

# Staff Probationary Period Policy

<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	HR & Pay Committee
<b>DATE:</b>	February 2025
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## Contents

Section		Page
1	Introduction	Page 3
2	Aims of this policy	Page 3
3	The purpose of the probationary period	Page 3
4	Structuring the probationary review	Page 4
5	Responsibilities of the trust	Page 4
6	Responsibilities of the employee	Page 5
7	Concerns during the probationary period	Page 5
8	Conclusion of probation	Page 6
9	Extending a probationary period	Page 6
Appendix 1	Probationary review form	Page 8
Appendix 2	Induction checklist	Page 17

## **PROBATIONARY PERIOD POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

This policy is intended to outline the way in which the Trust will assist an employee to settle into their new role. This probationary period will, other than in exceptional circumstances, apply only to new recruits and will not apply on an internal change of role.

This policy and procedure applies to all employees of the Trust (which will be referred to as “you” in this policy). It does not form part of the terms and conditions of any employee’s employment and is not intended to have contractual effect. However, it reflects our current practices and employees are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with its content.

It is our policy to require all new members of teaching and support staff to undertake a period of probation when they commence employment. The applicable probationary period to your employment is outlined in your contract of employment.

### **2. Aims of this Policy**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that new members of staff know what is expected of them as part of their probationary period and that those with responsibility for managing the probation process are provided with guidance to ensure that any appropriate support (if/when necessary) is provided to employees to assist them in performing effectively in their role.

This guidance is intended to support those with responsibility for managing staff to ensure that all new members of staff are treated consistently and fairly and to ensure there is a structured approach to assessment/performance management during the early stages of employment.

### **3. The purpose of the Probationary Period**

The probationary period operates in conjunction with the induction and initial training offered to new employees and allows both you and Headteacher or your Line Manager to assess objectively whether you are suitable for the role.

The use of probationary periods is intended as a constructive process to allow you to understand the:

- Trust, your own role and how these fit together; and
- expectations, standards, behaviours and job tasks required for your role and how to fulfil these.

During your probationary period, your performance will be supported and monitored by your Line Manager.

#### **4. Structuring the Probationary Period**

At your induction meeting, a schedule for probationary review meetings will be confirmed. There will usually be a review meeting half way into your probationary period and at the end of the initial probationary period. These probationary review meetings do not preclude interim, informal meetings also being arranged. We encourage a close working relationship between a probationary employee and their Line Manager.

During your initial probationary meeting, your Line Manager will:

- make clear the expectations and objectives that are required and what is expected of you in your new role;
- make arrangements for you to work a mentor/buddy, where appropriate;
- create a development plan with you, to help support you in achieving the objectives previously identified;
- discuss any training and development needs and specify how and when these needs will be addressed during the probationary period;
- discuss our policies and procedures, where a copy of these can be found and which policies must be read during your probationary period.

If there are any concerns regarding your conduct or performance, these will be addressed at an early stage with the aim of supporting you to improve your conduct or performance to the level required. Should the required improvements not be made the probationary period may be extended or if performance remains unsatisfactory termination of employment within or at the end of the probationary period may be considered. Nothing in this policy prevents the Trust from terminating your employment prior to the end of your probationary period (or any extension of it).

We, may, at our discretion, extend the probationary period in line with your contract of employment. At the end of your probationary period, you will be informed in writing if you have successfully passed your probationary period. We reserve the right to terminate your employment at any time without recourse to the adopted disciplinary, performance or capability procedures.

#### **5. Responsibilities of Trust**

Your Line Manager will generally have the responsibility for managing your probationary period.

Your Line Manager's responsibility will be to provide:

- induction and training relevant to the role (training may be delegated to another suitable colleague);
- clear and constructive feedback on your performance, clarifying any areas of concern at the earliest opportunity and giving an opportunity to improve;

- appropriate support, help and where necessary appropriate training, to assist you to improve your performance.

Unless the Headteacher is your line manager, they will only normally be involved in the following meetings:

- at the End of Probation meeting to confirm whether or not the probationary period has been successfully completed; or
- at an earlier meeting where progress has not been satisfactory and employment may not be continued.

## **6. Responsibilities of the Employee**

You have responsibility to:

- carry out your job to the standard that is expected of and required for the role and grade;
- engage fully in induction/initial training opportunities for new employees;
- clarify expectations with your Line Manager if you are unclear about them;
- alert your Line Manager at the earliest opportunity to any difficulties you are experiencing meeting the expectations of the role and work positively to achieve the required performance standards;
- actively participate in any meetings/discussions/supportive measures put in place as part of this procedure.

## **7. Concerns during the Probationary Period**

Where concerns are identified during the probationary period, they will be raised with you at the earliest opportunity with the aim of supporting you to improve your performance and/or conduct.

