1.0 INTRODUCTION

1. These guidance notes have been produced to support Heads of Departments in the completion of probationary agreements for employees who are subject to a probation period of 3 or more years.

2. Before completing the Probationary Agreement please read these guidance notes and the Academic Probation Policy.

3. The Probationary Agreement must be completed within 1 month of commencement of employment of the probationer.

2.0 COMPLETING THE PROBATIONARY AGREEMENT

Part A – Probationer Details

Please complete all details relating to the Probationer in this section.

Part B – Probation Review Meeting Dates

This section should outline the planned dates of meeting, and the dates the meetings actual took place. This is to ensure that review meetings are planned in advance.

Part C – Probation Objectives

1. The criteria for successful completion must be in line with the department 'Discipline Profile' which describes expected research activity and outputs, teaching abilities and teaching load and service duties.

2. The probationary objectives must be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed) and cover the areas of research, teaching and service.

3. Once the probation objectives have been discussed and agreed with the probationer and signed off by the Dean, a copy of Parts A, B and C should be submitted to the probationer and to Nick Thoume in HR (n.thoume@lancaster.ac.uk, ext: 5-10614) for uploading to the Core MyHR portal.

4. Below are a number of expected and suggested objectives that must be included in Part C. This is to ensure that the probationer is very clear about expectations during their probation period and that there are specific outputs from which the probationer can develop their academic career. Examples are included and should be adapted to reflect discipline profiles and departmental expectations.
Research objectives define what the probationer is expected to achieve in respect of research outputs within the probationary period.

**Research Publications**

**Expected objective:**
- Number of publications to be submitted for publication.

**Suggested objective:**
- Number of publications to be accepted for publication.

*Example:*
The probationer will have submitted at least three high quality research papers to internationally refereed journals within the three year probationary period, including at least two as lead author.

**Research Grant Applications**

**Expected objectives:**
- Number of internal and external grant applications to be submitted as Co-Investigator.
- Number of internal and external grant applications to be submitted as Principal Investigator.

**Suggested objective:**
- Research grant income won as Principal Investigator and/or Co-Investigator.

*Example:*
The probationer will have submitted at least one research grant application as Principal Investigator to the value of at least £100k within the three-year probationary period.

**Conference Papers**

**Expected objective:**
- Number of conference papers to be presented during the probationary period.

*Example:*
The probationer will have presented no less than three papers at international conferences by the end of the probationary period.

**Research Trajectory**

**Expected objective:**
- To provide evidence of an established research trajectory capable of generating high quality publications beyond the probationary period.
TEACHING OBJECTIVES

Module Teaching

For grade 7 Lecturers, please specify a maximum percentage of the average teaching load that the probationer will undertake each year during the probationary period, taking account of preparation time and time involved in establishing a research profile.

Expected objective:

To teach courses effectively and to a high standard. This will be measured on the basis of:

i. Student feedback, with scores normally greater than 4.00 from more than 50% of the cohort;
ii. Peer observation;
iii. Satisfactory averages for assessment (quantitatively between 55% - 65%), or the corresponding norm for qualitative assessment.

PhD Supervisory Responsibilities

Suggested objective:

Number of PhD students to be supervised by the probationer by the end of the probationary period.

Example:
To become involved in PhD supervision so as to supervise two students by the end of the probationary period (initially as co-supervisor) provided that enough good quality applications have been received in the relevant area.

On-going Commitment To Excellence In Teaching

Expected objective:

The probationer will have achieved professional recognition of their teaching by the end of the probationary period. Successful realisation of this objective will vary according to the career history of the probationer:

i. A probationer with less than three years’ of Higher Education teaching experience in a full academic role and who does not hold a recognised teaching qualification, will be expected to successfully complete the Postgraduate Certificate of Academic Practice (PGCAP).

ii. A probationer with more than three years’ of HE teaching experience in a full academic role who does not hold a recognised teaching qualification will be expected to achieve professional recognition status as a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. This can be achieved by either completing the experience-based Advanced Teaching: Lancaster Accreditation Scheme (ATLAS) or by making a direct application to the Higher Education Academy for professional recognition status.
The probationer holds an equivalent Higher Education teaching qualification, for example, a PGCert in Education and has achieved professional recognition status as a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

Further information is available here:
http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/hr/OED/ED/index

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Expected Objective:

- To take on an administrative role within the department and to have performed demonstrably well in it by the end of the probationary period.

Suggested Objective:

- To support and sustain a culture of academic excellence by contributing to the collective administrative activities of the department.

Training – include any mandatory training or specific training required, including the dates and expected outcomes/learning.

Reasonable Adjustments – In some cases it may be appropriate to discuss and agree any reasonable adjustments where the probationer has a disability or condition. Advice can be sought from the HR Partner if necessary.

Part D – 6 Month Review

The purpose of the six-month review is to ensure that the probationer is on track, has settled into the university and is clear about their objectives and expectations. It is also an opportunity to change or amend any objectives if necessary.

The review is “light touch” and if there are no changes to objectives, no concerns about the probationer’s conduct or performance then the form should record this.

If there are substantial changes to the Probationary Agreement or concerns about the conduct or performance of the probationer then this must be discussed with the probationer and recorded on the review form, including any actions to improve performance or conduct.

Part E – 12 Month Review

The purpose of the 12 month review is for the Head of Department and probationer to review progress against the objectives and to provide any necessary feedback.

The objectives from Part C should be copied into this section and the Head of Department in discussion with the probationer should provide evidence of how the objectives are progressing, outlining any actions required to ensure that objectives will be achieved.

If there are any concerns about the performance or conduct of the probationer this should be recorded on the form (although any such concerns should be brought to the attention of the probationer (following advice from the HR Partner) at the earliest opportunity.
Once the review has been completed. Part E should be completed, signed and a copy given to the probationer and sent to Nick Thoume in HR (n.thoume@lancaster.ac.uk, ext: 5-10614).

**Part F – 2 year Review**

This is exactly the same process as outlined in Part E and the 12 month review. The same process should be used for any on-going reviews if the probation period is longer than 3 years.

**Part G – 3 year Review (end of Probation)**

**No later than 3 months** before the end of the probation period a final review meeting must be held. This may be year 5 if a longer period of probation has been agreed.

The purpose of this final review is to meet with probationer to review the whole probation period. There should be no shocks in this discussion and if there have been issues of performance or conduct, this should have already have been brought to the attention of the probationer and the HR Partner for the Faculty at the earliest opportunity.

The final review should establish whether or not the probation objectives have been achieved and that it is clearly documented how the objectives have been met with demonstrable evidence.

The Head of Department having completed the review will then determine a recommendation to the Academic Probations Committee as pass, extend or fail. If the Head of Department determines that an extension or failure for probation is to be made to the Committee the rationale should be fully discussed and explained to the probationer. In such cases, there should have been an opportunity for the probationer to improve and/or be provided with additional support.

Part G needs to be fully completed as this will be submitted to the Academic Promotions Committee and decisions will be made on the basis of information contained in this section.

Following completion of the end of probation review, please forward the whole probationary agreement (Parts A-G) with an up to date CV from the probationer to your Faculty Dean for quality assurance and sign off.

Signed off papers are to be sent to Nick Thoume in HR (n.thoume@lancaster.ac.uk, t: 5-10614) for collation for the Academic Probation Sub-Committee.

Parts A, B and G will then be submitted to the Academic Promotions Committee and a decision will be determined with regards to probation period for the employee.