

Appendix 2

Managers guidance

It is the responsibility of the manager to ensure that the correct processes are followed as outlined below.

In undertaking an assessment, line manager will consider a number of factors including whether:

- the new employee can consistently demonstrate behaviors in accordance with the employing SBC's values, behavioural standards, and the SBC way of working.
- the new employee can consistently meet the requirements of their employment contract (e.g., arrive on time, fulfil their contracted hours and role).
- the new employee can consistently perform effectively in their role.
- the new employee is demonstrating higher than expected sickness absence during the probationary period as outlined in the SBC Managing Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure; subject to an assessment of the employee's health in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and refer to the Managing Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure.
- the new employee is achieving the expected level of progress in relation to any essential training requirements associated with their role.

1. Management of the Probationary Process

- 1.1 It is the manager's responsibility to monitor the progress of new employees, ensure training needs are met, to keep the employees informed of their progress and ensure that any problems are sorted out quickly before they become serious concerns.
- 1.2 It is vital line managers raise and address any issues or concerns including poor performance as soon as they arise and give appropriate support to assist the new staff member to attain the required level. Action plans to address shortfalls in performance must be clearly documented to ensure all concerned are clear about the required outcomes.
- 1.3 Where the level of performance is putting the employee's continued employment at risk, this should be clearly explained and documented.
- 1.4 Following an initial meeting on commencement into role, the following formal probationary review meetings **must** be held (for Probation 6 months):
 - The first review – Month 1 to 2 (6-8 weeks)
 - The second review – Month 3 to 4 (12- 15 weeks)
 - The final review before the end of the 6th month (or at the end of the extended probation period where an extension has been agreed)
- 1.5 All meetings will be clearly documented, with a copy of the notes given to the member of staff and a copy placed on the employee's personal file. Probation process is in Agresso system refer to Agresso freskdesk guidance - [Probation Assessments in Agresso : Slough Borough Council \(freshdesk.com\)](#)

- 1.6 Where it is not possible to complete the final review meeting within the above timeframe, this must be confirmed in writing to the new member of staff and the meeting arranged for the earliest opportunity. It must be noted that this situation should occur in exceptional circumstances only.

2. Probationary Step Process

Week 1

- 2.1 At the earliest opportunity, during the first week of employment, the line manager will arrange a meeting with the employee. This meeting will form part of the induction process and should be used to set the 6 monthly probation meetings for the duration of the probation period. These dates should be recorded on the 'Probationary Form' refer Appendix 3 and the form is in Agresso system.
- 2.2 The manager will identify the employee's performance objectives (not usually more than 5) and link these to the competencies established for the post. All objectives should be SMART Objectives (see 'Setting SMART Objectives' guidance for further information). The Council has set a mandatory objective that the employee must achieve an excellent standard of conduct, attendance and timekeeping, with the linked competency of Job Knowledge and Professionalism.
- 2.3 The objectives and competencies should be recorded on the Probationary Form, which will be used monthly to review performance. An Induction Checklist can be found in Cornerstone. Link is [Cornerstone](#)
- 2.4 An induction checklist is automatically assigned on Cornerstone to every new starter as a prompt to run through with their line manager.
- 2.5 A further copy of the Induction Checklist should be forwarded to the line Manager.
- 2.6 The objectives set should enable the manager to assess the employee's ability to do the job, as well as assessing them against specified competencies. Areas identified for improvement, during the recruitment process, should be addressed and developed.

First assessment - Month 1 to 2 (If the contract is less than 12 months this should be held during the 1st month of the 3 months' probation period)

- 2.7 The first probation review will take place at the end of the second month. This review, and subsequent monthly reviews, will focus on performance against the objectives and specified competencies and identification of learning and development needs.
- 2.8 The Probationary assessment form should be completed and signed. If performance is unsatisfactory any improvements and support required should be highlighted and addressed. In addition, any comments the employee has will be discussed and recorded also.
- 2.9 Line managers should raise any areas of concern at the earliest possible opportunity with the employee. Managers should not wait until the next monthly probation meeting to do so.

- 2.10 Where any objective has not been achieved, or only partially achieved, this must be fully explained on the Probationary Form at the time of the meeting, together with an action plan identifying how the concerns should be addressed and the required outcomes.
- 2.11 At the end of month 2, the line manager will discuss the employee's progress with the employee and will provide an opportunity to offer feedback and/or support.

Second Assessment - Months 3 to 4 (If the contract is less than 12 months this should be held during the 1st month of the 3 months' probation period)

- 2.12 During months 3 to 4, there will be ongoing assessment of performance against objectives, identifying areas for development. Probationary assessment form to be completed and signed. If performance has deteriorated, identify reasons and agree remedial action. Employee to be informed of required improvements to meet satisfactory level by final assessment meeting.

