

# Probation (Professional and Support Staff)

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### 1.0 Purpose

Employees appointed to continuing or fixed term positions are normally required to undertake a period of probation. Confirmation of a continuing or fixed term appointment is subject to the employee demonstrating satisfactory performance during the probation period.

The period of probation provides a set period in which a manager can assess an employee's performance against set objectives that are aligned with their position purpose and the strategic goals of their Element. The establishment of performance objectives provides a structure to the ongoing dialogue and feedback between a manager and the employee prior to a decision being made about confirmation of the appointment. On confirmation of the appointment, these goals and objectives will form the basis of the employee's performance review.

### 2.0 Scope

This procedure is a guideline for a manager to be guided by when orientating and managing an employee performance during the probation period. A manager should work in partnership with their HR Business Partner to ensure that appropriate advice and planning is in place to support employees performance.

### 3.0 Procedure

#### 3.1 Probation Period

Professional and Support staff are subject to a minimum probationary period. Continuing and Fixed term, that is greater than 12 months will have a 6 month probationary period. Fixed term contracts that are less than 12 months, will have a minimum period of 3 months.

A Probationary period can apply to employees that are transferring to new positions within the University, when the new position is substantially different to the employee's current role.

Head of Element, in exceptional circumstances may request a probationary period that is shorter than the standard outlined above. The Head of Element may request this approval with a justification from the Director, Human Resources.

### 3.2 Initial Performance Planning

The manager and employee are expected to discuss, document and clarify performance expectations within the first month of the commencing employment.

At the initial meeting, the manager and employee should set goals and objectives that align with the purpose and primary accountabilities of the position and align with the Element's strategic objectives.

The manager will establish regular opportunities to provide support, guidance and feedback to enable the employee meet optimal performance in the position during this period.

### 3.3 Probationary Reviews

The manager and employee should meet periodically during the probationary period to discuss and assess the employee's performance. These reviews provide the opportunity for the employee to seek additional support and advice to ensure they are able to meet performance expectations.

It is recommended that a final probation review meeting occurs within two weeks prior to the end of the probation period.

### 3.4 Responsibilities of the Manager

The manager is responsible for:

- ensuring that specific duties and performance expectations are communicated clearly to the employee
- meeting dates for formal probationary reviews should be established at the initial meeting
- ongoing regular dialogue with the employee regarding their performance, which will include:
  - monitoring the employee's performance
  - providing feedback on a regular basis
  - taking remedial action as a result of poor performance
  - advising the employee of the consequences of unsatisfactory performance
  - establishing timelines to review outcomes of remedial actions.

### 3.5 Responsibilities of the Employee

The employee is responsible for:

- working with the manager to establish goals and objectives
- working towards achieving expectations
- acting on feedback as required
- providing feedback to the manager in relation to performance matters including
- seeking further clarification of expectations if in doubt of requirements
- advising the manager of any concerns relating to the achievement of expectations as they arise during the probationary period.

### 3.6 Unsatisfactory performance during the probationary period

In the event unsatisfactory performance is identified during the probationary period, the manager will arrange a meeting with the employee as soon as possible to advise the employee of the areas and

examples where unsatisfactory performance is occurring and provide support to the employee to achieve expected performance levels.

If the manager has concerns in relation to the development, performance or behaviour of the employee at any stage throughout the probationary period, the leader must immediately contact their HR Business Partner for advice and support.

### 3.7 Decision to Confirm Employment

The manager should conduct the final review of the employee's overall performance at least two weeks prior to the end of the probationary period.

Where the manager is of the view that performance is satisfactory, they will recommend to the Head of Element that the employee's appointment be confirmed. The Head of Element will make a decision to confirm the appointment.

### 3.8 Decision to Terminate

An employee's employment may be terminated by the University at any stage during the probation period for any reason, including unsatisfactory performance, behavioural concerns, misconduct (after the employee has an opportunity to respond to any adverse material that will be taken into account in any decision to terminate their employment) or serious misconduct.

The manager, based on advice and support from their HR Business Partner, will advise the employee of the recommendation that they will not have their probation confirmed. The recommendation report will be sent to the Director, Human Resources outlining the performance concerns, support and counselling provided to the employee. The employee will be given the opportunity to respond to the report.

The Director, Human Resources will make a final decision regarding the report and employee response.

The manager will communicate the final decision to the employee. Where the final decision results in the termination of employment, the employment will cease on the date the final decision is communicated to the employee.

The University will provide the employee with the equivalent of two weeks' salary in lieu of notice from the final date of employment.

## 4.0 Definitions

**Continuing Appointment** is employment with the University that is not continuing (contingent funded), fixed term or casual and may be subject to the successful completion of a probationary period.

**Fixed Term Appointment** is an appointment made for a specified term or ascertainable period for which the employment contract will specify the starting and finishing dates of that employment.

**Head of Element** means a position that is the designated head of an organisational unit in the University, for example, Head of School or Director of an administrative division.

**HR** means the office of Human Resources at Griffith University.

For advice and support contact [policy@griffith.edu.au](mailto:policy@griffith.edu.au) for Governance and Operational policy documents.

## 5.0 Information

Title	Probation (Professional and Support Staff) Procedure
Document number	2023/0001117
Purpose	<p>Employees appointed to Continuing or fixed term positions are normally required to undertake a period of probation. Confirmation of a continuing or fixed term appointment is subject to the employee demonstrating satisfactory performance during the probation period.</p> <p>The period of probation provides a set period in which a manager can assess an employee's performance against set objectives that are aligned with their position purpose and the strategic goals of their Element. The establishment of performance objectives provides a structure to the ongoing dialogue and feedback between a manager and the employee prior to a decision being made about confirmation of the appointment. On confirmation of the appointment, these goals and objectives will form the basis of the employee's performance review.</p>
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UN Sustainable Development 4: Quality Education Goals (SDGs)	
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Policy advisor	Head of HR Business Partnering
Approving authority	Directed, Human Resources

## 6.0 Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents

Legislation	Griffith University Professional and Support Staff Enterprise Agreement
Policy	Delegations Policy Performance Reviews and Professional Development (Professional and Support Staff)
Procedures	Delegations Procedure Delegations Register
Local Protocol	N/A
Forms	N/A