

## INDUCTION AND PROBATION PROCEDURES

### Purpose and Context

These procedures are designed to support the University's induction of new members of staff and provide guidance on the operation of probation periods, ensuring consistency of application across the University.

### Scope

These procedures are applicable to all new members of staff employed by the University and staff that have moved to a role at a higher grade.

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#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of a probation period is to ensure that the performance of new members of staff, and staff that have moved to a role at a higher grade, are assessed fairly and appropriate training and support is provided.

#### 2. Probationary Periods

- 2.1 Probation periods are as follows;

Grades 1-6 6 months

Grades 7-9 12 months

Senior Staff 12 months, or longer period as specified in contract

- 2.2 Existing members of staff who are re-graded or redeployed within the University will not normally be subject to a probation period unless their initial probation period is not yet completed. Members of staff who are promoted to higher graded posts will have a new probation period.
- 2.3 If a member of staff's performance is due to misconduct the matter will be considered in accordance with the University's Disciplinary Procedure. When considering whether the requirements of a probation period have been met, any matters that have been dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure may be taken into account.
- 2.4 If a member of staff is absent from work on either a short term or long-term basis during their probation period, the matter will be considered in accordance with the University's Management of Sickness Absence Procedures. When considering whether the requirements of a probation period have been met, absence records, excluding absence relating to disability or pregnancy/maternity, may be taken into account.

- 2.5 Any period of family leave during a probationary period does not count towards completion of probation. On return from a period of family leave, the probationary period will be extended to reflect the period of leave taken.
- 2.6 Where a member of staff has indicated that they are disabled within the definition of the Equality Act 2010, the line manager should take care to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to the workplace and/or working arrangements so that the member of staff is not at a substantial disadvantage when compared to a non-disabled person. Occupational Health are able to provide advice upon request in respect of equipment and personal assistance resources (through the Access to Work Fund) for disabled staff.
- 2.7 Members of staff on probation will not be subject to the Personal Development and Performance Review (PDPR) appraisal process until such time as their probation period is successfully completed.

### **3. Induction Requirements**

- 3.1 Induction allows a smooth transition into work at the University and/or introduction to a new role. An effective induction is likely to increase retention of staff and increase performance at work. It allows the member of staff to get to know their work environment and to understand University procedures and the requirements of the role. It also enables the manager to set the standards required by the University and ensure the member of staff receives the training they need to do their role.
- 3.2 The activities required to support a member of staff's induction should be determined by the nature of the role.

Further support and guidance can also be accessed on the People and Organisational Development's webpage:

<https://staff.hud.ac.uk/hr/pod/induction-and-settling-in/>

### **4. Procedure**

#### **4.1 Setting Standards/Initial Meeting**

- 4.1.1 When a new member of staff is appointed, their manager should ensure that an induction program is in place. Standards and objectives should be set and provided to the member of staff to ensure that expectations regarding standards of work performance, conduct and attendance are clear to them on commencement of their role and that the appropriate support, training and guidance is in place. This should be in line with the job description for the role.
- 4.1.2 The manager should arrange an initial meeting with the new member of staff ideally on the first day of employment to help them understand the role requirements.

- 4.1.3 At the initial meeting, the manager should outline their expectations in regards to both the tasks and skills related to the role as well as the values and behaviors expected from the member of staff when carrying out their role at the University.
- 4.1.4 Details of how these will be monitored and measured, the timescales and what support will be given in order to achieve them should be explained. In addition the manager should also:-
- Identify and put in place ways to address any training and development requirements.
  - Explain the probation procedure to be followed
  - Agree dates for further review meetings.

