



PROBATION PROCEDURE

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REVISIONS

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1.0		First approval	30.09.2019
1.1	P.2 2.8	Amend reference to NQTs to ECTs and ECF	14.10.2021
	P.5 5.4	Amended Clerk to G&C Manager	
1.2	P.1/1	Introduction replaced with generic reference to Staffing Policy Statement	30.06.2022
	p.2/3.2 and various	'Line Manager' replaced at various points with 'OWN Trust'	
	p.4/6.9	Procedure for hearings deleted and amended as covered in Staffing Policy Statement	
	p.5/7	Procedure for appeals deleted and amended as covered in Staffing Policy Statement	
1.3	4/6.4	Added 'copy to probationer'	25.01.2024

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Probation Procedure should be read and applied in conjunction with OWN Trust's Staffing Policy Statement.
- 1.2. This procedure applies to all employees regardless of their permanent, fixed-term, full or part-time status.
- 1.3. This procedure is non-contractual and for guidance only, although reduced notice of termination provisions by the employer are covered in the contract of employment. The exception to this is substantiated allegations of gross misconduct, as outlined in paragraph 4.3 below, which normally warrants summary dismissal without notice.
- 1.4. It is the responsibility of the line manager to implement the procedure and to ensure that the procedure is communicated to probationers and that it is applied consistently.

2. Probation Period

- 2.1 The probation period is for six months from the start date of employment and may be extended by an additional three months, or longer if the extension period includes school holidays (see section 4.8).

- 2.2 It may also be agreed at the outset of the employment that the probation period will be longer than six months where the probationer is employed on a term time only contract and the probation period spans the school summer holidays.
- 2.3 The purpose of the probation period is to enable an assessment to be made regarding a probationer's suitability for the job for which they have been employed.

3. Purpose of the Probation Procedure

- 3.1. The probation procedure provides a consistent and fair framework for:

- 3.1.1. Monitoring and reviewing the performance of new employees in relation to:

- Quality of work and understanding of role;
- Attitudes and motivation;
- Conduct and attendance;
- Compliance with all policies and procedures particularly those relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people;
- Health and safety

- 3.1.2. Providing feedback and opportunity for discussion.

- 3.1.3. A structured approach to address any concerns linked to 2.3.

- 3.2. The capability, disciplinary and sickness absence policies and/or procedures do not apply during the probation period. If issues of conduct, poor performance or sickness arise during the probation period, the probation procedure will normally be used to address such matters. Where allegations have been made against a probationer, a management investigation will be conducted into the matter. In cases of alleged serious misconduct OWN Trust (or person with delegated responsibility for suspension) will normally suspend the probationer pending an investigation.

4. Exclusions

- 4.1. The following employees are excluded from a probationary period:

- When transferring between Academies within the Trust
- Following an internal promotion
- Following any variations to the terms and conditions of employment
- Early Career Teachers where separate arrangements exist.

- The Early Career Teacher (ECT) induction arrangements and the Performance Development Policy for teachers will run concurrently with the probation period. The line manager (or a member of the Trust Executive in the case of ECTS) will normally be the induction tutor/appraiser. Where deemed necessary the probation procedure will take precedence over the Performance Development Policy.

5. Equality and Diversity

- 5.1. This procedure will be operated in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy. We are committed to developing, maintaining and supporting a culture of equality and diversity in employment. The impact of the procedure will be monitored in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

6. The Procedure

- 6.1. OWN Trust is responsible for ensuring that the probationer is properly monitored during the probation period and meetings and paperwork are completed in a timely manner. The probationer will be provided with a copy of the procedure and indicative dates for the probation meetings. In the event that the probationer's standards fall below expectations, OWN Trust is responsible for initiating and taking action in accordance with this procedure.
- 6.2. OWN Trust should, in normal circumstances, conduct three reviews with the probationer. Reviews should take the form of a confidential meeting between OWN Trust and the probationer, in which there is opportunity for two-way discussion.
- 6.3. In exceptional circumstances, where there are serious concerns over the suitability of a probationer, OWN Trust may decide to progress straight to the final review and omit the second review, or to reduce the time between the review meetings. Such concerns may include substantiated safeguarding or health and safety concerns or substantiated allegations that may constitute gross misconduct.
- 6.4. **The First Review:** To be completed within weeks four to six of the probationer's start date.

The purpose of this meeting is for OWN Trust to evaluate the probationer's performance and discuss any key issues. If performance improvements are required, full details should be given, including appropriate management support/training.

