



# Probationary Policy

CHARITY POLICY & PROCEDURE

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# Probation Policy

## Content

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## Statement of Intent

Talbot House Children's Charity Limited ("the Charity") recognises that a supportive and developmental probation process is vital in providing the appropriate level of support and training for new Employees ("Employee") on commencement of their employment.

The Charity will make every effort to ensure that the recruitment procedures serve the purpose of recruiting the best individuals for each role. However, we acknowledge that we are inevitably not always accurate in predicting conduct, performance, or determining suitability. The probation period for new Employees gives both parties enough time to assess if the appointment will be suitable for the Charity and the individual.

This policy applies to employees or workers directly employed or engaged by the Charity and sets out the Charity's approach to probation for new Employees (and those changing roles during employment). The policy aims to ensure the Charity meets its commitment to the fair, equal, and consistent treatment of employees with regard to the probation period.

The main purpose of this policy is to ensure that probationary reviews are carried out effectively.

Employees within probation will not join the appraisal process or be subject to the disciplinary process until such time as their probationary period is successfully completed.

This policy and procedure does not form part of any Employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time. The Charity may also vary this procedure, including any time limits, as appropriate in any case.

# Probation Policy

## 1. Probationary Periods

### 1.1 Central and Residential Employees:

- Employees working within Central and Residential are subject to a 6 months probationary period, with meetings held on or around 1, 3, and 6 months.

### 1.2 School Employees (those who do not usually work during the school holiday periods):

- Employees working within the School are subject to a 6 months probationary period, however, this is assessed over a 26-term week period, with meetings held on or around 4 term weeks, 12 term weeks, and 26 term weeks. Term weeks exclude school holiday periods.

### 1.3 The Charity aims to secure equality of opportunity in all its activities and in this respect, the probation process must be objective, clear, transparent, and free from discrimination.

- The probation process should work alongside the induction process to help create a positive and supportive working environment, allowing new Employees to settle into the organisation and learn the key elements of the job within a reasonable and realistic timescale.
- At their induction, new Employees will be made aware by their Line Manager of the performance standards expected of them and will be given support, training, and feedback necessary to achieve these standards. Line Managers will use the probationary period to monitor the success of the new Employee in reaching those standards.
- Clear, comprehensive, and accurate records of the probation review meetings must be maintained, including how standards are set, what methods are used for measuring them, and what timescales are given for reaching them. A probation review form is provided for this purpose and must be signed by the Employee and their Line Manager at each review point to provide a formal record of the probationary period. Induction materials may be used to inform the initial probation review meeting i.e., to clarify the duties and responsibilities of the new employee in line with their terms and conditions of employment, their job description, and the policies and procedures which must be followed.
- In circumstances where problems arise during a period of probation, the Line Manager should raise these with the Employee in a timely manner, and the Employee must be given an opportunity to respond to any concerns. Line Managers should discuss the action required by the Employee to address the problem and where necessary give clear, unambiguous warnings if standards are not met. The Manager should use the probation review form to keep a record of the discussion and ensure that this is signed by both parties.

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

### 2.1 The new Employee is responsible for:

- Demonstrating their suitability for the post for which they are appointed.
- Participating as required in their induction.
- Meeting any reasonable objectives within set deadlines.
- Identifying to their Line Manager at the earliest opportunity any difficulties they are experiencing.
- Raising with their Line Manager any training, development, or support which they believe to be necessary in order for them to fulfil the requirements of the role.
- Following the Code of Conduct.

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## 2.2 The Line Manager is responsible for:

- Establishing the standards of performance consistent with the requirements of the position, in line with the job description.
- Communicating the required standards, responsibilities, and objectives to the new Employee.
- Ensuring the new Employee is inducted locally.
- Making sure that the Employee is aware that records of induction activities may be used to support the probation process.
- Maintaining induction records which will provide complete and documented evidence to support the probation procedure.
- Providing training and guidance as necessary.
- Monitoring the conduct, performance, suitability, attendance, and timekeeping of the Employee.
- Arranging and conducting formal probation review meetings at the intervals prescribed in the probation procedure, and holding additional meetings as required.
- Providing appropriate supervision to monitor progress or identify difficulties and provide opportunity for resolution.
- Timely conduct and documentation of probation reviews.
- Advising Human Resources of the outcome of the probation period.
- Confirming verbally and by completing the probationary form, whether or not the employee has completed their probationary period successfully at the final review meeting, if this is going to be extended, or if the Employee has failed.

## 2.3 The HR Department is responsible for:

- Providing HR advice on the probation period for both Line Managers and the new Employee as required.
- Issuing probation review paperwork to Line Managers in time for review meetings as agreed.
- Setting reminders ahead of meetings (any additional meetings are set by Line Managers, additional meetings can be set with or without advance notice). The Employee and / or Line Manager will set the date and time of the meetings.
- Sharing information regarding attendance and timekeeping with Line Manager/s.
- Advising Line Managers on cases of unsatisfactory conduct, performance and / or lack progress and where appropriate, supporting Line Managers during formal meetings to address serious cases, as requested / required.

## 3. Policy

- The Employees contract (terms and conditions of employment) and / or offer letter states the relevant probation period, if applicable. The purpose of the probation period is to assess the Employees' suitability for the role they have been employed to perform.
- During the probation period, conduct, performance, attendance, and timekeeping will be monitored to ensure that it is satisfactory. Each Employee will be required to demonstrate that they have the necessary skills, experience, and ability expected of them to allow them to undertake their role.
- Line Managers are encouraged to conduct meetings with employees during the probation period as deemed appropriate in the circumstances to discuss and feedback on conduct, performance, and progress, addressing any concerns, including attendance and timekeeping concerns.
- The Charity reserves the right to extend any probation period, at its discretion for the better assessment of conduct, performance, suitability, attendance, and timekeeping for the role. The extended period can be up to 3 months. If a lesser time is initially determined for any extended period, this can further be extended up to 3 months.

