



Probation Policy

Introduction

It is the Charity's policy to operate probationary periods for all new employees, and in some cases, at the Charity's discretion, in respect of employees who have been transferred or promoted into different posts.

This policy is intended to allow both the employee and line management to assess objectively whether or not the employee is suitable for the role. The Charity believes that the use of probationary periods increases the likelihood that new employees will perform effectively in their employment.

Management is responsible under this policy for ensuring that all new employees are properly monitored during their probationary period. If any problems arise, the line manager should address these promptly. This will ensure that the employee is aware that some aspect of their performance or conduct is unsatisfactory and prevent the problem from escalating.

Length of probation

The Charity's normal period of probation is six months.

Extending probationary periods

The Charity reserves the right to extend an employee's period of probation at its discretion. This will be limited to one extension and the total period of probation will be no longer than 12 months.

An extension may be implemented in circumstances where the employee's performance during probation has not been entirely satisfactory but it is thought likely that an extension to the probationary period may lead to an improvement, or where the employee or line manager has been absent from the workplace for an extended period during probation.

Before extending an employee's probationary period, the line manager must consult with the HR department. If an extension to the probationary period is agreed, the Charity will confirm the terms of the extension in writing to the employee, including:

- the length of the extension and the date on which the extended period of probation will end;
- 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 meet fully the required standards by the end of the extended period of probation, their employment will be terminated.

Reviews during probation

The line manager should review and assess the employee's performance, capability and suitability for the role on at least a monthly basis during the employee's probation, and again at the end of the probationary period. A clear record should be made of each review meeting. A copy of the record should be passed to the employee and the original forwarded to the HR department. The Charity processes any personal data collected during the probationary period in accordance with its data protection policy. Any data collected is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of operating the probationary period. Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the Charity's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the Charity's disciplinary procedure.

During an employee's probation, the line manager should provide regular feedback to the employee about their performance and progress, and, should there be any problem areas, raise these with the employee as soon as possible with a view to resolving them. The line manager is also responsible for providing guidance and support and for identifying and arranging any necessary training or coaching.

Irregularities discovered during the probationary period

If, during an employee's probation, it is suspected or established that the employee does not have the qualifications, experience or knowledge that they claimed to have at the time of recruitment, the matter will be discussed with the employee to establish the facts. If the evidence suggests that the employee misrepresented their abilities in any way, the Charity will terminate the employment giving one week's pay in lieu of notice. If the employee is an existing employee who has been transferred or promoted into a different role, the Charity's normal capability/dismissal procedure must be followed in full.

End of probation

At the end of the probationary period, the line manager should conduct a final review of the employee's performance and suitability for the job. This will involve a meeting with the employee to discuss their performance and progress throughout the period of probation. The review must be conducted on or shortly before the date on which the employee's probationary period comes to an end. If the employee's performance is satisfactory, the line manager should notify the HR department to issue a letter of confirmation of appointment to the employee.

If the employee's performance has not met the standards required by the Charity, the line manager should discuss the matter with the HR department before any decision is made to terminate the employee's employment.

Termination of employment

If an employee's performance while on probation has been unsatisfactory (despite support from the line manager), and it is thought unlikely that further training or

support would lead to a satisfactory level of improvement, the employment will be terminated at the end of the period of probation.

It is the Charity's policy to allow the employee to complete the designated period of probation rather than terminating employment before the probation has come to an end. This is to give the employee a full opportunity to come up to the required standards. If, however, there is clear evidence prior to the end of the period of probation that suggests the employee is wholly unsuitable for the role, the line manager should consult the HR department with a view to terminating the employee's contract early.

Where a decision is taken to terminate the employee's employment, the employee must be interviewed and informed of the reason for the termination. The Charity will write to the employee confirming the termination and the reason for it. The employee will be given an opportunity to appeal the decision.

If an employee's employment is terminated after the expiry of the probationary period, or if the employee is an existing employee who has been transferred or promoted into a different role, the Charity's normal disciplinary dismissal procedure must be followed in full.

Key Legislation

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679 EU)
- Employment Rights (Employment Particulars and Paid Annual Leave) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1378)

Created June 2020