Probation Policy and Procedure

Contents

1. Introduction 1
2. The Public Sector Equality Duty 1
3. Aims 1
4. Scope 2
5. Policy 2
6. Occupational health referrals 4
7. Reasonable Adjustments 5
8. Confirming in Post 5
9. Misconduct 5
10. Unsatisfactory Performance, Conduct or Attendance 5
11. Additional review meeting 6
12. Extending the Probation Period 7
13. Unsuccessful Completion of the Probation Period 8
14. Dismissal Decision Procedure 8
15. Dismissal Decision Meeting 8
16. Covert Recording of Meetings 9
17. Accompaniment at meetings 9
18. Appeals 10
19. Other Policies 10
20. Freedom of speech and academic freedom 11
21. Appendix A: Line managers' guidance 12
22. Appendix B: Probation Process Flow Chart 17
23. Appendix C: Unsatisfactory Performance, Conduct, Attendance Flow Chart 18
24. Appendix D: Decision Making Authority 19

1. Introduction

1.1. The university is committed to fostering an inclusive culture where every employee feels valued and enabled to thrive and perform to the best of their ability and fulfill their responsibilities.

1.2. The university expects all employees to strive to attain the highest levels of performance, conduct and attendance to contribute to the delivery of its vision, to be the best modern university in the UK, and to feel empowered to do so by upholding and demonstrating the university's core values; to be inclusive, collaborative, and impactful.

1.3. The probation period is intended as a constructive process to allow the employee to understand the university, their department, their role and how these fit together. It is an opportunity for the employee to understand the standards required for their role and to fulfill those standards in full and ultimately for both employee and manager to assess the employee's suitability for the role.

2. The Public Sector Equality Duty

2.1. The Equality Act (2010) requires public bodies such as the University of Greenwich to consider how their decisions and policies affect people with different protected characteristics (or a combination of these).

2.2. The university is committed to promoting equality of access and outcome for all, celebrating diversity, and providing an inclusive learning and work environment for all students, staff, and visitors. The university will ensure they pay 'due regard' to:

a) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
b) advance equality of opportunity.
c) foster good relations between people, irrespective of their age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation'.

2.3. Paying 'due regard' means the university will consciously consider or think about the need to do the above.

3. Aims

3.1. To provide line managers with a clear framework for managing the **performance**, **conduct** and **attendance** of new staff members during their probation period:

3.2. Provide clearly defined steps for line managers to follow when the employee's performance, conduct or attendance falls below acceptable standards and requires additional intervention beyond the expected levels of advice, encouragement, training, or support during their probation period.

3.3. Ensure employees are given reasonable opportunities to improve and maintain their performance, conduct and attendance to the required level and to succeed in their role.

4. Scope

4.1. This policy and its procedures apply to all university employees, including people employed on a fixed term contract.

4.2. This policy does not apply to Associate Academics, Jobshop, PGRTA, agency workers and self-employed contractors, who will not be subject to an induction or probation period. However, line managers should ensure that they are sufficiently orientated to the university and their department

5. Policy

5.1. To complete the probation period successfully, all employees are expected to pass each of their formal probation reviews and achieve all the required standards of performance, conduct and attendance, mandatory training and goals set, by the end of their probation period. The expectations of employee's and line managers are outlined in this policy. The detailed steps of the probation review procedure are outlined in Appendix A: Line managers' guidance.

5.2. The probation period for individual employee's based on their role is as follows:

Role	Probation period
Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Associate Professors, Professors and staff on Senior Management Contracts	12 months
Professional Services employees, Researchers and Apprentices	6 months

5.3. Attempts must always be made to resolve minor concerns in one-to-one check-in meetings during the probation period. However, where the line manager has identified performance, conduct or attendance concerns that fall below the required expectations and standards, and a one-to-one check-in meeting has not resolved the concerns, the line manager reserves the right to meet with the employee sooner than any planned probation review meeting, at an **additional review meeting**. The line manager must contact the Employee Relations and Change Team to seek advice.

5.4. Employees do not have the statutory right to be accompanied at probation review meetings, or additional review meetings that take place in the first six months of continuous service, however by exception where an employee is required to attend an **additional review meeting** and they have **more than six months continuous service**, the university will offer the employee the opportunity to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative, in line with our commitment to fair and transparent processes. A member of the People Directorate may also be present where the employee chooses to be accompanied.

5.5. What a new employee can expect from their manager

Employees can expect their manager to:

a) provide them with appropriate time to orientate to the university and carry out the expected induction activities and mandatory training.

b) treat **performance**, **conduct** or **attendance** issues occurring during their probation period promptly, fairly, and consistently across the university in line with this policy and procedure.
c) provide them with clear, timely and constructive feedback on their performance, conduct and attendance, clarifying any required improvement, providing an opportunity to rectify this within a reasonable timescale.
d) give appropriate support, help and where necessary, reasonable training to improve.
e) Make reasonable adjustments as required where an employee has shared a disability, or physical or mental health condition (refer to the university's Reasonable Adjustments policy and procedure found on the staff portal.) Any reasonable adjustments must be implemented promptly and without unreasonable delay.
f) give them the right to be accompanied at any meeting which may result in their dismissal, providing written notice of the meeting and a right of appeal against dismissal.
g) provide notice in accordance with the employment contract, in the event of their dismissal if they do not perform their role to the required standards after being given an appropriate opportunity to improve as set out in this policy and procedure.

