



LINCOLN ANGLICAN
ACADEMY TRUST

DIOCESE OF LINCOLN

Probationary Policy

Schools serving their communities through excellence,
exploration and encouragement within the love of God.

The diocese of Lincoln is called to faithful worship, confident discipleship and joyful service and our church schools bear witness to our belief that every child is made in the image of God and loved by Him. They were founded for the good of their local communities so that children can be educated through the values and stories of Christianity.

Policy Owner: LAAT CEO
Policy Date: April 2017
Policy Review Date: April 2019

Excellence

Exploration

Encouragement

Contents

1.	Introduction.....	2
2.	Length of probation	2
3.	Extending probationary periods.....	2
4.	Terms of employment during the probationary period	3
5.	Line Managers' responsibilities	3Error! Bookmark not defined.
6.	Reviews during probation.....	3
7.	Irregularities discovered during the probationary period.....	4
8.	End of probation	4
9.	Termination of employment	4
10.	Appeals against Termination of employment.....	5
11.	Review of policy	5

Appendix A Probationary Guidance Notes

Appendix B Probationary Review Form

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The LAAT aims to deliver excellent services to our local communities and to operate as effectively as possible at all times. Monitoring employees through their initial period in a role is an important part of ensuring this is achieved.
- 1.2 It is the Trust's policy to operate probationary periods for all employees, including internal employees who have been transferred or promoted into different posts.
- 1.3 This policy allows both the employee and the Trust to objectively assess whether or not the employee is suitable for the role. A probationary period helps support employees and enables them to become fully integrated and productive from the earliest opportunity. It provides an important opportunity for employees to familiarise themselves with their job and for Line Managers to clarify what is required, set standards and encourage development.
- 1.4 The Headteacher/Line Manager is responsible for ensuring that all employees are properly monitored during their probationary period. If any problems arise, the Headteacher/Line Manager should address these promptly and in accordance with the policy. The employee should be made aware that some aspects of their performance or conduct is unsatisfactory. This will help prevent the problem from escalating and hopefully lead to sufficient improvements.
- 1.5 Where the employee is the Headteacher, the Chief Officer or their nominee shall be responsible for managing the probation process and determining whether their employment is confirmed or their employment is terminated.
- 1.6 The probationary assessment form which can be found in Appendix B should be completed for all employees who are subject to a probationary period.
- 1.7 The probationary process does not replace the performance appraisal process. It is complimentary and any individual performance targets should still be set.

2. Length of probation

- 2.1 The length of the probationary period applicable to an employee will be as set out in the contract of employment of that employee.

3. Extending probationary periods

- 3.1 Six months should be an adequate period of time to effectively assess an employee's suitability for the role. In exceptional circumstances, the Trust may decide to extend an employee's period of probation. This will be limited to one extension and the total period of probation will be no longer than 12 months.
- 3.2 An extension may be implemented in circumstances where:
 - (a) The employee's performance, conduct or attendance during probation has not been entirely satisfactory, but some improvement

has taken place and it is thought likely that an extension to the probationary period may lead to satisfactory improvement.

- (b) The employee or the Line Manager has been absent from the workplace for an extended period during the probation.

3.3 Before extending an employee's probationary period, the Headteacher may consult with H.R. or the Chief Officer, depending on who is making a decision to extend. If an extension to the probationary period is agreed, the Trust will confirm the terms of the extension in writing to the employee, including:

- (a) the length of the extension and the date on which the extended period of probation will be reviewed and when it will end;
- (b) the reason for the extension and, if the reason is unsatisfactory performance, details of how and why performance has fallen short of the required standards;
- (c) the performance standards or objectives that the employee is required to achieve by the end of the extended period of probation;
- (d) any support, for example further training, that will be provided during the extended period of probation; and
- (e) a statement that, if the employee does not meet fully the required standards by the end of the extended period of probation, their employment will be terminated.

4. Terms of employment during the probationary period

4.1 During the probationary period, employees will be subject to all the terms and conditions of their contracts of employment with the exception of those terms noted below. During the probationary period, attendance, conduct and capability issues will be managed under this policy rather than the standard school/central H.R. policies.

4.2 During probation, either party may terminate the employee's contract of employment by giving the notice as specified within their contract of employment. In the event that the Trust decides to terminate the employee's employment, their employment will come to an end immediately and the employee will receive pay in lieu of the notice together with any outstanding holiday pay.

