

Guide to Probationary Periods

All new appointments to the County Council should be subject to a probationary period of six months. The fact that the new employee is subject to such a probationary period should be clearly brought to their attention prior to appointment.

The purpose of a probationary period is to give the County Council the opportunity to assess a new employee's suitability as a potential member of staff taking into account their capability, skills, performance, attendance and general conduct.

During the Probationary Period

Throughout the probationary period, the manager should ensure that regular supervisory (or 121) meetings are undertaken in order to agree work requirements and monitor performance.

A written record should be made of these meetings; an optional [Probation Review Form](#) is available on the intranet

Where there are concerns regarding an employee's performance, the manager should provide documentary evidence wherever possible to the employee and ensure these concerns are clearly outlined and recorded. The manager should assist the employee to overcome any challenges, making reasonable adjustments where required, and agreeing clear actions to ensure a valid judgement can be made at the end of the probationary period. The employee needs to be made aware that if the required standard isn't reached it will be necessary to terminate his/her employment

Reviewing the Probationary Period

At the end of the probationary period, the manager should hold a formal review meeting. The manager should make notes of this meeting so that the areas of discussion and agreement are clearly noted. The optional [Probation Review Form](#) can be used for this purpose.

Successful Probationary Periods

Where an employee consistently performs to the required level, the manager can confirm the employee's success and note this on Your HR. The employee will then receive notification of successful completion of their probationary period. The following guide will show you how to update probationary period details for a new employee within People Manager in Your HR;

[How to...update probationary period details for a new employee](#)

Extending Probationary Periods

In some instances the employee may not meet the required performance standards.

At the end of the probationary period, the manager must determine if there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the employee may be able to meet the required performance levels with additional time and support. Alternatively a manager may feel there has been insufficient time and contact to make a judgement.

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In these circumstances the manager can suggest an extension of the probationary period. This must be fully discussed with a member of the HR Advisory Team.

During the extended period of probation performance must be monitored and recorded so that an objective decision on suitability can be made at the end of the period.

No matter what reason for extending a probationary period, it is important that managers discuss this with the HR Advisory Team.

Unsuccessful Probationary Periods

It is important that concerns about an employee's performance are raised with them at the earliest opportunity and decisions about whether to continue employment must not be left to the last minute.

Advice can be sought from the HR Advisory Team at any stage but managers should always ensure that the HR Advisory Team are consulted before holding a formal meeting with an employee.

In the event that the employee's performance is unacceptable, despite

efforts to improve it, the manager can take action to terminate the employment at or before the end of the probationary period.

A meeting is be arranged with the employee, at which they may be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague if they so wish. It should be made clear that the decision to end employment is not a disciplinary measure. The purpose of the meeting is to allow the manager to explain to the employee why they consider them unsuitable for appointment, and for them to make any representations as to why the manager should reconsider that decision.

In this instance, the manager must inform the HR Advisory Service.

Once the meeting has taken place, and should the manager's decision be unchanged, then they should update Your HR with the unsuccessful completion of the probationary period along with making them a Leaver. The manager will write to the employee to inform them of the outcome and that the employee's employment will not be confirmed. The following guide will show you how to update probationary period details for a new employee within People Manager in Your HR; How to...update probationary

period details for a new employee and how to make them a leaver. Here is the link again for both these; [Your HR for managers](#)

Employment should be terminated in accordance with the employee's contractual notice period.

In describing the nature of the employee's departure from the County Council, in their letter of termination, to outside bodies (eg. the Employment Service) or in references to future employers, it should be made clear that it arose from non-confirmation of a probationary period, not dismissal.

[How to update Your HR is provided in guidance called..... How to make your employee a leaver.](#)

Who to contact for help

The People Service Centre can provide assistance and advice on completion of forms. They can be contacted on: [HR Service Desk](#)

The HR Advisory Team is available to discuss managers' requirements as well as talking through the options.

<https://warwickshiregovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/resources/SitePages/Human->

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