

Probation and Confirmation Procedure (MPF1148)

GOVERNING POLICY

This procedure is made under the [Recruitment and Appointment Policy](#).

SCOPE

This policy applies to all continuing and fixed term staff.

PROCEDURE

1. Probation periods

1.1. Table 1 sets out:

- probation periods for professional and academic staff
- the notification periods for decisions to terminate probationary employment.

Table 1: Probation periods (all staff)

Employment type	Duration of employment	Probation period	Notification period for decision to terminate
Professional staff	One year or less	Three months	At least 10 working days before the end of the probationary period.
Professional staff	More than one year	Six months	At least 10 working days before the end of the probationary period.
Full and part-time academic staff at levels A, B, C, and D		Maximum of five years with the provision for up to one annual extension	At least 6 months before the end of the probationary period.
Academic fixed-term staff	One year or less	Three months	At least 10 working days before the end of the probationary period.
Academic fixed-term staff	More than one year	Six months	At least 10 working days before the end of the probationary period.

2. Extension of probation periods

2.1. The probation period of a professional staff member or of an academic staff member on a fixed-term contract cannot be extended.

2.2. A head of department may, at their discretion or at the written request of a staff member, extend the probation period of a continuing academic staff member once only for a maximum period of one year and will notify local Human Resources of any extension.

2.3. The Provost, on advice from the Academic Confirmation Panel, may extend a staff member's probation period once only for a maximum period of one year and will notify local Human Resources of any extension. The advice to extend must be recorded in the minutes of the Academic Confirmation Panel meeting.

3. Probation criteria

3.1. A new staff member may not commence employment with the University until the probation criteria set out in the contract of employment have been accepted by the staff member in writing.

3.2. The head of department will ensure that probation criteria are:

- specified as definable goals
- related to the position description for the position
- related to the level and time frame of the appointment of the staff member
- designed to ensure that the staff member works productively in the University.

4. Supervisor's role

4.1. The staff member's supervisor will in the first weeks of employment:

- clarify probation criteria established in the contract of employment
- introduce the staff member to the Performance Development Framework and clarify objectives and performance indicators and establish a development plan consistent with probation criteria.

4.2. The staff member's supervisor will at regular intervals or as necessary during the probation period:

- meet with the staff member to monitor and discuss progress against objectives, and provide reasonable coaching and counselling where necessary
- provide reasonable training and professional development to support the staff member undertake the role
- document progress against objectives
- alert the staff member to the possibility of termination if it appears that the criteria are not being met and support the staff member in achieving the required performance.

5. Confirmation - professional staff and fixed-term academic staff

5.1. No later than four weeks prior to the end of the probationary period of a professional staff member or a fixed-term academic staff member, the supervisor will make a recommendation to the level 2 delegate that the staff member's employment be confirmed or terminated.

5.2. Staff are invited to disclose relevant personal circumstances and working arrangements. Planning for and assessment of performance for confirmation will be conducted in accordance with the [Guidelines for Consideration of Performance Relative to Opportunity](#).

5.3. Where the staff member's supervisor intends to make a recommendation that the staff member's employment be terminated, the supervisor will advise the staff member of the intended recommendation and give the staff member an opportunity to comment on the recommendation.

5.4. No later than four weeks prior to the end of the probationary period of a professional staff member or a fixed-term academic staff member, the level 2 delegate may, by completing a Confirmation of Appointment form:

- approve a recommendation to confirm the appointment
- make a recommendation to the head of budget division that the appointment be terminated. Documentation supporting a decision of non-confirmation must reach local Human Resources with sufficient time to allow the head of budget division to determine the non-confirmation and provide 10 days notice to the staff member.

5.5. When considering a recommendation for termination of a professional staff appointment or fixed-term academic staff appointment, the head of budget division will:

- consult with the staff member, their supervisor and any other relevant person
- advise the staff member of any adverse material about the staff member which the head of budget division intends to take into account and provide the staff member with an opportunity to respond to that material.

5.6. A head of budget division may approve a recommendation for termination of a professional staff appointment or fixed-term academic staff appointment if he or she is satisfied that:

- the staff member was reasonably aware of the job requirements
- the staff member received adequate supervision and coaching for the expected standard of performance
- there is not an appropriate match between person, job and environment
- probation procedures were followed.

