

Livewell Southwest

Probationary Period Policy

Version No 1.10
Review: April 2022

Notice to staff using a paper copy of this guidance.

The policies and procedures page of the Livewell Southwest intranet holds the most recent version of this document and staff must ensure that they are using the most recent guidance.

Author: Human Resources

Asset Number: 898

Reader Information

Title	Probationary Period Policy V1.10
Asset number	898
Rights of access	Public
Type of paper	Policy
Category	Non clinical
Document purpose/summary	Guidance for staff probationary periods.
Author	HR Department
Ratification date and group	9 February 2016, Joint Committee for Consultation and Negotiation (JCCN)
Publication date	29 th September 2021
Review date and frequency	Three years after publication, or earlier if minor changes are required.
Disposal date	The PRG will retain an e-signed copy for the archive in accordance with the Retention and Disposal Schedule, all copies must be destroyed when replaced by a new version or withdrawn from circulation.
Job title	Human Resources
Target audience	All staff employed by Livewell Southwest
Circulation List	Electronic: Livewell Southwest (LSW) intranet and website (if applicable) Written: Upon request to the Policy Co-ordinator at livewell.livewellpolicies@nhs.net Please contact the author if you require this document in an alternative format.
Consultation process	HR Policy Group JTUF – Joint Trade Union Forum JCCN
Equality analysis checklist completed	Yes
References/sources of information	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
Associated documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality and Diversity Policy • Recruitment and Selection Policy • Workplace Adjustments Policy
Supersedes document	All previous versions
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Document review history

Version No.	Type of change	Date	Originator of change	Description of change
1	New Policy	February 2016	HR Policy Group	New Policy
1.1	Minor change	April 2016	HR	Incorporated local induction checklist
1.2	Minor Change	April 2017	HR	Updated induction checklist
1.3	Minor Change	December 2017	HR	Clarification on notice periods
1.4	Extended	July 2018	Head of HR & Staff Wellbeing	Extended
1.5	Minor change	September 2019	Workforce Policy Group	Update to references to Declarations of Interest Policy
1.6	Minor Amend	October 2019	HR	Minor formatting amendments
1.7	Extended	February 2020	Head of HR & Staff Wellbeing	Extended
1.8	Minor change	November 2020	HR Admin	Amendment to induction checklist
1.9	Extended	January 2021	HR Admin	Extended
1.10	Extended	September 2021	Associate Director of HR & Engagement	Extended

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Probationary Period Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Livewell Southwest is committed to support all new employees as they induct into the organisation. We are also committed to providing the highest quality of care for our service users. To help us do this, all new employees will have a probationary period which allows them time to settle into the organisation, learn the new job and receive the appropriate training.
- 1.2 We will support all new employees as they aim to complete their probationary period successfully.
- 1.3 The purpose of this policy is to outline Livewell Southwest's expectations of a new employee and the process for managing a probationary period.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all newly employed staff. It does not apply to Medical Staff or Doctors in Training or those staff who have retired and returned to work for Livewell Southwest.
- 2.2 In implementing this policy, managers must ensure that all staff are treated fairly and within the provisions and spirit of Livewell Southwest's Equality & Diversity Policy.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Probationary Period** – a period of time to allow employees to settle into the organisation, to learn the job and to receive any required training, normally six months. However newly Qualified Social Workers have a standard 12 month Probation Period.
- 3.2 **Induction** – an initial orientation programme that is completed within the first month of employment in the new role.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 **Line Managers** – responsible for:
 - Providing the necessary induction support and guidance to enable new employees to understand what is expected of them.
 - Ensuring that all new employees are aware of the standards of behaviour and performance expected in their role.
 - Ensuring that adequate and appropriate support, supervision, training and development is provided for the employee during their induction and probationary period.
 - Ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made to support individuals who have declared themselves disabled.
 - Meeting regularly with the new employee during their probationary period to

ensure that standards are being set and reviewed effectively and in a timely manner.