4.3 Once the probationary period has been completed, the notice periods will be as defined in the employee's contract of employment.

5. Reviews during probation

5.1 Under this policy, the Headteacher/Line Manager has responsibility for monitoring an employee's performance, conduct, attendance and progress during the probationary period. The Headteacher/Line Manager should ensure that the employee is properly informed at the start of their employment about what is expected of them during probation, for example the required

targets or standards of performance, and for putting in place a plan to support the successful start to any new role.

6. Line Manager's responsibility

- 6.1 The Line Manager should review and assess the employee's performance, capability, conduct, attendance and suitability for the role on at least a monthly basis during the employee's probation, and again at the end of the probationary period.
- 6.2 During an employee's probation, the Line Manager should provide regular feedback to the employee about their performance and progress, and, should there be any problem areas, raise these with the employee as soon as possible with a view to resolving them. The Line Manager is responsible for providing guidance and support and for identifying and arranging any necessary support, training or coaching that is relevant to the role.

7. Irregularities discovered during the probationary period

- 7.1 If, during an employee's probation, it is suspected or established that the employee does not have the qualifications, experience or knowledge that they claimed to have at the time of recruitment, the matter will be discussed with the employee to establish the facts. If the evidence suggests that the employee misrepresented their abilities in any way, the Trust will terminate the employment giving the appropriate contractual notice.

8. End of probation

- 8.1 Shortly before the end of the probationary period (or end of the extension), the Headteacher/Line Manager should conduct a final review of the employee's performance, conduct, attendance and suitability for the job. This will involve a meeting with the employee to discuss their performance and progress throughout the period of probation.
- 8.2 If the employee's performance is satisfactory, the Line Manager should notify H.R. in order to issue a letter of confirmation of appointment to the employee.

9. Termination of employment

- 9.1 Ordinarily it is the Trust's policy to allow the employee to complete the designated period of probation rather than terminating employment before the probation has come to an end. This is to give the employee a full opportunity to come up to the required standards. If, however, there is clear evidence prior to the end of the period of probation that suggests the employee is wholly unsuitable for the role, the employment may be terminated early. Advice from H.R. must be sought by the Manager before this action is taken.

Performance

- 9.2 If an employee's performance whilst on probation has been unsatisfactory (despite support from the Line Manager) and it is thought unlikely that further training or support would lead to a satisfactory level of improvement, the employment will be terminated at the end of the period of probation. Where the concerns are considered serious and have not improved despite support,

4

Excellence

Exploration

Encouragement

then the employment may be terminated prior to the end of the period of probation or at an earlier point if appropriate.

Conduct

- 9.3 If an employee's conduct while on probation has been unsatisfactory (despite support from the Line Manager) and it is thought unlikely that further training or support would lead to a satisfactory level of improvement, the employment will be terminated at the end of the period of probation or at an earlier point if appropriate.

Attendance

- 9.4 If an employee's attendance while on probation has been unsatisfactory (despite support from the Line Manager) and it is thought unlikely that further or support or reasonable adjustments would lead to a satisfactory level of improvement, the employment will be terminated at the end of the period of probation or at an earlier point if appropriate.
- 9.5 Where a decision is taken to terminate the employee's employment, a meeting will be held with the employee to inform them of the reason for the termination. The Trust will write to the employee confirming the termination and the reason for it. The employee will be given an opportunity to appeal the decision.
- 9.6 If the employee is an existing employee who has been transferred or promoted into a different role, the Academy's normal capability/disciplinary/sickness absence/dismissal procedure must be followed in full.

10. Appeals against Termination of Employment

- 10.1 Should an employee wish to appeal against a decision to terminate their employment they must write to the Headteacher/Line Manager within ten working days of the decision to terminate the employment being communicated to them. The employee must state the grounds of their appeal in full. An appeal meeting will then be arranged with a relevant Senior Manager who has not been involved in the original decision. The Appeal meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Trust's standard Appeal process and the employee will have the right to be accompanied, if they so wish. The outcome of an appeal meeting will be confirmed in writing; this will make it clear that there is no further internal right of appeal. Where the employment of the Headteacher is terminated they should appeal to the CEO who will make arrangements for the appeal hearing.

