



Appendix A

Draft Probation Policy

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Document Control

Version History	0.2
Summary of Change	New Probation Policy that defines the framework within which employees who are new to the Council will receive regular review and support in the early stages of their employment with the Council.
Contact (job title)	HR Policy Manager
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 Probation is a 'trial period' that allows for the assessment of an employee's suitability for the job for which they have been employed. This policy sets out the framework for monitoring, reviewing and formally supporting new employees to the Council during this probationary period through regular feedback on their performance in the following areas:
- Quality and quantity of work;
 - Behaviours;
 - Conduct and attendance;
 - Compliance with policies and procedures;
 - Leadership and management (if appropriate).
- 1.2 This policy replaces all previously issued documentation and local arrangements related to the Council's probationary process. The Probation Guide 2017 provides further guidance for employees and managers.
- 1.3 The Council's Induction Policy 2017 provides information on the induction process for new staff and a checklist to assist managers inducting new staff.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all new employees and apprentices regardless of their permanent, fixed-term, full or part-time status.
- 2.2 Although this policy applies to temporary employees, successful completion of a probationary period by a temporary employee does not lead to the conversion of the individual into permanent employee status.
- 2.3 Subject to section 2.5, all new employees are subject to satisfactory completion of a six-month probation.
- 2.4 Employees who have previously worked for the Council as agency workers/contractors are still subject to the probationary process.
- 2.5 Individuals who have completed a probation period and are moving to a new position within the Council, for example redeployees, are not subject to any further probation periods. This only where there has not been a break in employment/contract with the Council. These individuals will be given a formal period of support and development; this is not a probation. Issues of capability and performance for these individuals will be dealt with under the Council's Capability Policy and/or Disciplinary Policy.
- 2.6 Where a six month (or less) fixed term contract is issued the probationary period will run concurrently with the contract. Employees engaged on six months or less contract are not required to have a My Conversation Map meeting (see section 5.2)

- 2.7 Employees engaged under the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) scheme that gives newly qualified social workers extra support during their first year of employment will be subject to an extended probation of 12 months.
- 2.8 If issues of conduct, sickness and/or poor performance arise during the probation the probationary procedure (or where appropriate the associated guidance for dealing with disciplinary issues during probation – see section 8) will be used to address such matters.

3. Promoting equality and inclusion

- 3.1 This probation policy must always be applied fairly and in accordance with employment law and the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy. (See the Probation Guide).

4. Roles and responsibilities

Everyone involved in the probationary period for a new employee must appreciate that this is a two-way process: the degree to which a new entrant develops into a fully effective member of Haringey staff depends not only on their own skills and attributes but also on the assistance and encouragement received during their probationary period.

4.1 Employees

Employees are responsible for:

- a. Ensuring that they understand the probationary policy;
- b. Ensuring that they are familiar with the standards and requirements of the job role;
- c. Ensuring that they take an active part in the probation review meeting;
- d. Undertaking any learning and development activities agreed with the manager.

4.2 Line managers

Line managers are responsible for:

- a. Scheduling and notifying the employee of probationary meetings in advance so that both parties have time to prepare;
- b. Explaining to the employee how the probation will be managed;
- c. Fairly and consistently applying the probation policy;
- d. Informing employees at the outset of their employment of the purpose of probation and the standards of performance, attendance and conduct expected of them;
- e. Completing a probation review for the new employee at the probation review stages (more frequently for ASYE employees) and provide a copy to the employee;
- f. Ensuring that probation review forms are completed in a timely manner;
- g. Identifying any potential for the employee to fail to meet the standards required and take the necessary action to support the employee;
- h. Ensuring that systems are in place to support and monitor the employee's work throughout the probationary period in order that they receive such assistance as is reasonable to fulfil the duties and responsibilities of the post.

