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Probation Policy

This document is available in Welsh, please see Polisi'r Gwasanaeth Prawf



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1. INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of this Council to operate probationary periods for all new employees.

The policy is intended to allow both the employee and Rhondda Cynon Taf Council to assess objectively whether or not the employee is suitable for the role to which they have been appointed. This Council believes that the use of probationary periods increases the likelihood that new employees will perform effectively in their new employment.

The probationary period procedures provide a framework for identifying and rectifying any early difficulties which may occur in the performance of the job, and provide for early termination of employment if such difficulties are not resolvable during this period.

Managers are responsible, under this policy, for ensuring that all new employees are properly monitored during their probationary period. If any problems arise, the manager should address these promptly, ensuring that the employee is aware that some aspect of their performance or conduct is unsatisfactory and preventing the problem from escalating, by putting support measures in place to try and resolve any identified issues.

2. LENGTH OF PROBATION

All new entrants to Rhondda Cynon Taf Council will be contractually subject to a standard probationary period of 6 months.

This policy does not apply to existing employees transferring to different roles within the Council, but does apply to employees coming from external organisations, including other Local Authorities or from an organisation identified on the Modification Order.

Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) employees into the council are not required to complete a probation period.

3. LINE MANAGER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The "Hello To ... Induction" program aims to provide all the information that the new employee needs, and able to process without being overwhelmed. The "Hello to ... Induction" program can be accessed through RCT Source and includes both a local and council induction.

It is the line Manager's responsibility to ensure all elements of the induction are completed within the 6 months' probation period. The successful completion of an employee's induction forms part of the employee's probation sign off. The "Hello to ..." Local Induction Checklist (Appendix 1) provides a guide for managers when preparing an induction. For more information see the Induction Policy

Employees must be properly informed at the start of their employment about what is expected of them during their period of probation, e.g. the required job outputs or the standard of performance and conduct.

During the probationary period, the employee's performance in the post must be continuously monitored and reviewed by the line manager. Any meetings held to review performance must be recorded.

Staff should be approached immediately if problems are arising. As part of their supervision and probationary monitoring, all staff should be given feedback on their progress. If there are areas for development, managers must inform the employee and address them as quickly as possible giving the employee advice on how they can overcome their difficulties and set a time constraint in which they should achieve it e.g. one month. Managers must not wait until the end of the probationary period to address any identified problems.

4. REVIEWS/SUPPORT DURING PROBATION

Using the Guidelines and forms in the Appendices, Managers must review and assess the employees' attendance, performance, conduct, capability and suitability for the role periodically during the probationary period, in supervision and/or probationary review meetings, and again before the end of the 6 month period.

At the end of the probationary period, the line manager will need to hold a review meeting with the employee to discuss their performance and progress throughout the review period. It is important that this meeting takes place shortly before the date at which their probationary period ends. If the meeting does not take place by this date, the appointment will, be confirmed by default. If the employee's performance is satisfactory, a copy of the final review should be passed to the employee and the original document forwarded to Human Resources for retention on the personal file. Human Resources will issue a letter of confirmation to the employee.

If the employee's performance has not met the standards required, the line manager should discuss the matter with their Head of Service and Human Resources before any decision is made with regard to continued employment. Failure to address performance issues throughout the probationary period may result in the employment being confirmed and thereafter will need to be managed through the Council's capability procedure.

Satisfactory attendance at work is also a factor when considering completion of the probationary period. The manager must ensure that appropriate reasonable adjustments (where identified) have been put in place to remove any disadvantage for disabled employees during the probationary period, and employment. When appropriate advice may be sought from Occupational Health.

5. EXTENDING PROBATIONARY PERIODS

During the standard 6 month probationary period it might be necessary to extend for a further time if any issues have not been resolved. An extension may be agreed in circumstances where the employee's performance during probation has not been entirely satisfactory, but where it is thought likely that an extension to the probationary period may lead to an improvement.

Probationary periods should not be extended by any more than a further 3 month period (up to a maximum 9 month probationary period). For any period or periods of sickness absence or unpaid leave amounting to 2 weeks or more during the probationary period, the probationary period may be extended by at least the length of time of the absence to allow for further monitoring and reviewing of their performance to take place. It would be advisable to seek HR assistance at this point.

