



Lincolnshire County Council

LCC Probation Policy Updates

Talent and Learning
Human Resources

Why has the policy been changed?



Why do you need to ensure you follow the policy?

A dismissal may be considered **unfair** if the employer does not have a valid reason or fails to follow a fair procedure these can result in:

- legal action against the organisation
- costs to the organisation
- reputational damage



Key changes for employees who commence employment from 1st July 2026

- Reduction of all probation periods from 6 months to 4
- Extension period if required reduced to one month
- Formal end of successful probation review meetings removed
- All employees are required to complete all mandatory learning excluding role specific learning during their probationary period
- Introduction of Payment In Lieu of Notice (PILON) clause into contracts (1st July 2026 onwards)
- Timescale for appeal reduced to 5 days

Managing the Probation Period

Managers must:

- Hold monthly probation review meetings throughout the probation period.
- Deal with any concerns about work performance or conduct as they arise. **Do not** wait until the probation review meetings.
- Assess employee performance, capability and suitability for the role
- Get feedback from supervisors, colleagues or other managers involved in the probation period of the new employee
- Provide regular feedback to employees about their performance and progress.
- Discuss any problems as soon as possible



Probation

Early Termination during the Probation Period

Employees will be invited to a probation hearing to consider possible termination of employment when:

- we can demonstrate that, during the appointment process, the employee purposely misled or provided false information. An example may be concerning their qualifications, skills or experience
- we consider that an employee's performance, conduct, or attendance is unsatisfactory despite being given appropriate support.
- we consider an employee's conduct to be a concern of a more serious nature



End of Probation Period

Managers must undertake a final probation review as a desktop exercise, considering all available information relating to the employee's performance, conduct and attendance. There are three possible outcomes which are:

- confirm the appointment
- extend the probationary period by up to 1 month
- invite the employee to a probation hearing with the possibility of dismissal



Extending the Probation Period

Where the manager is considering extending the probation period for reasons including, but not limited to:

- we have not been able to fully assess performance due to the employee's sickness or other authorised absence
- there have been concerns regarding performance.

A meeting will be arranged with the employee. In these circumstances we may extend the probation period by up to 1 month.



Probation Hearing

Employees will be invited to attend a probation hearing if:

- their performance, conduct or attendance is unsatisfactory, and
- the manager does not consider an extension to the probation period would sufficiently improve the situation
- Or an extension has taken place and their performance, conduct or attendance remains unsatisfactory



Probation Flowchart

[Toolkits - schools employment manual – Professional resources](#)



