

Probation Policy

Reference: HR032

Document Type:	Policy
Status of Document:	Final
Version:	1.3
Date Approved:	01/08/2022
Approved By:	Chief HR & Corporate Services Officer
Publication Date:	01/08/2022
Review Date:	01/08/2025
Policy Owner:	HR Services Manager
Applies to:	All Staff
Document Location:	Corporate Records Centre
Publication:	Internal & External

DOCUMENT STATEMENT:

All Translink Group Corporate Procedural Documentation Policies should be consistent in terms of development, approval, implementation, communication, control and review in line with these guidelines.



Do you need to print this document? If yes, please consider the environment; print double-sided copies and print only those pages you need using the 'Page Range' in Print Properties.

VERSION CONTROL RECORD

Policy Owner:		HR Services Manager	
Main Contributors/co- authors:		HR Management Team	
Executive Sponsor:		Chief HR & Corporate Services Officer	
Version Reviewed	Reviewed by / Consultation Sought from	Date of Consultation	Comments
1.0	HR Services Manager	03.01.2018	Section 2 on 'Scope' amended from 'employees who have been promoted internally' to 'employees who have been appointed to new roles'. Section 2 on 'Scope' amended from 26 weeks review for weekly paid employees, to 6 months for all employees. Section 2 on 'Scope' amended to include same wording in relation to equal opportunities as the Equal Opportunity Policy. Section 5 on Corporate Induction amended from quarterly induction to requesting employees to attend on their first day or as soon as reasonably
1.1	HR Management Team	24.01.2018	No further Changes
1.2	HR Management Team People and OD Manager	Nov 2021	Reviewed by HR Mgmt team – accepted change to Manager induction.
	HR Compliance & Governance Officer	Dec 2021	Remove section on Managers induction as no longer applicable

This is a controlled document. Whilst this document may be printed, the electronic version is maintained within the Corporate Records Centre within Sharepoint by the Policy Owner.

1. Introduction

Throughout this Policy, the words 'Translink' 'Company' and/or 'the Group' refer to all corporate entities under the ownership of the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company (NITHC). This includes the parent company and each subsidiary either individually or taken together as a group.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Translink employees. It includes new employees recruited externally into the organization and also those employees who have been appointed to new posts internally and who are on a probation period. The policy does not cover agency workers or self-employed consultants.

The purpose of the probationary policy is to provide a clear framework for assessing a new employee's capability, reliability and suitability in respect of a post. All employees will be subject to a probationary period of six months. This probationary period may be extended if satisfactory performance or conduct is not achieved within this timescale and it is believed that performance or conduct will improve with the necessary support or training. Probationary periods may not extend beyond 10 months from the date of appointment.

Translink is committed to Equality of Opportunity for all regardless of gender, including gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital or civil partnership status, having or not having dependants, age or perceived age, race, (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, being an Irish Traveller) or disability.

3. Aims and Objectives

The policy aims to ensure an effective probationary process is undertaken for all employees that will include provision for induction, training and performance review during the probationary period.

The policy aims to ensure that both managers and new employees understand the purpose of the probation period and ensures that all employees are given the support and opportunity to maximise their potential and to achieve success in carrying out their duties to the required standard.

4. Line Manager Responsibility

The Line Manager is responsible for ensuring the employee is aware of this probation policy and procedure. He/she must ensure that they explain the expected standard of performance, how performance will be monitored and outline the expected standards of conduct to the new employee.

The Line Manager is responsible for completing a probation review for the new employee at

three monthly intervals. He/she is responsible for:

- Notifying the employee of the probation review meetings in advance so that both parties have time to prepare.
- Holding regular one to one meetings with their employee in order to ensure a good working relationship and provide feedback on the employee's progress.
- Ensuring that systems are in place to support and monitor the probationer's work throughout the probationary period in order that they receive such assistance as is reasonable to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the post.

5. Corporate Induction

Each new externally-recruited employee will be invited to attend the Corporate Induction by Human Resources on their first day of appointment, or as soon as reasonably practicable if not on their first day.

6. Employee Review

HR will remind the Line Manager of the date of the probation review. During the review the Line Manager will formally discuss the probationer's performance with them and document the discussion. The probationer will be given the opportunity to add their comments to the written assessment. If any review is deemed unsatisfactory the Line Manager must discuss with the probationer the aspects of performance that need improvement and should set clear objectives and timescales within which they will be reviewed. The probationer should be asked if they consider that any further assistance and/or training is necessary to enable them to complete tasks to the standards expected of them. The probationer should sign the review and receive a copy of it to confirm that they have been made aware of the improvements required.

The six month probationary review must recommend one of the following:

- Transfer to permanent employment
- Extension of the probationary period
- Dismissal during probation

When notified of completion of a successful probationary period HR will write to the employee and arrange for the transfer of the employee to permanent employment.

7. Extension of the Probationary Period

It may be appropriate to extend the probationary period if:

- Through the probationer's sickness or other authorised absence, it has not been possible to assess performance.
- The probationer has not performed satisfactorily but the manager has evidence to suggest that performance is likely to improve with a further period of probation.

Probationary periods should not normally be extended by more than three months and may not extend beyond 10 months from the date of appointment. Where the probation is extended, the following should be discussed between the Line Manager and the employee and confirmed in writing:

- Reasons for the extension.
- Length of the extension period
- Areas for improvement and indication of how these will be monitored and measured.
- Assistance/training that will be given during the period of extension.
- Dismissal will be recommended at the end of the extension period if the employee fails to meet standards of performance expected for the post.

If progress and performance are satisfactory at the end of the extended period, the Line Manager will recommend that the appointment should be confirmed and will complete the probation form as appropriate. The employee will be advised in writing of the successful completion of their probation period. If progress is still considered unsatisfactory, the Line Manager will inform the employee and make a recommendation that the employee be dismissed. The line manager should contact the HR Business Partner or HR Advisor before proceeding with a termination meeting.

8. Dismissal during Probation:

If, at the review stages, insufficient improvement has taken place, the employee will be invited to a meeting to consider the Line Manager's recommendation to dismiss. The employee should be given 48 hours' notice of the meeting and be given the right (in writing) to be accompanied by a work colleague or a trade union representative. This action may be taken by the line manager at any time during the probation period. The line manager, supported by a representative from HR will determine whether dismissal with notice is appropriate during the probationary period. The probationer and their representative will be given the opportunity to challenge any evidence brought forward or to present any evidence they believe is relevant.

The line manager will review the evidence and make a decision on one of the following outcomes:

- Transfer to permanent employment
- Extension of the probationary period (subject to maximum extension period)
- Dismissal, with notice, during probation

All employees must receive their contractual notice if dismissed during the probationary period.

9. Appeal

Any employee dismissed under the Probationary Policy has the right of appeal. The grounds for appeal must be put in writing within 7 days of receipt of the written outcome of the decision to the HR Business Partner.

On receipt of the written appeal, the HR Business Partner will arrange for a panel to hear the

appeal within 21 days of receipt. This will be communicated to the employee who will be responsible for arranging their own representation.

The panel will consist of the Head of Department and an HR Business Partner. Where reasonably practical, none of the panel members selected will have had any previous involvement in the probation review to offer complete impartiality. The Appeal panel will hear the grounds for appeal from the employee and their representative. The panel will adjourn to consider all the facts and will give a decision either the same day or within 5 working days of the hearing, subject to the need to gaining more information/advice. In the event that further investigation is required this timescale may be extended by mutual agreement. The decision of the appeal panel will be final.