5. Timing

- 5.1 Managers will hold regular monitoring meetings with employees on probation, to review progress. A minimum of four formal probationary reviews should take place with a new employee at the following intervals:
- a. First review meeting - To be held within 4 weeks of start date;
 - b. Second review meeting - To be held by week 10 of start date;
 - c. Third review meeting - To be held by week 14 of start date;
 - d. Fourth review meeting - To be held by week 17 of start date.
- 5.2 Employees on probation will not have a My Conversation Map rating in the first six months. An employee may request to have a My Conversation Map meeting to support their development plan, so long as both parties have agreed that this could happen.

6. Newly Qualified Social worker probation

- 6.1 Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWs) joining the Council under the ASYE programme will complete a 12-month probation period. The line manager will complete the ASYE paperwork instead of the Council's standard probation forms.
- 6.2 Where a NQSW has completed part of the ASYE with another organisation, their probation will last up to the end of the ASYE programme (at least six months) with Haringey.
- 6.3 If a NQSW is failing their ASYE, they will also be heading towards failing their probation, which will lead to HR being advised and in most cases instigation of the Council's capability policy, which could lead to the termination of the individual's contract of employment with the Council.
- 6.4 NQSW's will have a My Conversation Map meeting in their sixth month to help to support their development plan.

7. Extensions of the probationary period

7.1 Probationary extensions

- 7.1.1 In the event that performance is insufficient, appropriate notice must be given to the employee within the probationary period.
- 7.1.2 In certain exceptional circumstances, a probationary period may be extended where there are definite indications that the employee will achieve the standard required for confirmation given further time, training or where an employee's sickness or other authorised absence has made it not possible to assess the employee's performance. An extension period will not exceed three months.
- 7.1.3 Where an extension of the probationary period is a likely outcome of the final review meeting, the manager must consult with HR before proceeding with the final review meeting. The employee should be given reasons why it is not possible to confirm them in the post. The employee needs to be able to understand what aspects of their performance are letting them

down and, as a result, what they will need to do to prove themselves in the further period of probation.

8. Disciplinary and capability issues during a probation

8.1 Where, at any stage of the process, a dismissal is a likely outcome, the line manager must consult with HR before proceeding with the final review meeting. A management investigation will be conducted in complex cases. A three-step process of notification, meeting, and written confirmation of decision must be followed where the meeting may result in dismissal.

9. Termination of employment during a probation

9.1 If work performance, attendance or conduct falls short of acceptable standards with the effect that it is not appropriate to continue employment it is possible to terminate employment at any point during the probationary period. The employee will be invited to attend a meeting to be told how their performance, attendance or conduct is unsatisfactory and have the opportunity to give an explanation.

9.2 As dismissal will be considered, the manager will inform the employee of their right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague.

9.3 It is not the intention of this procedure that probationary employees should face dismissal as a result of allegations of minor misconduct which would not lead to the dismissal of any other employee. However, persistent acts of minor misconduct (i.e. more than once), may lead to dismissal.

10. Appeals

10.1 Where an employee on probation has their probationary period extended, a warning issued, or has been dismissed for reasons of capability/performance/conduct; the individual will be informed in writing of the decision and given the right to appeal against the decision.

10.2 Appeals must be registered with the manager and Shared Services within three working days of the date of the letter confirming any decision. Appeals received after this period will not be heard.

10.3 Appeals will be restricted to considering one or more of the following:

- **Procedural** – the appeal must detail how procedural irregularities prejudiced the decision;
- **Factual** – the appeal should detail how the facts do not support the decision or were misinterpreted or disregarded. They should also detail any new evidence to be considered;
- **The decision** – the appeal should state how the act(s) of misconduct did not justify the level of action taken.

- 10.4 The purpose of the appeal hearing is to review the decision to extend the probation period, issue a warning or to dismiss. The possible outcomes are to confirm the decision, substitute a lesser penalty or to withdraw the dismissal. The decision is final.

11. Monitoring

- 11.1 SSC (HR) is responsible for monitoring the application of this policy.

12. Further Advice

- 12.1 Further advice is available from SSC (HR) contactable on 0208 489 7000 or via the Haringey Intranet portal.