

# HR Policy/Bylaw: Probation Procedures

## Policy Statement

The institution recognises that a supportive and developmental probation process is vital in providing the appropriate level of support and training for all new members of staff on commencement of their employment. This policy sets out our approach to probation for new members of staff, aiming to ensure we meet our commitment to the fair, equal and consistent treatment of staff with regard to the probation period.

## Scope

This policy relates to all newly appointed staff, whose terms and conditions of employment state that their appointment is subject to a probationary period. **The length of the probation period will be three months for all staff extendable to a maximum of six months from the date of joining.**

## Aims

The policy aims:

- To ensure that the probation process is undertaken for all staff and is applied in a fair and consistent manner, within a supportive framework and in line with employment legislation requirements.
- To ensure the institution is provided with an opportunity to assess the skills, conduct, capability and attendance of new staff before deciding whether or not to confirm their appointment.
- To identify the link between induction, probation and developmental processes (e.g. mentoring opportunities) and emphasise the need for all to underpin the support and development of a new member of staff.

## Principles

The institution aims to secure equality of opportunity in all its activities, and in this respect, the probation process must be objective, clear, transparent and free from discrimination. Line Managers are expected to have undertaken equal opportunities training.

The probation process should work alongside the induction process to help create a positive and supportive working environment, allowing new staff to settle in and learn the key elements of the job within a reasonable and realistic timescale.

Clear, comprehensive and accurate records of probation review meetings must be maintained, including how standards are set, what methods are used for measuring them and what timescales are given for reaching them. A Probation Review Form is provided for this purpose and must be signed by the employee and his/her line manager at each review point, to provide a formal record of the probationary period. Induction materials may be used to inform the initial probation review meeting i.e. to clarify the duties and responsibilities of the new employee in line with their terms and conditions of employment, their job description and the policies and procedures which must be followed.

In circumstances where problems arise during a period of probation, the line manager should raise these with the member of staff in a timely manner, and the member of staff must be given an opportunity to respond to any concerns. Line managers should discuss the action required by the member of staff to address the problem, and where necessary, give clear, unambiguous warnings if standards are not met. The manager should use the Probation Review Form to keep a record of the discussion and ensure that this is signed by both parties (i.e. the line manager and the employee).

Documentation relating to staff will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

## Responsibilities

<b>Role</b>	<b>Responsible for</b>
	Demonstrating their suitability for the post for which they are appointed
<b>New Employee</b>	Participating as required in their induction Meeting any reasonable objectives within deadlines set Identifying to their line manager at the earliest opportunity any difficulties they are experiencing Raising with their line manager any training, development or support which they believe to be necessary in order for them to fulfil the requirements of the role.
	<b>ACADEMIC STAFF ONLY: To have one teaching observation within the first six weeks of joining</b>
<b>Line Manager</b>	Establishing the standards of performance consistent with the requirements of the position, in line with the job description Communicating the required standards, responsibilities and objectives to the new staff member and ensuring the new employee is inducted locally Making sure that the employee is aware that records of induction activities may be used to support the probation process Maintaining induction records which will provide complete and documented evidence to support the probation procedure Providing training and guidance as necessary, monitoring the performance of the employee Holding regular one-to-one meetings with the employee in order to ensure a good working relationship and provide feedback on the employee's progress Arranging and conducting formal probation review meetings on a monthly basis Providing appropriate supervision to monitor progress or identify difficulties and provide opportunity for resolution Timely conduct and documentation of probation reviews Advising Human Resources of the outcome of the probation period including any extension of or difficulties during the probation period Confirming verbally whether or not the employee has completed their probationary period successfully at the final review meeting.
	<b>ACADEMIC STAFF ONLY: To carry out one teaching observation within the first six weeks of joining.</b>
<b>Human Resources</b>	Providing HR advice on the probation period for both line managers and the new employee Advising on cases of unsatisfactory performance/progress and, where appropriate, supporting line managers during formal meetings to address serious cases. Confirming in writing the outcome of the probation period.