

# Probation Policy

## Contents

1. Introduction .....	1
2. Who is Covered by This Policy? .....	1
3. Length of Probation.....	2
4. Induction and Onboarding.....	2
5. Feedback and Support .....	3
6. Formal Probation Reviews.....	4
7. Right of Appeal.....	6
8. Pausing the Probationary Period .....	7
9. Extending the Probationary Period.....	7
10. Absence and Conduct Concerns .....	8
11. Notice During Probation .....	8
12. Further Information and Support.....	8
13. Policy Review .....	8

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## 1. Introduction

At Strathclyde, we want to make sure that when you join us, you're given every opportunity to succeed in your role. Our probationary process ensures you're provided with the right support in the early weeks and months so you know what's expected of you, how you're doing, and any questions or concerns can be sorted out quickly.

Along with our [New Staff Induction](#) (staff login required), and our annual [Accountability and Development Review](#) (staff login required) process it helps ensure you settle in quickly and get the onboarding and training you need to do your job well.

In this policy you'll find information on who needs to complete a probationary period, how long probation normally lasts and what to expect during your probation. The policy also sets out the steps we'll follow if, despite appropriate support, you're not meeting the expectations of your role.

Please note, if this policy refers to additional guidance, FAQs, online forms, or training, these are accessible to University colleagues on our [People Hub](#).

## 2. Who is Covered by This Policy?

This policy applies to all new employees of the University. This includes those on temporary or fixed term appointments, irrespective of the length of the contract, on the basis that fixed term appointments can be extended.

### Internal Moves During Probation

It's unusual for a newly appointed employee to change roles prior to the completion of their probation. But, if you do secure a new position during your probation, the remaining portion of your probation will carry over into your new role and may be extended to allow sufficient time for review within your new role.

### Internal Moves After Probation Is Completed

If you secure a new role after you've successfully completed your probation, you don't need to complete a further probation period. However, your new manager will provide a tailored onboarding to help you get you up to speed quickly in your new role.

## Redeployment

If you've been redeployed to another role within the University (for example, to avoid redundancy), you'll not be required to complete a probation. Rather, a short trial period will normally apply. Further details can be found in our [Redeployment Policy](#).

### 3. Length of Probation

The length of probation varies by job family and grade, reflecting the complexity of the role, and will normally be for the following periods:

Role	Length of Probation
APS, KTP Associates, Modern Apprentices, Technical and Operational staff grades 5 and below, and Trades staff	6 months
APS, Teaching, Research, Knowledge Exchange, and Technical staff grades 6-7	9 months
Professors, Directors, Academic staff and APS, Teaching, Research, Knowledge Exchange, and Technical staff grades 8 and above	12 months

The periods outlined in this table are for guidance only. You should always refer to your letter of appointment and your terms and conditions as individual probation periods may vary.

### 4. Induction and Onboarding

When you join the University, you'll have an induction during your probation period. We want to ensure you're set up for success, so it's important that you fully participate in the programme. Arrangements for induction vary across departments and Faculties, so your manager will talk to you about what's involved.

Your manager will normally arrange to meet with you during your first week to discuss the requirements of your role and the expectations during your probation period. They'll also organise various onboarding activities and provide a range of different materials and experiences to help you become familiar with us, your role, and our ways of working.

You'll also be invited to attend a staff induction seminar where you'll learn more about the University, our Values, our Vision, and our Strategic Plans.

And just so you know, the University has several [mandatory training](#) (staff login required) requirements that staff must complete, such as health and safety, data protection, and cyber-security training. All mandatory training must be completed during your probation. If you think you might have difficulties completing your mandatory training during your probation period, you should discuss this with your manager.

## 5. Feedback and Support

Your manager will hold regular one-to-one meetings with you to give you feedback throughout your probation, so you know what's going well and if there are any areas where you might need some more support or training on. It's important that you let your manager know straight away if you're having any difficulties or if you feel you need any additional training or support.

### Probation and the Accountability and Development Review

To ensure you are fully aware of what is expected of you in your role you're required to participate in our annual Accountability and Development Review (ADR) process during your probation (unless you're on a contract of three months or less). Through this process you and your manager will agree and document a clear set of performance objectives and identify any learning and development needs. These will be reflected on throughout your probation and during your probation review meetings.

Just so you know, you and your manager can only record performance objectives and learning needs on our ADR system in [Pegasus](#) (staff login required) when it's open between May and July each year. So, if you're setting objectives outside this time, these should be captured on the [Probation Form](#) (staff login required) instead.

### Probation and Early Career Academics

During your probation, you'll also be expected to participate in the [Academic Career Development Framework](#) (staff login required), if:

- you've been appointed to an academic role for the first time, or you have less than 3 years' experience in an academic role at another institution, and

- your contract is for at least 12 months.

## 6. Formal Probation Reviews

As well as getting ongoing informal support and feedback, you'll also have at least two formal review meetings with your manager during your probation:

- First (interim) review meeting - held approximately mid-way through your probation and
- Final review meeting - held shortly before the end of your probation.

At both your interim and final probation review meeting your manager will complete the online [probation review form](#) (staff login required). Your manager will use the form to guide and document the discussion and any agreed actions, including any support, training or adjustments required. Both you and your manager should sign these forms, where they will then be sent to Human Resources and placed on your personal file.