Where an extension is agreed, the terms of the extension must be set out in writing to the employee including:

- The length of the extension and end date;
- The reason for the extension and, if the reason is unsatisfactory performance, details of how and why the 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 extension;
- Any support or further training that will be provided during the extension;
- A statement that, if the employee does not fully meet the required standard by the end of the extended period of probation, then his/her employment may be terminated.

All paperwork relating to the periodic reviews of induction, performance, any action plans, supervision reports, records of meetings etc. relating to the employees probationary review should be passed to Human Resources to facilitate a discussion with the line manager about an appropriate way forward. This must be sent to allow sufficient time for review before the end of the probationary period. Outcomes may include an extension to the probationary period or termination of employment.

6. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Confirmation of appointment is dependent upon the satisfactory completion of the Probationary period. If a new employee's conduct, performance, timekeeping or attendance during the probationary period is not satisfactory, the employment may be terminated with due regard for following an appropriate and fair process.

Where termination of employment is being considered the employee will be advised by the line manager that the matter will be referred to the Head of Service. This should form part of the final review meeting and it should be made clear that the employee's performance has not met the required standard. In this case the Head of Service must hold a meeting with the employee to review their employment position.

During the probationary period, employees will be subject to all the terms and conditions of their contract of employment with the exception of their notice period. During probation, either party may terminate the employee's contract by giving one week's notice. In the event that the Council decides to terminate the employee's employment due to issues relating to their Probation, the employee's employment will end immediately and the employee will receive pay in lieu of the one week's notice together with any outstanding holiday pay.

If, during an employee's induction or probation, it is suspected or established that the employee does not have the qualifications, experience or knowledge that s/he claimed to have at the time of recruitment, the manager must discuss this matter with the employee to establish the facts. If evidence suggests that the employee misrepresented his/her abilities in any way, this could be a breach of the Council's disciplinary rules and the Council will terminate the employment with immediate effect, giving one week's pay in lieu of notice.

“Hello To ... Your Team”

INDUCTION CHECKLIST

<i>Employees Name</i>	
<i>Division</i>	
<i>Managers Name</i>	
<i>Date of commencement in post</i>	

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council is committed to ensuring that all new employees to the Council receive a comprehensive induction. This checklist is designed to complement the **“Hello To ...The Council”** (Corporate Induction programme), **“Hello To ... Your Team”** (employee’s local induction programme/plan and as a tool for both managers and new employee’s to:

- Track the delivery of an employee’s induction programme/plan led by the line manager
- Track the completion of the induction programme/plan by the employee
- Provide a baseline of information to begin the personal development planning process which will be undertaken jointly by both the manager and employee

All of the activities covered must be included in the employees induction programme if they are applicable.

All inductions are to be completed within 6 months of employment start date.

Mandatory Completion for ALL New Employees

	Date Completed	Comments
Part 1: Introduction & Health & Safety		
Initial greeting and briefing of the induction program/plan/induction checklist from manager		
RCT Source account details provided to the employee		
Signing in/out procedure explained (including any local arrangements in relation to safety)		
Procedure for accessing building explained e.g. key fob supplied if appropriate		
Emergency Contact form completed and manager keeps a copy safely		
Identity card/security pass issued (where applicable)		
Accident Reporting Procedures, location and completion of accident book explained		
Nominated First Aider and location of First Aid box/equipment		
COSHH procedures explained (where applicable)		
Lone Working procedures explained (where applicable). Policy available on RCT Source		
Display Screen Equipment procedure (where applicable)		
Personal Information		
Introduction to immediate team members		
Provide email and login details		
Location of kitchen/canteen/toilets/tea & coffee facilities		
Location of an use of fax machine/photocopier – login		
Site layout explained and tour carried out (where applicable)		

