

Support Staff Probationary Period Policy

SEPTEMBER 2019

SUMMARY

All new support staff will be appointed subject to satisfactory completion of a probationary period. This policy includes details of how progress is monitored, the use of extensions and where necessary, the termination of employment.

The probationary period is a specified period of time when you start employment with the school during which your performance, attendance and conduct is assessed. It also provides you with the opportunity to become familiar with the main duties of your post and to demonstrate that you meet the required standards of performance, attendance and conduct. Your continued employment will be confirmed if the probationary period is satisfactorily completed.

1. The length of the probationary period

The probationary period is the first six months service with the school. Governors have the discretion to apply a longer period where this is considered appropriate to the requirements of the job. Your employment contract will state how long your probationary period is for.

If you change jobs within the school and your new job requires different or new skills and/or experience, Managers/Headteachers have the discretion to apply a probationary period. For example, where a new job involves taking on management responsibilities (e.g. finance, staff, property). During this period, appropriate support and training will be provided to enable you to achieve the requirements of the job.

Any concerns or issues on commencement or during the probationary period, will be discussed as they arise. If your performance, attendance and conduct are satisfactory a probationary review meeting will be completed at 6 months.

Your Manager/Headteacher will complete your final probationary review and confirm it is satisfactory. You will also receive written confirmation.

2. Probationary period extension

The Manager/Headteacher can consider extending your probationary period and will explain the reasons for the extension. It may be that you need further training or support to meet the required standards of the post and your Manager considers you will be able to make the necessary improvements within the period of extension.

You will receive written confirmation of the extension explaining how long the extension is for and the reason.

3. Ending the contract

If your Manager/Headteacher considers that an extension is not appropriate and your employment cannot continue they should arrange a meeting with you to discuss the situation. You are entitled to bring a workplace colleague or trade union representative. Following this meeting, you will be notified in writing and given the appropriate notice to end your contract.

If you were already an employee of the school when you were appointed to the post in which you are now subject to a probationary service and your Headteacher considers that your employment cannot continue, the Headteacher will endeavour to re-deploy within the school where possible at your original substantive grade.

4. How to appeal against the decision to end a contract

You can appeal by writing to your Chair of Governors within five working days of the date you received notification to end your contract. You need to set out the reasons why you consider the decision to fail your probationary period to be unreasonable.

An appeal hearing will be arranged with an appeals panel of three governors who have had no direct involvement in the case already. You have the right to be represented at the appeal hearing by a trade union representative or work colleague.

You should send any paperwork you want to be considered in support of your appeal to the Chair of the appeal panel. This needs to be sent at least three working days before the appeal hearing.

5. Possible outcomes of the appeal

The appeal can result in one of three decisions:

- a) To confirm your dismissal on the grounds of failed probation.
- b) To extend your probationary period for a further agreed period.
- c) To confirm your probationary period has been successfully completed.

The decision of the Chair is final and you will receive written confirmation within three working days of the hearing.

If your probationary period is extended, an action plan should be drawn up between you and your Manager and it is up to both of you to make sure it is followed. It may include some specific recommendations from the Chair of the appeal hearing.

If at the end of any agreed extension, your Manager still considers that you are unsuitable to continue in employment with the school, they can recommend your contract is ended. You have the right to appeal against your dismissal. The appeal hearing would be the same governors who recommended the original extension wherever possible.

The appeal hearing will result in one of the following:

- a) To confirm your dismissal on the grounds of failed probation.
- b) To confirm your employment status.

This decision is final. You will receive written confirmation within three working days of the appeal hearing.

6. The Appeal Procedure

1. Manager/Headteacher introduces the background to the case, the steps taken to support your improvement and the subsequent reason for dismissal.
2. You and/or your representative state your case as to why you feel you have met the requirements of the post and why you feel dismissal is unfair.
3. The Chair may ask questions of either side.
4. The Chair will adjourn and consider the case.
5. The Chair reconvenes to confirm the decision and explain the reasons.
6. The Chair confirms the decision in writing within three working days of the date of the appeal.