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- The Charity reserves the right to reduce any probation period at its discretion, to make a decision on continued employment, if it is clear that the Employee is under-performing and / or is unsuitable for the role and / or the Employee has poor attendance or timekeeping. Reducing a probationary period can occur with or without notice, depending on the circumstances and / or severity of the situation, if deemed appropriate by the Charity.
- Where a decision is made by the Charity to terminate employment either during or at the end of the probationary period, this will be deemed with immediate effect, the Employee will usually be entitled to one week's notice of the termination of employment, unless their contract of employment states otherwise. Notice, under these circumstances, will usually be paid in lieu of notice. There is no right to appeal against a decision to terminate employment during or at the end of the probationary period.
- At the end of a successful probation period the Line Manager will confirm, using the probationary assessment form, that the Employee has successfully completed the probation period. This will be signed by the Employee and Line Manager (SMT where required).

## 4. Policy Review

This policy is non-contractual and is subject to review in line with changes to legislation. This policy may be subject to review prior to the date shown if deemed necessary. The HR Department will be responsible for reviewing this policy.

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Appendix A – Example Probationary Review Forms (current forms as at November 2023).



## **PROBATIONARY REVIEW FORM**

Before completing this form, you are advised to read the Probationary Policy.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

You **MUST** submit a copy to HR as soon as possible following the meetings.

### **Probation Record**

<b>Employee name:</b>		
<b>Job Title:</b>		
<b>Department</b>		
<b>Post Start Date:</b>		
<b>Line Manager:</b>		
<b>Probation Review Meeting:</b>	<b>Date Due:</b>	<b>Date Completed:</b>
<b>1 month / 4 term-weeks review date:</b>		
<b>3 month / 12 term-weeks review date:</b>		
<b>6 month / 26 term-weeks review date:</b>		

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## PART 1 – First review (1 month / 4 term-weeks)

To be completed by the Line Manager in discussion with the employee.

<i>(please tick ✓)</i>	<b>Improvement required</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Quality and accuracy of work</b>				
<b>Efficiency</b>				
<b>Attendance</b>				
<b>Time Keeping</b>				
<b>Work relationships (teamwork and interpersonal communication skills)</b>				
<b>Competency in the role</b>				

If any areas of performance, conduct or attendance require improvement please provide details below.

Where concerns have been identified, please summarise how these will be addressed during the remaining period of probation.

Summarise the employee's performance and progress over the period

Have the objectives identified for this period of the probation been met?	<b>YES</b>	<b>If NO, what further action is required?</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
Have the training / development needs identified for this period of the probation been addressed?	<b>YES</b>		
<b>Employee's Signature:</b>			
<b>Manager's Signature:</b>			
<b>Date:</b>			



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## PART 2 – Second Review (3 months / 12 term-weeks)

To be completed by the Line Manager in discussion with the employee.

<i>(please tick ✓)</i>	Improvement required	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Quality and accuracy of work				
Efficiency				
Attendance				
Time Keeping				
Work relationships (teamwork and interpersonal communication skills)				
Competency in the role				

If any areas of performance, conduct or attendance require improvement please provide details below.

Where concerns have been identified, please summarise how these will be addressed during the remaining period of probation.

Summarise the employee's performance and progress over the period

Have the objectives identified for this period of the probation been met?	YES / NO	If NO, what further action is required?	Review Date
Have the training / development needs identified for this period of the probation been addressed?	YES / NO		
Employee's Signature:			
Manager's Signature:			
Date:			

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## PART 3 – Final Review (6 months / 26 term-weeks)

To be completed by Line Manager in discussion with the employee.

<i>(please tick ✓)</i>	<b>Improvement required</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Quality and accuracy of work</b>				
<b>Efficiency</b>				
<b>Attendance</b>				
<b>Time Keeping</b>				
<b>Work relationships (teamwork and interpersonal communication skills)</b>				
<b>Competency in the role</b>				
<b>Have the objectives identified for the probationary period been met?</b>	<b>YES / NO</b>	<b>If NO, please provide details</b>		
<b>Have the training / development needs identified for the probationary period been addressed?</b>	<b>YES / NO</b>			
<b>Summarise the employee's performance and progress over the period</b>				
<b>Is the employee's appointment to be confirmed?</b>				<b>YES / NO</b>
<b>If NO, please provide reasons below and summarise what action has been taken to address any difficulties which have arisen during the probationary period.</b>				
<b>The employee may provide any comments about their experience of the probationary process here.</b>				
<b>Should the employee's probationary period be extended?</b>				<b>YES / NO</b>
<b>If YES, please provide reasons and, where appropriate, specify any areas of improvement required and how these will be monitored.</b>				
<b>Length of the extension (max 3 months):</b>				
<b>New Probation Period completion date:</b>				
<b>Employee's signature:</b>				
<b>Manager's signature:</b>				
<b>SMT Signature (if Line Manager is not SMT)</b>				
<b>Date:</b>				

**Objectives to be set at end of 6 month probationary meeting to be used in annual appraisal scheme.**

**Summary of objectives for the next period:**  
Identify some objectives with target dates for the coming year.  
Remember that all objectives must be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic & Timely.

Objective	Target Completion Date