5.6. What the university expects from its new employees.

The university expects all new employees to:

a) carry out their job to the standard that is expected and required for the role and grade as set out in the job description, person specification and goals.
b) understand the impact of their **performance**, **conduct** and **attendance** on colleagues, customers, and the wider university.
c) clarify expectations, standards, tasks, goals, and behaviours with their line manager where required, and if they are unclear about them.
d) engage fully in their local induction and the Horizon Welcome Journey, the setting of their goals and standards and monitoring of their performance, conduct and attendance through this policy, and develop their skills and knowledge to carry out their role to the highest possible standard.
e) complete all mandatory training within their probation period as required in the Horizon Welcome Journey.
f) bring any issues which may affect their ability to carry out their role to the attention of their line manager at the soonest opportunity, including matters related to their mental or physical health, or where they may have a disability.
g) attend meetings to discuss any aspects of their performance, conduct or attendance which are considered unsatisfactory as requested to do so and respond constructively to any feedback given.
h) comply with the university's information security, cyber security or phishing prevention requirements, policies and procedures.

5.7. What the university expects from its managers

The university expects all its line managers to:

a) be responsible for managing the probation period and conducting probation review meetings in line with this policy and procedure for their new staff member and to support and monitor their performance, conduct and attendance through regular

contact, typically with one-to-one check-in meetings. This should all be recorded on Horizon.

b) create a local induction applicable to the employee's role and faculty/directorate. This should be recorded on Horizon.
c) meet their new staff member at the earliest opportunity and set goals of performance, conduct and attendance and the expected timeframes, at the latest by the end of the first two weeks.
d) give the employee sufficient opportunity during their probationary period to understand the university, their department, and their role and how they fit together and to achieve the identified standards and goals for their role.
e) monitor goals throughout the probation process.
f) give the employee positive feedback where they have met set standards and goals.
g) identify any areas of performance, conduct or attendance that fall below the required standards promptly with the employee so that they have opportunity to improve before the end of their probation period. Feedback should be clear, specific, and constructive. Contact the Employee Relations and Change Team to discuss this by submitting an enquiry via the Horizon Help Desk.
h) remain aware that an employee's performance, conduct or attendance concerns may be linked to a physical or mental impairment, including an undisclosed condition, and take appropriate steps to explore this with the employee, including consideration of an occupational health referral where appropriate (see also *Neurodiversity in the Workplace Guidance* on the staff portal and *Occupational Health Referrals* within this policy).
i) document each check-in meeting and probation review meeting on Horizon for the individual employee. Written records should include theme of discussions, training or support needs, actions required and if appropriate areas for improvement with timescales.
j) ensure that if they are absent from work or anticipate they will be absent from work for a significant amount of time that an interim line management arrangement is in place.
k) ensure that when they either leave the university or move job role, they provide, where possible, a thorough handover to the incoming manager including records of meetings.

6. Occupational health referrals

6.1. If, during the probation period, matters come to light which indicate that an employee's mental or physical health is impacting on their ability to carry out their role, or where they have, or may have a disability which is affecting their performance, conduct or attendance, the manager should discuss this promptly with the Employee Relations and Change Team and seek an occupational health referral if it is deemed appropriate. Managers can also seek guidance on making an occupational health referral from the university staff portal.

6.2. Occupational health will advise on the impact of any disability or health problem on an employee's ability to perform their role, including any reasonable adjustments that should be considered (see also 7. Reasonable Adjustments in this policy)

7. Reasonable Adjustments

7.1. A reasonable adjustment is a change to make sure a disabled employee with a physical or mental impairment, is not placed at a substantial disadvantage when doing their job, compared to a non-disabled employee.

7.2. A disability is defined under the Equality Act 2010 as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long term' negative effect on an individual's ability to do normal daily activities. This includes progressive conditions, which is a condition that gets worse over time.

7.3. For further information on making reasonable adjustments see the university's Reasonable Adjustments policy and procedure which can be found on the staff portal.

8. Confirming in Post

8.1. Employees whose performance, conduct and attendance meet the expected standards who have completed their probation period successfully, will be confirmed in post at the end of their probation period.

8.2. The line manager should inform the employee they have successfully completed their probation period at the final probation review meeting and record this on Horizon. Once the line manager has completed the final probation review meeting and submitted the final probation review form on Horizon, the People Directorate will release a confirmation letter to the employee.

8.3. Line managers note that where the employee has **not** completed their probation period successfully this should also be recorded on Horizon in the final probation review meeting form. The line manager must contact the Employee Relations and Change Team immediately, if they have not already done so.

