

Introduction

This probation review process is for all new employees to ABCA Systems, to ensure that it is applied in a fair and consistent manner. It has been produced to assist Managers in carrying out the reviews.

The formal probationary procedure helps to ensure that ABCA can assess the performance, conduct and attendance of each new employee, in a fair and consistent manner. It also helps to ensure that employees are given the support, encouragement, training and guidance needed to have a successful career with ABCA Systems. It also ensures that Managers and Employees understand the purpose of the probationary period and what is expected of them.

Induction

When a new employee is appointed their line manager should ensure that an induction programme is in place prior to the commencement of employment, which will set standards that are expected during the probation period.

Initial Meeting

Following the induction, an initial meeting with the new employee and line manager should be arranged during the first 2 weeks of employment.

At this meeting the following should be discussed:

- How the probationary period review process works.
- Clarify the duties and responsibilities of the new employee in line with their terms and conditions of employment and their job description.
- Identify and put in place objectives which will be statements of what should be achieved during the probationary period, explaining how these will be monitored and measured, the timescales and what support will be given in order to achieve them.
- Go through the ASLGN138 Training Needs Analysis form and put a plan in place to address the actions from this form.
- Agree dates for the remaining probation review meetings:
 - First Review meeting within 2 months of start date
 - Second review meeting no later than 4 months of start date
 - Final review meeting no later than 6 months of start date

Probation Review Procedure

Throughout the probation period an employee's performance and competence should be continually reviewed by their line manager. As well as the formal probation meetings, regular, informal one to one meetings should be held to review performance and check that the employee is settling into their new role. Any performance, conduct or attendance issues should be addressed immediately with the new employee, rather than waiting for a formal review. Formal reviews should take place in stages at 2, 4 and 6 months of employment as listed above. Review forms are provided for this purpose and should be signed by the employee and line manager at the end of each review stage.

HR will send reminders of probationary review dates, but it is the responsibility of the line manager to carry these out in a timely manner. After each review a copy of the completed review form should be sent to HR, and any concerns regarding the review should also be discussed with HR. The review should be arranged in advance so the employee is aware when their reviews are.

Review Meetings

As part of the formal review meeting Managers should:

- Praise good performance and achievements so far
- Discuss the employee's performance against the requirements of the role
- Discuss the employee's performance against objectives and targets set at the initial meeting and previous review meetings
- Review timekeeping and attendance
- Review training requirements and agree any further development needs
- Review any areas of conduct, performance or attendance that needs improving, stating what the standard is and if applicable putting a plan in place as to how this can be improved.
- Provide support and guidance
- Document the discussion on the review form and ensure that the employee signs to confirm the discussion that has taken place
- Set the date for the next review.

Confirmation of successful probationary period

If at the end of the 6 month probation period an employee's performance, conduct and attendance satisfactorily meet the requirements for the role, during the Final Review meeting the manager should confirm verbally whether or not the employee has completed their probationary period successfully and complete this section on the review document. HR will then confirm the successful probationary period in writing to the employee.

Difficulties during Probation

Managers should discuss with the new employee any difficulties which arise during the probationary period at the time that they occur, rather than leaving any issues until the formal review meeting.

Where difficulties arise, the manager should take the following into consideration.

- Clarify what the difficulties are in detail – be as specific as possible, using examples.
- Allow the employee to respond and raise any issues.
- Discuss the action required to address the problem, then agree targets/objectives so that they can reach the required standard.
- Monitor and review at the next formal meeting.

The Manager should use ASLGN156 Probation Review Form to keep a record of the details referred to in the meeting and ensure that it is signed by both parties

If the employee's performance/conduct/attendance does not improve within a realistic timescale, it may be necessary to discuss the matter at a more formal meeting. Please discuss this with HR to confirm the next steps. The employee will be invited to this formal meeting in writing. The letter will state the reasons why they have fallen short of the required standards. They should be given evidence of this, where available, prior to the meeting.

The employee will have the opportunity to be accompanied at the meeting by a work employee or trade union representative.

A decision will be made at the meeting whether to give the employee an opportunity to improve their performance/conduct and attendance or whether their contract will be terminated on the grounds on an unsuccessful probationary period. Termination should only be considered before the end of the probation period in circumstances where it is clear that no improvement will be made, or in the case of gross misconduct.

Termination of employment during the probation period will be subject to one week's notice, usually paid in lieu. If they are dismissed for any reason that can be categorised as gross misconduct, then no notice will be paid.

If the employee is to be given a further opportunity to improve, clear objectives and timescales should be set and the employee will be informed that they are still under a probation review. It will be clearly set out to them, that if the objectives are not hit then they risk being dismissed due to an unsuccessful probationary period.

Regardless of the outcome of this meeting HR will issue a letter to confirm in writing the outcome.

Extending the Probationary Period

ABCA Systems reserves the right to extend the probationary period in circumstances, where due to an absence from work it has not been possible to assess the employee's performance, or where the employee has not yet demonstrated their suitability (due to exceptional circumstances), but are likely to do so.

The probationary period should not be extended for any longer than 3 months. Where the probation period is extended, the following must be discussed with the employee:

- The reasons for the extension.
- The length of the extension.
- What guidance and training will be provided during the extension.
- Areas of improvements required, how this will be monitored and timescales for improvement.
- Explain that if they have not reached the required standards by the end of the (extended) final review meeting, then they may be dismissed due to an unsuccessful probationary period.

If performance is deemed to be satisfactory at the end of the extended period then a final copy of the Probation Review form should be completed and signed. HR will confirm the outcome of the meeting in writing to the employee.

If the required standards have not been met then a formal review meeting will be arranged as detailed in the 'Difficulties in Probation' section.

Right of appeal

Where an employee is dismissed during their probationary period they have the right to appeal against the decision.

The process under the disciplinary policy and procedure will be followed at this stage.

The decision taken at the appeal hearing will be final.