## **4.2 Formal Review Meetings**

- 4.2.1 Throughout the probation period a member of staff's performance and conduct should be subject to assessment by their manager within a supportive and developmental context. Regular and informal one-to-one meetings should be held to review performance and to ensure that new members of staff are kept informed of their progress against the required standards; to advise them of any concerns and how these can be addressed; and to ensure members of staff are able to raise any questions they may have about their work performance or training requirements. In addition to informal one to one meetings, formal, documented probation reviews are to be carried out as follows;
- A) For those members of staff with a six-month probation period the line manager should meet with them at the end of the first month, the end of the third month and the end of the sixth month.
- B) For those members of staff with a twelve-month probation period the line manager should meet with them at the end of the first month, third month, sixth month and the end of the first year of employment.
- 4.2.2 The purpose of the formal review meetings is to assess and document the standards of work performance, conduct and attendance of the member of staff against the objectives set at the initial meeting and to identify any further support, training or guidance which is required.
- 4.2.3 The formal review meetings should be documented and a summary of the discussion points and any follow-up actions should be shared with the member of staff following the meeting.
- 4.2.4 Formal reviews should be set up in advance so that both parties have time to prepare for the meeting.

## **4.3 Confirmation of Appointment**

- 4.3.1 If at the end of the probation period a member of staff's work performance, conduct and attendance have been satisfactory and have met with the requirements of the

role, they should be informed by their manager that they have successfully completed their probationary period.

4.3.2 The line manager will receive a **Probation Review Form** prior to the end of the probation period. The manager should complete the Probation Review Form to indicate that the member of staff's appointment should be confirmed. This form should then be returned to the HR Team who will write to the member of staff and confirm their appointment.

#### **4.4 Difficulties during Probation**

4.4.1 During the probation period, managers should contact either their HR Advisor or HR Manager if there are any concerns about the ability of the member of staff to successfully complete their probation period.

4.4.2 Managers should discuss with the member of staff, any difficulties which arise during the probation period at the time when they occur, rather than leaving them until a formal review meeting.

4.4.3 Where difficulties arise the manager should meet with the member of staff, informally in the first instance to:

- clarify what the difficulties are in detail - specifying how their performance, conduct and/or attendance are falling below what is acceptable
- where possible provide evidence/examples of the problem/issues to be discussed
- allow the member of staff an opportunity to raise and respond to any concerns
- discuss objectives, which specify in detail what standards of performance, conduct and/or attendance are required to reach an acceptable level.
- identify any training needs which may need to be met in order for the member of staff to achieve the objectives
- explain what the consequences may be if the standards/objectives are not met - that it may be necessary to discuss the matter at a formal meeting and that ultimately it could result in the member of staff not being confirmed in their post
- discuss any actions required by the manager and agree timescales for completing these, where there is an issue of concern to the employee.

#### **5. Formal Procedure**

5.1 If an employee's performance, conduct and/or attendance does not improve following an informal meeting, within a reasonable and realistic timescale, it may be necessary to instigate the formal procedure.

5.2 Formal procedures can be started at any point during the probation period and managers must seek advice from HR should they have any concerns relating to an employee's performance, conduct and/or attendance.

#### **5.3 Formal Meeting**

- 5.3.1 A formal meeting will be held to discuss the member of staff's performance, conduct and/or attendance. The member of staff will be given five working days' notice of the meeting and be advised of their entitlement to be accompanied by a trade union representative or friend. A Human Resources representative will also be present to advise on procedural issues.
- 5.3.2 Evidence of how their performance, conduct and/or attendance is unsatisfactory and any action taken to date, including details of any support provided and work observation records, will be provided in writing to the member of staff before the meeting. Targets, standards, deadlines and further support will be identified and compiled into a draft action plan. The draft action plan will be in writing and given to the employee before the meeting.
- 5.3.3 At the meeting the member of staff will be given the opportunity to provide any relevant evidence of matters that may affect their performance, conduct and/or attendance which may be unknown to the manager. The member of staff will also have opportunity to comment on the action plan and will be invited to suggest further sources of support.
- 5.3.4 A review date will be set where progress will be measured against the action plan targets. The actual length of the review period will depend on what targets have been set. The manager should identify how progress against the action plan will be measured and what evidence will be used for review purposes.
- 5.3.5 The manager will confirm the outcome of the meeting in writing and will provide a copy of the finalised action plan.

