

Monash University Procedure

Procedure Title	Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Procedure - Professional staff probation
Parent Policy	Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Policy
Date Effective	1 October 2015
Review Date	3 years from effective date
Procedure Owner	Chief Human Resources Officer
Category	Human Resources
Version Number	2.0
Content Enquiries	ask.monash or phone Monash HR on 990 20400
Scope	
Purpose	<p>At Monash University, all new professional continuing and fixed term staff are subject to a probationary period in accordance with the relevant industrial legislation.</p> <p>A professional staff member's progress and performance is managed through regular feedback and the performance development process using the University's online tool – Performance Development Online – Performance Development Online (PDO).</p> <p>This procedure applies to all continuing and fixed term professional staff. It does not apply to casual professional staff, or honorary appointees.</p>
PROCEDURE STATEMENT	

Criteria

The first appointment of a professional staff member to a position at the University is normally subject to a probationary period.

The length of a probationary period must be included in the letter of offer.

The probationary period for a professional staff member in a continuing position is normally six months.

For staff appointed to a fixed term position of twelve months or less in length, the probation period will be 50% of the length of the appointment. Staff appointed to fixed term positions greater than twelve months in length will have a six month probation period applied to their appointment.

A probationary period is not normally required for a staff member entering into a second or subsequent successive contract of employment, provided that he/she has already served a probationary period in his/her first contract of employment and the duties of the position remain substantially unchanged.

During the Probation Period

Monash University Procedure

Within the first month of commencement, the supervisor will conduct an initial discussion with the staff member to inform him/her of the required performance expectations including goals, objectives and the results required of the position. During the staff member's probation period, the supervisor will monitor the staff member's performance in the role and will also meet to discuss the development of the staff member's performance development plan, in PDO.

At the mid-way point of the probation period (normally 3 months), the supervisor and staff member will meet to discuss the staff member's performance towards the goals and objectives of the position. The supervisor will review the performance of the staff member and provide the staff member with feedback on their performance to date, highlighting any areas for improvement.

Where the supervisor has concerns that the staff member is not meeting performance expectations or the behaviour relevant to the role is not to the standard required, s/he should set specific goals and objectives for the staff member to achieve during the remainder of the probationary period. These goals and objectives should be documented and brought to the attention of the staff member by the supervisor. The staff member will be given an opportunity to respond.

If at any point during the probationary period the supervisor has doubts about the confirmation of the staff member's appointment, the supervisor should seek advice from their HR Business Partner as soon as practicable. If the HR Business Partner forms the view that the probationary appointment may not be confirmed, they will consult with Workplace Relations, Monash HR.

Review Process

The HR Operations Centre will notify the supervisor and the HR Business Partner of upcoming probation end dates three months prior to the date.

This notification period will provide the supervisor with sufficient time to arrange a meeting with the staff member. This meeting will give both the supervisor and the staff member the opportunity to discuss the staff member's performance to date and any areas that may require further improvement.

At the end of the probationary period the supervisor may recommend that:

- the appointment is confirmed; or
- the employment is terminated.

Confirmation of Appointment

When determining whether a staff member's employment should be confirmed, the supervisor will take into account the following:

- whether the staff member has satisfactorily performed the duties of his/her position consistent with the staff member's classification level; and,
- whether the staff member has demonstrated sufficient potential to make an ongoing contribution to the work of the administrative unit.

The head of unit must authorise the decision to confirm the staff member's appointment at the end of the probationary period.

If the staff member is satisfying the conditions above, his/her employment will be automatically confirmed at the end of the probation period.

Monash University Procedure

Non-Confirmation of Appointment

A staff member's employment may be terminated prior to the end of the probation period.

If the supervisor recommends a non-confirmation of appointment before the end of the probation period, the supervisor must notify the HR Business Partner of this as soon as possible. The HR Business Partner will liaise with the Director, Workplace Relations to ensure that all requirements of the relevant industrial legislation are met.

The Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice-President or nominee will notify the staff member of their non-confirmation.

To ensure consistency and avoid confusion, faculties are not to separately notify staff members in writing.