9. Misconduct

9.1. If during the probation period, an employee's conduct is deemed by the line manager to be so serious that the contract of employment needs to be terminated, they must bring this to the attention of the Employee Relations and Change Team immediately by submitting an enquiry via the Horizon Help Desk enquiry (See also *Dismissal Decision Procedure* in this policy).

10. Unsatisfactory Performance, Conduct or Attendance

10.1. Attempts must always be made to resolve minor concerns at one-to-one check-in meetings during the probation period. However, Where the line manager has identified performance, conduct or attendance concerns that fall below the required expectations and standards, and a one-to-one check-in meeting has not resolved the concerns, the line manager reserves the right to meet with the employee sooner than any planned probation review meeting, at an **additional review meeting**. The line manager must contact the Employee Relations and Change Team to seek advice (see additional review meeting in this policy.

10.2. Employees are expected to comply with the university's information security, cyber security and phishing prevention requirements. Any failure to meet these requirements

may be managed under the probation procedure and taken into account when assessing their suitability for continued employment.

10.3. Where it has been identified that the employee's performance, conduct or attendance concerns are falling below the required expectations and standards during their probationary period, any application for or expression of interest in an internal role will be considered carefully in consultation with the People Directorate.

10.4. In such circumstances, priority will normally be given to supporting the employee to address the identified concerns within their current role. If an employee applies for, or expresses interest in, an internal role during this period, this may not be supported where this could prevent resolution of those concerns or effective completion of the probationary process.

10.5. Employees are expected to inform their line manager at the earliest opportunity if they intend to apply for, or express interest in, an internal role during their probationary period.

11. Additional review meeting

11.1. Before meeting with the employee at an additional review meeting, the line manager must contact the Employee Relations and Change Team to seek advice. The line manager must write to the employee to provide details of the meeting, which must be held promptly and confidentially between the line manager and employee.

11.2. The additional review meeting must be recorded on Horizon using the additional review meeting form.

11.3. The meeting should be a collaborative, two-way discussion providing sufficient opportunity for the employee to respond.

11.4. Employees do not have the statutory right to be accompanied at probation review meetings, or additional review meetings that take place in the first six months of continuous service, however by exception where an employee is required to attend an **additional review meeting** and they have **more than six months continuous service**, the university will offer the employee the opportunity to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative, in line with our commitment to fair and transparent processes. A member of the People Directorate may also be present where the employee chooses to be accompanied.

11.5. At the meeting the manager should:

a) Be clear with the employee about the specific concern(s)and what improvements need to be made.
b) Be clear with the employee that the improvements must be significant and sustained over a period of time, and prior to the final probation review meeting.
c) Confirm if the probation period will be extended (see also *Extending the Probation Period* in this policy).
d) Confirm the final probation review meeting date.
e) Agree any support or intervention required to assist the employee with meeting the required improvement if appropriate (including training).

11.6. Following the meeting the manager should:

a) Record details of the meeting on the additional review meeting form on Horizon.
b) Confirm all the points discussed in writing to the employee.
c) Continue to monitor the employee's performance, conduct or attendance maintaining regular one-to-one check-in's and continuing to hold probation review meetings where appropriate prior to the final probation review meeting.

11.7. If the employee successfully makes the required improvements set out in the additional review meeting and the line manager is satisfied that the employee should complete their probation period, they should inform them of the outcome at their final probation review meeting (see also *Confirming in Post* in this policy).

11.8. If, during the additional review meeting, it is brought to the attention of the manager that the employee has or may have a disability, the manager should refer to the Occupational Health Referrals section within this policy and procedure, and where appropriate, ensure that reasonable adjustments are implemented, and effectiveness assessed (see the Reasonable Adjustments Policy found on the staff portal).

12. Extending the Probation Period

12.1. Where the line manager has identified performance, conduct or attendance concerns that fall below the required expectations and standards, it may be appropriate to extend the probation period. The existing probation period can be extended by up to three months, or in exceptional circumstances for up to six months. This can be done at any point during the probation period.

12.2. Extension of the probation period must not wait until the end of the probation period. The line manager should consider this as part of the additional review meeting.

12.3. There may also be circumstances where the line manager has been unable to make a fair assessment during the probation period for other reasons such as:

a) An extended period of authorised absence such as sickness, parental leave, jury service.
b) Delays in completing essential training or onboarding activities which are outside of the employee's control.
c) Additional time is needed to implement or review reasonable adjustments and assess effectiveness.

12.4. Before proceeding with an extension for any reason, the line manager must contact the Employee Relations and Change Team to agree the next steps.

12.5. The details of the probation extension, and the date of the revised final probation review meeting should be confirmed by the line manager in a letter to the employee, the content of which should be agreed with the Employee Relations and Change Team.

12.6. Where there is a risk of dismissal if the required improvements are not made within the extended period, this must be confirmed in writing in the letter. A copy of the letter should be uploaded to the probation review meeting form on Horizon.