In cases of unsatisfactory performance, or where a medical condition or disability has been disclosed, managers should seek advice from Human Resources at an early stage.

### 6.1. First (Interim) Review

The interim review is an opportunity to reflect on progress against performance objectives, provide support and give you feedback. By this stage you should normally have completed your induction and associated training too. So, if you haven't completed these yet, you should plan to do so as soon as possible.

#### **Progress Satisfactory**

If your manager is happy with your progress, they'll let you know this and record this on the interim probation review form. You won't normally have another formal review meeting until the end of your probationary period. However, your manager will continue to have supportive discussions to help you maximise your performance.

## **Progress Unsatisfactory**

If there are any performance concerns, your manager will formally bring these to your attention. They'll ask for your input to understand potential barriers or other factors which may be contributing to the unsatisfactory performance. Your manager will also clarify the expected level of performance, discuss, and identify with you any additional support or training needed to help you improve performance, and agree next steps and timescales for review. This may include warning you that your continued employment is now at risk, and that continued failure to meet the expectations of your role may lead to your dismissal. You'll be given the opportunity to make comments on this point and have these considered by your manager.

In these circumstances it may be appropriate to have structured review meetings on a more frequent basis.

## **6.2. Final Review**

Your manager will normally schedule your final review meeting before the end of your probation period. In certain circumstances, depending on the steps already taken, it may be appropriate for a final probation review meeting to be scheduled at an earlier point. For example, this might happen where it can be clearly shown that the employee is unsuitable for the role despite a reasonable level of support and training having been provided.

In all cases, your induction programme and associated training must be completed by the final review meeting. If you haven't completed your induction and training, the reasons for this must be clearly documented on the Probation Review Form, along with arrangements and a timescale for completion.

And just so you know, if you're a member of Academic Professional staff, Executive Dean level consultation and agreement is required prior to employment being confirmed.

## **Satisfactory Probation Performance**

If your manager is happy with your performance, they'll let you know this and record this on the form, which will be sent to Human Resources. Human Resources will then write to you to advise that the probationary period has been satisfactorily completed and that your appointment is now

confirmed. Your appointment cannot be confirmed until your final probation review has taken place.

### **Unsatisfactory Probation Performance**

Where there is performance, conduct or attendance concerns which have not been resolved despite a period of review and support, a more structured approach to the final review meeting will be taken.

You'll be given reasonable notice of the meeting and informed of your right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative.

During the meeting you'll be given the opportunity to explain and respond to the issues identified before a final decision is made.

If the decision is to terminate your employment, you'll be given reasons for the decision, which will be confirmed in writing to you. Notice of termination will be given as outlined in your Terms and Conditions of Employment.

## **7. Right of Appeal**

You have the right of appeal against any decision to terminate your employment.

You must lodge your appeal, in writing, and within five working days of having the decision confirmed to you in writing.

Appeals should be submitted to the Assistant Director – Business Partnering, Human Resources, and you must state your grounds of appeal in reasonable detail.

Your Head of School/Department will normally hear your appeal unless they're your manager or they have played a direct role in your probation review and the decision to dismiss. In these circumstances an alternative senior manager will be identified to hear your appeal. A representative from Human Resources will also attend the meeting.

## 8. Pausing the Probationary Period

We want to ensure you get a fair opportunity to demonstrate your suitability for your role, so we may 'pause' your probation in the following circumstances:

- If you take a period of extended family leave during your probation, such as maternity leave, adoption leave, shared parental leave, or ordinary parental leave.
- If you're on a period of sick leave lasting more than 4 weeks.
- If you're on temporary restricted duties, for example due to pregnancy, breastfeeding, ill-health, or injury.
- If you're a term-time employee and you haven't completed your probation period before your scheduled term-time leave.

If we pause your probation for one of the reasons above, it'll resume on your return from leave or on your return to full duties.

## 9. Extending the Probationary Period

In some situations, your manager may decide to extend your probationary period as an alternative to dismissal. We'll only do this if your manager believes there's a realistic chance of you meeting the required standards within a reasonable timeframe.

If your probationary period is extended, your manager will clearly explain and confirm in writing, the reasons for the extension, as well as the actions required to improve performance. Any extension will be confirmed in writing by Human Resources.

Where your probation is extended, a further formal review meeting will be held prior to the end of the extension period where a decision will be taken on your continued employment with the University.

Normally no more than one extension will be made, with the period of extension normally being no longer than three months.

## 10. Absence and Conduct Concerns

Where attendance or conduct issues arise during probation, these will be managed in line with the principles of our formal [Sickness Absence Management Policy](#) or our [Disciplinary Procedure](#) as appropriate. Due to the short nature of the probation period, such cases may progress immediately to the final stages of these policies.

If you have an underlying medical condition or disability which is affecting your performance and/or attendance at work, we encourage you to let your manager know so that we can provide you with the appropriate support. Your manager will seek advice from Human Resources and Occupational Health in these circumstances.

## 11. Notice During Probation

During the probation period, your employment may be terminated, by either you or the University, by giving the following notice:

- one week's written notice or
- One month's written notice where contractual notice is three months or more.

## 12. Further Information and Support

If you have any queries about this policy, please talk to your manager or contact [Human Resources](#).

## 13. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed by Human Resources on a regular basis. To see when the next review is due, please refer to our [Policy Review Schedule](#) (staff login required) on our People Hub.