



## **UTC PLYMOUTH Probation Policy**

### **1 POLICY STATEMENT**

This policy informs employees and the Line Manager of what is required during the probationary period.

### **2 POLICY SCOPE**

The probationary policy and procedure applies to all support staff including those transferring from another local authority or people who have related service e.g. local government staff, civilian employees from the police and fire service.

### **3 POLICY FOR TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES**

Employees on temporary contracts of six months or longer will be required to complete the full probation period.

Where an employee is on a temporary contract of less than six months the probation period will span the whole of the employment. If the temporary contract were to be extended, the probation period would continue until six month's service was complete.

### **4 PROCEDURE**

The probation period provides the Line Manager with the opportunity to clarify what is expected of a new employee, set objectives and standards, and assess performance. It also gives new employees the opportunity to familiarise themselves with their new role and to assess their suitability to a post at UTC Plymouth.

The aim of this procedure is to inform employees and the Line Manager of what is expected during the probationary period.

### **5 INDUCTION**

For the probationary period to be successful a comprehensive induction programme must support it. This will assist the employee in understanding their role within the college and the standards expected.

### **6 UNDERTAKING ASSESSMENTS**

Employees will be informed that they will be assessed regularly during their probationary period. These will take place at approximately 2, 4 and 6 months. The final assessment must be completed before employment can be confirmed.

Employees should be set reasonable objectives and/or targets during the initial stages of their employment. These should be used to measure an employee's performance during the probationary period.

Line Managers must complete the probationary performance assessment report form. All reports must be discussed with the employee and comments given.

A copy of the completed form should be retained by the line manager in preparation for the next assessment, and the employee must also receive a copy.

When an unsatisfactory assessment report is submitted the following requirements must be met:

- The employee must have been made aware of any performance shortcomings at the earliest opportunity, in consultation with the Head of Human Resources.
- The employee must be offered suitable instruction, training or guidance in order to overcome these difficulties.
- The employee must be allowed reasonable time for improvement before further action is taken. For example, to complete any training that has been identified.
- The employee must be given this information in writing as well as having it discussed with them personally.

## **7 DEALING WITH PERFORMANCE ISSUES**

The line manager must deal with any unsatisfactory performance as it arises, and not wait until the assessments are undertaken. The assessment meetings will then offer an opportunity to review performance.

Line managers are responsible for taking action to deal with unsatisfactory performance promptly – dealing with problems at an early stage means that they are more likely to be dealt with successfully.

If you have to deal with performance issues you should:

- Discuss your concerns with the Head of Human Resources, if required
- Arrange a meeting as soon as possible with the employee to discuss their performance.

The purpose of the meeting is to:

- Discuss your concerns with the employee
- Let the employee discuss /explain the areas of concern
- Offer instruction or training where appropriate

- Explain that if there is no improvement within a specified timescale further action may be taken, which may include dismissal
- Agree a timescale within which the improvements should be achieved, and arrange a date to review the employee's progress
- Ensure that any training that has been agreed is organised quickly.

Line managers will confirm the outcome of the meeting in writing, clearly setting out the concerns discussed, the action to be taken and possibility of termination of employment should there be no improvements.

Where performance does not improve within the time allowed refer to the procedure in section 9 and seek advice/support from the Head of Human Resources.

## **8 EXTENDING THE PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

The probation period is for six months. During this time line managers must ensure that feedback is given to employees on a regular basis and that any performance or conduct issues are resolved within this period.

In exceptional circumstances the probationary period may be extended for a further specified period of not more than three months. The justifiable reasons for extending a probationary period are:

- Where there is a good reason why it has not been possible to assess an employee's performance during the initial probation period of six months, for example the employee has been absent for a significant proportion of this period, or
- Where the required improvement has not been made, but where further time, for example to attend appropriate training courses, will allow such improvement to happen.

If the probationary period is extended the employee should be informed, normally no later than at the second probationary assessment. During this meeting the employee must be informed of the reasons for the extension and the period of extension should be specified. This must then be confirmed in writing and a copy placed on the employee's personal file.

Line managers must ensure that any extension to the probationary period is for reasonable and justified reasons. Advice from the Head of Human Resources must be sought if there is any doubt about the reasonableness of the extension.

Where a probation period is extended the line manager will hold regular, for example weekly or fortnightly review meetings with the employee to continue to assess their performance. Notes must be made of discussions had at these meetings and retained on the employee's personal file.

## **9 CONTINUED POOR PERFORMANCE AND MISCONDUCT**

Where an employee's performance continues to be poor despite additional training, coaching and an extended probation period, or in cases of misconduct, it may be necessary for employment to end.

## **10 ENDING EMPLOYMENT IN THE PROBATION PERIOD**

The employee must be asked to attend a meeting to discuss their performance. This should be followed up in writing and should set out the grounds for this action. Employees should be told that one outcome of the meeting could be termination of their employment.

The meeting should take place in private, and the Principal should have a full report prepared for the meeting by the line manager. For example have records of performance appraisals, training courses etc to hand.

The Principal should clearly state the reason for the meeting taking place, and outline their concerns about the employee's performance.

The employee should then be given the opportunity to respond. If the employee is not able to give a reasonable explanation for their continued poor performance, the Principal may take the decision to dismiss.

The employee should be informed of any decision at the meeting, and this should be followed up in writing. Employees should be informed in writing of their right to appeal.

Where the employee is dismissed standard notice periods apply. Therefore an employee dismissed during their probationary period would be entitled to one week's notice.

At these meetings the Head of Human Resources should accompany the Principal, and a colleague or trade union representative may represent the employee.

Employees have the right of appeal against dismissal and appeals should be submitted within five working days of receipt of written confirmation of the outcome of the meeting.

Appeals should be sent to the Chair of the Governing Body stating the grounds of appeal.

## **11 NOTICE PERIODS FOR EMPLOYEES**

Employees who wish to end their employment within their six-month probationary period must give a minimum of one months' notice. Thereafter employees should give the period of notice contained in their Letter of Appointment.

## **12 CONFIRMING PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT**

Following successful completion of a probationary period it is the colleges responsibility to confirm permanent employment status in writing.

Any concerns about conduct or capability must be resolved before permanent employment is confirmed.

## **13 SICKNESS ABSENCE DURING THE PROBATION PERIOD**

Sickness absence during the probationary period will be dealt with in line with the colleges policy.

Where an employee has a substantial amount of absence due to sickness during the probationary period, the manager may extend the duration of the probation period or terminate employment as appropriate.

#### VERSION CONTROL SHEET

**POLICY NAME: Probation Policy**  
**Policy Prepared by: Julie Rae**

<b>Document date</b>	<b>Filename</b>	<b>Mtg submitted</b>	<b>Summary of changes required</b>
Oct 2013		Staffing	New Policy
June 2019			Reviewed