

## Probationary Employment Policy and Procedure

### 1. Scope

- 1.1 This policy and procedure applies to all employees who are newly appointed to the University of Manchester Conference Ltd (UMC) (“the company”).
- 1.2 The policy does not apply to existing employees (who have already completed a probation period) when changing roles within the company.
- 1.3 However, the company may, in exceptional circumstances with the agreement of the Head of Hospitality and Events and the UMC-designated HR Partner, offer an existing employee a new appointment on the basis of satisfactory completion of a probationary period (for example this might sometimes be appropriate on promotion or appointment to a different role.)
- 1.4 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.

### 2. General Principles

- 2.1 Within this policy the following definitions apply:
  - i. The term ‘manager’ refers to the line manager
  - ii. the term ‘probationer’ refers to the newly appointed member of staff
- 2.2 A probation period is a trial period for a new employee, allowing the manager to assess objectively whether the new recruit is suitable for the role, taking into account the their capability, skills, performance and general conduct in relation to the job in question.
- 2.3 A probation period also enables the new recruit to assess the suitability of the role in line with their aspirations and requirements.
- 2.4 The company believes that the use of probationary periods increases the likelihood that new employees will perform effectively in their employment.
- 2.5 Probationers should be given appropriate and adequate support to enable them to complete their probation satisfactorily.

- 2.6 The process of probation complies fully with the company's stated policies of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity.

### **3. Period of probation**

- 3.1 The probationary period will normally last for 3 or 6 calendar months (role dependant), during which time the manager will meet regularly with the probationer to discuss their progress and suitability to the role.
- 3.2 If there are concerns about the probationer's suitability, or due to absence there has been insufficient time to assess the probationer, the probationary period maybe extended by up to 2 calendar months or such period as is reasonable to be able to assess the probationer. This will only be appropriate if the manager believes that the required standards can potentially be met within this time period.
- 3.3 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 necessary or appropriate to wait until the end of the probation period.
- 3.4 During or at the end of the probation period, the contractual notice period required by either party to terminate the employment is one week.

### **4. Induction**

- 4.1 It is the manager's responsibility to devise an appropriate induction programme for all newly-appointed employees which will enable the probationer 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 business.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 An Induction Check-list can be found within the company's Employment Handbook:
- i. This must all be completed and signed by each new employee and their induction (line) manager - ensuring that all relevant issues, including those of critical 'Health and Safety (H&S)' are covered
  - ii. Completed copies of the checklist should be retained confidentially on file in a secure location locally by the line manager, alongside any other relevant operational training, development and H&S compliance documents, for on-going/ future reference

- 4.4 A further copy of the Induction Check-list should be forwarded to the company Compliance Manager
- 4.5 The manager should ensure that all stipulated mandatory training is agreed, arranged and completed by the probationer

## **5. Probation Aims**

- 5.1 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 behaviour and appearance
  - skills, qualities and levels of competence required
  - any specific objectives or targets
  - any agreed training and support available
  - timekeeping and attendance
- 5.2 It must also be clear how requirements will be measured during the probation period and how the probationer will know whether they are meeting them.

## **6 Monitoring Performance**

- 6.1 The progress of a probationer will be kept under review through regular pre-arranged meetings; the frequency of these meetings may vary according to the situation but the manager should aim to meet with the probationer at least once per month on this basis.
- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 The discussions 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)

- 6.4 These meetings must be documented, of which the probationer should be given a copy and the manager should keep a copy on their personnel file.
- 6.5 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 problem is
  - what they need to do to improve and by when
  - the support available to help them.
- 6.6 The information above should also be documented and a copy provided to the probationer.
- 6.7 This procedure for dealing with concerns regarding capability, conduct and performance will be used in place of the following company procedures during the probationary period:
- [the Capability policy and procedures],
  - the Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures
  - the Management of Sickness Absence policy and procedures

## **7 Completion of the Probation Period**

- 7.1 During the probation period the manager will be assessing the suitability of the probationer (as described in paragraph 6) in order to decide if they are suitable for permanent employment.
- 7.2 If the probationer has met the required standards, the manager will meet with the probationer for a final review and confirm that they have successfully completed their probation.
- 7.3 The manager will then explain how future performance will continue to be reviewed through the Performance Development Review system.
- 7.4 If concerns regarding the probationer's suitability for permanent appointment have been identified, which the manager believes can be rectified with a little more time, the probation period may be extended for by a maximum of 2 calendar months.
- 7.5 The manager must then hold a review meeting with the probationer to explain the reasons for the extension of the probationary period, and set out the required standards which must be met for the appointment to be confirmed, along with the

support available to help them achieve these, whilst again giving the probationer a copy of the review notes.

- 7.6 In either case of confirming the permanent appointment of the probationer or extending their probation, the manager will notify HR Services, sending the completed probation review forms, whereby HR Services will then issue a letter, either confirming the extension period or confirming that the probation period has been successfully completed.
- 7.7 During or at the end of this period, the manager must either confirm the appointment or terminate the contract as set out in paragraph 7.2 and in section 8 (below) respectively.

## **8. Terminating the Contract of Employment**

- 8.1 Should the probationer not have 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 if the probationer is judged unsuitable to be confirmed in post for any other reason (e.g. due to disciplinary or ill health issues), the manager may decide that the appointment should be terminated.
- 8.2 The contract may be terminated at any stage during the probation period where there is sufficient evidence that the standards are not being met, or are unlikely to be met, i.e. it is not always necessary or appropriate to wait until the end of the probation period.
- 8.3 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 Human Resources may attend the meeting and the probationer may be accompanied by a trade union representative or a workplace colleague.
- 8.4 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.
- 8.5 The manager should always seek advice from Human Resources at the earliest stage when considering terminating the contract of employment.
- 8.6 The decision to terminate the contract of employment must be confirmed in writing by Human Resources following the meeting, giving the required contractual notice period of one week and stating the right to appeal; HR Services must be notified and sent a copy of the dismissal letter.

## 9. Review/Appeals Procedure

- 9.1 A probationer whose contract is to be terminated following unsuccessful completion of their probationary period will have the right to request that this decision is reviewed.
- 9.2 Their request must be made in writing to their manager 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.
- 9.3 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, and he/she will be assisted and advised by a representative from Human Resources with no prior direct involvement in the case.
- 9.4 All reviews will be undertaken as quickly as possible, and will not be unduly delayed.
- 9.5 The reviewing manager will consider whether the reasons for recommending dismissal are reasonable and supportable and will consider any evidence put forward by the probationer; additionally, if it is felt necessary, further information and/or evidence may be sought and the reviewing manager may wish to meet with the probationer, the manager or other relevant parties.
- 9.6 The probationer will have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or by a work colleague at any meeting they are asked to attend.
- 9.7 The reviewing manager will confirm their decision in writing as soon as possible. The reviewing manager's decision will be final.

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