This will usually include a discussion of the following, with your Line Manager:

- the areas where performance / conduct improvement is required and targets to be met;
- your views about your performance in the role;
- appropriate training, support or coaching to help you meet the required standards;
- timescales for improvement and arrangements for further monitoring/meetings; and
- whether an extension of the probationary period is appropriate.

You will also be made aware, that should the required improvements not be made, your employment may be terminated within the probationary period.

The outcome of this discussion will be confirmed in writing.

Additional meetings may be arranged to assist with the support and monitoring of your performance with the aim of working towards addressing these concerns.

## **8. Conclusion of Probation**

At the end of the probationary period the Headteacher will meet with you and your Line Manager to discuss the probationary period as a whole. Your Line Manager will provide feedback on your progress to the Headteacher and you will have the opportunity to comment.

The Headteacher will have the responsibility for deciding whether you have successfully passed your probationary period and will inform you of this decision at the meeting.

If the probationary period has:

- been satisfactory, continued employment will be confirmed.
- not been satisfactory, the Headteacher may decide too either:
  - a) give notice of the termination of your employment; or
  - b) agree to an extension to the probationary period, during which you will have a final opportunity to improve.

This decision will be confirmed in writing.

## **9. Extending a Probationary Period**

As outlined above, if, during or towards the end of the probationary period and despite addressing concerns with you, there remain areas of performance that remain unsatisfactory, the Headteacher may extend the probationary period.

An extension may not be appropriate in all instances but may be considered where:

- it is felt that you will be able to meet the expectations of the role within the extended period;
- you have demonstrated genuine progress towards meeting the standards expected;
- you are awaiting further training which is key to the performance of the role; and/or
- absence has meant it has not been possible to adequately assess your performance.

When the decision to extend the probationary period is made, the Headteacher will confirm in writing:

- the reason for the extension
- any further assistance/training that will be given in the extension period
- the length of the extension
- the levels of performance expected and how this will be monitored during this period; and
- should the satisfactory improvements not be made, your employment may be terminated within or at the end of the probationary period.

Towards the end of the period of extension a final review meeting will usually take place.

Should performance be deemed satisfactory at the end of the extension period, you will receive written confirmation of the successful completion of your probationary period.

## Appendix 1

### Probationary Period Review Form

This form is to be completed ahead of/alongside the Induction Checklist.

<b>Employee name</b>	
<b>Job title</b>	
<b>Department</b>	
<b>Start date of employment</b>	
<b>Line Manager</b>	

	<b>Date Due</b>	<b>Please tick when completed</b>
Initial Meeting		
Review Meeting		
Final Review Meeting		
[INSERT ADDITIONAL REVIEWS REQUIRED]		

A copy of this document should be shared with the employee following each meeting.



## Initial Meeting

***This section should be completed by the line manager and the employee as soon as possible after the start date of their employment.***

		<b>Please tick</b>	
<b>Expectations and Objectives</b>			
The line manager should identify specific expectations and objectives to be achieved during the probationary period		Yes	
		No	
What has been agreed with the employee?			
<b>Initial Support</b>			
Mentor/buddy arranged where appropriate (if agreed that it is appropriate for the new employee's development)		Yes	
		No	
What has been agreed with the employee?			
<b>Development Plan</b>			
To support the employee in achieving these objectives, the line manager should identify any training and development needs and specify how and when these needs will be addressed during the probationary period		Yes	
		No	
What has been agreed with the employee?			
<b>[School/Academy/Trust] Policies and Procedures</b>			
Policies explained and understood (explain to the new employee that they must read, understand and adhere to the policies. Refer them to the documents on the Intranet and arrange for them to sign the declaration below)		Yes	
		No	

<b>Declaration for the employee to complete</b>			
<b>Confirmation that the employee has read and understand the relevant policies and procedures</b>			
<u>Employment Policies &amp; Procedures</u>		<u>School Policies &amp; Procedures</u>	
<u>Policy</u>	Tick to confirm	<u>Policy</u>	Tick to confirm
Anti-Harassment and Bullying		Child Protection policy	
Appraisal		Safeguarding Policy	
Capability (Teaching and Support Staff)		[INSERT AS APPROPRIATE]	

Code of conduct			
Data Protection			
Disciplinary			
Equal Opportunities and Diversity			
Grievance			
Induction of Early Career Teachers (ECTs) Policy			
Pay (Teaching and Support Staff)			
Whistleblowing			

<b>Employee's signature</b>	
<b>Manager's signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

## Review Meeting

To be completed by the line manager in discussion with the Employee

	<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
Quality and accuracy of work				
Efficiency				
Attendance				
Time Keeping				
Work relationships (team work and interpersonal)				
Relationships with pupils				
Competency in the role				
Other role specific (to be specified)				

If any areas of performance, conduct or attendance require improvement, please provide details below:



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	<b>Please tick</b>	
Have the objectives identified for this period of the probation been met?	Yes	
	No	
If NO, what further action is required?		
Review date of additional action required		
Have the training / development needs identified for this period of the probation been addressed?	Yes	
	No	

<b>Employee's signature</b>	
<b>Manager's signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

## Final Review Meeting

To be completed by Line Manager in discussion with the Employee.

