



PROBATION POLICY

Introduction

1. All appointments to the City of London Corporation are subject to a probationary period, during which time appropriate training and support will be provided and the ability of employees to perform their duties assessed.
2. Employees have the responsibility for demonstrating their suitability for the post and every encouragement and assistance will be given to help them meet the standards of work required.

Probationary Periods

3. The standard probationary period is six months. This can be extended if there are concerns over performance. However, employees on fixed term contracts of less than six months may have a shorter probationary period.
4. Probationary periods may be extended, by up to three months, if performance, conduct or attendance causes concern during the initial probationary period. Every effort will be made to help employees to settle into their new role and support provided. Employees will be advised of any issues as soon as possible and given an opportunity to discuss them.
5. If areas of concern arise during the probationary period they will be dealt with on an individual basis, however, they will all be taken into consideration when deciding whether to confirm the appointment.

Transfers within the City of London

6. Internal transfers will be subject to a further monitoring period. The length and type of period will vary depending on individual circumstances.
7. Where internal transfers occur whilst employees are in their initial probation, the probationary period will be extended by up to a further three months.
8. Where internal transfers occur once employees have completed their initial probation they will not be subject to a further probationary period. They will, however, be subject to a transfer support period of up to six months, during which they will have periodic meetings with line management to discuss any learning needs that arise. Any issues that arise will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant procedure in the Employee Handbook, i.e. [Capability](#), [Attendance Management](#), [Disciplinary](#).

Notice Periods

9. One week's notice is required during probationary periods by either side. The nature of some posts means that longer notice periods may be necessary. An



employee's Statement of Terms and Conditions will give full detail of their notice period. Employees may be required to stay away from their place of work during this notice period.

Probation Procedures

10. During the probationary period employees will not have the right to use the formal capability and disciplinary policies as set out in the Employee Handbook, however, the general principles of good practice will apply.
11. If employment is terminated either during or at the end of the probationary period employees will be notified of the reasons in writing, given the opportunity of a meeting to discuss these, and given a right of appeal if termination is the outcome.

Induction

12. Line management and Departmental HR are responsible for ensuring that induction is completed fully and that employees are aware of the required standards of performance, conduct and attendance. Please see [Employee's Guide to Induction](#) for full details.

Required standards of performance, conduct and attendance

13. Employees are expected to meet certain required standards in relation to capability to perform their role, conduct and attendance. These required standards are outlined below. Failure to meet the required standards during probation period could result in dismissal.

Performance Management

14. The City of London operates an annual [Performance Development Framework and Appraisal](#) process with an interim review at six months. If the annual Performance and Development Review cycle takes place during the probationary period, it will form part of the employee's probationary period review process, otherwise they will be included in the annual cycle from the next Performance and Development Review.
15. In accordance with the Performance Development Framework and Appraisal process, during their probationary period the employee and their line manager must agree the objectives, behavioural standards and development issues that will be used to formally assess performance and, where appropriate, form the basis for the first pay increment.
16. During probationary periods, employees will be under continuous assessment and meetings with their line manager should take place periodically to discuss performance against the initial objectives and to identify areas for improvement.



17. Performance assessments are moderated at both departmental and corporate level to ensure that the process is fair, consistent and transparent.

Conduct

18. The City of London expects the conduct and integrity of employees to be of the highest standard. The [Code of Conduct](#) sets the standards of conduct required at work.

Attendance

19. Regular and punctual attendance from all employees is a contractual condition and is essential in providing quality services to the public and other users. The City of London is committed to employee care, health and welfare and the furtherance of the best possible employee relations whilst managing sickness levels.
20. The approach of the City of London, in cases of ill-health, will be one of sympathy and understanding, however, in cases where the sickness absence is not considered to be genuine or necessary, this may be dealt with as misconduct.
21. The procedure for reporting sickness absence detailed within the [Attendance Management](#) policy should be followed by all employees, including those in their probationary period. If attendance causes concern during probationary periods it will be addressed and, if found to be unacceptable, may lead to formal action.

Review periods

22. The last probationary period review meeting will take place approximately two weeks before the end of the probationary period. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss performance with a view to confirming employment, extending the probationary period or dismissal. This process will be repeated if the probationary period is extended.
23. If dismissal is the outcome, the notice period will be one week, unless the nature of the post means that longer notice periods are necessary. If a senior manager decides there has been gross misconduct dismissal may take effect without notice.

Failure to meet required standards

24. If, during their probationary period, including any extensions, employees fail to meet and maintain the required standards of performance, conduct and/or attendance, they will be invited to an informal meeting by their line manager to discuss concerns. As this is an informal meeting it is not appropriate for employees to be accompanied.
25. During this meeting, standards will be discussed and if necessary a review period set during which improvements will be expected. Further learning needs may be



identified to assist the employee to achieve these standards. The outcome of the meeting will all be confirmed in writing.

26. If standards improve satisfactorily, the process ends at this stage. If standards do not improve sufficiently the formal stage of this process will be initiated.

Formal Stage

27. If the required standards of performance, conduct and/or attendance have not been met at the end of the review, the formal stage will be convened at least two weeks before the end of the probationary period. If, however, the failure to meet standards is sufficiently serious then the formal stage may be convened at an earlier stage.
28. The line manager will arrange a meeting, giving at least 5 working days written notice, setting out the reasons for the meeting and offering the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague (whose identity should be notified to line management in advance). This meeting may result in dismissal.
29. The meeting will be chaired by a designated senior manager, and may also be attended by a departmental HR Officer. In the case of employees of Grade H and below the designated senior manager is a Chief Officer or a nominated manager at or above grade I / Chief Superintendent (in the City of London Police) / deputy Head in schools).
30. The decision will be communicated in writing within 5 working days. Employees have the right of appeal against any decision to dismiss (see paragraphs 31-37 below for details of this process).

Appeal Process

31. Appeals must be set out in writing and forwarded to the Director of HR (enclosing a copy of the decision) within 5 working days from the date of receipt. This must be followed up with the grounds of the appeal within 10 working days of the date of receiving the decision.
32. These timescales mean that, in most cases, the appeal hearing will occur after the date of termination. Individuals will not be paid after their date of termination.
33. The appeal will be heard by a Chief Officer or a nominated manager at or above grade I / Chief Superintendent (in the City of London Police) / deputy Head in schools), not previously involved in the decision. Individuals have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a work colleague (whose identity should be notified to departmental HR in advance).
34. Copies of any relevant documentation must be provided at least five working days in advance of the appeal to allow these to be circulated to all parties.



35. The management side will present their case first, calling any witnesses to support their case. The employee will be given the opportunity to question the witnesses. The employee will then be asked to state their case, again calling any witnesses. The management side will then have an opportunity to question the employee's witnesses.
36. The Chief Officer/designated senior manager will have an opportunity to question all parties and having heard all the evidence will decide whether to uphold the appeal or not. The decision of the Chief Officer/designated senior manager is final and will be communicated in writing, within 5 working days of the meeting.
37. If the appeal is successful the employee will be reinstated and receive full pay (excluding overtime, reimbursements and occasional payments) from the date of termination.

Withdrawal of Appeal

38. An appeal may be withdrawn before the hearing, this must be confirmed in writing, but at least 2 clear working days' notice must be given if a hearing date has been arranged.