



ENERGY COAST UTC

PROBATIONARY PROCEDURE FOR STAFF

GUIDANCE FOR LINE MANAGERS

Document Summary: To ensure consistent, fair and equitable processes are in place for all staff.

Notes:

Line Manager: This refers to the person to whom the new employee reports to on a day to day basis, for example: Principal, Vice Principal, Head of Department, Business Director etc.

Dual Roles: Where an employee has more than one role, the reporting managers will agree how each role is reviewed and notify the employee.

HR Support: This refers to the UTC's HR support service.

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1. Introduction

This procedure is non-contractual and for guidance only. This guidance advises line managers of their role and responsibilities when managing an employee through the probationary period. Whilst the procedure is non contractual there are elements of the procedure that will be contractual such as the probationary period itself. For further information managers should seek advice from the Business Director and/or the HR provider.

If matters of conduct or performance issues arise during the probation period, the Probationary Procedure will normally be used to address such matters.

2. What is the purpose of the probation period?

The probationary period is a critical stage and enables an assessment and evaluation to be made regarding the employee's suitability, capability, experience and qualifications to be able to carry out the role successfully. New employee's must, during the probation period, demonstrate their suitability for the post and complete this before being confirmed in post

The Probationary Procedure provides a consistent, fair and transparent framework for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the performance of employees in relation to:

- Quality of work and understanding of role;
- Attitudes, morale and motivation;
- Conduct and behaviours;
- Attendance levels (as per the UTC's Staff Attendance Policy);
- Compliance with all policies and procedures, particularly those relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- Compliance with health and safety;

The probationary period also facilitates the following scenarios:

- Providing formal feedback and an opportunity for discussion;
- Identifying appropriate training, support and assistance;
- An opportunity for reinforcing the UTC's vision and values;
- An opportunity to address any poor performance and/or conduct matters.

3. Who does the probation period apply to?

It applies to all new staff employed by the UTC regardless of their permanent, fixed term, full or part-time status.

4. The probationary period

The probation period is for twelve months from the start date of employment.

5. The probation procedure

5.1 The line manager should, in normal circumstances conduct a total of three formal reviews with the employee. Reviews should take the form of a confidential meeting between the manager and the employee in which there is opportunity for two-way discussion.

5.2 Preparation

The requirements of the job (as a minimum this will include the employee's job description/person specification) and specific performance targets (for example, time keeping, conduct, reliability) will have been outlined to the new employee during the induction process. The line manager is responsible for informing the employee of the following:

- Purpose of the probation period;
- Job and specific performance targets they will expected to achieve and which the employee's performance will be measured against;
- Planned training/development which will support the employee's performance;
- Planned meetings/discussions to review the employee's progress.

This will establish a baseline against which to measure the employee's progress throughout the probation period.

5.3 The first review

When? - On completion of four months' service (or earlier where the employee has a short-term contract or there are concerns).

The purpose of this meeting is for the line manager to evaluate the employee's performance and to discuss any key issues. If improvements in performance are required, the discussion should focus on the standards expected, how to make the necessary improvements, including any details of the appropriate management support/training that may be put in place and timescales for improvement and how improvements will be measured/assessed?

The detail of any performance assessment will vary dependent upon the level of skills and competencies required to perform the job effectively.

Listed below are some examples of potential sources from which line managers could make an assessment on an employee's performance:

- Learning walks or lesson observations;
- Completed work/targets;
- Work/targets in progress;
- Colleague/student feedback;
- Data analysis;
- Team meetings;
- Customer feedback;
- Third party observations (where appropriate).

Whilst assessing, line managers should:

- Be objective;
- Recognise achievement;
- Highlight areas that require improvement.

Upon completion of the review meeting, the line manager should complete Form A (Appendix 1). This should then be signed by both the line manager and the employee. A copy should be given to the individual and a copy saved on the employees' personnel file.

Where the employee has not met the required standards, s/he will be informed that continued failure to meet those standards will result in failure of the probationary period and may ultimately result in termination of contract of employment.

5.4 The second review

When? - On completion of 8 months' service (or earlier where the employee has a short-term contract or where there are concerns).

The purpose of this meeting is to review the employee's performance over the first 8 months. Where the previous review indicated that improvements in performance were required, the second review meeting should be used to consider the extent of any improvement that may have taken place.

Where the employee has not met the required standards, s/he will be informed that continued failure to meet those standards may result in failure of the probationary period and may ultimately result in termination of contract of employment. The line manager in discussion with the employee should consider other intervention which could help support the employee in meeting the required improvements as soon as possible. The line manager may also wish to consider at this point a possible extension to the probationary period to provide the employee with additional time to reach the required standard.