13. Unsuccessful Completion of the Probation Period

13.1. Where it becomes apparent that the employee is unable to make the required improvements or meet the targets set, and it is evident they will be unable to reach the required standards by the end of the probation period (including any extension that may have been applied), the line manager should contact the Employee Relations and Change Team to recommend dismissal (see also *Dismissal Decision Procedure* in this policy).



13.2. Where the manager is recommending dismissal, they must act swiftly and discuss the next steps with their People Directorate representative without delay, prior to the end of the review period. Sensitivity to the impact on the employee is vital.

13.3. The university will ensure that the employee is given the right to be accompanied at any meeting which may result in their dismissal and to be given written notice of the meeting and the right of appeal.

14. Dismissal Decision Procedure

Dismissal may be recommended at any point during the probation period for the following reasons:

14.1. Where the employee's performance, conduct or attendance fall below the required expectations and standards. Where the employee is unable to make the required improvements or meet the targets set and it is evident, they will be unable to reach the required standard that is expected of and required for their role and grade as per their job description or person specification, by the end of the probation period.

14.2. Where an employee's performance, conduct or attendance is considered serious enough that the contract of employment should be terminated with immediate effect, usually without notice or payment in lieu of notice (summary dismissal). Where dismissal is with notice, it will normally be paid in lieu.

15. Dismissal Decision Meeting

15.1. The Dismissal Decision Meeting will be conducted by the relevant decision maker (see also *Appendix C: Decision Making Authority* in this policy). The employee will be invited in writing to attend a Dismissal Decision Meeting, at which their performance and/or attendance and/or conduct within their probation period to-date will be discussed and at which they may be dismissed. The employee will have the opportunity to present any mitigating circumstances that they wish to be considered.

15.2. A representative from the People Directorate will attend the meeting and a note taker may also be present. This meeting should take place without undue delay and with reasonable notice.

15.3. The employee may be accompanied at the Dismissal Decision Meeting by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or an official employed by the trade union. *(see Accompaniment at meetings* in this policy*).*

15.4. The meeting will go ahead in the absence of the employee if they fail to attend and have not provided prior notice.

15.5. Following the meeting the decision maker should discuss the outcome with their People Directorate representative before taking further action.

15.6. The outcome of the meeting will be confirmed both verbally and in writing to the employee without undue delay. Where the outcome is dismissal, the effective date of dismissal will also be confirmed. If the employee is not required to work any period of notice, pay in lieu of notice will be provided instead, except in the case of summary dismissal (termination with immediate effect without notice or payment in lieu of notice). The employee will be offered the right to appeal against dismissal *(see Appeals in this policy).*

16. Covert Recording of Meetings

16.1. The employee and anyone accompanying the employee, are prohibited from making covert audio recordings of any informal or formal meetings conducted under this policy. The covert audio recording of meetings will be regarded as misconduct and dealt with according to the university's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

16.2. The university will not make audio recordings of any meetings conducted under this policy except in the following circumstances:

a) where this is requested by the employee as a reasonable adjustment arising from a disability (see also the Reasonable Adjustments Policy).

b) where the recording of a meeting is conducted by the People Directorate via Microsoft Teams for note taking purposes only, with the permission of the employee, and deleted once the notes have been transcribed, accepted and signed by the employee.

17. Accompaniment at meetings

17.1. Employees do not have the statutory right to be accompanied at probation review meetings, or additional review meetings that take place in the first six months of continuous service, however by exception where an employee is required to attend an **additional review meeting** and they have **more than six months continuous service**, the university will offer the employee the opportunity to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative, in line with our commitment to fair and transparent processes. A member of the People Directorate may also be present where the employee chooses to be accompanied.

17.2. An employee may be accompanied at a **Dismissal Decision Meeting** or **Appeal Meeting** under the Probation Policy and Procedure by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or an official employed by the trade union. The employee must inform the decision maker conducting the meeting and the People Directorate representative who their chosen companion is, in good time before the meeting takes place.

17.3. If the companion is not available at the time proposed for the meeting, the meeting will be postponed and rearranged at a date and time proposed by the employee that is

both reasonable and no more than seven calendar days after the date originally proposed.

17.4. Acting as a companion is voluntary and colleagues are under no obligation to do so. Employees are allowed reasonable time off from duties without loss of pay to act as a companion.

17.5. A companion should not answer questions on behalf of the employee but may make representations and ask questions and sum up. The employee and companion may talk privately at any time during the meeting.

17.6. Typically, an employee would not be accompanied by a relative or partner, however at the university's discretion, the employee may be allowed to bring a companion who is not an employee or trade union representative if this is deemed reasonable, for example, where this will help overcome a disability or significant health condition, or where the employee has difficulty understanding English.

18. Appeals

18.1. If an employee wishes to appeal the dismissal decision, they should appeal in writing, within seven calendar days of the date on the dismissal letter, stating the grounds for appeal. The appeal hearing would not usually be a complete re-hearing of the case and therefore, the employee must be specific about the grounds for appeal as these will form the agenda for the hearing.

