

Induction and Probation Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with The Consortium Trust's:

- Appraisal and Capability policy and procedure
- Pay policy
- Disciplinary policy and procedure
- CPD policy

Introduction

The Consortium Trust's Trustees, Directorates and staff at all its constituent schools are committed to an on-going journey of discovery and development that we believe will help us continually test and challenge ourselves and, consequently, continually enhance our offer to families and young people.

Achievement of this commitment depends upon recruitment and development of high quality staff. An essential element of the recruitment and development process is provision of a framework for the effective induction of newly appointed staff and those who are promoted, transferred or have been absent from work for a long period e.g. on career breaks.

This policy and following procedures outline the broad principles that governs the Consortium Trust approach to the induction/probation of staff and supports the aims of Continuing Professional Development. It also provides guidance for Trustees and the nominated representatives to ensure that new staff members are provided with effective support so that they can fully meet the requirements of their job.

Aims

The aim of the Induction and Probation Policy is to ensure that all employees beginning their employment with Consortium Trust are, by the end of the induction/probation period, able to:

- Contribute effectively to achieving the best possible progress and outcomes for our pupils;
- Understand how the organisation operates and the expectations placed on all employees;
- Understand how their role fits in with their respective team and the organisation as a whole;
- Understand their objectives for the performance period (including the induction/probationary period)
- Understand and fulfil their commitment to Safeguarding and Child Protection (and the related policies and procedure);
- Understand the Health and Safety obligations all parties at work and fulfil their obligations as an employee;
- Achieve and continue to develop the levels of knowledge and standards of professional competence necessary to fulfil all aspects of their role and responsibilities;

Newly appointed employees will be supported throughout the induction/probation period and will be provided with:

- Clear direction, support and guidance;
- Adequate time for discussion and reflection with colleagues;
- Relevant training activities to enable continued professional learning.
- Wellbeing support and advice

Induction

The Trust's Trustees and Leadership teams believe that effective induction is one of the best ways to welcome and integrate new members of staff into the organisation, thereby ensuring that they settle in and are able to work effectively and efficiently as quickly as possible.

Probation

The probation period ensures that a new employee's work performance can be monitored, and the required support can be provided. Progress will be discussed at induction and probation meetings and the Academy Head or nominated Induction/Probation manager will encourage and assist the new employee to improve and develop. It is important that all newly appointed employees have their performance monitored and assessed during their probationary period. Confirmation of appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of the probationary period.

Induction / Probation Managers must:

- Manage and monitor the induction/probation period;
- Set expectations of the individual in line with their job description and person specification;
- Ensure any necessary support, guidance and development is provided;
- Record assessment meetings/outcomes;
- Make themselves available and respond to any questions and concerns raised by new employees on a day-to-day basis and at regular review meetings.

Employees must:

- Raise any questions or concerns about their role or the probation process as soon as they arise;
- Actively participate in induction and probation meetings and any development activity provided.

Timescales

All new external appointments to permanent posts and fixed term appointments of one year or more are subject to a probationary period of 6 months i.e. 26 working weeks. It may be extended by a maximum of a further 13 working weeks if the employee's performance/conduct/wellbeing warrants this.

Employees on fixed term appointments of less than one year are subject to a three-month probationary period i.e. 13 working weeks, which can be extended by a maximum of a further 13 working weeks where necessary. Probation timescales exclude school holiday periods for school based staff or any Central Trust staff who are employed on term-time only contracts.

Occasionally it may be necessary to terminate an appointment during the probationary period. The induction/probation procedure allows for new employees to prove their suitability before any decision is made to dismiss either within, or at the end of the probationary period.

Notice periods applicable during the probationary period are reduced to half a term (teachers) and one week (support staff) by either party (subject to statutory employment rights).

In the unlikely event that evidence gathered indicates that the appointment may not be confirmed at the end of the probationary period, this will be discussed with the employee at one or more interim meetings. The employee will also be notified of this possibility, in writing, in advance of the final induction and probation review meeting.

