



University Procedure

Academic Probation (Higher Education)

1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a structured process in order to:

- establish whether an appropriate match has been made between the person, the position and the work environment, and whether the person is able to perform the duties of the position as required;
- ensure individual staff are clear about the roles and responsibilities of the position they hold;
- ensure supervisors are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the development and performance of staff;
- develop open and effective communication between supervisors and their staff;
- identify training needs;
- inform new staff of the mission and goals of the University.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all academic appointments of more than six months duration that include a probation period.

3. Definitions

Probationary Period: The probationary period is a defined period of time during which a new staff member's performance and conduct are subject to formal assessment. The staff member is provided with continuing constructive counselling and support to confirm progress and/or identify difficulties and develop strategies for their resolution.

4. Actions

- 4.1 After commencement of employment the Deputy Vice Chancellor or Head of School/nominee shall meet with the new member of staff as part of an induction process to clarify the following:
- teaching requirements consistent with the School's profile of academic practice standards
 - research direction and expected research outcomes
 - mentoring arrangements for the staff member
 - an agreed set of objectives and performance standards for a successful probation
 - an agreed process of formal and informal review during the probation period.
- 4.2 At regular intervals throughout the probation period the Deputy Vice Chancellor, or Head of School/ nominee shall meet informally with the staff member to review progress and to consider any guidance and assistance that may be appropriate.

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- 4.3 Six months after commencement, and at six month intervals thereafter, the Deputy Vice Chancellor or Head of School / nominee conducts a formal review of progress. As part of the review the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Head of School/nominee shall consult colleagues in the School, consider feedback from colleagues and students on teaching performance and interview the staff member.
- 4.4 At the conclusion of each formal review meeting the Deputy Vice Chancellor or Head of School/nominee shall make a record of the meeting and provide copies to the staff member and to the Director, Human Resources.
- 4.5 The final review shall be conducted no later than three months before the end of the probationary period. Following this review the Deputy Vice Chancellor or Head of School/nominee shall prepare a comprehensive report on the staff member's performance over the probation period. The report shall take into account peer assessment of performance, including research outcomes, and feedback on teaching performance. The Deputy Vice Chancellor or Head of School/ nominee may decide that:
- the appointment be confirmed in accordance with the contract of employment; or
 - the appointment be annulled.;
- 4.6 In the case of a decision to annul, the Deputy Vice Chancellor or Head of School/nominee shall consult the Director, Human Resources (or nominee). The report and determination shall be sent to the Vice-Chancellor or nominee.

5. Annulment of Appointment

- 5.1 The University will annul an appointment if:
- An employee is unsuited to the position they hold, either by reason of performance or conduct;
 - Claims made by the employee during the selection process were either untrue or not substantiated by performance in the position.

Where the final probation report to the Vice-Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor's nominee indicates a recommendation to annul the appointment, the Vice-Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor's nominee shall give an opportunity to the employee and, if the employee so chooses, their representative, to hold a face-to-face meeting with him/her before a final decision is made. The meeting will provide an opportunity for the employee to make a case for further consideration or provide additional evidence on why the appointment should not be annulled. The Vice-Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor's nominee shall consult with the Director, Human Resources prior to meeting with the relevant employee.

The Vice-Chancellor's or Vice-Chancellor's nominee's decision is final

Where employment is annulled at the completion of a probationary period, three months' notice shall be given or payment in lieu thereof.

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6. Responsibilities

6.1 The Director, Human Resources or nominee is responsible for:

- providing assistance and advice to staff and supervisors about this procedure and its implementation;
- coordinating implementation of this procedure, including preparation of appropriate correspondence; and
- providing training to supervisors to ensure effective implementation of this procedure.

6.2 Academic supervisors have a specific responsibility for ensuring that this procedure of academic probation is implemented for all staff in probationary appointments for whom they are nominated as line manager or supervisor.

7. Policy Base

Academic Probation Policy

8. Associated Documents

University of Ballarat Union Collective Agreement 2006- 2008 – Academic and General Staff Employees or relevant Australian Workplace Agreement.

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Authorised by: [Vice-Chancellor]
Maintained by: [Director, Human Resources]
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