

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY AND FINANCE CABINET MEMBER

INDUCTION AND PROBATION POLICY

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To outline and seek approval for the council's revised Induction and Probation policy.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The council's Probation policy was last updated in 2010. It has now been reviewed to incorporate the initial induction stage of the employment relationship and also to make changes to the final review of a probationary period.
- 2.2 The induction process has changed over time to take account of different forms of learning, such as online elearning or APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning) in addition to more traditional attended courses. The Induction and Probation policy now reflects such routes to achieving the required knowledge of the council and job roles in order to successfully complete an initial probationary period. Checklists have been provided as appendices to the policy to assist managers and employees with the induction process.
- 2.3 A more structured approach has also been provided with regard to the review of performance during the probationary period to ensure records are maintained and more detail has been added around dealing with poor performance.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 To approve the revised policy.
- 3.2 To reject the revised policy.

3.3 To recommend amendments to the policy.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 The revised policy is a vital element in ensuring that employees new to the council are supported at the start of their employment and also that managers are enabled to manage performance from an early stage.

4.2 Rejecting the revised policy would result in the council not keeping up with best practice in this area.

4.3 Recommending further changes to the policy would require further consultation and would delay implementation.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 None.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

6.1 An impact assessment of potential impacts has considered the equality implications of these changes.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

7.1 The relevant trade unions have been consulted and are supportive of the revisions.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the revised policy be approved and implemented.

DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND RESOURCES

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This procedure describes the steps to be taken during an employee's induction and probationary period. The probationary period allows both the employee and manager to objectively assess the employee's capability and suitability for the role.
- 1.2 The council recognises the need for all employees to undergo a period of planned induction, training and integration into the workforce. This will ensure that employees feel valued, gain an appropriate insight into the workings of the council and the role they are expected to play in order to make an effective contribution to the services the council provides.
- 1.3 All new employees will be required to demonstrate knowledge in the mandatory induction areas, relevant to their role, by the end of their probation period. This is designed to help employees understand their work environment and integrate into the workforce. The mandatory induction areas are detailed in the 'Mandatory Induction Course Planner' section of Appendix 2.
- 1.4 With the exception of TUPE transfers and employees on teachers' terms and conditions all new employees, irrespective of the nature of the contract or any continuous local government service will be subject to a probationary period on appointment to a role with the council.

Note 1: This procedure does not apply to those employees appointed directly by schools with delegated powers.

- 1.5 Existing employees who transfer within the council will not be subject to a probationary period unless their initial probation period is not completed. Separate procedures apply to those transferring as a result of redeployment; see the council's Redeployment procedure, A.9.
- 1.6 Subject to the conditions outlined at paragraph 1.4, new appointees to permanent posts and fixed-term posts of one year or more will be subject to a probationary period of up to six months on appointment.

- 1.7 For fixed-term posts of less than one year the probation period should not normally be greater than half of the duration of the contract.
- 1.8 The Human Resources (HR) Advisory Service will advise managers if a new employee has to undergo a probationary period.
- 1.9 The employee's Statement of Main Terms of Employment will make clear that the appointment is subject to the satisfactory completion of a probationary period of up to six months and that if the employee does not fully meet the required standards, including demonstrating knowledge in the mandatory induction areas relevant to their role, by the end of the probationary period, their employment will be terminated with notice.

2.0 Procedure

- 2.1 Prior to a new employee starting employment with the council the manager should prepare using the Pre-induction Checklist (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 Once the employee starts work, managers must work through the Induction Checklist and Personal Action Plan (Appendix 2) with the employee to ensure that they have an understanding of:
 - The councilwide policies and standards they need to adhere to as an employee of the council;
 - the standards of performance and outcomes required in the role;
 - how these will be assessed during the probationary period, and
 - any training requirements necessary to support them.

This must be undertaken within the first week of employment.

Note 2: Employees during their probationary period are encouraged to talk to their manager at the earliest opportunity if they are experiencing problems or difficulties in the role.

- 2.3 Every month throughout the probationary period, the employee will attend a one-to-one review meeting with their manager to discuss their progress and performance.