- Effectively managing any concerns that arise during the probationary period.
- Signing off the successful achievement of the probationary period.

4.2 **Member of staff** – responsible for:

- Consistently behaving in accordance with Livewell Southwest values and behavioural standards.
- Consistently meeting the requirements of their employment contract.
- Consistently performing effectively in their role.
- Their own health, wellbeing and attendance at work.
- Their own conduct as an employee of Livewell Southwest.
- Their own learning.
- Where appropriate, practising in accordance with their professional body's code of conduct performance and ethics, acknowledging that they are accountable for their own practice.

5. **General Principles**

5.1 The purpose of the probationary period is to allow time for the organisation to assess the work and behaviour of the employee and to determine whether the employee has a long term future with the organisation.

5.2 In making their assessment, a line manager will consider a number of factors, including whether:

- The employee can consistently demonstrate behaviour in accordance with Livewell Southwest values and behavioural standards.
- The employee can consistently meet the requirements of their employment contract.
- The employee can consistently perform effectively in their role.
- The employee is demonstrating higher than expected sickness absence during the probationary period.
- The employee is the subject of concerns in relation to their conduct during the probationary period.

5.3 The management of such matters as capability and conduct during the probationary period will be carried out in accordance with the Probation Policy.

5.4 Where termination of the contract of employment during the probation period is to be discussed at a probation review meeting, staff have the right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or work colleague.

5.5 Employees within the probationary period (or extended probationary period) will not be entitled to access the lease car service due to the potential financial implications of such arrangements.

6. Local Induction

- 6.1 As part of the induction process, the inducting manager is responsible for ensuring the induction process is completed satisfactorily. The new employee also has a responsibility to ask for further clarity or information where there are queries or doubts regarding particular aspects of working in Livewell Southwest and their department.
- 6.2 A Local Induction Checklist is set out in Appendix A and all items on the checklist must be discussed within the first week and signed under week one. By week four the items on the checklist should be signed to demonstrate an understanding of all items. This acknowledges that a large amount of information may be difficult to retain in the first week.

7. Managing the Probationary Period

- 7.1 The line manager will discuss their expectations through a Personal Development Plan (PDP) within 4 weeks of starting with the organisation (see Appendix B). Within the six month probation period the line manager will conduct at least one midway review meeting, normally between 12 and 16 weeks.
- 7.2 At the end of the 6 month probationary period, there should be a final meeting for the manager to advise the employee whether they are performing satisfactorily or whether any further training or other action is recommended.
- 7.3 Performance against the employee's job description and person specification should form the basis of the review, together with any competency framework.

8. Concerns during the probationary period

- 8.1 Although a review date will be set during the induction process, it is important that any concerns are brought to the attention of the employee when they arise so that the employee has an opportunity to address those concerns.
- 8.2 If a line manager has concerns about a new employee's performance they should arrange a meeting with the employee to express those concerns. The meeting should be held in private and notes must be taken. If problems persist and/or targets or actions are agreed as a result of the meeting, these should be confirmed in writing to the employee.

9. HR Support

- 9.1 A manager who has concerns about the progress of a new member of staff should raise this at the earliest opportunity with the HR Representative for advice and guidance.

10. Confirmation of Probationary Period

- 10.1 If performance and behaviour are satisfactory, the line manager should write a short letter confirming the appointment (see Appendix C). If not, the line manager should either extend the probationary period or terminate it.

11. Extension to Probationary Period

- 11.1 Where an employee has failed to make the required progress, a manager may, extend the probation by a further period, but no more than three months. This should only be taken where some progress has been made and the expectation is that, with additional time, the employee will be able to perform satisfactorily.

