

Reference code	Probation Policy
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Probation arrangements

1. All appointments to the staff of the University are subject to a probationary period.
2. The length of the period depends on the nature of the role and the table below shows the normal time periods and the standard conditions.
3. It is important for the new member of staff to receive appropriate induction to the University, the School/Department and the post. University-wide induction programmes are arranged and new staff are required to attend. Local induction is provided within Schools/Departments. Guidance and checklists are available from the Human Resources website. .
4. All new members of staff will have a mentor to provide support and advice during their first few months of employment. Guidelines about the mentoring process are available from the Human Resources Department.
5. All newly appointed members of staff, including those already in employment and who are taking up new posts, will be required to undertake specified training courses that set out certain legal requirements that all members of staff are expected to observe. These requirements include information security, general data protection regulations, health and safety, equality and diversity and other topics may be added in the future.

Support for staff with teaching and/or learning support responsibilities

5. All members of staff employed by the University on permanent teaching/lecturer contracts are expected to gain **Fellowship of the HEA (FHEA)** within three years of commencing employment at the University, either via successful completion of the PG Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (PGCLTHE), or for those with more than three years full-time experience of teaching in higher education, via [the Worcester Scheme](#) for seeking HEA Fellowship.
6. Members of staff appointed to permanent academic contracts or contracts with teaching and/or significant learning support responsibilities will be advised as part of the interview and appointment process as to whether they should register for the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in HE (PGCLTHE) leading to FHEA, or the first module only (leading to AFHEA). Policy in relation to eligibility for registration can be found in a separate policy document.

7. Heads of School/Departments must ensure members of staff registered for the PGCLTHE or constituent modules are effectively supported to undertake the course and that this commitment is taken into account when agreeing a balanced workload for an individual.
8. The progress and performance of employees will be reviewed throughout the probationary period by the immediate line manager who will provide any necessary support, encouragement and advice. During the probationary period new employees are expected to establish their suitability in the post in relation to the job description and the terms of the employment as set out in the contract of employment with the University; this will include timekeeping, attendance and sickness absence record.
9. Heads of Schools/Departments must arrange for a short review meeting with a new employee to take place every four weeks during the first 3 months of employment. The purpose of this meeting is for feedback from and to the employee, and for early identification of any concerns. The procedure for dealing with concerns/poor performance is described below.
10. Formal reports of progress will be sought from Heads of Schools/Departments at regular intervals by the Human Resources Department; the table shows these intervals. The form of the report is a checklist which seeks comments about progress on the activities within the job description, plus others. It is recommended that this form be completed after one of the review meetings and a copy given to the employee, in order to make the process transparent.
11. During the probationary period it is advisable to set out a programme of activities and expectations for each element of the job description for the new employee to undertake and to provide the person with a copy. Some elements will have a higher priority than others and some may not occur until later in the probationary period but it is expected that the final report will include a comment on every aspect of the job description.
12. It may be appropriate to set objectives for the person to meet during the probationary period and these should be put in writing and a copy given to the person. The probationary reports should make reference to these targets, if they have been set.
13. The immediate line manager will give advice and support to the member of staff during the probationary period. Where performance is not meeting expectations, the line manager is encouraged to seek advice from the appropriate HR Business Partner at an early stage, with the intention of the line manager helping the probationer to improve his/her performance. A record of any such advice and support should be kept. It may be helpful to set or revise targets of performance behaviour: these should be recorded and a copy given to the person. Any training needs should be identified and met.
14. Where the formal written reports reveal concerns expressed by the immediate line manager, the relevant HR Business partner will arrange to discuss the issues with the employee and the immediate line manager and seek to find a resolution. The aspects of the employee's performance or conduct that are unsatisfactory will be identified and the steps considered necessary to rectify the situation will be specified and agreed with all parties. Throughout the process, the views of the employee will be taken into account in determining the most appropriate action.
15. Six weeks before the end of the probationary period, the Head of School/Department will be asked by the Human Resources Department to make a recommendation regarding the completion of the probationary period. Options open to the Head are:

- a. that the probationer be confirmed in his/her appointment.
- b. that the probationary period be extended.
- c. that the appointment be terminated.

16. The Head of School/Department's recommendation must be returned to the Human Resources Department at least four weeks before the probationary period is due to expire and the Head of School/Department will have informed the employee of his/her recommendation beforehand.

17. If the recommendation is to terminate or extend an appointment within the probationary period the following procedure will apply;

- a) The employee will be informed in writing of the reasons for the recommendation and invited to a meeting to discuss these. A Human Resources Adviser will make these arrangements.
- b) A meeting will be held with the person and their chosen representative; they will be notified of the decision, and given the right of appeal if the decision is that the employment should be terminated. This meeting will be chaired by a manager with no previous involvement in the matter, and attended by the Head of School/Department or a nominee and a Human Resources Adviser. The Head of School/Department/nominee will present the case.
- c) If the decision is to extend the probationary period, the employee will be notified of the period of the extension, the performance standards/expectations required to be met and the review arrangements. There is no right of appeal against a decision to extend a probationary period.
- d) If the recommendation is that the employment be terminated, the right of appeal will be provided and an appeal meeting held, if requested. The appeal will be heard by a manager with no previous involvement in the matter. The employee and their representative will attend, with a Human Resources Adviser present. The Head of School/Department will attend to explain the basis of the initial recommendation.

18. Probationary periods

An example of how probation meetings, reports and teaching observations link is shown below.

Staff group	Length of probation	Conditions to be met during probation	Formal reports requested	Teaching observations required
Professional support staff Bands 1 - 4	26 weeks	May be determined by the role	Interim after 12 weeks; final after 24 weeks;	n/a
Professional support staff Band 5-9	52 weeks	May be determined by the role	Interims after 12 weeks and 26 weeks; final after 48 weeks;	n/a
Learning support staff	52 weeks	To have been observed by an experienced member of staff conducting at least 3 learning and teaching sessions	Interims after 12 weeks and 26 weeks; final after 48 weeks;	Indicative times; between Weeks 16-18 and again between Weeks 32-34

Academic staff	52 weeks	To have been observed by an experienced member of staff conducting at least 3 learning and teaching sessions.	Interims after 12 weeks and 26 weeks; final after 48 weeks;	Indicative times; between Weeks16-18 and again between Weeks 32-34
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19. Teaching observations during probation

The intervals at which observations of teaching are to be undertaken are set out in the schedule above; guidance and a template for recording the observations is available.