18.2. The appeal should be addressed to the person named in the outcome letter and copied to the People Directorate representative involved in the case.

18.3. The appeal hearing will take place without undue delay and the employee provided with seven calendar days' notice, in writing, of the date, time and place of the meeting. The appeal hearing will be conducted by the relevant decision maker (see Appendix C: Decision Making Authority in this policy). A representative from the People Directorate will also attend, and a note taker may also be present. The employee has the right to be accompanied at the hearing (see *Accompanied at meetings* in this policy).

18.4. The date on which dismissal takes effect will not be delayed pending the outcome of the appeal. However, if the appeal is successful the employee will be reinstated with no loss of service or pay.

18.5. Following an appeal, the original decision may be confirmed, revoked, or replaced with a different decision. The final decision will be communicated to the employee in writing without undue delay, within seven calendar days. The appeal decision will be conclusive and there will be no further right of appeal.

19. Other Policies

a) **Grievance Policy and Procedure – overlapping grievances**
If an employee raises a Grievance which is not linked to the Probation Policy and Procedure, it will typically be heard separately and without delaying the Probation Policy and Procedure. If an employee raises a Grievance which is linked to the Probation Policy and Procedure, it will typically be heard as a relevant issue in the course of the probation proceedings.

b) **Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Procedure**

c) **Menopause Guidance**

d) **Menstrual Health Guidance**

e) **Appraisal Policy and Procedure**

f) **Professional Teaching Qualification and Recognition Policy**

20. Freedom of speech and academic freedom

In any matter falling under this policy, the university will have particular regard to, and place significant weight on, the importance of freedom of speech within the law, academic freedom and tolerance for controversial views in an educational context or environment. The University's commitments to freedom of speech and academic freedom are set out in the Freedom of Speech Code of Practice. In the event of any conflict between this policy and the Freedom of Speech Code of Practice, the Freedom of Speech Code of Practice will take precedence.

21. Appendix A: Line managers' guidance

This guidance supports the Probation Policy and Procedure. It provides procedural guidance for managers responsible for managing Professional Services and Academic employees and employees on Senior Management Contracts during their probation period.

The guidance should be followed to ensure employees receive an effective induction, appropriate support and a fair assessment of their suitability for the role.

Managers are responsible for actively managing probation throughout the review period and maintaining accurate records of discussions, goals, support provided and outcomes.

A probation guide for line managers can also be found on the university staff portal. Line managers can also refer to Appendix B: Probation Process Flow Chart in this policy.



If at any point during the probation period the line manager identifies performance, conduct or attendance that falls below what is expected, they must contact the Employee Relations and Change Team and refer to Unsatisfactory Performance, Conduct or Attendance in this policy, and Appendix C: Unsatisfactory Performance, Conduct, Attendance Flow Chart.

Preparing for a new starter

Prior to the employee's start date, managers should ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to support the employee's arrival and integration into the university.

This should normally include:

- Reviewing the university Horizon Welcome Journey.
- Preparing a local induction programme relevant to the role and faculty/directorate.
- Arranging IT equipment, system access and non-IT equipment/workspace requirements, if required.
- Scheduling meetings with key colleagues.
- Arranging campus and workplace orientation.
- Scheduling a one-to-one check-in on their first day.
- Allocating a named 'buddy' to help orientate and settle in.

Managers should take reasonable steps to ensure the employee has the resources, information and support required to perform their role from their first day of employment.

Only where a disabled colleague is unable to access the Horizon Welcome Journey should the line manager use the Induction Checklist, which can be downloaded from the staff portal.

Induction

An effective induction is critical to a successful probation period. All university employees who are subject to a probation period must receive a comprehensive induction to introduce them to the university and help them to settle in, including:

a) Reviewing the Horizon Welcome Journey and the line managers responsibilities.
b) Ensuring the employee has any equipment, software or system access they need.
c) Signposting the employee to the Horizon Welcome Journey and tasks.
d) Preparing a local induction specific to the faculty or directorate.
e) Signposting to the university's Probation Policy and Procedure.

Probation procedure for Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Associate Professors, Professors, Senior Management Contracts

Day one

- ✓ Meet and welcome employee.
- ✓ Direct the employee to their actions required on **day one.**
- ✓ Highlight the mandatory training which must be completed by the employee to pass their probation period.
- ✓ If the line manager is unable to meet with the new employee on their first day, they must ensure this responsibility is delegated to their line manager or appropriate senior colleague.

Week one

Identify the formal milestone review meetings required throughout the probation period and **diarise these meetings with the employee in the first week**.

First two weeks

The line manager is expected to meet with their new team member at the soonest opportunity to **set goals** and outline the expectations in their role.

Goals must be in place by the end of the **first two weeks** and added to the probation goal plan on Horizon.

The line manager should meet with the employee regularly and prior to the first probation review meeting to check on their progress and identify any needs they may have. They should use check-ins on Horizon to record these meetings.