12. Terminating Employment during the Probationary Period

- 12.1 It will be usual for employees to successfully complete the full probationary period. The length of time has been set to allow employees to settle into the organisation, to learn the new job and to receive any required training.
- 12.2 Termination of the contract of employment may occur at any time during the probation period.
- 12.3 Staff have the right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or work colleague to the probation review meeting where termination of their contract is to be considered.
- 12.4 The employer may terminate the contract of employment with one weeks' notice. This notice period may be paid in lieu of notice ie notice period would be paid rather than worked. No decision to terminate the probationary period should be communicated to the employee before HR advice has been taken.
- 12.5 The employee may give notice to end their employment as per their contractual notice period.
- 12.6 Notice of termination will be given in writing and will include the right of appeal against the decision.

13. Appeals against a decision to terminate the probationary period

- 13.1 Employees have a right of appeal against the decision to terminate their probationary period, and therefore their contract of employment. Appeals must be made in writing, setting out the grounds for appeal, no later than five working days after the receipt of the termination letter.
- 13.2 Appeals must be made to a senior HR manager.
- 13.3 The purpose of an appeal meeting is to review the decision to terminate the probationary period and consider:
- Why the employee considers the decision unfair or unreasonable; and

- The rationale and justification of the decision to dismiss.
- 13.4 The lodging of an appeal will not suspend the notice of dismissal.
- 13.5 The manager hearing the appeal will arrange a meeting at which the employee may be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or work colleague.
- 13.6 Where an individual or their representative cannot attend the appeal meeting, it will be rescheduled once within 5 working days of the original date.
- 13.7 In the event that either the employee or their representative fails to attend the re-scheduled appeal meeting, it will proceed in their absence. A decision will be made based upon the evidence available.
- 13.8 The decision of the manager hearing the appeal is final.
- 13.9 The manager hearing the appeal will confirm the outcome in writing to the employee, with a copy to the employee's representative, normally within five working days of the hearing.
- 13.10 The manager hearing the appeal may uphold or overturn the decision of the line manager. Where the decision is overturned the employee will be reinstated to their role. Where time remains within the 6 month probationary period, the employee will continue to be managed in accordance with this policy. Where the 6 month probationary period has expired, the employee will be deemed to have successfully passed their probation.

14. Retrospective Action

- 14.1 An employee who has not had an end of probation review by the 6 monthly date of their appointment, will be deemed to have been confirmed in their appointment irrespective of performance or behaviour. It is therefore incumbent upon the line manager to ensure that an end of probationary review meeting is arranged in good time, taking into account commitments such as annual leave. There may be exceptions e.g. when a probationary meeting has been arranged and the employee is sick and the meeting cannot be rescheduled before the end of the six months. If a manager is sick and the sickness is likely to go beyond the end of the probation, they must arrange for another manager to carry out the review.

All policies are required to be electronically signed by the Lead Director. Proof of the electronic signature is stored in the policies database.

The Lead Director approves this document and any attached appendices. For operational policies this will be the Locality Manager.

Signed: Head of HR

Date: 19 December 2017

Appendix A: Local Induction Checklist

1. Introduction

In keeping with good employment practice, it is essential that every new member of staff joining Livewell Southwest or a new team within organisation is appropriately inducted. This will help and support the individual to become familiar with ways of working, expectations and the general running of the department.

This checklist is intended to cover basic induction requirements across the organisation. It is expected that this will be supplemented by specific departmental information provided by the inducting manager and also aligned to the wider corporate induction process.

All items on the checklist must be discussed within the first week and signed under week one. By week four the items on the checklist should be signed to demonstrate an understanding of all items. This acknowledges that a large amount of information may be difficult to retain in the first week.

The inducting manager is responsible for ensuring the induction process is completed satisfactorily. The new employee also has a responsibility to ask for further clarity or information where there are queries or doubts regarding particular aspects of working in Livewell Southwest and their department.

Formal Induction training will commence with Professional Training and Development (PTD) on the Tuesday. The Monday should be used by the manager to start the induction process, completing any forms e.g. appointment form, SystemOne referral form etc. Items listed below are advised to discuss on the Monday prior to attending Induction training.

When the induction checklist is completed a copy must be retained and placed on the employee's file. In case of internal or external audit, this form must be produced as evidence of completion of local induction training.