Upon completion of this meeting, the line manager should complete Form B (Appendix 2). This should be signed by the line manager and the employee, and a copy should be given to the individual and a copy saved on the employee's personnel file.

5.5 The final review:

When? - On completion of 12 months' service (or earlier where the employee has a short-term contract or where there are concerns).

Prior to the final review meeting, which normally takes place after the employee has completed 12 months' service, (or sooner where the probationer has a short-term contract) the line manager should consider whether:

- The employee's appointment should be confirmed OR;
- The probationary period should be extended because there are exceptional circumstances OR;
- The employee has significantly failed their probationary period despite interventions to help and support them and as such the contract of employment must be brought to an end. The employee will be dismissed with statutory or contractual notice, whichever is the greater.

5.6 Where a dismissal is a possible outcome of a review meeting, the following preparation will be undertaken by the line manager:

- The employee will be notified in writing with the details of the date, time and purpose of the review meeting.
- The letter will state reasons why the performance has been unsatisfactory to date and why they have not met the required standard.
- The employee will be notified in writing of their right to be accompanied at the meeting by a workplace colleague or trade union representative

5.7 If a recommendation is made by the line manager to terminate the employee's contract of employment, there will be a formal meeting with the Principal at which the Principal and the employee, who may be accompanied by a trade union representative or a work place colleague, will have the opportunity to state his/her case, before any decision is made by the Principal concerning his/her employment. The Principal will write to the individual confirming their decision.

5.8 There is right of appeal against a decision to terminate employment. Any appeal will be heard by a panel made up of two trustees and the employee will have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or workplace colleague.

5.9 Upon completion of the final review meeting, if the employee has successfully passed the probationary period then the line manager will complete Form C (Appendix 3). This will be signed by the line manager and the employee. The form should be placed on the employee's personnel file with a copy provided to the individual.

6. Disciplinary/conduct arising during the probation period

6.1 The UTC's Disciplinary Policy applies to employees who are in their probationary period. The Disciplinary Policy is available on the UTC's website.

7 General Advice

7.1 Whatever course of action is taken following a probationary period, the line manager is responsible for ensuring this is communicated in a timely manner to the employee and the necessary documentation is fully completed

7.2 Where the employee is not meeting the required standard of performance due to a disability, advice will be sought from the UTC's Occupational Health provider.

7.2 For further advice, line managers should contact the UTC's HR advisors.

Appendix 1 - PROBATION PERIOD – FIRST REVIEW MEETING - FORM A

This form should be completed by the line manager at the first review. The original should be placed on the employee's personal file, and a copy provided to the employee.

FIRST REVIEW

Employee name:

Start date:

Job title:

Date of review meeting:

Line manager's name and job title:

Line manager's comments:

How does the employee feel s/he has performed against each element of the job description or, for teachers, the teachers standards?

How does the line manager feel s/he has performed against each element of the job description or, for teachers, the teachers standards?

Are there any training or continuing development needs the employee wishes to have met during the coming probation period?

Are there any training or continuing development needs the line manager feels are necessary during the coming probation period?

Is the employee's progress satisfactory to date? Any strengths? Any identified areas that require improvement?

Are there any other topics the employee wants to discuss further during the meeting?

Is the employee currently on track to pass the probationary period?

(If no, the employee should be made aware that failure to pass the probationary period may result in termination of employment)

Progress required before next review:

Support/additional training required to assist employee in meeting the required standard if applicable:

Employee's comments:

Signed (Line Manager):

Signed (Employee):

Dated:

Appendix 2 - PROBATION PERIOD – SECOND REVIEW MEETING - FORM B

This form should be completed by the line manager at the second review. This should be signed by the line manager and the employee, and the original placed on the employee's personal file with a copy also provided to the employee.

SECOND REVIEW

Employee name:

Start date:

Job title:

Date of review meeting:

Line manager's name and job title:

Line manager's comments:

How does the employee feel s/he has performed against each element of the job description or, for teachers, the teachers standards?

How does the line manager feel s/he has performed against each element of the job description or, for teachers, the teachers standards?

Are there any training or continuing development needs the employee wishes to have met during the coming probation period?

Are there any training or continuing development needs the line manager feels are necessary during the coming probation period?

Is the employee's progress satisfactory to date? Any strengths? Any areas of improvement identified?

Are there any other topics the employee wants to discuss further during the meeting?

Is the employee currently on track to pass the probationary period?
(If no, the employee should be made aware that failure to pass the probationary period may result in termination of employment)

Progress required before next review:

Line manager support agreed to assist the employee in meeting the required standard:

Employee's comments:

Signed (Line Manager):
Dated:

Signed (Employee):

Appendix 3 - PROBATION PERIOD – FINAL REVIEW - FORM C

This form should be completed by the line manager at the third and final review meeting

FINAL REVIEW

Employee name:

Start date:

Job title:

Date of review meeting:

Line manager's name and job title:

Line manager's comments:

How does the employee feel s/he has performed against each element of the job description or, for teachers, the teachers standards?

