

Probation Policy and Procedure

Research, Teaching-only and Professional Services Staff

We operate probationary periods for all new employees. We recognise that starting a new job can be challenging and are committed to ensuring that you are fully supported during your starting months.

The aim of the probationary period is to allow both you and the organisation to assess objectively whether you are suitable for the role.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

Application

The probation procedure applies to all employees on, research, teaching-only and professional services terms and conditions of employment. Academic employees should refer to the [Academic Probation Regulation](#).

A standard probationary period is 6 months, or as detailed in the contract of employment, which can be extended up to 9 months. During the probation period, all aspects of performance, attendance and conduct will be dealt with using this procedure.

For employees with a fixed term contract that ends before their probationary period, the employment will be probationary throughout. If employment is subsequently extended, the probation period will run up to the end of the standard period.

Following a probation period, employee conduct, capability and sickness absence will be managed using the relevant procedure, this includes employees that have transferred posts within the University.

Probation Plan

At the start of your employment, your manager will set out your probation plan, using the [Probation Planner](#), detailing:

- the training that will be provided to you to undertake the role
- the objectives that you will be expected to meet; and
- the expectations in terms of your conduct.

Your individual plan will depend on your job role, level of responsibility, previous work experience and your training needs.

Your plan will include completion of the [Health and Safety](#), [Fire Safety](#), [General Data Protection Regulation](#) and [Introduction to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#) training and any other mandatory training as necessary.

Probation Review Meetings

You should have at least two dedicated probation meetings, during your probation period, usually around your 3rd and 5th month of employment. The probation planner can be used to help structure the meetings during which you and your manager should discuss progress and feedback.

In addition to the probation meetings, your line manager will check in with you regularly to ensure that you understand what you need to do, provide you with feedback and check that you are receiving sufficient support.

Confirming the Appointment

At the end of your probationary period, you should have completed the required training and achieved set objectives ready to further embed in the role. Your manager will verbally confirm your appointment and record this through HR digital services, detailed instructions can be found on our [managing teams](#) intranet pages.

You should then discuss further development and objectives for the next year and set a time for your first [Performance Development Review](#).

Extending the Probation Period

If towards the end of your probation period, there is still a significant milestone to meet, essential training has not been undertaken, or there has been a significant period of absence, your manager may decide to extend the probation period.

Managers should speak with their [HR Business Partnering Team](#) before initiating this process.

Typically, the probation period will be extended for up to 3 months, dependant on objectives and circumstances. Regular feedback should be provided by the manager throughout the extension period, through one-to-one meetings.

If an extension to your probation period is decided, your manager will write to you setting out:

- the date on which the extended period of probation will end,
- the reason for the extension,
- any objectives that you are required to achieve; and
- any support or training, that will be provided to you during the extended period.

Any extension should be arranged before your original probation period ends, and there is no right to appeal this decision.

Terminating Employment

Sometimes things don't work out and the role at King's may not be right for you, or your manager may have concerns about your performance, conduct or attendance levels. If this is the case, you or your manager may decide to end the employment.

During the probation period the notice period is 4 weeks on either side.

Your manager may hold a formal probation meeting to end employment at any point during your probation period, if there is a clear breach of conduct or evidence that the required standards are not being met and are unlikely to be resolved through additional time or training.

Managers should speak with their [HR Business Partnering Team](#) before initiating this process.

If your manager decides to hold a formal meeting to consider your employment you will be given at least 5 working days' written notice, including details of the concerns and any supporting material.

You will also be informed of the right to be accompanied and will be asked to notify the [HR Business Partnering Team](#) no later than 3 working days ahead of the scheduled meeting if you intend to be accompanied, the name of the companion and, if relevant, the trade union they are from.

The outcome will be confirmed to you in writing explaining the grounds on which the decision was reached.

Right to Appeal

If your appointment has been terminated through the probation procedure you will have the right to appeal this decision.

An appeal must be submitted in writing, including the grounds for the appeal and any supporting documentation, to the [Director of People](#) or as advised, within 10 working days of receipt of the written notice of the dismissal.

The appeal will be heard by a Panel appointed by the [Director of People](#) or their designate. The appeal Panel will comprise of at least two members, one of which will not have been previously involved in the particular case.

You will be given at least 10 working days' written notice of the appeal hearing together with copies of any supporting material used during the probation procedure.

You will be informed of the right to be accompanied and asked to notify the [HR Business Partnering Team](#) no later than 3 working days ahead of the scheduled appeal hearing if you intend to be accompanied, and to provide the name of the companion and if relevant, the trade union they are from.

The outcome will be confirmed by the Panel Chair in writing, usually within 10 working days of the appeal hearing.

For an appeal against dismissal, this may be to:

- Support the appeal and reduce the dismissal to an extension of probation or confirmation of employment, or
- Reject the appeal and confirm the decision to dismiss.

Should an appeal against dismissal be supported, you will receive salary payment at the appropriate rate as if you had not been dismissed and there will be no break in your continuity of employment.

The decision of the appeal Panel will be final and there will be no further avenue for appeal within the university.

Meetings

Formal meetings will be conducted in-person or by using the appropriate technology such as Microsoft Teams.

The recording of formal meetings held in relation to this policy will not normally be permitted. Any deliberate recording of meetings obtained without the express agreement from all participants before the commencement of the meeting may result in disciplinary action.

Adjustments to Proceedings

Under the Equality Act 2010, the university has a legal responsibility to consider reasonable adjustments in the application of this policy, to ensure that employees with disabilities or specific needs can fully participate and understand the process.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered on an individual basis, taking into account the specific needs and circumstances of an employee, this could include adjustment to the location and timing of meetings, use of a translator and accepting written submission of statements.

Employees facing difficulty at any stage of the procedure due to a disability should contact the [HR Business Partnering Team](#) for advice.

Version Control

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