



City of Dublin Education and Training Board

# Probation and Induction Policy for non-Teaching Staff

Board Meeting: 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020



## 1. Scope

This policy applies to all newly recruited staff of City of Dublin ETB with the exception of staff employed on a teacher's contract. The information and procedures outlined in this policy refer to City of Dublin ETB induction and probation only, and do not encompass or supersede in any way the requirements for new teacher induction and probation managed by the Teaching Council, which is a separate process.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure that all new staff are supported at the commencement of their employment and are informed of the operations of City of Dublin ETB and the relevant policies and procedures.

## 3. Policy Objectives

City of Dublin ETB is committed to supporting new staff and considers induction and probation to be a vital part of staff recruitment and smooth integration into the new working environment. It is recognised that the initial and early experiences of new staff members are central to the perception of the culture and professionalism of the organisation. The aim of the process is to provide a positive experience upon commencement of employment which will enable new staff to settle into a safe working environment in City of Dublin ETB and quickly become productive and efficient members of staff to the benefit of the organisation and employee alike.

City of Dublin ETB recognises that some schools, colleges and centres have well developed local induction practices. This policy document is not intended to replace such practices but is intended to ensure a minimum level of induction and to ensure consistency across the ETB.

## 4. Induction Process

City of Dublin ETB believes that all new employees must be given timely induction training in an organised and consistent manner. City of Dublin ETB expects that Principals/Coordinators/Managers will demonstrate good induction practice in line with guidelines issued by the Human Resources department.

Adequate preparation is required prior to the commencement of all new employees. Principals/Coordinators/Managers should ensure that all administrative and practical requirements for the set-up of a new employee have been fulfilled, and that provision is made for the new starter in operational terms including provision of desk, PC, network access, email address etc where appropriate (requirements will vary based on the role).

All new members of staff will be provided with a local level induction in the first few weeks of their employment by their Principal/Coordinator/Manager, this may take place over a

number of meetings. On the first day of employment, the following should be provided for new employees:

- a tour of the work location & information on access to centre
- introduction to colleagues,
- discussion of local working conditions and environment
- essential documentation (where appropriate)
- essential information about health and safety matters including fire exits, emergency procedures
- information as to how to access networks, any necessary IT systems etc
- introduction to a specific colleague who will act as a point of contact, answer queries (or direct the person to the correct contact) and help the new employee settle in.

The induction will also encompass orientation through the organisation's role, responsibilities, structure, practices, policies and ethos. This should include essential information about the local centre and its role and responsibilities with regards to City of Dublin ETB's vision, principles and values.

## 5. Probation Period

The probationary period allows time for the new employee adapt to his/her new role and working environment and to become familiar with the workings of City of Dublin ETB. It also allows the employee to demonstrate that he/she is capable of maintaining satisfactory standards of job performance and behaviour.

The probationary period extends the recruitment, selection and induction process, by establishing a specified time period for evaluating a new employee's performance, behaviour, attitudes and work habits. It is the final and most important phase of the selection process.

The probationary period is set out in each new employee's contract of employment.

City of Dublin ETB recognises that it is essential for managers to ensure new employees are fully supported during the probationary period with constructive feedback on their performance and any necessary training and development aimed at helping the employee to reach the required standard.

The new employee's line manager (Principal/Coordinator/Manager) must meet formally with the new employee on **at least two occasions** during his/her probationary period.

The purpose of these meetings is to provide feedback to the new employee on his/her performance, to ensure he/she is settling in well to the school/centre and his/her role, and to assist him/her in building on strengths and identifying any development needs. The new employee will also have opportunity to raise any concerns or issues he/she may have, respond to the feedback provided and request support where he/she feels it is necessary.

## 6. The length of Probation Period

The standard probation period for staff is 6 months with an option to extend to 11 months in exceptional situations where there is a serious performance issue that has not been addressed during the first 6 months of employment.

All employees will be advised at the outset of employment that their employment is subject to a probationary period. The Principals/Deputy Principals/Managers who will be performing the review should issue dates of review to the new employee.

The first period of review will be an informal meeting after 2 months of employment. The second period of review will be more formal in nature and should take place after 4 months of employment. A final meeting will take place at the end of the period to confirm continuation of employment, extension of probationary period or termination of employment.

Where staff are employed on short term temporary contracts there is still a probationary period which will be aggregated to ensure the full probationary requirement is met. HR will advise the relevant Principals/Deputy Principals/Managers of such periods.

## 7. Suspension of Probation

Should an employee go on approved leave of absence e.g. maternity leave, the probation period will be suspended until the person returns to employment. The employee will be notified of the suspension prior to the commencement of their leave as well as the remaining period of probation on his/her return.

## 8. Management of Probation Period

The actual probation meeting should be a two-way forum. The meeting should review the employee's knowledge, performance, areas of expected standards and any shortfalls. The meeting should also focus on the employee's perception of their first few months and where the organisation can offer more supports and better induction systems.

The first review is informal in nature and takes the form of a conversation. The second and final review periods are more formal in that a form is to be completed and forwarded to City of Dublin ETB HR Department. At the end of the final review a recommendation is to be made by the Principal/Deputy Principal/Manager.

### *If performance is satisfactory*

The staff member is informed verbally at the end of the final assessment that there is a recommendation that their contract be continued. This decision is confirmed to the staff member by the HR Department on receipt of the final probationary report provided all other employment requirements have been fulfilled.

### *If performance is not satisfactory*

Areas for improvement should be indicated, discussed and agreed verbally at the first meeting. The Principal/Manager, in certain cases, should consider offering advice, further mentoring and/or training, support.

Another review meeting should be pre-arranged, with areas for improvement / discussion highlighted.

At all times the employee must be fully aware of why further meetings are arranged.

A letter advising the employee of the next probation meeting and the areas for review should be sent to the staff member. This should also refer to the probation clause in the contract of employment.

### *If there is no sustained improvement in performance*

If a person's probation period is clearly not satisfactory after 4 months and there is a view that the Principal/Deputy Principal/Manager will recommend that the contract is not renewed, it is important to note that the employee must be afforded due notice prior to any final decision being made.

If termination of the contract of employment becomes necessary employees should be invited to a final performance meeting to discuss their poor performance or conduct as needs be. They should be advised of their right to representation and also be aware of the possible outcome of the meeting. All the relevant facts must be considered, especially all representations made by the employee.

The Principal/Manager should ensure in **ALL** cases to seek advice from the HR Department **prior** to any action being taken.

## 9. Implementation & Review

This policy will be reviewed by the executive in line with best practice, or in light of changes in legislation.

The date of implementation is 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020 which is the date of the noting of the policy by the City of Dublin Education and Training Board.