Where there is any unsatisfactory performance, managers must raise any issues and set targets for improvement along with details of necessary support to be provided. The discussions should be recorded on the monthly probation review form (Appendix 3), which should be signed, by both the employee and the manager. The employee must be provided with a copy of the form.

Note 3: Employees may be requested to attend a review meeting at any time during their probationary period where performance or conduct is a cause for concern. If the employee's conduct is so detrimental, action may be taken before the end of the probationary period under the council's Disciplinary procedure, C.2.

- 2.4 Through the ongoing monthly review meetings, managers should be in a position to determine whether the employee's performance is satisfactory or not.

Satisfactory performance

- 2.5 If the employee's performance is consistently satisfactory in every aspect, including demonstration of the required level of knowledge in the mandatory induction areas relevant to the role, probation may be completed after a minimum period of three months. In any case, the manager should use the final review meeting to discuss and confirm this with the employee

Unsatisfactory performance

- 2.6 If the employee's performance has not been satisfactory, and/or they have not demonstrated the required level of knowledge in the mandatory induction areas relevant to the role, managers must use the final review meeting to discuss this with the employee. The discussions should be recorded on the final probation review form as detailed below. The employee has the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or fellow worker of the council.

Final review meeting

- 2.7 At the end of the induction and probation period, the employee will attend a final review meeting with their manager to:
- Discuss their overall performance;

- confirm if the required level of knowledge in the mandatory induction areas relevant to their role has been achieved or not, and;
 - confirm whether the probation period has been successfully completed or not
- 2.8 The discussions should be recorded on the Final Probation Review Form (Appendix 4) which should be signed by both the manager and employee.
- 2.9 Is it the responsibility of the manager to notify the HR Advisory Service of the outcome of the final review meeting and to send a copy of the form to be recorded on the employee's personal file.
- 2.10 Where performance is satisfactory, standards of performance and required outcomes for the next 12 months should also be recorded on this form, as well as a record of how these will be assessed and any training required to support them.
- 2.11 Following confirmation from the manager, the HR Advisory Service will inform the employee in writing when they have satisfactorily completed their probationary period.
- 2.12 Where performance is unsatisfactory, the Director, or nominated officer, in consultation with HR, may extend the probationary period by up to three months where more time is needed to fully assess an employee's capabilities.
- 2.13 If the employee fails to reach the required standard by the end of the probationary period, they will be informed in writing of the issues with their performance, including evidence of unsatisfactory performance and what support has already been provided. These should be documented on previous monthly probation review forms (Appendix 3). They will be invited to a meeting to discuss their performance with their manager. The employee has the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or fellow worker of the council.
- 2.14 Should the decision be taken to dismiss the employee, appropriate notice will be given and this will be confirmed in writing. Employees who are dismissed will have a

right of appeal. The appeal must be made in writing to the Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services who will arrange for it to be considered by the Appeals Committee. Action to implement decisions to dismiss will not be suspended pending the appeal but should the appeal be upheld, the appellant will be reinstated to his or her original post without a break in service.

Note 4: There may be instances where the end of the notice period is after the original expiry date of the probationary period. In such instances it should be made clear that this does not mean that the probationary period has been extended or, by inference, that the employee is deemed to be satisfactory because the probationary period has expired.

3.0 Additional

3.1 Employees who go on maternity leave or are absent for an acceptable reason for a large part of the probationary period will have their probationary period suspended until they return to work. Advice should be sought from the HR Advisory Service in these circumstances.

3.2 Should the probationary period be extended or suspended, this will be confirmed in writing, including:

- The length of the extension/suspension;
- the reason for the extension/suspension;
- standards which must be achieved by the end of the extended probationary period (applies to paragraph 2.8 only);
- any support that is to be provided to the employee, such as training;
- that if the employee does not fully meet the required standards by the end of the extended/suspended probationary period their employment will be terminated.

3.3 In exceptional circumstances, where there are concerns that an employee's performance represents a significant risk to themselves, colleagues, service users or the financial/physical resources of the council, suspension on full pay may be considered.

- 3.4 Advice should be sought from HR prior to contacting the employee where suspension is a possibility. The reason for the suspension will be confirmed in writing to the employee with a copy to the Assistant Director Human Resources. If the employee is a trade union representative, a senior trade union representative or full time official will also be notified at the same time or as soon as possible thereafter. This should only occur however **with the agreement** of the trade union representative whose performance is in question.

