



Probation Policy

Responsible for policy
Date of policy
Date approved by CC3
Date of review
Chair of Directors

CC2
September 2019
September 2019
September 2022

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Definitions

In this **Probation** Policy, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

- i **'The Romero Catholic Academy'** means the Company named at the beginning of this **Probation Policy** and includes all sites upon which the Company is undertaking, from time to time, being carried out. The Romero Catholic Academy includes; **Corpus Christi, Good Shepherd, Sacred Heart, Blue Sky, SS Peter and Paul, St Gregory, St John Fisher, St Patrick, Cardinal Wiseman, Shared Services Term.**
- ii **'Romero Catholic Academy'** means the Company responsible for the management of the Academy and, for all purposes, means the employer of staff at the Company.
- iii **'Board'** means the board of Directors of the Romero Catholic Academy.
- iv **'Chair'** means the Chair of the Board or the Chair of the Local Academy Committee of the Academy appointed from time to time, as appropriate.
- v **'Clerk'** means the Clerk to the Board or the Clerk to the Local Academy Committee of the Academy appointed from time to time, as appropriate.
- vi **'Catholic Senior Executive Leader'** means the person responsible for performance of all Academies and Staff within the Multi Academy Company and is accountable to the Board of Directors.
- vii **'Companion'** means a willing work colleague (not family member) not involved in the substance of the employee's performance issues under review by this Absence Policy, or an accredited representative of a trade union or other professional association of which the employee is a member, who should be available for the periods of time necessary to meet the timescales under this Capability Policy and Procedure.
- viii **'Diocesan Schools Commission'** means the education service provided by the diocese, which may also be known, or referred to, as the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service.
- ix **'Local Academy Committee'** means the governing body of the School.
- x **'Academy Committee Representatives'** means the governors appointed and elected to the Local Academy Committee of the School, from time to time.
- xi **'Principal'** means the substantive Principal, who is the person with overall responsibility for the day to day management of the school.
- xii **'School'** means the school or college within The Romero Catholic Academy and includes all sites upon which the school undertaking is, from time to time, being carried out.
- xiii **'Shared Services Team'** means the staff who work in the central team across the Company (e.g. HR/ Finance)
- xiv **'Vice-Chair'** means the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body elected from time to time.
- xv **'Full time'** is defined as an employee working 37 hours per week, 52 weeks per year

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Support Staff - Probation Policy, as adopted, applies to all newly appointed Support Staff employed in the Romero Catholic Academy (The 'Academy Company') working in one of the Academy Schools (The 'School').
This policy also applies to temporary appointments, regardless of if they are moving from another School within the Academy. However, discretion may be considered as to how the policy may be applied for those employees who are appointed to similar posts and who have transferred from another School.
This policy is not applicable to casual workers.
- 1.2 The purpose of the probation policy is to ensure that all new employees have the opportunity to become familiar with the main duties and tasks of their post and to demonstrate that they meet the appropriate standard of performance, behaviour and attendance expected of them. It also gives the line manager the opportunity to assess a new employee's suitability to the role they have been appointed to.
- 1.3 All new employees who are appointed to a permanent or temporary contract, regardless of the length of time, are required to complete a probationary period before they are confirmed in post. A probation period will usually last for 6 months although this may be extended in exceptional circumstances.
- 1.4 Principals must ensure that current HR policies and other advice/guidance referred to throughout this document are accessible for all staff employed within the Academy Company. The current HR policies are available on www.romeromac.com or via the HR Team in the Shared Services Office. Policies are reviewed annually, to ensure the most appropriate employment legislation is adhered to.

2. Application of the Policy

- 2.1 During an employee's probation period, their performance, behaviour and attendance will be monitored and assessed by the employee's line manager.

3. Employees with a disability

- 3.1 Consideration should be given as to whether an employee's behaviour, capability or poor attendance is due to a disability and if so, what reasonable adjustments may be needed to assist the employee in being able to reach the required standard of performance, behaviour and attendance. Further advice may be sought from Occupational Health and HR services in these circumstances.

4. Induction Period

- 4.1 A thorough and effective induction is essential for all new starters. An induction programme should take place when an employee is recruited into a post and would usually be completed within the first 3 months of employment.
- 4.2 The induction programme should cover everything that employees need to be aware of, in terms of policies, procedures and working practices within the school. It should also cover the performance, behaviour and attendance expectations and standards required from the employee within their role.

5. Serious Concerns

- 5.1. If at any point during the employee's probation period, the line manager considers that there are serious concerns then it may be necessary to refer the employee to a Formal Probation Hearing to consider termination of employment.
- 5.2. In these circumstances, managers should discuss their reasons and seek advice from HR.

