**QUEEN’S UNIVERSITY BELFAST**

Probation Procedure (For Staff Grades 1-5)

1. Principles
   1. The main function of probation is to provide a period of development for a member of staff appointed to the University, to enable them to gain appropriate experience, with advice and guidance from senior colleagues. At the same time it enables the University to assess the contribution of a new member of staff and if he/she fulfils the requirements of the post.
   2. If the performance/conduct of a member of staff is found to be deficient, or if for any other substantial reason or reasons they are judged unsuitable to be confirmed in post there is the provision for non-confirmation in post during or at the end of the probationary period.
   3. This procedure applies to all staff in Grades 1-5. In all cases that are to be considered under this procedure, the University reserves the right to digress from them in so far as they may be inconsistent with its legal obligations as an employer and/or the legal rights of individual members of staff.
   4. For newly appointed staff in Grades 1–5 the period of probation specified in the letter of appointment will be 6 months.
2. Activity Setting/Training and Development
   1. Following the appointment of the member of staff, the Senior Manager will select the supervisor/manager who will set the activities, standards and responsibilities for and monitor the progress of the probationer. This will normally be the member of staff’s line manager.
   2. The line manager is responsible for ensuring that activities, standards and responsibilities are communicated to the probationer within one month of appointment. Appropriate induction, training and development should also be agreed with the probationer. The line manager should ensure that this information is documented.
3. Monthly Review Meetings
   1. The reviews should be conducted at monthly meetings between the probationer and the line manager to discuss their progress and performance with reference to the activities, standards and responsibilities that have been set. Feedback should also identify any deficiencies in performance and advice given to help facilitate improvements. An adequate period of time should be given to improve. Where deficiencies have been discussed, the probationer should be advised of these in writing and of the potential outcome, ie: failure to successfully complete probation. The line manager should ensure that this information is documented.
4. Recommendation from Line Manager
   1. By the end of the probation period (or earlier if the probationer’s performance/conduct is unsatisfactory or if for any other substantial reason or reasons they are judged unsuitable to be confirmed in post), the line manager should complete the probationary report recommending that the probationer:
      1. pass probation and be confirmed in post or
      2. have his or her employment terminated or
      3. extend the period of probation once unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.
   2. Confirmation in Post : Recommended

Where confirmation in post is being recommended, the line manager should meet the probationer to discuss and sign off the report accordingly. The line manager should submit the report to his/her Senior Manager.

The Senior Manager should consider the report and recommendation submitted by the line manager and either uphold or amend the recommendation\*. A copy of the completed report is sent to the line manager who should forward a copy to the HR Hub for implementation.

\*Where a Senior Manager decides to amend the recommendation Section 4.3 will be followed.

* 1. Confirmation in Post : Not Recommended

Where confirmation in post is not being recommended, the line manager should advise the probationer of this and arrange a meeting for him/her, the probationer and the Senior Manager to discuss the report and recommendation. At this meeting the probationer will be entitled to be accompanied by a representative of a recognised trade union or a University colleague. A HR Business Partner should also be present.

At the meeting:

* The line manager should clearly indicate the reasons for the recommendation.
* The probationer or relevant officer should make their representation.
* The Senior Manager shall consider all relevant information, question the line manager, and the probationer and/or relevant officer.

Within 5 working days of the meeting, the Senior Manager shall give a reasoned decision in writing to the probationer either upholding or amending the line manager’s recommendation.

A copy of the completed report and confirmation of the Senior Manager’s decision is sent to the line manager who should forward a copy to the HR Hub for implementation.

4.4. If, without good cause, the probationer does not attend the probationary meeting(s) to set/review activities, standards, responsibilities and/or sign the completed probationary report form, the process will proceed in the probationer’s absence.

1. Appeal
   1. The probationer will have the right to appeal the decision either to have his/her probation extended or employment terminated. This appeal, should outline the grounds on which the appeal is based, and be submitted in writing to the People and Culture Director within 10 working days from the date of the letter of notification.
   2. The People and Culture Director will constitute an Appeal Panel comprising:

* A Director/Head of School from another Directorate or cognate area.
* People and Culture Director or nominee.
* Director/Head of School in which the individual works.
  1. The probationer (the appellant) has the right to attend the hearing of the appeal and is entitled to be accompanied by a representative of a recognised trade union or a University colleague.
  2. The probationer should attend the hearing of the appeal, but the hearing may proceed in their absence where the Appeal Panel considers that such absence is unreasonable in the circumstances.
  3. The decision of the Appeal Panel shall be final and will be communicated in writing to the probationer.