

Academic Staff Probation and Confirmation Policy

Section 1 - Overview

(1) This policy defines the nature and purpose of probation for academic staff and sets out eligibility, responsibilities and timeframes for the probation process.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This policy applies to Early-Career Academic staff appointed to a continuing or fixed-term academic position for more than 12 months.

Section 3 - Policy

(3) An Early-Career Academic appointed to a continuing or fixed-term academic position for more than 12 months is subject to a probationary period in accordance with clause 11 of the [UNE Academic and English Language Teaching Staff Enterprise Agreement 2020-2022](#) (the Agreement).

Probation Periods

(4) There are two (2) stages in the academic probation process:

- a. the Mandatory Probation Period of twelve (12) months for applicable academic positions in accordance with clause 1; followed by the
- b. Confirmation Period of up to two (2) years for continuing positions.

(5) The Head of Cost Centre may waive:

- a. the Mandatory Probation Period, in exceptional circumstances; and
- b. part or all of the Confirmation Period, where a staff member is operating at a more than satisfactory level.

(6) A staff member on a second or subsequent fixed-term contract to the same or similar position will not be required to serve a further period of probation.

(7) A staff member who is promoted during the Confirmation Period will have their continuing appointment automatically confirmed.

Probation Criteria

(8) During the Mandatory Probation Period, a staff member will be assessed against their demonstrated general suitability for the position in which they are employed. This may also include reference to the criteria outlined in clause 9.

(9) During the Confirmation Period, a staff member will be assessed on their total contribution to the functioning of the Cost Centre and will be reviewed in terms of their competency at the relevant classification level relating to:

- a. teaching and curriculum development, where relevant;
- b. research, scholarship, professional activity and creative achievement; and
- c. University and community service, where relevant.

(10) In addition, specific conditions relating to an individual staff member may be included, provided they align with the duties and responsibilities as determined by the relevant UNE Position Classification Standards and can be reasonably and effectively achieved within the limits of the Mandatory Probation Period and in full recognition of their likely workload.

(11) Any subsequent variation to a staff member's probation requirements will be mutually agreed between the Head of Cost Centre and the staff member, and be

- a. recorded as part of the staff member's Performance Planning Development and Review; and
- b. included as part of the process of confirmation as a permanent staff member.

(12) Variations may be required when there is a change in the nature of the position and may include new or additional conditions only where mutually agreed between the staff member and the Head of Cost Centre.

Reviews

(13) Regular formal and informal feedback will be provided to a staff member throughout the probation period.

(14) A formal appraisal of performance will be provided to the staff member by the supervisor at the end of the initial six (6) months. Any impediments to the continuation of employment must be provided to the staff member in writing.

Performance Standards not being met during probation

(15) The procedures specified in the Agreement for dealing with unsatisfactory performance do not apply to staff during their Mandatory Probation Period of probation.

(16) Where a supervisor informs a staff member of any impediments to the continuation of the staff member's employment, the staff member will be given reasonable opportunity to respond to the matters raised and provided with reasonable opportunity and appropriate support to improve their performance.

(17) A staff member must be notified, in writing, that their probation period may be terminated no later than four (4) weeks prior to the expiration of the probation period. The staff member must be given an opportunity to respond to any adverse material about the staff member which the University intends to rely upon in deciding to terminate the staff member's employment.

(18) Where the University determines to terminate the employment of a staff member during:

- a. a Mandatory Probation Period of probation, the staff member must be provided with two (2) weeks' notice or two (2) weeks' payment in lieu of such notice;
- b. a Confirmation Period, the staff member must be provided with twenty-six (26) weeks' notice or payment in lieu of such notice.

Authorisation

(19) The Director People and Culture is authorised to administer this policy and to make procedures to apply under this policy. The procedures must be consistent with this policy.

(20) This is a Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer policy and vested authority is granted for decisions made under this policy to the nominated parties. The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer retains discretion over decisions made under this Policy.

Compliance

(21) All staff must comply with this Policy. A failure to comply with this Policy may amount to misconduct/serious misconduct and/or unsatisfactory performance.

(22) Where there is any unresolved interpretation of this Policy in relation to the provisions of the relevant Collective Agreement, the provisions of the relevant Collective Agreement take precedence.

Section 4 - Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy the following definitions apply

(23) Collective Agreement means the [UNE Academic and English Language Teaching Staff Enterprise Agreement 2020-2022](#), as extended or varied from time to time, and is taken to include any agreement that replaces or varies this document.

(24) Early-Career Academic means an academic staff appointed at Level A or B, with less than five (5) years regular continuing and/or fixed-term teaching/research employment.

(25) Senior Executive means the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer and his/her direct reports, excluding support staff.

(26) Supervisor means the role to whom a position reports to.

(27) Normally-Where the word 'normally' is used, it means that it is the default position that must be followed unless exceptional circumstances exist that require a departure from the default position, as determined by the Policy Administrator acting reasonably.

Status and Details

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