#### **5.4 Formal Review Meeting**

- 5.4.1 In advance of the formal review meeting, the manager will consider all available evidence to determine whether sufficient progress has been made. The manager will provide an update of where targets have/have not been met and other supporting documentation, e.g. copies of observation reports, details of support provided. The report and supporting documentation will be sent to the member of staff, five working days before the review meeting.
- 5.4.2 At the meeting the member of staff will have opportunity to provide details of any relevant matters that may be affecting their performance, conduct and/or attendance and which may be unknown to the manager. The member of staff will also have opportunity to comment on the report and will be invited to suggest further sources of support that may be required. The member of staff is entitled to be accompanied by a trade union representative or friend. A Human Resources representative will also be present to advise on procedural issues

5.4.3 The outcomes of the meeting and appropriate responses are likely to include:

Outcome	Response
All targets are met and the member of staff is performing at a satisfactory standard	No further action required. Normal probation requirements continue
Significant progress has been made but further limited support is required to secure a permanent satisfactory standard	Extension of the review period or extension of the probation period
Targets not met with mitigating circumstances, e.g. a period of ill health or if the agreed support package has not been provided.	Extension of the review period or extension of the probation period.
Targets not met.	The employee will be notified that their performance remains unsatisfactory, and that the probation period has been failed leading to dismissal.

5.4.4 Extensions to a probation period are normally put in place for a period of one month, however depending on the issues being addressed and affording an appropriate level of time and opportunity for the individual to achieve the required standards, longer periods of up to 6-months may be granted.

5.4.5 Where the probation period is extended, the following must be discussed between the manager and the member of staff:

- reasons for the extension
- length of the extension period
- any assistance/guidance/training to be given during the extension
- any areas of improvement that are required and how these will be monitored (where these arise the guidance in section 4.4 Difficulties During Probation should be followed)
- explain the consequences should they not reach the required standards by the time of the final review meeting - that they may not be confirmed in post, and could therefore have their employment with the University terminated

The manager should confirm in a letter to the employee the outcome of the meeting, including confirmation of the extension and details of the revised action plan.

Monitoring will continue through the probation period extension, and the member of staff and their manager will meet again to formally review progress. The format for this meeting will follow that as detailed under the Formal Review Meeting.

5.4.6 Where a member of staff has failed to achieve the required standards of performance, conduct and/or attendance required for their position, they will be notified in writing of the decision to terminate their employment. The member of staff will be informed of the reasons for the dismissal, their final date of employment and notice/pay in lieu arrangements. They should also be advised of their right to appeal.

## **6. Appeal**

- 6.1 Where a member of staff's employment has been terminated during their probation period, they have a right to appeal against the decision to dismiss them from the University. The member of staff must exercise the right to appeal within 10 working days of being notified of the outcome and must provide written grounds of appeal to the Head of Human Resources.
- 6.2 The Appeal will be heard by a Panel of three Senior Managers from outside the School or Service.
- 6.3 The member of staff must be given at least 10 working days' notice of the appeal hearing and advised of the entitlement to be represented by a trade union representative or a friend. The letter giving such notice should state the date, time and place of the appeal hearing, attach all relevant documentation, give the names of those hearing the appeal and any witnesses to be called in person.
- 6.4 All relevant documents, including the grounds of appeal and manager response, will be made available to the Appeal Panel in sufficient time to enable the Panel to read the evidence on both sides and prepare questions. Appeal Panel members must not discuss the case with anyone (apart from fellow Panel members) prior to the hearing.
- 6.5 A member of Human Resources staff will be present to advise the Panel on procedure.
- 6.6 The Panel should arrange for all persons present to introduce themselves and all witnesses as they are called. The purpose of the appeal hearing should be explained. The Chair will remind those present (and in turn the witnesses) that the proceedings are confidential.
- 6.7 Once all the evidence has been presented and all questions asked, the appeal hearing will be concluded, all parties except the Panel and any advisors will leave the room. The Appeal Panel must consider all the evidence presented to them and decide whether to confirm, modify or overturn the decision regarding the probationary period.
- 6.8 The outcome of the hearing must be confirmed in writing to the member of staff within five working days.
- 6.9 Where an appeal against dismissal is successful the notice will be immediately withdrawn or where PILON has operated the member of staff will be immediately re-

instated and adjustments to salary made to reclaim any PILON payments already made.

- 6.10 The decision of the Appeal Panel is final. This does not affect an individual's statutory rights.

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