6. Process

Stage 1 - First Probation Meeting (end of induction period)

The Line Manager will meet with the employee after 3 months upon completion of their induction:

- Discuss how the employee considers the period has gone.
- Provide feedback on the employee's performance, behaviour and attendance, providing examples where possible.
- Re-affirm that a satisfactory standard must be reached for all of the essential requirements of the role by the Stage 2 Final Probation Review Meeting.

Whilst it would be unusual for an employee to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or work colleague at a Probation meeting, such a request should not be refused if the employee feels they require support.

Stage 1 - Possible Outcomes

Where the performance, behaviour and attendance is satisfactory, this will be confirmed to the employee, and a date for the Stage 2 Final Probation Meeting will be arranged for just before 6 months from the employee's start date.

Where the performance, behaviour and / or attendance is not satisfactory, the required standards will be re-affirmed to the employee. An improvement plan will be drawn up (to last a period of 2-4 weeks) which will set goals, targets that are reasonable and achievable and identify any training and / or support needed. A Progress Review Meeting will be set at the end of the improvement plan to determine whether the employee's performance, behaviour and attendance has improved. If progress is considered to be satisfactory at this stage, then a date for the Stage 2 Final Probation Meeting will be arranged. If, however, the employee's progress is still considered to be unsatisfactory at the review meeting, then the line manager may refer the matter to a Formal Probation Hearing.

Stage 2 - Final Probation Meeting

The Line Manager will meet with the employee, after 6 months from the start of their employment to:

- Provide feedback on the employee's performance, behaviour and attendance, giving examples where possible.
- To inform the employee that their performance, behaviour and attendance has been satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

Stage 2 - Possible Outcomes

Satisfactory Performance

Where the performance, behaviour and attendance is satisfactory or sufficient improvements have been made where targets were previously identified:

- The employee will be verbally confirmed into post and sent a letter confirming the appointment (see appendix 3).
- Any future training or support should be identified and linked to the objectives and targets set as part of the performance management process.

Unsatisfactory Performance

Where the performance, behaviour, and attendance is not satisfactory or sufficient improvements have not been made, the employer must advise:

- That the matter will be referred to a Formal Probation Hearing which may lead to the employee's dismissal.
- The employee must be advised of their right to be accompanied by a Trade Union Representative or a work colleague at the hearing.

Extension

In exceptional circumstances a manager may grant an extension to the probation period for a maximum of 8 weeks. Examples of circumstances where an extension may be appropriate may be sought from HR.

At the end of the extension period the Line Manager will meet with the employee to review the employee's performance, behaviour and/or attendance in addition to any progress made against the expectations and requirements of the post:

- If following the extension period, the employee's progress is acceptable, the employee will be confirmed in post both verbally and in writing.
- If the employee's progress is not acceptable, the matter will be referred to a Formal Probation Hearing.

Formal Probation Hearing

The employee must be given at least 10 working days' written notice to attend a formal probation hearing and the notice should inform the employee of the reasons for the hearing and their right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. The letter should state that a potential outcome of the hearing is dismissal. Employees should be provided with copies of relevant documentation e.g. improvement plan(s), notes of meetings etc. that may be referred to at the hearing.

Details of any witnesses that management are intending to call should be included.

The invite to hearing letter should also inform employees that they will have an opportunity to provide any evidence and call witnesses if they wish, details of which should be submitted to the chair of the panel no later than 5 working days prior to the hearing.

Formal Probation Hearing - Possible Outcomes

The panel or delegated person may find that:

The employee's performance, behaviour and attendance is of an acceptable level, and that the employee is therefore confirmed into post.

Based on the evidence provided at the hearing, the employee has not been given sufficient opportunity to demonstrate their ability to fulfil the job, and/or has not been given enough support/training; it may be decided to allow the employee to continue with the probation process.

- A formal extension of up to 8 weeks may be given where it is considered that the employee has not reached the required standard, but that this will be attained in the very near future with some additional training/support. An extension may only be given if this has not been previously granted during the probation process. Following this extension there will be a Formal Review Hearing with the same panel, where possible.
- The employee's performance, behaviour, and attendance is of an unacceptable level. The employee should be dismissed.

Delegation of Authority

The person or panel responsible for hearing the case will depend on who has been given the delegated authority. This will either be the Governing body (i.e. a panel of Governors) or the Principal. If it is the Principal, then they may be supported by another member of the senior management team or a Governor. It would not be appropriate for the Principal to make the decision if they have managed the case.

Dismissal

If the decision is made that the employee should be dismissed, the panel or delegated person will dismiss the employee with notice in accordance with their contract of employment.

The employee should be notified in writing of the outcome of the hearing, including the reason for the decision to dismiss and the date of termination of their employment. The letter will also include details of the employee's right to appeal

Right of Appeal

An employee has the right to appeal against dismissal. A request for an appeal must be submitted in writing by the employee and sent to the Line Manager within 5 working days of receiving their letter of confirmation for the decision from the Company. The appeal will be held in line with the Appeal Procedure for all staff.