Additional review meeting

Where the line manager identifies performance, conduct or attendance concerns that fall below the required expectations and standards, and one-to-one check-in meetings do not resolve the concerns, the line manager reserves the right to meet with the employee sooner than any planned probation review meeting, at an **additional review meeting** (see Additional Review Meeting in the Probation policy).

Formal probation review meetings

Line managers must follow the steps below and document each probation review meeting on Horizon.

Month 3 – Probation Review Meeting

Hold the **first probation review meeting** at the end of month three to discuss progress and provide feedback against goals set out in the goal plan. This must be recorded on Horizon in the Probation Review Meeting Form.

Where the line manager has identified performance, conduct or attendance concerns that fall below the required expectations and standards at this stage of probation (3 months), the concerns must be recorded on Horizon in the probation review meeting form. The line manager must also contact the Employee Relations and Change Team to seek advice by submitting an enquiry via the Horizon Help Desk.

Month 6 – Probation Review Meeting

The line manager must hold the second probation review meeting at the end of month six to discuss progress and provide feedback against goals. This must be recorded on Horizon in the Probation Review Meeting Form.

Month 9 – Probation Review Meeting

The line manager must hold the third probation review meeting at the end of month nine to discuss progress and provide feedback against goals. This must be recorded on Horizon in the Probation Review Meeting Form.

Month 12 – Final Probation Review Meeting

The line manager must hold the **final probation review meeting** at the end of month twelve. This must be recorded on Horizon in the Final Probation Review Meeting Form.

Where probation has been completed successfully the line manager should confirm this on Horizon in the Final Probation Review Meeting Form and confirm the employee in post. (see *Confirming in Post* in this policy).

Where the employee has not completed their probation period successfully this must also be recorded on Horizon. The line manager must contact the People Directorate immediately, if they have not already done so.



Line *managers must not wait until the final probation review meeting to address concerns. It would be reasonable for an employee who reaches their final probation review without any concerns brought to their attention, to expect to pass their probation successfully. If a line manager has concerns, they must raise them at the earliest opportunity in the probation period.*

Probation procedure for Professional Services, Researchers and Apprentices

Line managers must follow the steps below and document each probation review meeting on Horizon.

Day one

- ✓ Meet and welcome employee.
- ✓ Direct the employee to actions required on **day one.**
- ✓ Highlight the mandatory training which must be completed by the employee to pass their probation period.
- ✓ If the line manager is unable to meet with the new employee on their first day, they must ensure this responsibility is delegated to their line manager or appropriate senior colleague.

Week one

Identify the formal milestone review meetings required throughout the probation period and **diarise these meetings with the employee in the first week**.

First two weeks

The line manager is expected to meet with their new team member at the soonest opportunity to **set goals** and outline the expectations in their role.

Goals must be in place by the end of the first two weeks and added to the probation goal plan on Horizon.

The line manager should meet with the employee regularly and prior to the first probation review meeting to check on their progress and identify any needs they may have. They should use check-ins on Horizon to record these meetings.

Additional review meeting

Where the line manager identifies performance, conduct or attendance concerns that fall below the required expectations and standards, and one-to-one check-in meetings do not resolved the concerns, the line manager reserves the right to meet with the employee sooner than any planned probation review meeting, at an **additional review meeting** (see Additional Review Meeting in the Probation policy).

Formal probation review meetings

Line managers must follow the steps below and document each probation review meeting on Horizon.

Month 3 – Probation Review Meeting

The line manager must hold a **first probation review meeting** at the end of month 3 to discuss progress and provide feedback against goals set out in the goal plan. This must be recorded on Horizon in the probation review meeting form.

Where the line manager has identified performance, conduct or attendance concerns that fall below the required expectations and standards at this stage of probation (3 months), the concerns must be recorded on Horizon in the probation review meeting form. The line manager must also contact the Employee Relations and Change Team to seek advice by submitting an enquiry via the Horizon Help Desk.

Month 6 – Final Probation Review Meeting

The line manager must hold the **final probation review meeting** at the end of month six. This must be recorded on Horizon in the final probation review meeting form.

Where probation has been completed successfully the line manager should confirm this on Horizon in the final probation review meeting form and confirm the employee in post. (see *Confirming in Post* in this policy).

Where the employee has not completed their probation period successfully this must also be recorded on Horizon. The line manager must contact the People Directorate immediately, if they have not already done so.



