



Policy and Procedure on Induction and Probation Arrangements for Professional Services Employees (Grades 1 -5)

If you are reading a printed version of this document, you should check:

<https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=20638>. This reference number can then be used to identify each specific document, which can be helpful if there are name changes to ensure you have the most up to date version.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The University is committed to providing a supportive working environment and ensuring that all newly appointed employees receive the best possible induction and support during their probation period. This policy sets out the probation arrangements for all Professional Services employees (Grades 1-5) who are newly appointed to the University. This policy outlines how employees will be supported, developed and managed during the probation period, as well as how any issues of underperformance during probation will be addressed.
- 1.2 The purpose of the probationary period is for the employee and the manager to assess suitability to the new role and ensure the necessary support has been identified to ensure employees are successful in their new role. It allows the manager to assess objectively whether the employee is suitable for the role, taking into account the individual's overall capability, skills, performance and general conduct in relation to the job in question. The probationary period also enables the employee to assess the suitability of the role in line with their aspirations and requirements.
- 1.3 The University believes that the use of probationary periods increases the likelihood that new employees will perform effectively in their employment.
- 1.4 Although the probationary period is defined in the contract of employment, the probationary policy and procedure is non contractual and can be updated at any time.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy and procedure applies to all Professional Services employees at Grades 1 – 5 who are newly appointed to the University.
- 2.2 The policy does not normally apply to existing employees (who have already completed a probation period) when changing roles within the University. However, the University may in exceptional circumstances with the agreement of the appropriate Faculty/PS Head of People and OD, offer an existing member of staff a new appointment on the basis of satisfactory completion of a probationary period (For example this might sometimes be appropriate on promotion to a significantly different role such as an academic-related role to an academic one or more than one grade higher than the current grade).

3 Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 Managers should recognize that commencing a new role in a new organization can be challenging and therefore should ensure new employees are welcomed, feel valued and provided with an effective onboarding experience. It is the responsibility of managers to support employees through the probation period, providing relevant feedback and development opportunities. Managers are also responsible for addressing any issues of underperformance during probation in accordance with this policy and procedure and ensuring employees complete mandatory training.
- 3.2 It is the responsibility for new employees to demonstrate their suitability for the post they have been appointed to and ensure that the necessary behaviours and conduct is consistently demonstrated. New employees are responsible for fully participating in their induction programme, probationary reviews and any training or development that is provided within the probationary period.

4 General Principles

- 4.1 Within this policy the following definitions apply:
- the term 'manager' refers to the designated probationary review manager
 - the term 'probationer' refers to the newly appointed employee

- 4.2 A probation period is a trial period for a new member of staff. It allows the manager to assess objectively whether the new recruit is suitable for the role, taking into account the individual's overall capability, skills, performance and general conduct in relation to the job in question.
- 4.2 Probationers should be given appropriate and adequate support to enable them to complete their probation satisfactorily.
- 4.3 The probationary process will be conducted in accordance with the University policies on equality and diversity. The University aims to secure equality of opportunity in all its activities, and in this respect, the probation review process must be objective, clear, transparent and free from discrimination.
- 4.4 In the unusual circumstances where a newly appointed employee changes roles prior to the completion of their probation period, the probation period will carry over into the new role and may be extended in accordance with this policy in order to allow sufficient time for review within the new role.

5 Period of probation

- 5.1 The probationary period will normally last for 6 calendar months. During this time the manager will meet regularly with the probationer to discuss their progress and suitability to the role.
- 5.2 If the probationer is absent due to family leave (maternity, shared parental, paternity, or adoption leave) or long-term sickness absence, or is employed on a "term time only" contract of employment then the probationary period may be extended to ensure the aggregate period of probation is 6 calendar months.
- 5.3 If there are concerns about the probationer's suitability, the probationary period may, be extended by up to 3 calendar months. This will only be appropriate if the manager believes that the required standards can potentially be met within this time period.
- 5.4 Where there is sufficient evidence that the standards are not being met, or are unlikely to be met, the contract of employment may be terminated at any stage during the probation period i.e. it is not always appropriate to wait until the end of the probation period.

5.5 During or at the end of the probation period the contractual notice period required by either party to terminate the employment is one week.

6 Induction

6.1 The probationer must be informed as to who their designated probationary review manager will be. It is the manager's responsibility to devise an appropriate induction programme for all newly-appointed employees which will enable the employee to meet key contacts, understand their role and the standards expected of them, and understand how they contribute to the overall function and goals of the University.

6.2 The manager should also discuss and agree an initial training and development plan based on the individual's personal needs, to ensure that they will be able to perform their new role effectively.

6.3 The University [New Staff Induction Checklist](#), [the Induction Training and Development Plan](#) and [Induction Health & Safety Checklist](#) must all be completed for each new employee to ensure that all relevant issues are covered. The manager must ensure that completed copies of the first two forms are retained on file locally by the manager for future reference, whilst the latter should be returned to the local safety adviser. Employees should also refer to the [New Welcome Leaflet](#)

6.4 The manager should ensure that all mandatory training stipulated is completed by the probationer.

7 Probation

7.1 It is vital that through the information provided during induction, the new employee has a clear understanding of their role and about the standards they are required to meet. These may include but are not limited to:

- standards of performance in the role
- standards of conduct and behaviour
- skills, qualities and levels of competence required
- any specific objectives or targets
- any agreed training and support available
- timekeeping and attendance.

