

## Probation Policy & Procedure

Author	Head of HR
Date	October 2023
Person Responsible	Deputy Chief Executive
Approval/ review body	SLT
Frequency of Review*	36 months

*\* Policies will be reviewed more frequently if legal changes or good practice require*

Review History:		
Date of review	Reviewed by	Reason for review
April 2018	HR Manager	Re-write of policy and separation from performance management policy in line with Legal Advice
October 2023	Head of HR	General Review

### Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Scope .....	2
3. The Probation Period .....	2
4. Probation Assessment Principles .....	3
5. Probation procedure for New Employees .....	3
6. Probation procedure for Existing Employees.....	4

### **Related policies/documents:**

Sickness Absence Policy & Procedure  
Teaching & Learning Policy

## 1. Introduction

All new employees and/or staff undertaking new or different positions in North Kent College which incorporates Hadlow College, hereinafter collectively called “the College” will be subject to a probationary period.

A good probationary process is vital to enable the College to assess suitability for the role and to ensure that the performance standards of the College are being met. After the successful completion of a probationary period, performance is monitored by regular appraisals.

Line managers have the lead responsibility for the review of performance during the probationary processes, supported by Human Resources (“HR”) as necessary.

## 2. Scope

2.1. The probation process relates to the following staff:

2.1.1. all new employees to the College, including individuals on full-time or part-time (fractional, casual and sessional) contracts and employees who have worked within the College prior to employment through an agency (“**New Employees**”); and

2.1.2. existing employees who are promoted, re-graded or transferred within the College to a new position (“**Existing Employees**”).

2.2. New Employees on probation will not be subject to the College Annual Appraisal system or Staff Disciplinary Procedure.

## 3. The Probation Period

3.1. The purpose of a probationary period is to provide a reasonable amount of time in which the College can assess a New Employee’s and an Existing Employee’s suitability for the role that they have been appointed to perform.

3.2. A New Employee will be subject to an eight-month probationary period at the start of the employment relationship with the College.

3.3. An Existing Employee will be subject to a six-month probationary period when they start a new role or position, which is different to the one they had when they joined the College.

3.4. During the probationary period an employee’s suitability for the role will be assessed against the performance standards expected of the employee, which will be provided at the start of their employment/new role by their line manager.

- 3.5. Following successful completion of the probationary period an employee will be notified, in writing, as to whether their appointment will be made permanent.
- 3.6. The College may terminate the employment of a New Employee at any time during the probation period if they are not performing to the performance standards expected of their role.

#### **4. Probation Assessment Principles**

- 4.1. The College aims to secure equality of opportunity in all its activities, and, in this respect, the probation process must be objective, clear, transparent and free from discrimination.
- 4.2. Probation reviews will be carried out at intervals using the College's electronic HR system. New Employees and Existing Employees can access and see the electronic assessment by logging into the self-service function of the HR system.
- 4.3. It is the line manager's responsibility to ensure that the electronic assessments are completed within the timescales set out in this policy.

#### **5. Probation procedure for New Employees**

- 5.1. The line manager will carry out three electronic assessments during the probationary period. Where possible these assessments should be made at the end of the first month, after four months' employment and at the end of the eighth month of employment.
- 5.2. These assessments are not carried out in consultation with the New Employee but will be made based on the line manager's observations and where applicable lesson visit reports.
- 5.3. Lesson visits will form part of the probationary process for all teaching staff irrespective of contract type and teaching commitment. The line manager will arrange to provide feedback and recommendations to the employee following the assessment as appropriate.
- 5.4. The College may extend the probationary period by a further three months if it is felt that performance is likely to improve given extra time.
- 5.5. If a New Employee's employment is terminated during the probation period for failing to meet performance standards, the New Employee will be paid the contractual notice period specified in their contract of employment. The College reserves the right to pay in lieu of notice. No termination will take place without prior agreement with the SLT Lead for the department in which the New Employee works and HR.

## **6. Probation procedure for Existing Employees**

- 6.1. The line manager will carry out two review meetings with an Existing Employee during the probationary period. Where possible the first review meeting will be at the end of the third month in the new role, and the second review meeting will be at the end of the fifth month in the new role.
- 6.2. The purpose of these reviews is to provide feedback to an Existing Employee and to identify areas where support and/or additional training may be required. The line manager will arrange to provide feedback and recommendations to an Existing Employee during the review meetings.
- 6.3. The College may extend the probationary period by a further three months if it is felt that performance is likely to improve given extra time and support.
- 6.4. If an Existing Employee is not successful in their new role (which can be identified at any stage in the probationary period), the line manager will inform the employee and make a recommendation to the SLT Lead to terminate the appointment.
- 6.5. If a recommendation is made to terminate the appointment, in the first instance, the College will seek to re-deploy an Existing Employee back to a similar role to the one that they previously held, or to alternative employment if any is available. There is no obligation on the College to create a role. This will be done in consultation with an Existing Employee.
- 6.6. In the event that there is no re-deployment, an Existing Employee will be invited to attend a termination meeting made up of two senior managers who will decide whether the employment should be terminated. The employee will have the right to be accompanied by either a Trade Union Representative or a current work colleague at this meeting.
- 6.7. If an Existing Employee's employment is terminated, it will be terminated in accordance with the contractual notice provisions in an Existing Employee's contract of employment. The College reserves the right to pay in lieu of notice.
- 6.8. An Existing Employee will have the right to appeal the termination of their employment to the Chief Executive and Executive Principal. An appeal should be submitted in writing to HR within 10 working days of the date of the letter confirming the termination of their employment. In this event, HR will convene an appeal hearing within a reasonable time period following receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Chief Executive and Executive Principal will be final. There is no further right of appeal. HR will notify the member of staff of the decision in writing within ten working days.