school's management team. Any matters requiring attention should be highlighted.

A copy of any report will be supplied to the employee if he/she requests it.

Matters of capability, competence and general suitability for the job will be assessed in accordance with and at the various stages set down in this probation procedure.

## **Potential Outcomes:**

Following each review, there are a number of potential outcomes.

- Where an extended probationary period is being considered (or transfer to the Trust's permanent establishment may not be recommended) advice should be sought from the Trust's HR Team/caseworker at an early stage.
- If the probationary service is satisfactory, the employee should be notified formally of confirmation of his/her permanent position or longer-term temporary employment.
- If, on the other hand, the probationary service is not satisfactory and the appointment is not to be confirmed, the reasons should be recorded, with reference made to any separate papers (e.g. letters or internal notes to the employee).

## **Right of Appeal:**

Normal trust appeal rights against dismissal will apply.

Alternatively, and dependent on the offence (eg, misconduct) it may be appropriate to deal with a probationary employee for a disciplinary offence under the disciplinary procedures rather than the probation procedure. In such cases the disciplinary timescales may be shortened to fit in with the probationary period.

## Related Policies:

This procedure should be read in conjunction with other Trust policies.

## Period of Review:

This procedure will be review every four years.

Appendix A

### FIRST INTERIM REPORT ON PROBATIONARY EMPLOYMENT

(after 8 - 10 weeks' service)

To be completed by Line Manager following interview with the Employee

<b>Work Performance</b> – please report below on performance by comparison with the competency requirements of the job and/or the job description/person specification	
Essential/Desirable requirements of Person Specification - some examples are included below	Level of performance in job
a) Knowledge of school and specific tasks	
b) Knowledge of basic conditions or procedures	
c) Working with people and building relationships	
d) Performance of job related tasks	
e) Areas to be developed and carried forward for discussion at next review	
f) Other matters arising	

**Personal Requirements** – please report below on general conduct, timekeeping, attendance, commitment and any other characteristics necessary for good performance

**Training and Development needs** – please identify and describe below how these can be met in the review period, including an action to be taken before next review

**Comments and signature by Line Manager**

Signature:

Print name:

Date:

**Comments (if any) and signature by Head Teacher**

Signature:

Print name:

Date:

**Comments (if any) and signature by Employee**

Signature:

Print name:

Date:

Appendix B

**SECOND INTERIM REPORT ON PROBATIONARY EMPLOYMENT  
(after 16 - 18 weeks' service)**

To be completed by Line Manager following interview with the Employee

<b>Work Performance</b> – please report below on performance by comparison with the competency requirements of the job and/or the job description/person specification	
Essential/Desirable requirements of Person Specification - some examples are included below	Level of performance in job
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Matters brought forward from first review</li>   <li>b) Knowledge of school and specific tasks</li>   <li>c) Working with people and building relationships</li>   <li>d) Performance of job related tasks</li>   <li>e) Areas to be developed and carried forward for discussion at next review</li>   <li>f) Other matters arising</li> </ul>	
<b>Personal Requirements</b> – please report below on general conduct, timekeeping, attendance, commitment and any other characteristics necessary for good performance	

<p><b>Training and Development needs</b> – please identify and describe below how these can be met in the review period, including an action to be taken before next review</p>
<p><b>Assessment</b> - at this stage, are you likely to recommend for transfer to permanent establishment at the end of the probationary period? Yes/No</p> <p>If no, please set out reasons below and identify actions/improvement required before final review. (Concerns regarding the likelihood of transfer to the Trust’s permanent establishment should be discussed with your named HR Caseworker at an early stage.)</p>
<p><b>Further Comments and signature by Line Manager</b></p>
<p>Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____</p>
<p><b>Comments (if any) and signature by Head Teacher</b></p>
<p>Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____</p>
<p><b>Comments (if any) and signature by Employee</b></p>



Signature:

Print name:

Date:



**FINAL REPORT ON PROBATIONARY EMPLOYMENT  
(before 26 weeks' service)**

To be completed by Line Manager following interview with the Employee

<b>Work Performance</b> – please report below on performance by comparison with the competency requirements of the job and/or the job description/person specification	
Essential/Desirable requirements of Person Specification - some examples are included below	Level of performance in job
<p>a) Matters brought forward from second review</p> <p>b) Knowledge of school and specific tasks</p> <p>c) Working with people and building relationships</p> <p>d) Performance of job related tasks</p> <p>e) Areas to be developed and carried forward for inclusion in Performance and Development Review</p> <p>f) Other matters arising</p>	
<b>Personal Requirements</b> – please report below on general conduct, timekeeping, attendance, commitment and any other characteristics necessary for good performance	

<b>Training and Development needs</b> - please identify and describe below how these can be met in the review period, including an action to be taken before next review	
<b>Assessment and recommendation</b> – if, following discussion with the Trust’s HR Team, not recommending transfer to permanent establishment or extension of probationary period, please detail reasons under Supervisors comments	
Satisfactory progress to date?	Yes/No
Suitable for present work?	Yes/No
Transfer to permanent establishment?	Yes/No
Probation period to be extended?	Yes (period of extension:                      )/No
Possibility of alternative role?	Yes/No
Terminate employment – not satisfactory?	Yes/No
<b>Further Comments and signature by Supervisor</b>	
Signature:	Print name:                      Date:
<b>Comments (if any) and signature by Supervisor’s Line Manager</b>	
Signature:	Print name:                      Date:
<b>Comments (if any) and signature by Employee</b>	

Signature:

Print name:

Date:

## Appendix D

### **PREPARATION FOR PROBATIONARY REVIEWS - EXAMPLE QUESTIONS**

Employees and/or Line Managers may find some of the following questions helpful in their preparation for each review

- a) Have you been given induction training for your new job?
- b) Do you think you received the information and help necessary to settle into your new job?
- c) Do you understand the overall responsibilities of your job?
- d) Do you understand the specific tasks your job involves?
- e) Is the job what you expected?
- f) Do you know how the school/unit is organised?
- g) Do you feel you know enough about your team?
- h) Do you understand your team's role within the school/unit?
- i) What work have you undertaken to achieve the main tasks/objectives detailed in your job description since your appointment/last probationary review?
- j) What problems, if any, have you encountered?
- k) How do you consider these problems can be overcome (eg, training)?
- l) What do you think your training needs are for the next 6 weeks?

## Document History

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Issue 1	June 2018	Based on SCC Model Policy
Issue 1	July 2023	Reviewed and dates updated.