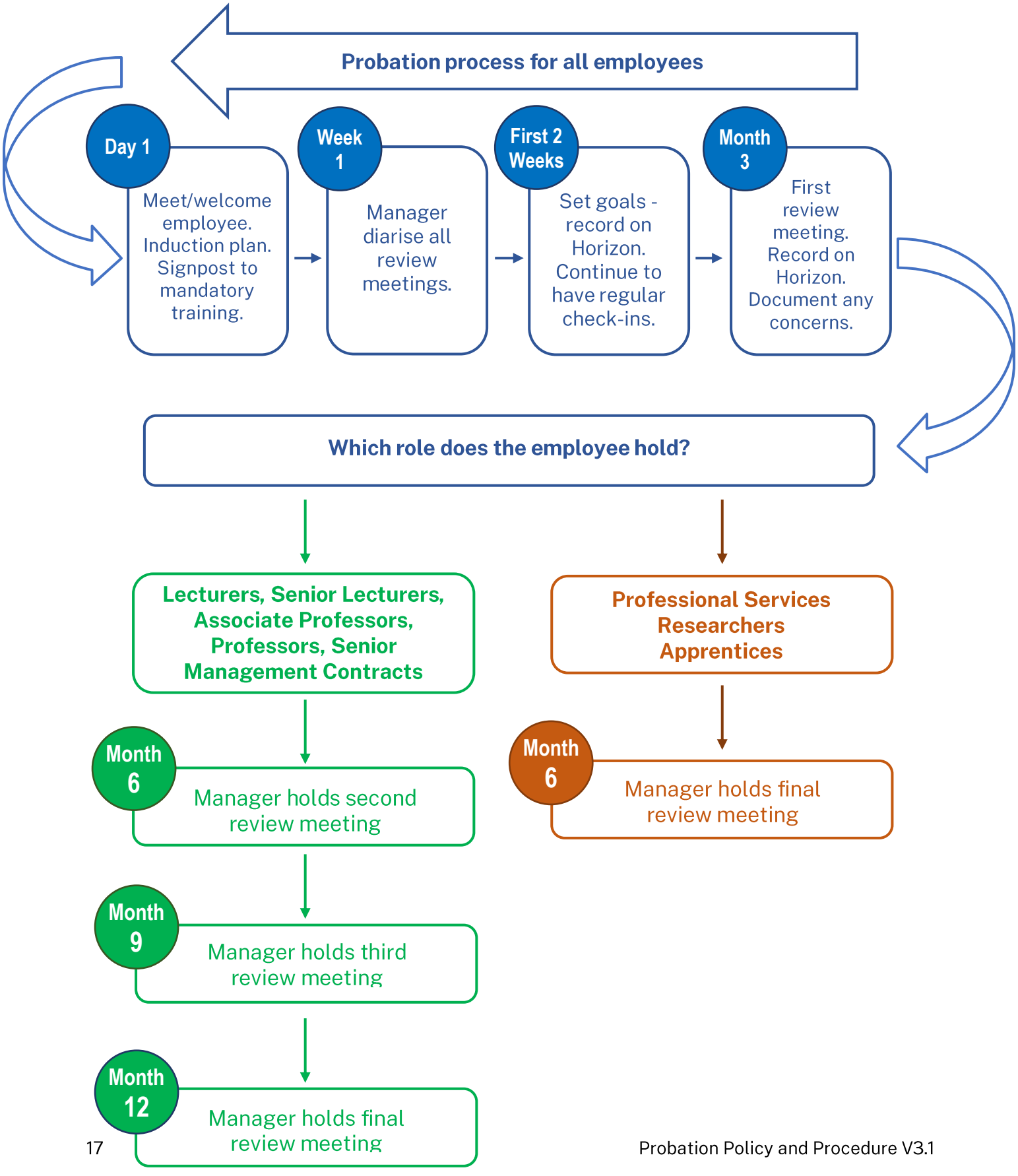
Line managers must not wait until the final probation review meeting to address concerns. It would be reasonable for an employee who reaches their final probation review without any concerns brought to their attention, to expect to pass their probation successfully. If a line manager has concerns, they must raise them at the earliest opportunity in the probation period.