6. Confirmation - continuing academic appointments

6.1. A probationary continuing academic staff member at level A, B, C or D who wishes to have his or her appointment confirmed will make a submission for confirmation to the head of department which will include an up-to-date curriculum vitae and a detailed report and argued case for confirmation setting out how all probation criteria have been met.

6.2. Staff are invited to disclose relevant personal circumstances and working arrangements. Supervisors will plan for and assess performance for confirmation in accordance with the [Guidelines for Consideration of Performance Relative to Opportunity](#).

6.3. Information about confirmation submissions is available on the [Human Resources website](#).

6.4. A probationary continuing academic staff member may apply to the head of department to have the confirmation decision made ahead of the time specified in the contract of employment.

6.5. The head of department may also recommend that the confirmation decision be made ahead of the date specified in the contract of employment. This could be in recognition of outstanding performance, however, in exceptional circumstances, it may be because of inadequate performance.

6.6. The same procedures apply to consideration of early confirmation as apply to confirmations handled in the standard timeframe.

6.7. The head of department will review the staff member's submission for confirmation and, following consultation with senior colleagues, will prepare a report for the Academic Confirmation Panel, convened in accordance with [Schedule A of this procedure](#), recommending either confirmation or termination of the appointment no later than six months before the expiry of the initially specified confirmation period, or no later than 4.5 years after the date of appointment (unless there has been an extension or early consideration of confirmation).

6.8. The head of department will provide the staff member with a copy of his or her confirmation report and recommendation and an opportunity to comment on the report prior to submitting it to the Academic Confirmation Panel. The staff member will countersign the document.

6.9. The Academic Confirmation Panel will consider the head of department's recommendation and make a recommendation that the Provost:

- confirm the appointment
- terminate the appointment
- extend the probation period (by up to 12 months).

6.10. The Provost may, on advice from the Academic Confirmation Panel and after taking into account any comment by the staff member, confirm the appointment or terminate the appointment.

6.11. In the event that termination is recommended, the staff member will be:

- advised of the grounds for termination
- provided a minimum of six months' notice of termination of employment
- provided with a payment in lieu of notice or part payment and part notice at the discretion of the University.

6.12. Within ten working days of the receipt of advice of the recommendation to terminate the appointment, the staff member may seek a review of that recommendation or decision by the Review and Appeals Committee (refer to the [Review and Appeals Committee Procedure](#)) on the grounds that:

- the outcome of the panel's deliberations was materially affected by a procedural irregularity
- in the case of early termination for unsatisfactory performance, there is insufficient evidence to support a finding of unsatisfactory performance.

6.13. The Review and Appeals Committee will make recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor who will determine the matter after taking into account any submission by the staff member in relation to the Committee recommendations.

SCHEDULES

- [Schedule A - Academic Confirmation Panel](#)

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Confirmation of Appointment form
- [Delegations Policy](#), including [Schedule D - Human Resources Delegations](#)
- [Human Resources website](#)
- [Review and Appeals Committee Procedure](#)
- [University of Melbourne Enterprise Agreement 2006](#)
- [University of Melbourne Collective Agreement 2010](#)

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

The Executive Director, Human Resources is responsible for the development, compliance monitoring and review of this procedure and any associated guidelines.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER

The Director, HR Specialist Services, Human Resources is responsible for the promulgation and implementation of this procedure in accordance with the scope outlined above. Enquiries about interpretation of this procedure should be directed to the implementation officer.

REVIEW

This procedure to be reviewed by 28 February 2015.

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections Modified
1	Senior Vice-Principal	21 Aug 2012	21 Aug 2012	New version arising from the Policy Simplification Project. Loaded into MPL as Version 1.
2	Senior Vice-Principal	6 Jun 2013	6 Jun 2013	Addition of new sections 5.2. and 6.2. and consequential renumbering within sections 5 and 6.
3	Vice-Principal Administration and Finance on behalf of Senior Vice-Principal	22 May 2014	22 May 2014	Links to 'Guidelines for Consideration of Performance Relative to Opportunity' updated.
4	Vice-Principal Administration and Finance	3 Mar 2016	3 Mar 2016	Fix broken hyperlinks.