2. Details of the new employee

Job title of new employee:	
Name of new employee:	
Commenced in post:	
Date local induction commenced:	
Date of corporate induction completed:	
Date planned for first appraisal	
Inducting manager:	

View and record:

- Personal Bank Details
- P45 Tax Form
- National Insurance Number

Complete the following forms:

- Appointment form
- Declaration of Interests form (see Declarations of Interest Policy)

3. Probationary Period and Personal Development Plan (PDP)

All new employees will be subject to a six month probationary period in line with Livewell Southwest's Probationary Period Policy. This document forms part of the policy.

As part of the induction process managers are to ensure that a PDP is completed within four weeks and copied to the Professional Training and Development Department, email: pchcic.ptd@nhs.net.

4. Checklist

Subject	Week 1		Week 4		Further action required to help with understanding
	Date:		Date:		
	Discussed	Y/N	Understanding checked	Y/N	
The department & team					
Departmental structure					
Who's who					
Locality it belongs to					
Roles and responsibilities of team					
The bigger picture – Livewell Southwest structures and briefings					
Day to day practicalities					
Entry and exit to the building					
Alarm systems					
Keys/security codes					
ID badge issued (PTD)					
Rest facilities					
Changing facilities/toilets					
Security of personal items					
Parking					
Use of phones at work					
Site map if appropriate					
First Aid facilities					
Corporate induction					
Appointment form completed					
SystemOne/CareFirst referral form (if relevant)					
Communication					
Meetings (staff briefing)					
Notice boards					
Newsletters					
Useful contact numbers					
Email access					
Dealing with media queries					
Fire Safety					
Fire alarms					
Fire extinguishers					
Fire exits					
Procedures to follow					
Employment issues					
Job description					
Role and responsibilities					
Main duties					

Subject	Week 1		Week 4		Further action required to help with understanding
	Date:		Date:		
	Discussed	Y/N	Understanding checked	Y/N	
Working relationships					
Accountability arrangements					
Professional Codes of Conduct					
Contract of employment					
Received and signed by employee					
Main aspects of it					
Salary and pay dates					
Queries arising from discussion					
Working hours and rules					
Start and finish times					
Rest breaks					
Working Time Directive					
Maximum working hours					
Secondary employment rules					
Flexible working arrangements					
Hospitality and acceptance of gifts					
Declarations of Interest					
Claiming for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsocial hours • Overtime • Mileage and expenses 					
Annual leave					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entitlement • Requesting annual leave 					
Sickness absence					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting arrangements • Monitoring • Policy 					
Staff Support arrangements					
Who to discuss problems with					
Work/Life balance (special leave)					
Occupational Health					
Union representation					
Supervision arrangements					
Covid Risk Assessment					
Appraisal					
Purpose/annual review					
Paperwork to be completed					
Objective setting					
Personal Development Plans					
Knowledge and Skills Framework					
Date for initial appraisal (to agree objectives and PDP as a new member of staff)					
Learning & Development					
Mandatory training (refer to Policy)					
Development opportunities					
Requirements to keep up to date					
Who to contact for further information					

Subject	Week 1		Week 4		Further action required to help with understanding
	Date:		Date:		
	Discussed	Y/N	Understanding checked	Y/N	
Appearance					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ID badge • Uniform policy (if appropriate) • Dress code 					
Policies and Conduct					
Disciplinary Policy					
Grievance Policy					
Bullying & Harassment Policy					
Data Protection, Confidentiality, Caldicott & Safe Haven Policy					
Whistle-Blowing Policy: How It Can Work For You					
Tobacco Policy					
Substance Misuse - Drug & Alcohol Policy					
Compliments, Concerns & Complaints Policy					
Incident Reporting & Investigation Policy & Procedure					
Infection Prevention & Control					
Information Governance Strategy and Health & Corporate Records Policy.					
Information Technology Security Policy					
Acceptance of Gifts/Hospitality Policy					
Declarations of Interest Policy					

5. Record of items issued

On termination of employment or redeployment to a different area, all of the organisations assets e.g. encrypted data sticks, mobile phone, laptops etc. must be returned to your line manager.