Examples of unsatisfactory performance, conduct and attendance

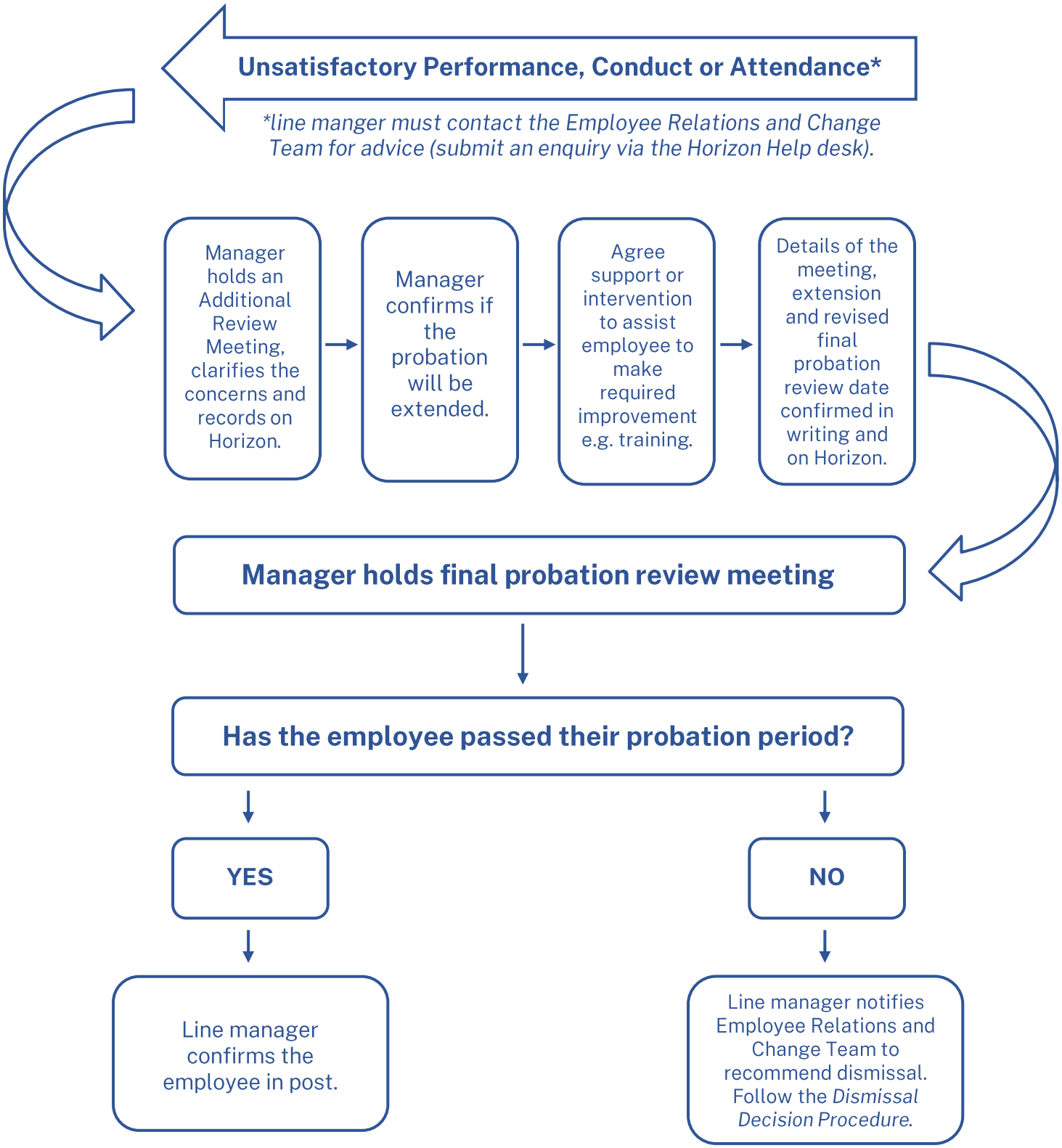
The following are some examples of unsatisfactory performance, conduct and attendance, although this list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive:

a) Performance, conduct, or attendance falls short of the required standard but is not considered to be so unsatisfactory that the contract of employment needs to be terminated.
b) Absence (for any reason) which has meant the line manager has been unable to make a fair assessment.
c) Failure to achieve performance, conduct or attendance goals set during the probationary period.
d) Poor timekeeping.
e) Inability to follow university policies and procedures.
f) Poor standard of customer care.

22. Appendix B: Probation Process Flow Chart



23. Appendix C: Unsatisfactory Performance, Conduct, Attendance Flow Chart



24. Appendix D: Decision Making Authority

The tables below set out who is responsible for conducting meetings and appeals at the formal stages of this policy and procedure, dependent upon where the employee works within the university.

Professional Services Directorates, Vice-Chancellors Office, Secretariat and Greenwich Research and Enterprise (GRE)

Dismissal During Probation	
Dismissal Decision Meeting Conducted by	**Appeal Heard by**
Executive Director	Vice Chancellor or Nominee

Faculties

Dismissal During Probation	
Dismissal Decision Meeting Conducted by	**Appeal Heard by**
PVC	Vice Chancellor or Nominee

**Where cases involve professional services staff within Faculties, Faculty Operating Officers (FOO) can undertake duties assigned to Deputy Dean or Associate Dean.*

Member of Vice Chancellor Group (VCG)

Dismissal During Probation	
Dismissal Decision Meeting Conducted by	**Appeal Heard by**
Vice Chancellor	Governor

N.B. for some employees on senior management contracts, certain employment procedures have been incorporated into the contract of employment.

This policy will be reviewed regularly.

Version No.	Purpose/Change	Author	Approved By	Date
1.0	First Draft	Vanessa Roots Senior Workforce Policy Officer	JNC	25/10/2023
	Reference to Reasonable Adjustments policy (21)	Vanessa Roots Senior Workforce Policy Officer	N/A	21/01/2026
2.0	Freedom of speech and academic freedom (22)	Vanessa Roots Senior Workforce Policy Officer	N/A	22/02/2026
3.0	Policy review: Appendix A: Line Managers Guidance. Introduced with clarity around processes. (16) Covert Recording of Meetings updated. (11) Additional Review Meeting (name change; previously named early review meeting). (17) Accompaniment at Meetings now includes additional reviews meetings after six months service.	Vanessa Roots Senior Workforce Policy Officer	JNC	22/09/2026
3.1	5.6(h) and 10.2	Vanessa Roots Senior Workforce Policy Officer	N/A	12/10/2026