How does the line manager feel s/he has performed against each element of the job description or, for teachers, the teachers standards?

Are there any training or continuing development needs the employee wishes to have met during the coming probation period?

Are there any further training or continuing development needs the line manager feels are necessary?

Is the employee's progress satisfactory to date?

Are there any other topics the employee wants to discuss further during the meeting?

Final review decision

- Appointment is confirmed
- Probation is extended
- Recommendation to the Principal that employee is dismissed/contract not extended

If, exceptionally, probation is extended then an account of the concerns and a support plan for the extension period will be attached to this form.

An account of the concerns and reasons for recommending alternative options is to be attached to this form.

Employee's comments:

Signed (Line Manager):
Dated:

Signed (Employee):

**Appendix 4 - TEMPLATE LETTER CONFIRMATION OF SATISFACTORY
COMPLETION OF PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

[ON HEADED NOTEPAPER OF SCHOOL/ACADEMY/TRUST]

[Private and Confidential]

[ADDRESSEE]

[ADDRESS LINE 1]

[ADDRESS LINE 2]

[POSTCODE]

[DATE]

Dear

Confirmation of satisfactory completion of probationary period

As you will know, your appointment as a is subject to satisfactory completion of a <> month probationary period.

I am pleased to confirm that, based on the recommendation of your line manager, you have now successfully completed your probationary period.

I would like to congratulate you and wish you every success in your future employment with us.

Yours sincerely

Principal

cc: Line Manager

Appendix 5 - TEMPLATE LETTER EXTENSION OF PROBATIONARY PERIOD

[ON HEADED NOTE PAPER OF SCHOOL/ACADEMY/TRUST]

[Private and Confidential]

[ADDRESSEE]

[ADDRESS LINE 1]

[ADDRESS LINE 2]

[POSTCODE]

[DATE]

Dear

Extension of Probationary Period for the post of

I am writing to confirm the outcome of our final review meeting held on

At the meeting, I explained my concerns about satisfactory completion of your probationary period and I drew your attention to a number of specific issues which are summarised on your review form. The decision I have made is that your probationary period will be extended by xxxxx weeks to [date] to afford you an opportunity to reach the required standard of competence in your role as xxxxxxxxxxxx. The areas for improvement are identified on your Probation Period - Form C - Final Review and the accompanying report

A further and final meeting will be held on xxxxx to review your progress against the area(s) identified for improvement.

I hope that this period of extension will enable you to demonstrate your suitability for employment across all performance areas. You should be aware that failure to achieve a satisfactory improvement by the end of the extension period may result in the termination of your employment.

I would urge you to make the most of this opportunity to address the concerns that have been raised. If you have any questions arising from this letter, please contact me as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Line Manager

Appendix 6 - TEMPLATE LETTER – TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT HEARING

[HR advice should be taken before adapting this letter and sending to an employee as this may not be appropriate in some circumstances].

[ON HEADED NOTEPAPER OF SCHOOL/ACADEMY/TRUST]

[Private and Confidential]

[ADDRESSEE]

[ADDRESS LINE 1]

[ADDRESS LINE 2]

[POSTCODE]

[DATE]

[BY HAND/RECORDED DELIVERY/SPECIAL DELIVERY AND COPY FIRST CLASS POST]

Dear [EMPLOYEE'S NAME]

Probationary Period - Hearing to Consider Termination of Employment

Following your completion of x months service at [SCHOOL/ACADEMY/TRUST], a meeting has been arranged on [DATE] at [TIME] in [PLACE] to discuss the outcome of your probationary period.

The Principal will chair the meeting and also present will be [Insert names and positions / roles at the meeting].

I will be recommending to the Principal that your employment is terminated due to the fact that you have not satisfactorily completed your probationary period.

The summary of the reasons why your performance has been unsatisfactory is outlined in the enclosed report.

You may be accompanied by a workplace colleague or a trade union representative at the meeting. If the decision is to terminate your employment, then you will have the right to appeal the decision to the panel made up of 2 UTC trustees.

The Principal has the authority to terminate your employment or, if s/he believes the circumstances are exceptional, to extend your probationary period as specified in the Trust's Probation Procedure, or to confirm your appointment.

Should you wish the Principal / Panel to consider any additional documentation please submit to [insert name and position] no later than [insert date] ahead of the meeting.

Please confirm your attendance on receipt of this letter and do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions in relation to its contents.

Yours sincerely

[NAME of line manager]

Appendix 7 - Probationary Period Flowchart