	Date Completed	Comments
Salary/wages explained		
Personal Information (cont.)		
Annual leave entitlement explained and card issued		
Flexi leave procedure explained (where applicable)		
Shift/Work rota explained (where applicable)		
Office hours/cover explained (where applicable)		
Scheme for Reimbursement of Travelling Expenses and e-expenses system explained – copy of license, MOT certificate and insurance documents provided and checked		
Probation period explained and ate of review meeting provided		
Appropriate use of mobile phones and office phones explained		
Car parking facilities explained (if applicable)		
Allocation of work related equipment (e.g. workstation, PC, tools, Personal Protective Equipment), workstation DSE assessment completed		
Explanation of Staff Benefits website and login details		

	Date Completed	Comments
Part 2: Organisational Policies All the policies and procedures that relate to these categories can be found on RCT Source – if you do not have access to RCT Source, your manager will provide you with a copy		
Mandatory e-Learning modules that ALL staff must complete via RCT Source, these include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Children and Adults – Raising Awareness • Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence • Introduction to Information Management • ICT Security – Protecting Information • Data Protection Awareness (GDPR) • Corporate Induction 		
Internet/Email Acceptable Use Police (where applicable)		
Sickness Reporting Procedure/Policy – Day 1-4 reporting		
Leave of Absence		
Welsh Language Standards and individual responsibilities explained		
Discipline Procedure and Rules, including Code of Conduct		
Grievance Procedure		
Equality and Diversity Policy		
Smoking in the Workplace Policy		
Capability Procedure/Policy		
Drug Misuse at Work Policy		
Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy		
Gifts and Hospitality Policy		
Workplace Stress Policy and role of Occupational Health Unit		
Complaints Procedure explained		
Training, Learning and Development Policy		

	Date Completed	Comments
Financial Regulations explained (where applicable)		
Dignity at Work Policy		
Managing People and Their Performance Policy and responsibilities explained		

All the areas listed on the checklist (part 1) MUST be covered in the induction programme as a minimum even where service areas have their own induction processes in place. In order to avoid duplication, Service areas must tailor their induction programme.

YOUR SERVICE SPECIFIC INDUCTION

Please feel free to use this blank sheet to schedule any further components of “Hello to ... Your Team” induction relevant to your service area.

Topic	Date Completed	Comments

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

Below is a list of further areas, which will aid with the Induction process. In line with best practice, these areas should be addressed within the first month of commencement.

Topic	Date completed	Comments
Council Plans explained		
Departmental/Team structure		
How the department works and relates to other departments		
Job Description and how employees post fits into the departments		
Expectations/standards/current priorities		
Who's who in the team, their roles and responsibilities		
Initial training need identified		
Set up meetings with key contacts		
Nominate "buddy"		
Visits to other key sites/locations		
Reporting, communications and management structures		
Terminology, jargon, glossary, definitions of local terms		
Customer Care Charter standards		

Any comments/follow up actions

It is advised this document should be signed and dated and should be completed no later than 6 months of commencement. The employee and line manager should then retain a copy, and a copy returned to Human Resources.

Signed Employee: _____

Date: _____

Signed Manager: _____

Date: _____

Please return to:

**Human Resources, Tŷ Elai, Dinas Isaf Industrial Estate, Williamstown,
Tonypany, CF40 1NY.**

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL

APPENDIX 2 (A)

PROBATION REPORT – INSTRUCTION TO MANAGERS

The Council requires all staff, regardless of whether they have previously completed a probationary period with another Local Authority, to serve a period of probation with Rhondda Cynon Taf on appointment.

Probationary reports must be completed by **no later than six months** from the date of appointment, the final probation sign off should include the successful completion of the “**Hello to...**” **Induction** programme and periodic reviews.

Please find attached a copy of a probation report, ***which must be completed by no later than six months from commencement in the role.*** Please return to Human Resources, Tŷ Elai, Williamstown, Tonypany, CF40 1NY. Both the employee and the manager must sign the report.

Human Resources will contact the individual following receipt of the completed report to confirm their appointment, providing that the report was satisfactory.

If it has been necessary during the 6 month probation period to discuss any issues of conduct, such as timekeeping or ability, then a record of this meeting must be recorded and signed by both the manager and employee. Should the matter require any further action, then it must be referred to Human Resources at the time, and not at the end of the probation period.

