

Probationary period policy

Aim

It is the Company's policy to operate a probationary period for all new staff and may be used where an existing member of staff is commencing a new role. Probationary periods will be used constructively to help new employees integrate effectively into the business and allow the line manager to assess whether the employee is suitable for the role.

Managing the probationary period

The line manager is responsible for setting objective performance standards for the employee and should discuss their expectations with the employee. A mid-point probationary review meeting should be held with the employee during their probationary period. This meeting will be used to assess how the employee is progressing and discuss whether any improvements are needed for the employee to successfully complete their probationary period.

Providing support during probation

The line manager is responsible for providing guidance and support to the new employee during the probationary period. The level of support required will differ depending on the individual. All support necessary should be given by the line manager to allow the employee to successfully complete their probationary period and continue their employment.

The line manager should ensure the employee receives appropriate training at the start of the probationary period. An induction and training plan should be set in place to assist with the employee's development and introduction to the Company. All relevant Company documentation should be made available to the employee at the earliest date.

Providing support for disabled employees

As legally required by the Equality Act 2010 and in line with our Company culture, line managers must provide additional support to disabled employees to ensure they are not subjected to unlawful or less favourable treatment during their probationary period. Reasonable adjustments must be made to remove any barriers the employee faces at work.

The line manager must discuss the support offered to disabled employees during their probationary period with the HR department.

Employees should also speak to their line manager or HR if they feel they need additional support to what has been offered.

Addressing concerns during the probationary period

During the probationary period, the line manager will be continually assessing the suitability of the employee. The line manager should share feedback, positive and constructive, in real time and during weekly touch points. The line manager should hold a mid-point probationary review meeting to discuss what is going well and any areas for improvement with the employee's performance or conduct during the probationary period.

When concerns are raised before or after the mid-point probationary review meeting, the line manager should arrange a formal meeting with the employee to discuss these. Failing to address these concerns in a timely manner could lead to the employee failing to complete their probationary period. Minutes of the meeting should be made and a record of any agreed actions should be made in writing and provided to the employee.

Confirming successful completion of the probationary period

If the employee has met the required standards during their probationary period, the line manager should hold a probationary review meeting with the employee and inform them that they have successfully completed their probation. Future performance objectives should be discussed and agreed with the employee.

The line manager shall notify the HR department that probation has been successfully completed, and they will confirm this to the employee in writing.

Terminating employment before completion of the probationary period

Most employees will remain employed by the Company until the end date of their probationary period. In some circumstances, the line manager may identify that the new employee is unsuitable for their role and will not reach the required standard with further support before the end of the probationary period.

Where there is sufficient evidence that the required standards are not being met and are unlikely to be met, the employment can be terminated at any stage during the probationary period. The line manager should discuss early termination with the HR department.

Terminating employment at the end of the probationary period

Despite being provided with support, necessary training and concerns being addressed as they arise, the employee may not meet the required standards of performance by the end of their probationary period. This includes, but is not restricted to, the employee not meeting their work targets, persistent lateness or unacceptable conduct during their probationary period.

The line manager may decide that their probationary period has been unsuccessful, and their employment should be terminated at the end of the probationary period. This should be discussed in advance with the HR department to ensure termination can take place at the end of the probationary period.

The line manager should hold a probationary review meeting with the employee and inform them of the decision to terminate. The reasons for termination should be recorded in the probationary period review form.

Terminating employment after probation

The employee's future performance will be assessed under the Company's capability policy and their conduct will be reviewed under the Company's disciplinary policy. Any breach of these policies will be managed in accordance with the Company's normal processes which could lead to formal action up to and including dismissal.