7. Review of this Policy

This version was reviewed in accordance with employment legislation in September 2019.

This policy will be reviewed in 3 years' time, unless direction is given from the CES prior to this, or employment legislation changes

Appendix 1 3 Month Probationary Review Form

A mid-point probation review meeting is held to check the employee's progress and discuss whether the employee has any concerns around their time in the business and their performance.

Employee Name	
Job Title	
Department	
Date employment commenced:	
Line Manager	
Date of Review meeting	
Date current probationary period due to end	

Have you enjoyed your time with the business?	
Have you completed your induction and training plan?	
Do you understand your job role and your required tasks?	
Do you require any additional support at this stage?	
Do you have any issues or concerns at this stage?	
Areas of work requiring further improvement/training:	
Summary of employee's overall performance:	
Any additional comments/concerns regarding completion of probation:	

Agreed Objectives

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.
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Signed (Manager):

Date:

Signed (Employee):

Date:

Date of next meeting:

Appendix 2 6 Month Probationary Review Form

The purpose of probationary period reviews is to review your performance and feedback on your future with the business.

The possible outcomes of the review meeting include: confirming a successful completion of the probationary period, extending the probationary period or terminating your employment.

Note: Completion of this form should be carried out in accordance with the probationary period policy

Employee Name	
Job Title	
Department	
Date employment commenced:	
Line Manager	
Date of Review meeting	
Date current probationary period due to end	

Review of Performance

Objectives/Targets	Improvement Required	Average	Good	Excellent

Areas of work requiring further improvement/training	
Summary of employee's overall performance	

My decision is that the:

Please tick

Employee has successfully completed their probation	
Employee probationary period to be extended	
Employee employment to be terminated	

If employment is to be terminated, record the reasons why:

If probation is to be extended, summarise the improvement required:

Extended probation period completion date (insert date below):

Additional Comments:

Agreed Objectives

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Signed (Manager):

Date:

Signed (Employee):

Date:

Appendix 3

Letter confirming successful completion of Probationary Period

Private and Confidential

[Insert name]

[Insert address]

[Insert date]

Dear [insert name],

When you commenced employment with us on [insert date] in the role of [insert job title] you were informed that your employment was subject to the satisfactory completion of a probationary period of [insert number] months.

I am delighted to confirm that you have successfully completed your probationary period. The time you have worked during your probationary period will count towards your length of service with the business.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you and wish you all the best in your continued role.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

[insert name]

[insert job title]

Appendix 4

Letter confirming unsuccessful completion of Probationary Period

Private and Confidential

[Insert name]

[Insert address]

[Insert date]

Dear [insert name],

When you commenced employment with us on [insert date] in the role of [insert job title] you were informed that your employment was subject to the satisfactory completion of a probationary period.

We met on [insert date] to discuss your performance during the probationary period and I explained to you that, unfortunately, you have not reached the standards we require to demonstrate your suitability for the role.

It is with regret that I confirm your probationary period ends on [insert date] and your employment will therefore terminate on this date.

I will arrange for any outstanding wages and accrued holiday pay to be sent to you under separate cover together with your P45. On your last day of employment you must ensure to return all company property that is in your possession including [insert items here – eg mobile phone, keys, laptops].

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

[insert name]

[insert job title]

Appendix 5 Letter extending Probationary Period

Private and Confidential

[Insert name]

[Insert address]

[Insert date]

Dear [insert name],

Further to our probationary review meeting on [insert date] I am writing to confirm my decision.

At the meeting we discussed the standards required of you in your role as [insert job role]. Unfortunately, you have failed to meet these standards however we remain hopeful that you can demonstrate the required improvement, therefore your probationary period is to be extended for [insert number] months, until [insert date].

We expect to be able to evidence an immediate and sustained improvement in the following areas: [insert details of required standard of behaviour/specific expectations of the employee's performance]. During this extended period, the following support will be provided: [insert details of support offered, if none delete this sentence].

We will meet again once this probationary extension has been completed, where we will decide appropriate next steps. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss.

Yours sincerely,

[insert name]

[insert job title]

Appendix 6

Letter inviting employee to Probationary Period Review Meeting

Private and Confidential

[Insert name]

[Insert address]

[Insert date]

Dear [insert name],

When you commenced employment with us on [insert date] in the role of [insert job title] you were informed that your employment was subject to the satisfactory completion of a probationary period of [insert number] months.

To discuss your performance during your probationary period, you are required to attend a probationary review meeting at [insert time] on [insert date] in [insert location]. The meeting will be chaired by [insert name] and will be used to review your performance and feedback on your future with the business.

As set out in your contract, the possible outcomes of the review meeting include: confirming a successful completion of the probationary period, extending the probationary period or terminating your employment.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

[insert name]

[insert job title]