11. Review of policy

- 11.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Trust in consultation with the Trade Union Consultation Group.

Appendix A - Probationary Period Guidance Notes

Outline of key steps in the process

- Employee begin the new role.
- Probationary assessment forms: - sent during first week of service to the Line Manager.
- First Review: - held after 6 weeks and relevant section of assessment form completed and signed by both parties.
- Second Review: - held after 12 weeks and relevant sections of the form completed and signed by both parties.
- If there are concerns: - copy of form given to employee and H.R.
- Final Review: - held after 18 weeks.
- Completed forms returned to H.R. for processing.

Suggested review format

The aim of the process is to assess the way the employee carries out their role. Whilst no two reviews can be carried out in exactly the same way, an initial assessment can be carried out by focussing on the following aspects:

Quality of Work

- Has achieved the standards expected, or the standards being achieved by other employees doing similar jobs.
- Number of regular errors
- Need for constant supervision
- Ability to plan and organise
- Relationships and working with colleagues and customers

Speed of working – has achieved the standard expected.

Attitude and Motivation

- Interested in the work, effort to learn the job and adaptability to changing situations.
- Accepts constructive criticism.
- Ability to liaise well with other employees and ability to meet standards of customer care when dealing with the public
- Relationships and working with/supporting colleagues and customers

Punctuality – has achieved the standards expected.

The First and Second Review Meetings

At the first review meeting it should be noted how improvement to performance can be made before the next review; e.g. any on the job training or formal training. If the employee's performance is unsatisfactory after the first review and is still below the standard after the second review, any shortcomings must be discussed and documented as part of the process. The employee must be informed of the specific ways in which he/she has still not met expected standards. The Line Manager should discuss these shortcomings with the Head of Service.

If progress has not been made: or, there is the possibility that it may not be made by the second review, the employee should be informed of the possibility that their appointment may not be confirmed. The employee should be given a copy of the assessment form which details why their performance is unsatisfactory and a copy sent to H.R.

The Final Review Meeting

The final review should assess the employee's progress over the whole probationary period. In the majority of cases the meeting will be an opportunity to give some positive feedback to the employee and inform them that their appointment will be confirmed.

However, if a recommendation is made that an employee should be dismissed, the employee must be informed of the reason why the manager is unable to recommend confirmation of the appointment. H.R. must be notified and convene a formal meeting to review the situation involving the employee, the manager and H.R., at which the dismissal will be confirmed and the employee informed of their appeal rights. The employee will have the right to be accompanied by a TU representative or a work colleague, if they so wish.

The completed probationary forms should be forwarded to H.R. by 20th week of service. In some cases it may be clear to both parties that no training or extra support is going to enable the employee to reach the expected standards. In this case the contract may be terminated earlier. On the other hand the probationary period could be extended if the employee has not met expected standards where it looks as if, given more time, they will successfully complete the probation period (e.g. where they have been on certified sick leave). Any extensions to probationary period can only be for a total maximum of 6 months and final decisions about the suitability of a new employee must be made before the 12 months service is completed. Further guidance on early termination can be obtained from H.R.

The review meetings should be noted on the assessment form and both the employee and the manager should sign the form as an indication of agreement on what was discussed and on any action to be taken.

Appendix B - Probationary Period Assessment Form

This form must be completed for all employees who are subject to a probationary period. The Line Manager concerned is responsible for completing this form having read the guidance notes. The employee may be assessed by their Line Manager or another designated supervisor.

Name:	
Start Date:	
Job Title:	
Service Area:	

FIRST REVIEW – AFTER 6 WEEKS SERVICE

Comments:

Any actions to be completed before next review:

Date interviewed

Signed Employee

Signed Manager

PROBATIONARY OUTCOME

To be completed at the end of the probationary period or at the end of the extension to the probationary period if that occurs.

Employees Name:	
Job Title:	
Service Area:	

Confirmation of Appointment

I recommend that the above employee's appointment is confirmed

Name Line Manager

Signature

Date

Non - Confirmation of Appointment

The above employee has unsuccessfully completed the probationary period and I recommend that this employee be dismissed for the reasons stated on the assessment form.

Name Line Manager

Signature

Date

Please note: H.R. will send formal notification to the officer and inform the employee of their Appeal Rights

**Please return completed probationary assessment form to the
Human Resources Team**