	<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
Quality and accuracy of work				
Efficiency				
Attendance				
Time Keeping				
Work relationships (team work and interpersonal)				
[Relationships with pupils]				
Competency in the role				
Other role specific (to be specified)				

	<b>Please tick</b>	
Have the objectives identified for this period of the probation been met?	Yes	
	No	
If NO, what further action is required?		
Review date of additional action required		
Have the training / development needs identified for this period of the probation been addressed?	Yes	
	No	

Summarise the employee's performance and progress over the entire probationary period:

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	<b>Please tick</b>	
Has the employees' probationary period been successfully completed?	Yes	
	No	
If NO, please provide the reasons and summarise what action has been taken to address any difficulties which have arisen during the probationary period.		

The employee may provide any comments about their experience of the probationary process below:

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	<b>Please tick</b>	
Should the Employee's probationary period be extended?	Yes	
	No	
If YES, please provide reasons and, where appropriate, specify any areas of improvement required and how these will be monitored.		
Length of the extension (max [6] months)		
New probationary period completion date		
Date letter issued to Employee to confirm Probation outcome		

<b>Employee's signature</b>	
<b>Manager's signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	



## Appendix 2

### Induction check list for permanent staff

*This induction check list should be completed with the Line Manager.*

<b>Name of Employee:</b>  <b>Start Date:</b>  <b>Name of Line Manager:</b>				
Line Manager – Action Required	Before Starting	1 <sup>st</sup> Day	Within 1 <sup>st</sup> Week	Within 1 <sup>st</sup> Month
<b>1. Upon appointment</b> Workstation/workplace equipped ICT equipment is working and network passwords/email address are in place Networking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant people/groups are identified</li> <li>Relevant diary dates are <del>recognised</del></li> <li>Inform team of employees' details</li> <li>Contact SGP to make ID badge</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <input type="checkbox"/>  <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>2. Initial Reception</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disabled access to work area, if applicable</li> <li>Introduction to immediate colleagues</li> <li>Staff facilities indicated e.g.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Car parking arrangements</li> <li>Smoking policies</li> <li>Facilities for people with disabilities</li> <li>Confirm payroll arrangements</li> <li>Refreshment arrangements</li> <li>Security arrangements</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>3. Health and Safety</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act</li> <li>Academy Health &amp; Safety Policies explained</li> <li>Fire evacuation procedures explained</li> <li>Hazards identified and protective measures to be taken, risk assessments explained</li> <li>Workstation assessment conducted (if applicable)</li> <li>Procedures for dealing with assaults at work explained</li> <li>Safety equipment explained (if applicable)</li> <li>Accident/incident reporting systems explained</li> <li>First aid arrangements explained</li> </ul>			<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>  <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>4. Conditions of Service</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Probationary period</li> <li>Annual leave (for staff employed all year round)</li> <li>Sickness</li> <li>Flexible working practices (if applicable)</li> </ul>			<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>5. Outline Introduction to the Job</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce the tasks and responsibilities of new post</li> <li>Further introduction to your teams' systems</li> <li>Explanation/demonstration of relevant equipment</li> <li>Relevant other staff in the team/Academy introduced and contacts made</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>Authorised</del> signatories created, where appropriate</li> <li>• Line management responsibilities and procedures (if applicable)</li> </ul>			<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>6. Learning and Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial mentoring and support arrangements in place</li> <li>• Awareness of the performance management process i.e. annual appraisal, regular supervision etc.</li> <li>• Access to other training needs discussed</li> <li>• Further courses booked if necessary</li> </ul>			<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>  <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>7. Trade Unions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informed of <del>recognised</del> trade unions and contact points</li> </ul>			<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>8. Information Communication Technology (ICT) Security Guidelines</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibilities under the Data Protection Act explained</li> <li>• Trust's ICT Usage Policy explained</li> </ul>			<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>9. Trust Policies and Processes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Probationary Policy</li> <li>• Child Protection and Safeguarding</li> <li>• ICT Usage</li> <li>• GDPR</li> <li>• Health and Safety</li> <li>• Whistleblowing</li> <li>• Absence Reporting Procedure</li> <li>• Staff Handbook</li> </ul>			<input type="checkbox"/>  <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>10. Team Specific Information</b>				
Line Manager's Signature:		Date Completed:		
Employee's Signature:		Date Completed:		

Completed form needs to be returned to HR.