Pre-induction checklist

Surname:	_____	First name:	_____
Payroll no:	_____	Directorate:	_____
Section:	_____	Job title:	_____
Start date:	_____	Manager:	_____

Workplace	Initial when complete
Prepare working environment	
Keys cut / access card	
Order name badge if front line staff	
Message to team/directorate introducing new employee as appropriate	
Update - door signs, sign in boards, fire evacuation list	
Does the employee have any specific access needs?	
Human Resources	
Complete new starter eform (Available on Intralinc)	
P45 – send to payroll if not previously sent to HR	
Pensions – forms returned to HR – Further information at www.erpf.org.uk or www.teacherspensions.co.uk	
IT – Arrange with IT for:	
PC/laptop and associated equipment to be available	
Installation of necessary software/systems	
Password(s) issued	
Telephone extension/landline	
Health and safety	
Arrange service specific requirements – health and safety equipment/clothing	
DBS check completed if required	
Is the new employee UNDER 18 years-old? If yes, remember to complete a Young Person's risk assessment form, available on Intralinc.	
Communication	
Arrange employee's first week induction and communicate with those involved	

This form is designed for use with all new employees. Where content is not applicable, please mark 'N/A'.

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First 2 weeks induction planner for.....							
Week 1	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Tasks to cover							
Buddy/ mentor assigned							
Training to complete							

		First 2 weeks induction planner for.....						
		MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Week 2	Tasks to cover							
	Buddy/ mentor assigned							
	Training to complete							

Week One Induction checklist and Personal Action Plan

Surname: _____	First name: _____
Payroll no: _____	Directorate: _____
Section: _____	Job title: _____
Start date: _____	Manager: _____

**This form is designed for use with all new and transferred employees. Where content is not applicable, please mark 'N/A'.*

First day

Initial where completed

	Employee	Manager
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Welcome

Meet your colleagues				
Where you will work				
Domestic arrangements (breaks, drinks, toilets, stationery, telephone, car parking)				
Do you have any specific access needs?	Yes	No		
Would any reasonable adjustments be beneficial to support you in carrying out your duties?	Yes	No		
Arrangements for storing personal items, e.g. desk, lockers				
Explanation of the council and structure relevant to position (follow on from pre-induction online course)				

Employee conduct and HR requirements

Confirm the requirements of the job using job description and employee specification				
Standard working hours form – check and complete				
Payment details (pay dates, timesheets – electronic/manual, overtime)				
Flexible working arrangements – flexitime, provision of flexi card, time off in lieu etc. as appropriate				
Claiming expenses; mileage, subsistence allowances as appropriate				
Holidays – entitlement, how to book, bank holiday procedures				
Sickness reporting and sick pay conditions – how to report, certification of absence				
Discuss Code of Conduct, Employee Handbook and relevant HR policies (available at www.northlincs.gov.uk search for 'information for new starters')				
Media Protocol and Style Guide best practice				
Access to buildings: entry card/identity badge/signing in requirements				
Dress code/uniform details				
Completion of payroll/payments request form if person is to be an authorised signatory				

Health and safety

Health and safety training arranged (job specific)				
Fire - fire procedure, signing in sheet, fire exit(s), roll call point, location of fire alarm, location of fire equipment, requirement to sign in at different locations				
First aid provision and structure in your workplace (name of first-aider, how to report accidents)				
Risk assessments - go through risk assessments as appropriate to job				
No smoking policy				
Driver check completed and handbook issued				

Employee	Manager
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Health and safety continued

Lone working arrangements		
Advise that wellbeing information including contact details for the staff welfare and counselling service is available on Intralinc – search for ‘wellbeing’		
Use of equipment and machinery (appropriate to job)		

IT

Password(s)		
Availability of PC/laptop and associated equipment/software		
Use of council telephone system, personal calls and the organisational directory		
Demonstrate council email system including electronic calendar and signature		
Discuss environmental issues e.g. use recycled paper, printing double sided, standby mode, power switch off		
Digital Technologies policy (available at www.northlincs.gov.uk search for ‘information for new starters’)		
Demonstration of appropriate systems; TOPdesk, HRInfo, Employee Self Service (ESS), service specific systems		

Support

Supervision/1:1s process to be explained and frequency discussed		
Assign to experienced employee(s) for ‘on the job’ training/shadowing/performance coaching		
Name and contact details:		

Mandatory induction course planner

During a new employee’s induction and probation period, they will need to achieve the required minimum level of knowledge in the areas listed below.