Upon completion of this review meeting, OWN Trust should complete the Probation Period Review Form (Appendix 1). This should be signed by OWN Trust and the probationer. A copy should be given to the probationer and a copy saved on the personnel file.

6.5. The Second Review: On completion of three months service.

The purpose of this meeting is to review the probationer's performance over the first three months. Where the first review indicated that improvements in performance were required, the second review meeting should be used to consider the extent of any improvement that may or may not have taken place.

Where the probationer has not met the required standards, they will be informed that continued failure to meet those standards could result in dismissal.

Upon completion of this meeting, OWN trust should complete the Probation Period Review Form (Appendix 1). This should be signed by OWN Trust and the probationer, and a copy should be given to the probationer and a copy saved on the personnel file.

6.6. The Final Review: On completion of five months service.

Prior to the Final Review meeting, which normally takes place after the probationer has completed five months service, OWN Trust should decide whether:

6.6.1. The probationer has passed probation or;

6.6.2. The probation period is extended due to exceptional circumstances. Consideration to extend may include the following, but this is not an exhaustive list:

- Performance concerns have not been fully addressed but there is a reasonable expectation that satisfactory performance standards may be met by the end of an extension of the probation period.
- The probationer has had an extended period of permitted absence and it has not been possible to assess performance.
- Other exceptional circumstances.

6.6.3. Recommendation to OWN Trust at a Formal Hearing that the probationer is dismissed.

6.7. The probationer has passed probation

Upon completion of the final review meeting, if the probationer has passed probation OWN Trust will complete the Probation Period Review Form (Appendix 2). This will be signed by OWN

Trust and the probationer. The form should be placed on the probationer's personnel file with a copy provided to the employee.

6.8. The Probation period is extended

Where the decision is to extend the probation period, this will normally be limited to one extension and the extension will be no longer than three months unless the extension period includes school holidays, in which case it may be longer.

Before extending the probation period, OWN Trust will normally seek HR advice. OWN trust will confirm the terms of the extension in writing to the probationer, including:

- The length of the extension, the date on which the extension will end and dates of review meetings, adjusted according to the extension.
- The reason for the extension and, if the reason is unsatisfactory performance, details of how and why performance has fallen short of the required standards.
- The performance standards or objectives that the employee is required to achieve by the end of the extended period of probation.
- Any support, for example further training, that will be provided during the extended period of probation and a statement that, if the employee does not fully meet the required standards by the end of the extended period of probation, the employment will be terminated.

There is no right of appeal to the extension of a probation period.

6.9. Formal Hearing

If OWN Trust decides to recommend to OWN Trust that the probationer is dismissed then a formal hearing will be convened. The hearing will constitute a formal meeting and should be arranged in conjunction with OWN Trust's Staffing Policy Statement.

OWN Trust may decide:

- a) To terminate employment from the date of the formal meeting with probation period notice.
- b) Extend the probation period. This will revert the process back to the line manager.
- c) Consider deployment to a suitable available alternative post (in which case a new shortened probation period will be put in place and the schedule and number of review meetings adjusted accordingly).

7. Appeal

7.1. The probationer has a right of appeal against a decision to dismiss.

7.2. An appeal should be made in writing to OWN Trust.

7.3. An appeal will be heard by OWN Trust.

Appendix 1 – Probation Review Period

Review Meeting:	First	Second	Final	Extension
Date:				

This form should be completed by OWN Trust after each review meeting. This should be signed by OWN trust and the probationer, and the original placed on the personnel file with a copy to the probationer.

Probationer's Name: _____

Start Date: _____

Job Title: _____

Line Manager's Name: _____

Line Manager's Job Title: _____

	Exceeds expectations	As expected	Below expectation
Quality and accuracy of work			
Efficiency/work rate			
Attendance			
Time Keeping			
Work relationships (team work and interpersonal communication skills)			
Competency in the job			
Understanding of the job			

Line Manager's Comments: _____

Probationer's Comments: _____

Objectives for Next Review: _____

Line Manager's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Probationer's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2 Probation Period Review: For Completion Following Final Review

Probation Passed

Line Manager's Comments: _____

Probation Extended

If the probation is extended then an account of the concerns and a support plan for the extension period will be attached to this form.

Line Manager's Reasons: _____

Formal Hearing: Recommendation to OWN Trust that the Probationer is dismissed

A statement of reasons will be attached to this form.

Line Manager's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Probationer's Signature: _____

Date: _____