7.2 It should also be clear how requirements will be measured during the probation period and how the probationer will know whether they are meeting them by completing the relevant [Probationary Review Forms](#)

8 Monitoring performance

8.1 The progress of a probationer will be kept under review through regular meetings which should be agreed in advance. The frequency of these meetings may vary according to the situation but the manager should meet with the probationer at least every two months.

8.2 The purpose of such meetings is to provide feedback and support, with the aim of helping the probationer to successfully complete their probation period and to prepare them to undertake their role effectively in the future. The discussion should include:

- positive feedback on things that are going well
- areas for improvement and how this can be achieved
- review of any induction plans, training and/or support received and whether any further measures are required
- progress towards agreed objectives or targets (if appropriate).

8.3 These meetings must be documented using the probationary review forms. The probationer should be given a copy and the manager should provide a copy to Employment Services to be retained on their personnel file.

8.4 The probationer must be given early notice if they are failing to make satisfactory progress at any stage in the probationary period. If there are areas for concern the manager must ensure that the probationer is clear about:

- what the area of concern is
- what they need to do to improve and by when
- the support available to help them

This should also be documented and a copy provided to the probationer.

8.5 This procedure for dealing with concerns regarding capability, conduct and performance, may be used in place of the following University procedures during the probationary period:

- the Capability policy and procedures
- the Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures for Professional Services Employees (Grades 1 -5)
- the Management of Sickness Absence policy and procedures.

9 Completion of the probation period

9.1 During the probation period the manager will be assessing the suitability of the probationer (as described in paragraph 5) in order to reach one of the following conclusions:

Confirm the appointment.

If the probationer has met the required standards, the manager should meet with the probationer for a final review and confirm that they have successfully completed their probation. The manager should notify Employment Services, sending the completed probation review forms. Employment Services will issue a letter to confirm that the probation period has been successfully completed. The manager should explain how future performance will continue to be reviewed through the Performance Development Review system.

Extend the probation period for a maximum of 3 calendar months.

If concerns have been identified that the manager believes can be rectified with a little more time, the probation period may be extended for up to a maximum of 3 calendar months. The manager should hold a review meeting with the probationer to explain the reasons for the extension. They should set out the required standards which must be met for the appointment to be confirmed and the support available to help them achieve these. The manager should give the probationer a copy of the review notes.

The manager should notify Employment Services, sending the completed probation review forms. Employment Services will issue a letter confirming the extension period.

During or at the end of this period, the manager must either confirm the appointment or terminate the contract as set out in this procedure.

Terminate the contract of employment

The manager should always seek advice from the People and OD Directorate at the earliest stage when considering terminating the contract of employment.

If the probationer has not met the required standards to the satisfaction of management, despite being given support and guidance to achieve them, (i.e.) their performance or conduct is deficient, or for any other substantial reason or reasons the probationer is judged unsuitable to be confirmed in post (e.g., due to disciplinary or ill health issues), the manager may decide that the appointment should be terminated.

The manager will write to invite the probationer to a meeting to discuss their performance with a view to termination of the contract. A representative from the People and OD Directorate may attend the meeting and the probationer may be accompanied by a trade union representative or a University workplace colleague. At the meeting the manager will give full reasons for considering termination and the probationer will have the opportunity to discuss these and provide further information for consideration before a final decision is reached.

The decision to terminate the contract of employment must be confirmed in writing by a member of the People and OD Directorate following the meeting, giving the required contractual notice period of one week and stating the right to appeal.

10 Review/appeals procedure

- 10.1 An employee whose contract is to be terminated following unsuccessful completion of their probationary period will have the right to request that this decision is reviewed. Their request must be made in writing to the Director of People and OD within 10 working days of receiving notification that their contract will be terminated, stating why they feel this decision should be reviewed and providing supporting evidence.
- 10.2 The decision to terminate will be reviewed by another manager with no prior direct involvement in the case, who will normally be a higher grade than the manager who made the decision to dismiss. They will be assisted and advised by a representative from People and OD Directorate

with no prior direct involvement in the case.

- 10.3 All reviews will be undertaken as quickly as possible and will not be unduly delayed.
- 10.4 The reviewing manager will consider whether the reasons for recommending dismissal are objectively reasonable and supportable and will consider any evidence put forward by the probationer. They may, as they feel necessary, request further information and/or evidence, and may wish to meet with the probationer, the manager or other relevant parties.
- 10.5 The probationer will have the right to be represented by a trade union representative or accompanied by a University work colleague at any meeting they are asked to attend.
- 10.6 The reviewing manager will confirm their decision in writing as soon as possible but within 10 working days. The reviewing manager’s decision will be final.

Document control box	
Policy / Procedure title:	Policy & Procedure on Induction and Probationary Arrangements for Professional Services Employees (Grade 1 – 5)
Date approved:	December 2022
Approving body:	PRC
Version:	4
Supersedes:	November 2018
Previous review dates:	November 2018
Next review date:	2025
Equality impact outcome:	Low
Related policies:	Capability Policy and Procedure Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure for Professional Services Grade 1 – 5 Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure
Related guidance and or codes of practice:	Induction Checklist - New and Transferring Employees H&S Induction Checklist Probationary Review Forms
Policy owner:	People and OD Directorate
Lead contact:	Policy Manager