If the decision is made to terminate employment either during, or at the end of the probationary period, the employee has the right of appeal against this decision. Any appeal should be addressed, in the first instance, to the Academy Head (School based staff) or the Principal/CEO (Central Trust staff)

Right to be Accompanied

Employees have a right to be accompanied at the final induction and probation meeting. The chosen companion can be a work colleague, a trade union representative, or an official employed by a trade union. The employee must notify the Academy Head / nominated Induction/Probation manager in advance of their wish to be accompanied, giving details of who that person is. It is the employee's responsibility to make arrangements for their chosen representative to attend the final assessment meeting.

Appraisal Process

Upon successful completion of their probationary period, employees will transition into the Trust appraisal system, as detailed in the Consortium Trust Appraisal and Capability policies. In the event that the probationary period is completed mid-way through the appraisal cycle, short-term objectives will be set and agreed for the remainder of the current cycle. Staff will join the **pay review cycle** at the next review point after the end of the probationary period. A minimum of 12 months employment is required before a formal pay review.

A meeting to set and agree objectives for the remainder of the current appraisal cycle will be scheduled within two working weeks of completion of the probationary period.

Interim Reports on Probationary Employment

DETAILS OF THE EMPLOYEE AND POST	
NAME:	DATE STARTED:
SCHOOL/UNIT:	SECTION:
POST TITLE:	JOB NO:

Notes:

This form is to be completed by the manager of the employee under review. When completed, each report must be shown to and discussed with the employee. It is important that all points included in the reports are covered, not just those where improvement appears necessary.

The completed form should be shared with the Academy Head or relevant member or the management team. Any matters requiring attention should be highlighted.

A copy of any report will be supplied to the employee if the employee requests it.

The recommended probationary period is six months (26 working weeks). This can be extended, usually for no more than three additional months (13 working weeks).

Where an extended probationary period is being considered (or transfer to the permanent establishment may not be recommended) advice should be sought from the Central Trust HR team at an early stage. If the probationary service is satisfactory, the employee should be notified formally of their transfer to the permanent establishment or longer-term temporary employment. If, on the other hand, the probationary service is not satisfactory and the appointment is not to be confirmed, the reasons should be recorded in the third report, with reference made to any separate papers (e.g. letters or internal notes to the employee). Where the employment pattern includes breaks in continuity, the period should be related to actual working weeks.

Matters of capability, competence and general suitability for the job will be assessed in accordance with and at the various stages set down in the probation procedure. Normal Trust appeal rights against dismissal will apply. Alternatively, and dependent on the offence (e.g., misconduct) it may be appropriate to deal with a probationary employee for a disciplinary offence under the disciplinary procedures rather than the probation procedure. In such cases the disciplinary timescales may be shortened to fit in with the probationary period.

The following model is based on three formal reviews over the 26 working weeks probationary period. Employees and/or Managers may find the questions at the end of this document helpful in their preparation for each review.

Additional, informal interim reviews should be scheduled where areas of additional development need are identified which require a more focused programme of action, monitoring and support.

First Interim Report on Probationary Employment (after 8 - 10 weeks' service)

To be completed by Probation Manager following interview with the Employee

Employee Wellbeing - Please report on the level of employee wellbeing. If necessary record areas of concern and what alterations have been made (if any) to the timeline.	
Work Performance – please report below on performance by comparison with the competency requirements of the job and/or the job description/person specification	
Essential/Desirable requirements of Person Specification - some examples are included below	Level of performance in job
Knowledge of section and specific tasks	
Knowledge of basic conditions or procedures	
Working with people and building relationships	
Performance of job related tasks	
Areas to be developed and carried forward for discussion at next review	
Other matters arising	

Personal Requirements – please report below on general conduct, timekeeping, attendance, commitment and any other characteristics necessary for good performance

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Training and Development needs – please identify and describe below how these can be met in the review period, including an action to be taken before next review

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Comments and signature by Probation Manager

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Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Comments (if any) and signature by Academy Head/Senior Line Manager

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Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Comments (if any) and signature by Employee

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Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Second Interim Report on Probationary Employment (after 16 - 18 weeks' service)