Final Assessment – Months 5 to 6 (If the contract is less than 12 months this should be held during the 1st month of the 3 months' probation period)

- 2.13 Towards the end of the 6-month probation period (unless significant concerns have emerged before this) the line manager will decide whether it is appropriate to confirm the appointment. Where the performance objectives (as set out on the Probationary Assessment Form) have been achieved, the appointment should be confirmed. Where the standards have not been achieved, and performance is considered unsatisfactory, the line manager should refer to Probationary Policy, section 10.

3. Confirmation of Appointment

- 3.1 Where the appointment is to be confirmed the line manager must:
- complete the relevant section on the Probationary Final Assessment Form, in Appendix 5, and ensure that all 3 probation assessment forms are uploaded in Agresso system.
 - ensure that the objectives are reviewed and assimilated into the Council's Performance Management (PM) scheme. These objectives will then form part of the employee's ongoing performance assessment.
 - Annual increments, where applicable, are usually payable on 1st April each year, subject to six months service in the post, until the maximum spinal column point of the level has been reached.
 - However, if you are starting in this post between **1st October and 31st March**, your first annual increment will be payable six months after commencement of employment in this post and annually thereafter on 1st April. The payment of annual increments is not automatic and is subject to satisfactory performance as assessed by the services Director. Manager to complete and submit the contract variation form in Agresso for the employee.

4. Unsatisfactory Performance and Process

- 4.1 Where performance and/or conduct is unsatisfactory, line managers can recommend termination of employment at any stage during the probationary period, subject to the procedure in Probationary policy section 12.
- 4.2 Where the performance/conduct of the employee has been identified as unsatisfactory, and the line manager is contemplating further action, a meeting must be convened as soon as possible to bring this to the employee's attention. This may be separate from the standard monthly meeting.
- 4.3 The purpose of the meeting is for the line manager to discuss the area(s) of concern with the new employee, and they should be given an opportunity to respond.
- 4.4 The new employee has the right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or a work colleague/support worker at this meeting.
- 4.5 After the meeting, the line manager will consider which of the following three options is appropriate:
 - Outline the improvement required, giving specific and realistic targets, and how these will be supported and reviewed within the remaining term of the probationary period.
 - Extension of the probationary period (see Probationary policy, section 11)
 - Termination of employment (see Probationary policy, section 12)

5. Process for dealing with an Extension of Probation

- 5.1 The line manager, who wishes to extend new employee's probation period, where the employee's assessment has been unsatisfactory should discuss the matters raised and identify remedial action that will put in place to enable the employee to meet the required standard.
- 5.2 The extension must be on the Probationary Form and forwarded to the HR BP team.
- 5.3 The employee will be notified of the extension and the grounds for it, in writing giving 5 working days' notice to attend. The employee must also be advised that failure to improve may result in the termination of employment.
- 5.4 The period of extension will not normally exceed 3 months. Line managers may choose a shorter period of extension where this is considered appropriate and should be discussed with the employee.
- 5.5 The line manager must continue to meet with the employee monthly to review progress. The monitoring / review meetings should be recorded on the Probationary Assessment Form.
- 5.6 Towards the end of the agreed extension of probation, the line manager must arrange a final meeting to review the employee's performance.

- 5.7 The purpose of the meeting is for the line manager to discuss the employee's performance during the extension period and for the employee to be given an opportunity to respond.
- 5.8 The employee has the right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or a work colleague at this meeting.
- 5.9 After the meeting, the line manager will consider which of the following two options is appropriate:
- If the extension period has enabled the employee to reach the required standards, then the line manager will advise the employee that the appointment is confirmed and complete the Probationary Form, Appendix 5, and upload the form in Agresso.
 - If however, the employee has not reached the required standards, then the dismissal procedure, set out in Probationary Policy, section 12, should be followed.

6. Dismissal

- 6.1 The line manager, in consultation with an HR Business Partnering team, will consider whether the employee's contract of employment should be terminated. Any recommendation must be justified with sufficient supporting evidence.
- 6.2 Where the decision is to dismiss, the employee will be notified in writing that their appointment is not confirmed and their contract of employment will be terminated, and of their right of appeal (see section 7).
- 6.3 The notice period for employees, whose contract of employment is terminated during the probationary period, is one week on either side, unless otherwise specified in the contract of employment.

