

PROBATION POLICY

In keeping with the Ashington Learning Partnership's (ALP) other policies and procedures, this document is issued for guidance and is not intended to have contractual effect. The ALP reserves the right to vary, amend or depart from the contents of this policy and procedure from time to time in appropriate circumstances.

This policy and procedure applies to all new full time, part time permanent and temporary support staff employees.

The policy and procedure does not apply to teachers, where different procedures apply.

Probation is a process where support staff become familiar with a new role and the ALP.

1. Policy

The ALP:

- recognises that the experience of new support staff when first starting work for the ALP will have a lasting impact on how they view the ALP and will enable them to become fully effective more quickly;
- recognises that setting appropriate objectives and assessing learning and development needs during the probation period will enable both the ALP and the new support staff member to assess whether they are suited to one another;
- will invest resources in ensuring that all new support staff undertake an effective probation procedure and are able to make a valuable contribution to the ALP as quickly as possible.

2. Principles

Support staff will be provided with relevant information, training and development to undertake their role through an effective probation period.

During the probation period, the ALP will ensure that the new support staff member is aware of:

- the ALP vision, objectives, goals, values, culture and ethos;
- organisational working practices;
- the support staff member's role in supporting the ALP achieve those goals;
- the skill and competencies needed to fulfil their role;
- the standards of performance, conduct and attendance required;
- his/her performance.

The performance, conduct, attendance and learning and development needs of the new support staff member will be monitored by the line manager during the probation process.

The probation process will provide the appropriate support and guidance which the support staff member requires.

The probation period will enable the ALP to assess whether the support staff member is capable of undertaking the new role competently and for the support staff member to decide if the role and/or the ALP is suitable for them.

The length of the probation period will normally be 6 months, but this may vary depending on individual cases.

3. Procedure

In addition to the formal meetings set out below, at any time during the probation period, the line manager and the support staff member may meet to discuss performance, progress or concerns.

3.1 During the First Week

During the support staff member's induction process, the line manager will meet with the support staff member and identify SMART (Specific, Measured, Achievable, Realistic and Time) objectives for the support staff member to work towards during the first weeks, months and year of employment with the ALP. Learning and development needs will also be identified and any support and training needed to meet these arranged.

3.2 At the End of One Month in the New Role

At the end of the first month in the new role, the line manager will hold a probation review meeting with the support staff member and discuss how s/he is settling into the ALP. Any concerns raised by the support staff member should be investigated and resolved.

The line manager will review the support staff member's progress against the objectives set. The objectives and learning and development needs themselves may be reviewed as part of the meeting. The member of support staff's the learning and development needs, conduct, attendance and punctuality will also be reviewed.

The line manager may also seek feedback on the support staff member's experience of the induction process.

3.3 At the End of Three Months' in the New Role

The line manager will undertake a three month probation review meeting with the support staff member in the same format as the review meeting at the end of the first month's employment.

3.4 At the End of the Probation Period (usually 6 months)

No later than two weeks before the end of the probation period, the line manager will hold an end of probation period meeting with the support staff member. Any concerns raised by the support staff member should be investigated and resolved.

The line manager will review the support staff member's progress against the objectives set and also the learning and development needs.

Where the support staff member's performance, conduct and attendance is satisfactory or above, the line manager will advise the support staff member that s/he has successfully completed the probation period and confirm this in writing.

The support staff member's objectives and learning and development needs will be reviewed as part of the meeting and the support staff member moved to the ALP's appraisal process.

4. Unsatisfactory Performance, Conduct or Attendance During the Probation Period

4.1 Informal Action

Concerns regarding the performance, conduct or attendance of the support staff member during the probation period should be raised by the line manager with the support staff member as soon as possible. The line manager should provide evidence to the support staff member of the concerns and agree with the support staff member targets and timescales (usually one month) in which improvement must be made.

Where the performance, conduct or attendance are serious, the informal process may be disregarded and the process moved straight to formal action.

4.2 Formal Action

Following informal action, where the support staff member's performance, conduct or attendance continues to be unsatisfactory, or where the issues are serious, the line manager will meet with the support staff member and advise the support staff member of this, and provide examples.

The line manager may decide to extend the probation period or recommend to the SBM that the support staff member's employment is terminated.

4.3 Extension to Probation Period

Where the line manager decides to extend the probation period to allow for a further short period of further monitoring to allow the member of support staff time to reach a satisfactory standard, this extension will usually be 4 – 6 weeks but may be up to 3 months.

In exceptional circumstances the line manager will continue to monitor the support staff member through regular probation review meetings during the extension to the probation period. The probation period may be extended on more than one occasion, but the total length of the probationary period will not exceed one year.

4.4 Terminate Employment During the Probation Period

Before the end of the probationary period, where the line manager believes that, despite appropriate training and support, the support staff member's performance, conduct or attendance is unsatisfactory, a recommendation should be made by the line manager to the SBM that the contract of employment should be terminated. This recommendation should be in writing and include details of the performance, conduct or attendance issues.

The EP/SBM will hold a meeting with the member of support staff to consider terminating the contract of employment. Where the EP/SBM is the line manager, s/he may also conduct the meeting. The line manager's recommendation should be provided to the employee in advance of this meeting to allow an opportunity to respond to this at the meeting.

The member of support staff has the right to be accompanied at this meeting with a suitably qualified trades union representative or a work colleague. If the EP decides that it is appropriate for the contract of employment to be terminated, the employee will be given a right of appeal in accordance with the ALP hearings and appeals procedure.

Other Documents:

Hearing and Appeals Procedure

Appendices:

1. Probationary Assessment Form – 8 weeks
2. Probationary Assessment Form – 18 weeks
3. Probationary Assessment Form – Final 26 weeks
4. Probation Extension Form
3. Responsibilities

Created <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Signed:	Name: Nikki Lumley
Role: Business Manager	Date: March 2019
Adopted	
Signed:	Name: Gemma Craik
Role: Chair, Financial & Resources Committee	Date: April 2019

Probationary Assessment Form – 8 weeks

Assessment of Performance during Probationary and Induction Period

NAME:	
JOB TITLE	
DATE OF APPOINTMENT:	

The above named person's appointment is subject to a satisfactory induction and probation report during a period after 8 weeks service and again at 18 weeks with a final report at 26 weeks service. You are responsible for monitoring his/her performance during this period and you must complete this form at the required times and forward it to the SBM in a timely fashion.

To be completed after 8 weeks service

I have today interviewed the above named employee and certify that (tick as appropriate):

The employee's performance is satisfactory in all respects at this stage:	<input type="checkbox"/>
The employee's performance is unsatisfactory in the following areas:	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please attached any improvement plans

I have outlined the areas of unsatisfactory performance to the employee and have informed him/her that failure to improve these areas may lead to action under the Capability or Disciplinary Procedure. Training and/or direct supervision will be given as necessary and will be evidenced by a formal action plan.

Employee comments (please use additional sheets if necessary):

Signed:		(Mentor)	Date:	
Signed:		(Employee)	Date:	

I approve the Line Manager's recommendation:

Signed:		(Business Manager)	Date:	
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Probationary Assessment Form – 18 weeks

Assessment of Performance during Probationary and Induction Period

NAME:	
JOB TITLE	
DATE OF APPOINTMENT:	

The above named person's appointment is subject to a satisfactory induction and probation report during a period at 18 weeks with a final report at 26 weeks service. You are responsible for monitoring his/her performance during this period and you must complete this form at the required times and forward it to the SBM in a timely fashion.

To be completed after 18 weeks service

I have today interviewed the above named employee and certify that (tick as appropriate):

The employee's performance was satisfactory at 8 weeks and still is:	<input type="checkbox"/>
The employee's performance was satisfactory at 8 weeks but now isn't:	<input type="checkbox"/>
The employee's performance was not satisfactory at 8 weeks but is now:	<input type="checkbox"/>
The employee's performance was not satisfactory at 8 weeks and still isn't:	<input type="checkbox"/>
The employee's performance is unsatisfactory in the following areas:	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please attached any improvement plans

I have outlined the areas of unsatisfactory performance to the employee and have informed him/her that failure to improve these areas may lead to action under the Capability or Disciplinary Procedure. Training and/or direct supervision will be given as necessary and will be evidence by a formal action plan.

Employee comments (please use additional sheets if necessary):

Signed:		(Mentor)	Date:	
Signed:		(Employee)	Date:	

I approve the Line Manager's recommendation:

Signed:		(Business Manager)	Date:	
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Probationary Assessment Form – Final Report

NAME:	
JOB TITLE	
DATE OF APPOINTMENT:	

To be completed after 26 weeks service

I have today interviewed the above named employee and certify that (tick as appropriate):

The employee's performance is satisfactory in all respects – I recommend the employee is confirmed in post:	<input type="checkbox"/>
The employee's performance is unsatisfactory. I do not recommend the employee is confirmed in post at this stage. The Probation Extension Form is attached:	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Probation Extension form is attached.

Employee comments (please use additional sheets if necessary):

Signed:		(Mentor)	Date:	
Signed:		(Employee)	Date:	

I approve the Line Manager's recommendation:

Signed:		(Business Manager)	Date:	
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Probation Extension Form

NAME:	
JOB TITLE	
DATE OF APPOINTMENT:	
LINE MANAGER’S NAME:	

It is agreed that the probationary period of the above-named employee be extended until when a further review will take place

The employee’s performance, conduct or attendance is unsatisfactory as follows:

-
-
-
-

The action plan to address the gaps is as follows: ☐ Attached: ☐

-
-
-

Signed:	<input type="text"/>	(Mentor)	Date:	<input type="text"/>
Signed:	<input type="text"/>	(Employee)	Date:	<input type="text"/>

I approve the Line Manager’s recommendation ☐ or the following actions are required:

Signed:	<input type="text"/>	(Business Manager)	Date:	<input type="text"/>
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Responsibility

1. The Governing Body has delegated responsibility for adopting, developing and reviewing this policy to the Finance and Resources Committee who will ensure that effective monitoring systems and procedures are in place.

The Governing Body has delegated authority to the EP, to make decisions in relation to the probationary process for support staff.

2. The SBM:
 - understands clearly this probationary policy and procedure and ensure that this is communicated to all new support staff members;
 - holds a probationary meeting with the member of support staff, if appropriate, to consider unsatisfactory performance, conduct or attendance and make a decision regarding the future employment of the member of support staff.
3. The line manager will:
 - plan the support staff's probation process. This will include holding probation review meetings after four and fourteen weeks' service and also an end of probation review meeting (see forms for completion at Appendix 1, 2, 3 & 4);
 - assess any learning and development needs and arrange appropriate support and training;
 - agree individual performance objectives with the new support staff member;
 - monitor the support staff member's performance and learning and development needs during the probation process;
 - Keep the SBM appraised of progress or concerns.
4. The support staff member will:
 - ask appropriate questions in order to clarify his/her understanding of the role, department, ALP and working arrangements;
 - suggest any individual learning and development needs to the line manager;
 - discuss and agree individual performance objectives with the line manager;
 - raise with the line manager any areas where insufficient information has been provided or further support is required;
 - fully understand and comply with this probation policy and procedure.