Nothing in the above precludes the probationary staff member from being dismissed with the approval of the Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice-President or nominee for misconduct or incompetence that would normally warrant summary dismissal (refer [clause 54 – Professional Staff Disciplinary Procedures](#) of the Monash University Enterprise Agreement (Academic and Professional Staff) 2014. No such action is to be taken by the supervisor, manager and/or HR Business Partner before liaison with Workplace Relations and the necessary approvals have been obtained

Responsibility

HR Business Partner:

The HR Business Partner is responsible for:

- providing advice and support to staff within the Faculty or unit regarding the probation process;
- liaising with Workplace Relations regarding all non-confirmation of appointment.

HR Operations Centre:

The HR Operations Centre is responsible for notifying the supervisor and HR Business Partner of probation end dates three months prior to that date.

Performance supervisor:

The staff member's performance supervisor is responsible for:

- meeting with the staff member within the first month of commencement to discuss performance expectations; and,
- meeting with the staff member at the mid-way point of the staff member's probation period to discuss the staff member's performance and any areas for improvement;
- conducting an end of probation meeting in advance of the probation end date; and,

Monash University Procedure

- liaising with the HR Business Partner to ensure any non-confirmations are dealt with in a timely manner.

Head of unit:

The head of unit is responsible for authorising the confirmation of a professional staff member's appointment.

Workplace Relations:

The Workplace Relations branch is responsible for:

- ensuring any variations of the standard probation periods mentioned in this procedure are for valid reasons;
- assisting with the management of under-performing staff; and
- ensuring that any non-confirmations of appointment meet the requirements of the appropriate industrial legislation provisions.

Chief Operating Officer & Senior Vice-President:

The Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice-President is responsible for notifying staff members of non-confirmation of appointment.

Responsibility for implementation		
Status	Revised	
Approval Body	Academic Quality and Standards procedure Name: Meeting: Date: Agenda item:	Operational procedure Name: Chief Human Resources Officer Date: Date effective Author: Director, Workplace Relations
Definitions	<p>Continuing staff: professional staff members of the University engaged in full-time or fractional employment other than fixed-term, sessional or casual employment.</p> <p>HR Business Partner: is a key member of the Monash HR Business Partnering community and provides strategic advice, guidance and solutions that underpin key client goals, HR strategy and organisational vision to a particular client group.</p> <p>HR Operations Centre: is a centralised HR team that brings together the HR Advisory, HR Business Support and HR Recruitment Support functions. The HR Operations Centre delivers a broad range of HR operational services at all stages of the employee lifecycle including recruitment and appointment of staff, staff enquiries and contract renewals.</p>	

Monash University Procedure

	<p>Letter of offer: is the letter sent to a successful candidate for employment at the University which offers him/her employment on certain terms and conditions.</p> <p>Performance Development Online (PDO): an online performance planning tool that supports professional staff members to manage the performance development cycle in a timely and consistent way. It is a hosted, web-based product that is easy to use, offers a secure repository for documentation, streamlines user data entry via SAP and gives heads of unit oversight of unit performance development activity.</p> <p>Performance plan: is a planning tool that is prepared by the staff member and confirmed in a meeting with the performance supervisor at the commencement of the annual performance development cycle. It records the annual work goals, career aspirations and development goals for the staff member's year ahead; and the specific targets and progress towards achieving those goals. The performance plan forms the basis for performance conversations at any stage of the annual performance development cycle including formal mid-year and end-of-year reviews and any regular informal performance discussions.</p> <p>Probation: involves close supervision and monitoring of a staff member's performance during the initial period of employment to establish whether there is an appropriate match between the person, the job and the work environment.</p> <p>Professional staff: non-academic staff employed by the University in Higher Education Worker (HEW) level roles (other than trades and services roles) or executive roles. Formerly known as general staff.</p> <p>Supervisor (or performance supervisor): the person who is responsible for managing the performance of a staff member. This will be the immediate line manager, unless the University nominates an alternative supervisor. The supervisor must be trained to effectively perform his or her role in the performance development process. Where a staff member has two or more supervisors, one should be nominated as the performance supervisor.</p>
Legislation Mandating Compliance	
Related Policies and Procedures	
Related Documents	Performance Development Process: Professional Staff