7. Right of Appeal

- 7.1 All probationary employees have the right to make an appeal against dismissal if they think:
- the decision based on evidence did not support the conclusion.
 - a failure to follow procedure had a material effect on the decision.
 - proper account was not taken of any matters of fact referred to at the original assessment meetings.
 - the action taken was too severe or inconsistent with previous decisions.
 - where new relevant evidence relating directly to the original concern(s) has become available.
- 7.2 The specific grounds of appeal must be made in writing to the Director or nominated managers as agreed by the Director and be received within five working days of receipt of the notice letter.
- 7.3 The appeal should normally be heard within the employee's notice period. The review meeting will be arranged within the 10 days period.
- 7.4 The employee should be given at least five working days' written notice of the

appeal hearing. The letter should include, as appropriate:

- Date, time and place of hearing.
- The employee's right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or work colleague.
- The names of the managers conducting the hearing
- The name of the person(s) presenting the management case
- Copies of relevant paperwork, i.e., Probationary Form and any accompanying documentation
- The name(s) of any management witnesses who will present evidence at the hearing.
- The employee's right to call witnesses and present any written submissions, provided the information is received at least two days prior to the hearing.

8. Appeal Hearing

- 8.1 The appeal will be heard by a panel comprising two senior managers, at least one of whom will be the Director, who has not previously been involved in the case.
- 8.2 The management case will normally be presented by the line manager who made the recommendation to dismiss. The Director, who made the decision to dismiss, may be called to attend the hearing.
- 8.3 A written record of the hearing should be taken, which need not be word-for-word, but should accurately reflect all relevant evidence. The Chair of the Panel, who will usually be the Director, should sign the document as a true record of the proceedings.
- 8.4 The appeal panel may take one of the following forms of action:
 - Uphold the appeal and reinstate the employee (possibly with conditions, i.e., extension of probation)
 - Turn down the appeal and confirm the employee's dismissal.
- 8.5 The outcome of the appeal should be confirmed in writing as soon as possible and normally within five working days of the hearing. A copy should be placed on the employee's personal file.
- 8.6 There is no further right to appeal.

Appendix 3

Probationary Assessment Form: First Assessment

Description	Details
Date:	
Assessment Period:	
Employee Name:	
Directorate/ Section:	
Job Title:	
Start Date:	

Description	Details
Job Performance:	
Conduct:	
Training & Development:	

Description	Details
Work Attendance:	
Number of days absent:	
Punctuality:	(Please state Good/ Not Satisfactory):
Managers Overall Assessment:	(Please state Exceeds Job Requirements/ Meet Job Requirements/ Still Requires Training & Coaching/ Significant Concerns Identified – Details below under Action Plan):

Issue	Action	Support/ Training Provided	By When

Issue	Action	Support/ Training Provided	By When

Description	Details
Employees Comments:	

Name of Manager:

Signed:

Name of Employee:

Signed:

Name of Countersigning Manager:

Signed:

Appendix 4

Probationary Assessment Form: Second Assessment

Description	Details
Date:	
Assessment Period:	
Employee Name:	
Directorate/ Section:	
Job Title:	
Start Date:	

Description	Details
Job Performance:	
Conduct:	
Training & Development:	

Description	Details
Work Attendance:	
Number of days absent:	
Punctuality:	(Please state Good/ Not Satisfactory):
Managers Overall Assessment:	(Please state Exceeds Job Requirements/ Meet Job Requirements/ Still Requires Training & Coaching/ Significant Concerns Identified – Details below under Action Plan):

Issue	Action	Support/ Training Provided	By When

Issue	Action	Support/ Training Provided	By When

Description	Details
Employees Comments:	

Name of Manager:

Signed:

Name of Employee:

Signed:

Name of Countersigning Manager:

Signed:

Appendix 5

Probationary Assessment Form: Final Assessment

Description	Details
Date:	
Assessment Period:	
Employee Name:	
Directorate/ Section:	
Job Title:	
Start Date:	

Description	Details
Job Performance:	
Conduct:	
Training & Development:	

Description	Details
Work Attendance:	
Number of days absent:	
Punctuality:	(Please state Good/ Not Satisfactory):
Managers Overall Assessment:	(Please state Exceeds Job Requirements/ Meet Job Requirements/ Still Requires Training & Coaching/ Significant Concerns Identified – Details below under Action Plan):
Employment to be:	(Please state Confirmed/ Probationary period to be extended until when/ Not confirmed – Details below under Action Plan)

Issue	Action	Support/ Training Provided	By When

Issue	Action	Support/ Training Provided	By When

Description	Details
Employees Comments:	

Name of Manager:

Signed:

Name of Employee:

Signed:

Name of Countersigning Manager:

Signed: