



**PROBATION GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

**JANUARY 2024**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Company believes that a probation period provides the opportunity for a Line Manager to work together with their new employee to give them the best possible start and to set them up for future success.

## 2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of these guidelines/procedures is to provide a clear framework for supporting, assessing and addressing, where appropriate, an employee's capability and suitability for the role during their probation period.

## 3. PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The guidelines/procedures have been developed based on the following principles:
- The standard probation period is 6 months, except for apprentices whose probation period is 12 months.
  - Annual leave will count towards a probation period. Normally, unpaid leave, maternity, paternity, shared parental leave and long term sick leave will not be counted and will extend the probation period.
  - Managers will welcome new employees to their team and wider organisation. This will include introducing them to the team and local working arrangements and securing an understanding and commitment to the Company's shared [purpose, values and behaviours](#).
  - Managers will provide guidance, support and any necessary training to build trust and to ensure positive development.
  - An employee's performance, conduct, attitude and attendance will be assessed throughout the probation period to support their induction in the organisation.
  - Employees will be informed of progress throughout the probation period and any issues that arise will be discussed and addressed as soon as possible.
  - Whilst in probation, allegations of Misconduct or Gross Misconduct may be addressed through a Probation Review Meeting.

## 4. SCOPE

- 4.1 This is a group level policy that applies to all employees of Anglian Water Group Limited, with the exception of Anglian Water (Ireland) Limited and Wave Limited (and their respective subsidiaries, which include Celtic Anglian Water and Anglian Water Business (National)).

## 5. STATUS

- 5.1 The guidelines/procedures are subject to regular review by the Company and are updated as appropriate.

## 6. OWNER

- 6.1 Head of Employee Relations.

**7. PROCEDURE (see flowchart at [Appendix 1](#))**

7.1 When an employee starts, the Line Manager will receive a notification alert from Workday. This will include a copy of the Probation Guidelines and Procedures, which the Line Manager must confirm that they have read and understood.

7.2 Within the first week of employment, the Line Manager must meet with the employee to talk through the Company's purpose, values and behaviours. It is important that the new employee understands what it means to be part of the Company and that "Together we...build trust, do the right thing and are always exploring". In particular, the Line Manager needs to explain clearly what this means for them and what is expected of them in terms of:

- performance (objectives set and level of required job outputs);
- conduct/attitude (displayed values/standards of behaviour); and
- attendance (i.e. reduced triggers of 4 days/2 occasions of absence).

In addition, the Line Manager will confirm the training and support to be provided to help the employee achieve these standards successfully.

7.3 The Line Manager should monitor the employee's progress and meet with the employee regularly, (i.e. at least monthly), to assess their performance, conduct, attitude and attendance and to provide constructive developmental feedback. Ideally, this meeting should be held face to face although this may not always be possible and, therefore, it may be carried out by telephone. To support this, the Line Manager will receive a monthly alert notification in Workday to set up an assessment meeting and to record the employee's progress in Workday. Once the Line Manager has completed the assessment record in Workday, the system will notify the employee that the assessment information is available to view.

7.4 Any issues regarding performance, conduct, attitude or attendance must be discussed with the employee (and recorded in Workday) as soon as they arise with a view to resolving them:

- Performance - the Line Manager must explain the areas of underperformance, what the employee needs to do to rectify the issues and what support is available. The Performance Improvement Plan template should be used to capture the discussion, agreed actions and progress going forward.
- Conduct/Attitude - unacceptable behaviours must be addressed promptly. Where required, allegations of Misconduct or Gross Misconduct will be addressed through a Probation Review Meeting.
- Attendance - Return to Work interviews must be undertaken and recorded and the Company's Supporting Attendance Policy applied as appropriate.

Line Managers must discuss any concerns with their Employee Relations contact - Workday provides a facility for Line Managers to flag concerns to the appropriate Employee Relations Manager (ERM)/Adviser (ERA), but this does not replace the

need to speak to the ERM/ERA direct. Details of the areas covered by each ERM/ERA can be accessed [here](#).

7.5 The Line Manager must meet with the employee no later than the final month of their probation period to undertake a final assessment of their performance, conduct, attitude and attendance against the standards set. In this final month the Line Manager will receive three alert notifications in Workday to prompt them to carry out this final assessment. The purpose of this assessment is to determine one of the following:

- That the employee has demonstrated satisfactory performance, conduct, attitude and attendance. In this case the Line Manager will inform the employee that they have completed their probation period successfully.
- That the employee has met some but not all the required standards in full, but sufficient improvement is likely to be made by extending the probation period. In this case the Line Manager may decide to extend an employee's probation period (for example for an additional month). This extension, along with details of the areas requiring improvement, will be confirmed to the employee through a notification in Workday.
- That the employee has **not** met the required standards, despite the support and training provided. In this case, the Line Manager must seek advice and guidance from their ERM/ERA and arrange for the employee to attend a Formal Probation Review Meeting to discuss their future employment with the Company. This meeting can be held at any point during the probation period and must be held before the expiry of the probation period.

*By the end of the probation period, if no notification is received from the Line Manager to the contrary, it will be assumed that the employee has completed their probation successfully and accordingly this will be confirmed in writing, through Workday.*

## 7.6 Formal Probation Review Meeting

7.6.1 Where the employee has not met the required standards the Line Manager must write to the employee inviting them to a Formal Probation Review Meeting, to be chaired by an appropriate independent Hearing Manager. The Company will provide a minimum of 48 hours' written notice of all formal face to face meetings unless otherwise agreed in advance. All the relevant supporting information and evidence of the employee's continued lack of capability, underperformance, poor conduct/attitude or attendance, to be referred to at the meeting, will be enclosed with the invitation letter.

7.6.2 An ERM/ERA will attend the meeting in an advisory capacity. Notes of the meeting will be taken. This may include the use of Company electronic recording equipment. The employee's use of personal electronic recording equipment of any description is not permitted.

7.6.3 The Hearing Manager will explain the purpose of the Probation Review Meeting, which will be to consider the future employment of the employee. The Line Manager will be responsible for providing the detail, with supporting evidence, of how the required standards have not been met.

7.6.4 The Hearing Manager will consider all the information available and will determine the outcome, which includes:

*Successful Probation Confirmed:*

If the Hearing Manager believes the employee has met the required standards in all areas this will be confirmed in writing and recorded in Workday.

*Extending the Probation Period:*

If an employee has not met the required standards but it is likely that an extension to the probation period will lead to a sufficient improvement, or where the employee has been absent from the workplace for an extended period during their probation, the Hearing Manager may decide to extend an employee's probation period. In this case the Hearing Manager will confirm this in writing and advise:

- The length of the extension (normally a maximum of 3 months) and the date on which the extended period of probation will end. This will be recorded in Workday.
- The reason for the extension and, if the reason is unsatisfactory performance, attendance or conduct, the details of how and why it has fallen short of the required standards.
- The performance, attendance and conduct standards or objectives that the employee is required to achieve by the end of the extended period of probation.
- Any support (e.g. further training) that should be provided during the extended period of probation.
- That if the employee does not meet the required standards fully by the end of the extended period of probation, they may be dismissed.

Where conduct issues have been addressed during the Probation Review Meeting and found proven, the Hearing Manager has the authority to issue a First or Final Written Warning.

*Dismissal:*

If, despite support and relevant training, the employee has not met the required standards and further training or support will not lead to a satisfactory level of improvement, the employee may be dismissed with contractual notice (normally 1 week/1 month depending on job role). Before a decision is taken to dismiss the employee, they will have been given the opportunity to respond to the issues raised and the reasons for reaching this decision. The Hearing Manager will write to the employee confirming the dismissal, including their right to appeal that decision.

## 7.7 Appeal

7.7.1 If an employee wishes to exercise their right of appeal, they must:

- submit their appeal in writing, within 14 calendar days from the date the outcome decision was communicated to them;
- address their appeal to the appropriate Employee Relations Manager and send it to the [employeerelations@anglianwater.co.uk](mailto:employeerelations@anglianwater.co.uk) mail box;
- clearly state why they believe that they have grounds of appeal, which must be about:
  - a failure in the process;
  - a misinterpretation of evidence or events;

- the availability of new evidence; and / or
- a belief that the outcome/sanction was unreasonable, inconsistent or erroneous in the circumstances;
- not use the appeal procedure to raise new, unrelated, issues that have not been mentioned previously; and
- indicate whether they wish their appeal to be heard face to face or through correspondence.

7.7.2 The Appeal procedure, which is available on [Lighthouse](#) will be followed. Any decision to dismiss remains in place unless, and until, it is changed by the Appeal Manager.

7.7.3 The decision by the Appeal Manager will constitute the Company's final response.

## **8. RIGHT TO BE ACCOMPANIED**

8.1 Employees have the right to be accompanied by a fellow worker or recognised Trade Union representative at formal meetings under this procedure.

8.2 It is the responsibility of the employee to arrange their own companion and provide their companion with any relevant information.

8.3 If the employee wishes to take up their right to be accompanied, they must notify the Company whom they have chosen to accompany them without unreasonable delay and, as far as possible, in advance of the meeting.

8.4 If the chosen companion is unable to attend a meeting, another date for the meeting can be suggested, as long as it is reasonable and not more than 7 calendar days after the date originally proposed by the Company. The Company will make reasonable efforts to agree an alternative time and date.

8.5 The chosen companion may address the meeting, put forward and sum up on behalf of the employee and confer with the employee during the meeting. The chosen companion is not permitted to answer questions on behalf of the employee, address the meeting without the employee's express permission, or prevent them from offering explanations.

## **9. RECORDS**

9.1 It is the Company's standard practice to send all written correspondence by Workday/email. Where this is not possible (i.e. the employee does not have a Company email account), it will be sent by standard mail or it may be sent to a personal email address with consent from the employee.

9.2 Probation Assessment records will be held and monitored in Workday.

9.3 All information will be held on the employee's record in accordance with the Company's Data Retention [Policy](#).

**10. FURTHER ASSISTANCE**

- 10.1 For general queries or for advice and guidance on the application of these guidelines please contact the appropriate ERM/ERA. Details of the areas covered by each ERM/ERA can be accessed [here](#).

**LAST REVIEWED**

January 2024



**APPENDIX 1 – FLOWCHART OF PROBATION PROCEDURE**