New employees **without** management responsibilities need only complete the **Employee Induction** list. Those **with** management responsibilities only need to complete the **Manager Induction** list.

Courses are available in the Induction zone on *LearningLincs* to support new employees achieving in all of these areas.

They can log in at <http://northlincs.learningpool.com>

Alternative methods such as: course attendance, work shadowing, Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), work booklets, or on-site inductions can all be used, as long as the employee achieves the level of knowledge required for their role in each area.

Employee induction	Complete by (date)	How?	Manager induction	Complete by (date)	How?
Introduction to North Lincolnshire Council			Introduction to North Lincolnshire Council		
Information Governance			Information Governance		
Basic Health and Safety			Managing Health and Safety		
Introduction to Diversity			Managing Diversity		
Safeguarding Children			Managing Attendance		
			Employee Development		
			Employee Relations		
			Safeguarding Children		

As part of the employee’s Induction and Probation final review meeting between 3-6 months, you will need to confirm that the minimum standards required for the job role have been met by the employee.

Monthly Probation Review Form

Surname:	_____	First name:	_____
Payroll no:	_____	Directorate:	_____
Section:	_____	Job title:	_____
Start date:	_____	Manager:	_____

Outline the employee's views on the job, work environment and working conditions:

Summary of the employee's performance and achievements to date:

Area of work	Satisfactory	Further development required
Quality and accuracy of work		
Efficiency		
Attendance		
Time keeping		
Work relationships		

Where any areas require further development give details below:

Outline plans or training required to support this development:

Next scheduled monthly review date: _____

Signed (employee): _____ Date: _____

Signed (manager): _____ Date: _____

Final Probation Review Form and Personal Action Plan

Surname: _____	First name: _____
Payroll no: _____	Directorate: _____
Section: _____	Job title: _____
Start date: _____	Manager: _____

Final review date: _____

Has the employee completed training relevant to their role in the following areas?

During a new employee's probation and induction period, they will need to achieve the required minimum level of knowledge in the areas listed below.
 New employees **without** management responsibilities need only complete the **Employee Induction** list.
 Those **with** management responsibilities only need to complete the **Manager Induction** list.
 Courses are available in the Induction zone on LearningLincs to support new employees achieving this.
 They can log in at <http://northlincs.learningpool.com>

Please initial each section below to confirm that the employee has the level of knowledge required for their role in each of these areas.

Employee induction	Initials (employee)	Initials (manager)	Manager induction	Initials (employee)	Initials (manager)
Introduction to North Lincolnshire Council			Introduction to North Lincolnshire Council		
Information Governance			Information Governance		
Basic Health and Safety			Managing Health and Safety		
Introduction to Diversity			Managing Diversity		
Safeguarding Children basic awareness			Managing Attendance		
			Employee Development		
			Employee Relations		
			Safeguarding Children		

Summary of the employee's overall performance during the induction and probation period:

Continue overleaf.....

Summary of the employee's overall performance during the induction and probation period:			
Continued.....			
Is the employee's appointment to be confirmed?	Yes	No	
If no, give details below:			
Have you extended the employee's probationary period to allow time for improvement?	Yes	No	
Confirmed with: (HR representative)		Date:	
If yes, please specify the revised end date of the probationary period, the improvements expected, or the tasks and training required to be completed and how this is to be achieved:			

Training and development required to support you in achieving your actions		
Training and development (Request via e-ladar)	The desired outcome (What will you be able to do as a result)	Timescale/ Target

Signed (employee): _____ Date: _____

Signed (manager): _____ Date: _____

Once the probation period is successfully completed please notify HR by returning a copy of this completed form to the HR Advisory Service via:

- TOPdesk;
- email to hradvisoryservice@northlincs.gov.uk, or;
- by post to HR Advisory Service, Civic Centre, Ashby Road, Scunthorpe, DN16 1AB.

A copy will be retained on the employee's personal file.