To be completed by Probation Manager following interview with the Employee

Employee Wellbeing - Please report on the level of employee wellbeing. If necessary record areas of concern and what alterations have been made (if any) to the timeline.	
Work Performance – please report below on performance by comparison with the competency requirements of the job and/or the job description/person specification	
Essential/Desirable requirements of Person Specification - some examples are included below	Level of performance in job
Matters brought forward from first review	
Knowledge of section and specific tasks	
Working with people and building relationships	
Performance of job related tasks	
Areas to be developed and carried forward for discussion at next review	
Other matters arising	

Personal Requirements – please report below on general conduct, timekeeping, attendance, commitment and any other characteristics necessary for good performance

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Training and Development needs – please identify and describe below how these can be met in the review period, including an action to be taken before next review

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Assessment - at this stage, are you likely to recommend for transfer to permanent establishment at the end of the probationary period? Yes/No

If no, please set out reasons below and identify actions/improvement required before final review. (Concerns regarding the likelihood of transfer to the school's permanent establishment should be discussed with your named HR Caseworker at an early stage.)

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Further Comments and signature by Probation Manager

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Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Comments (if any) and signature by Academy Head/ Senior Line Manager

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Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Comments (if any) and signature by Employee

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Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Final Report on Probationary Employment (Before 26 Weeks' Service)

To be completed by Probation Manager following interview with the Employee

Employee Wellbeing - Please report on the level of employee wellbeing. If necessary record areas of concern and what alterations have been made (if any) to the timeline.	
Work Performance – please report below on performance by comparison with the competency requirements of the job and/or the job description/person specification	
Essential/Desirable requirements of Person Specification - some examples are included below	Level of performance in job
Matters brought forward from second review Knowledge of section and specific tasks Working with people and building relationships Performance of job related tasks Areas to be developed and carried forward for inclusion in Performance and Development Review Other matters arising	Empty space for performance evaluation

Personal Requirements – please report below on general conduct, timekeeping, attendance, commitment and any other characteristics necessary for good performance

Training and Development needs - please identify and describe below how these can be met in the review period, including an action to be taken before next review

Assessment and recommendation – if, following discussion with your named HR Caseworker, not recommending transfer to permanent establishment or extension of probationary period, please detail reasons under Managers comments

Satisfactory progress to date?	Yes/No
Suitable for present work?	Yes/No
Transfer to permanent establishment?	Yes/No
Probation period to be extended?	Yes (period of extension:)/No
Possibility of alternative role?	Yes/No
Terminate employment – not satisfactory?	Yes/No

Further Comments and signature by Probation Manager

Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Comments (if any) and signature by Academy Head / Senior Line Manager

Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Comments (if any) and signature by Employee

Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Preparation for Probationary Reviews

Example Questions

Employees and/or Managers may find some of the following questions helpful in their preparation for each review

Have you been given induction training for your new job?

Do you think you received the information and help necessary to settle into your new job?

Do you understand the overall responsibilities of your job?

Do you understand the specific tasks your job involves?

Is the job what you expected?

Do you know how the school/unit is organised?

Do you feel you know enough about your team?

Do you understand your team's role within the school/unit?

What work have you undertaken to achieve the main tasks/objectives detailed in your job description since your appointment/last probationary review?

What problems, if any, have you encountered?

How do you consider these problems can be overcome (e.g., training)?

What do you think your training needs are for the next 6 weeks?

Document Control

Changes History

Version	Date	Amended By	Details of Change
V2	04/02/2018	Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne	Scheduled review, no significant amendments made
V3	15/03/2019	Joy Kent	Interim review and update
V4	20/05/2021	Liz Frere-Smith	Scheduled review and update
V4.1	08/12/2021	Liz Frere-Smith	Insertion of wellbeing comments; removal of gender specific terminology.
V5	23/09/2025	Liz Frere-Smith	Scheduled review no significant amendments. Updates to ensure consistent terminology.

Approval

This policy will be reviewed every 4 years by Head of Service People or as required by changes in legislation.

At every review, this policy will be approved by the Finance & Resources Committee.

The policy was last approved by the Finance & Resources Committee on 13/11/2025.

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