If the probationary period is to be extended, you must provide details of the reasons why and what action will be taken to help the individual reach the level required to pass their probationary period. The line manager, following support from Human Resources, will communicate this to the employee in writing.

If you do not complete and return the probationary report and poor performance is subsequently discovered beyond the probationary period date, you will not then be able deal with the issues of poor performance within the provisions of the Probationary Policy but will alternatively need to take action as outlined in the Council's Capability Procedure.

CONFIDENTIAL

Employee Number:

PROBATIONARY REPORT

IN RESPECT OF:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CONTRACT HOURS: _____ **JOB TITLE:** _____

LOCATION: _____ **DATE COMMENCED:** _____

Please give below your report on this employees':

Training to date:

Evidence of Competencies required to undertake the post:

Evidence of Ability to undertake tasks required:

Attendance & Timekeeping:

--

Relationships with colleagues/customers/service users:

--

Areas of concern and evidence of this (if any):

--

Additional Information:

--

Please give details of any absence due to sickness. If **NONE** then please indicate.

Date(s)	No. of Days	Reasons

I certify that the above comments have been discussed with this member of staff and that they:

- a) Have passed their probationary period and should continue to be employed.
- b) Have been made aware that her/his probationary period is being extended due to the reasons above.
- c) Have not passed their probationary period and have been given the opportunity to improve to the required standard. A meeting will be convened with the relevant Head of Service, who will determine on their continued employment with the Council.

Employee name: **Signature:**

Manager's name: **Signature:**

Date: **Date:**

Please ask for:

Telephone: (01443)

Facsimile: (01443) 444534

Our Ref: HR/ **Your Ref:** **Date:**

Dear

RE: PROBATION OF NEW STAFF

I refer to your appointment to the post of * with effect from * and to your period of probationary service.

I am pleased to advise you that I have recently received from your manager, *, a satisfactory report in respect of your probationary period.

As you have therefore now successfully completed your period of probationary service I wish to confirm your position as a Temporary/Permanent at *.

Should you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely

*

*

On behalf of the Group Director, *

Email:

PERSONAL

Please ask for: Jayne Dixon

Telephone: (01443) 444507

Facsimile: (01443) 444534

Our Ref: HR/

Your Ref:

Date:

Dear

RE: EXTENSION OF PROBATIONARY PERIOD

I refer to your recent meeting with * regarding the above.

As you are aware, your performance/conduct during the course of your probationary period has not been satisfactory and you have subsequently been given a chance to improve your performance/conduct during the remainder of your probationary period.

You have been provided with relevant support to assist you achieving the required standards since your commencement, including (training/coaching/regular supervision etc.), however despite this you have still not met the standards required of an employee in your position.

In your meeting with * on * your continued unsatisfactory performance was discussed and you were advised that your probationary period will be extended by a further *, until *. A further extension to this date is highly unlikely.

Your performance will continue to be monitored and your progress will be formally reviewed again at the end of the extended probationary period. Whilst it is acknowledged that you have agreed to work at meeting the required standard I must advise you that if you fail to make sufficient progress either during or by the end of the extended probationary period, your employment with this employment may be terminated.

I attach for your attention specific information relating to the areas that need improvement, together with details on the support you will be given.

Should you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely

*

On behalf of the Group Director, *

Email: *

PERSONAL

Please Ask For:
My Ref: HR/*

Direct Line: (01443) 444
Date:

Dear *

RE: PROBATIONARY PERIOD/TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

I refer to your meeting with *, Head of Service and *, Human Resources on * and to previous discussions with * and * on * in respect of your probationary period and post of *.

I wish to confirm, as discussed at the meeting, that your employment in this post will not be confirmed, due to the continued concerns discussed with you regarding the failure to reach the required standard of performance during your probation/extended probation period.

Insert specific information and examples and the impact this has had on service delivery etc.

You were reminded that reasonable support had been provided to assist you in meeting the required targets. This included ***.

I wish to confirm that the date upon which your termination will take effect is *. It has been agreed that you will not be required to attend work during your period of notice (delete if necessary).

Arrangements have been made for the payroll section to forward your P45 Income Tax form to you shortly

Should you have any queries please contact me on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely

*

*

On Behalf of Group Director, *