Items issued	Issued by	Date issued	Date returned

6. Local Induction Issues

This page may be used to include key information for a new employee that is specific to a ward, department or staff group and is not covered in the main induction checklist.

Subject	Week 1		Week 4		Further action required to help with understanding
	Date:		Date:		
	Discussed	Y/N	Understanding checked	Y/N	

7. The following training was completed during Corporate Induction with Professional Training & Development

Subject	Completion date	Subject	Completion date
Organisation Introduction and employee relations brief		Basic life support	
Fire awareness		Anaphylaxis(for certain staff)	
Risk management		Conflict resolution	
Manual handling of loads		Breakaway skills	
Safeguarding children level 1 Alerters		Patient handling	
Safeguarding vulnerable adults		SystmOne/CareFirst training (as appropriate)	
Infection prevention & control		Corporate identity badge (date issued)	
Information governance			

Week 1			
Employee signature:		Date:	
Inducting manager Signature:		Date:	

Week 4			
Employee signature:		Date:	
Inducting manager signature:		Date:	

8. Employee's Agreement on Mandatory Training

It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that they have completed and are kept in date with any mandatory training required within their department. Failure to keep in date with mandatory training may result in disciplinary action being taken.

Your manager will identify those subjects that are mandatory for you and guidance can be found in the Corporate Induction and Mandatory Training Policy available on the intranet.

Further details on courses can be obtained from Professional Training and Development, based at the Beauchamp Centre, Top Floor, Mount Gould Hospital, Plymouth. Email: pchcic.ptd@nhs.net or 01752 (4)35150.

I (employee name).....agree to undertake regular updates/mandatory training as required within Livewell Southwest to ensure I maintain my competence and the skills required to enable me to fulfil my role.

Employee signature:		Date:	
Manager signature:		Date:	

Appendix B: Probation Period – Formal Assessment

Employee Details			
Name:			
Job Title:		Grade:	
Locality/Department		Work base	
Manager			
Start Date			
	Date Due	Please tick when completed	
Initial Meeting (within 4 weeks)			
Midway Review (12-16 weeks)			
Final 6 month review			

Please indicate (tick relevant box) whether the above named member of staff has achieved satisfactory levels in the following areas:

Competency	Not satisfactory	Satisfactory	Comments
Attendance			
Managing time (being effective, efficient, productive and reliable)			
Quality of work			
Attitude to work			
Taking initiative, solving problems and personal responsibility			
Adaptability and flexibility			
Achievement of agreed targets			
Sickness record			
Respects Equality and Diversity			
Using information and communications technology			
Builds good relationships			

If as Manager you tick 'satisfactory' in all of the above areas the probation period will automatically continue through to the six month assessment stage.

If as Manager you tick 'not satisfactory' in any one or more of the above areas then the probation period will be classed as progressing unsatisfactory. In this situation further action must be taken by the Manager to assist the employee in improving in the identified areas. This can be achieved by discussing and agreeing with the employee any specific objectives (based on SMART (**S**pecific **M**easurable **A**chievable **R**elevant **T**imely) or training, development or welfare support that will enable them to reach the required performance in the role.

In cases where there is clear evidence to suggest that the employee is wholly unsuitable for the role, the Manager should consult HR with a view to early termination.

Outline the agreed development programme in the box below.

	Manager	Employee
Name (<i>block capitals</i>)		
Signed		
Date		

Once this form is completed the Manager must keep a copy on the individual's management file.

Appendix C: Template Letter – Confirmation of Probationary Period

Private and Confidential
Name and Address

Date

Dear

SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF PROBATIONARY PERIOD

I am very pleased to inform you that you have successfully completed your probationary period with Livewell Southwest. I hope your time with us will be happy and rewarding.

Thank you for your hard work and I look forward to continuing to work with you.

Yours sincerely

Line Manager
Job Title