



# Staff Induction & Probation Policy & Procedures

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## STAFF INDUCTION POLICY

*'All new members of staff will have formal induction. This will provide an opportunity to communicate the mission and objectives of the Institute and introduce new staff members to the values and culture of the Institute.'*

*The DIT Charter on Staff Development for 2000 and Beyond*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

DIT is committed to ensuring that it operates in a supporting and welcoming manner towards staff, students and the external community. This Staff Induction Policy has been developed to ensure that:

- the 'settling in' period to DIT is a positive experience for new staff
- new staff experience DIT as a caring and supportive organisation and
- new staff receive training and information on DIT policies and procedures as well as specific training in relation to their job.

The Induction process commences from the date of offer of appointment and ceases on completion of the probationary period. All staff regardless of grade, tenure or category are taken through the Induction process.

### 2. OBJECTIVES

- To provide a welcoming, caring and supportive experience of the organisation
- To establish a clear communications channel
- To ensure that the transition into DIT is a smooth and positive experience for the new staff member
- To provide information about the organisation, the structures, the policies and procedures
- To provide training on DIT systems and procedures
- To identify job specific specialist training required.
- To clarify the requirements/expectation of the role

### 3. PHASES OF INDUCTION

The Induction process spans over three phases:

Phase 1. Pre-Employment

Phase 2. Date of Commencement of Employment

Phase 3. Early Employment Period within One Year

## PHASE 1. PRE-EMPLOYMENT

### 3.1 Responsibility of HR Department

- a) *Assignment of a 'contact' from HR Department*

A member of the HR staff is assigned as a 'contact' to each new member of staff. The contact will maintain regular contact with the new appointee and be available to meet them if required. The new appointee will be encouraged to call at any time if they have any queries. If they need to meet with a member of the HR Department, the contact will arrange such a meeting.
- b) *Letter of offer of appointment*

The name of the 'contact' is provided in the letter of offer of employment with a commitment that they will be in contact with the new appointee (preferably by phone) within one week of the date of the letter.
- c) *Date of Commencement*

The HR Contact will contact the Line Manager to ensure that the new appointee is met by their Line Manager, or designated deputy, on arrival on their first day.
- d) *Letter of acknowledgement of acceptance*

As soon as the new employee has submitted all of the required documentation and met all of the requirements, HR will issue a letter confirming appointment together with the staff handbook, the contract of employment, details of who and where they should report to on the date of commencement and a copy of the Local Induction checklist.

### 3.2 Responsibility of Local Line Manager

- a) *Notify all Staff*

After the letter at 3.1 (iv) above has been issued, the local line manager will notify all staff in the relevant School/Department of the date when the new staff member will commence, where they will be located, the duties and role and who they will report to. **(N.B. No new staff member should commence duty until the letter at 3.1 (iv) above has been issued.**
- b) *Address Special Requirements*

Liaise, where appropriate, to ensure that any necessary requirements for the new staff member are implemented (e.g. with Disability Office in relation to special needs for the staff member)
- c) *Diary Day One Meeting*

Ensure availability to meet the new staff member on the date of commencement or where this is not possible assign another senior staff member
- d) *Prepare Accommodation & Equipment*

Liaise, where appropriate, to ensure that the accommodation and equipment that the staff members needs to do the job is available and ready for the date of commencement
- e) *IS Requirements*

Liaise with the IS Department to make arrangements for the allocation of necessary 'logins'

- f) *Assign Buddy*  
Assign a buddy to the new staff member
- g) *Complete Phase 1 Checklist*  
Complete the checklist to ensure all preparations have been made. The Checklist can be found at the end of this policy.

### **PHASE 2 DATE OF COMMENCEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT**

### **3.3 Responsibility of Manager/Supervisor**

The Line Manager or designated deputy will meet the appointee and go through the following steps:

- a) *Introduce the Department and issue any welcome/Induction information specifically relating to the department as appropriate.*
- b) *Explain the requirements of the job* in accordance with the job description and agree performance and behaviour targets for the probationary period of employment.
- c) *Introduce the new staff member to their work location. (The Line Manager or a designated colleague will take the new staff member on a guided tour of the premises and introduce them to colleagues and other personnel. They will show them where key facilities and resources are located. )*
- d) *Introduce the new staff member to their 'Buddy'*
- e) *Agree Training Plan:* and make arrangements for 'on the job' training and also 'off the job' training on specialised tasks (e.g. technical training, training on DIT software, etc.)
- f) *Provide Health and Safety information:* This will include details of local safety statements, evacuation procedures, first aid facilities and procedures for reporting accidents/emergencies.
- g) *Provide Operational/Procedural Information:* This will include outline details of DIT and local procedures/operations, e.g. purchasing procedures, access to passwords, etc.
- h) *Outline Probation Procedures:* and agree a schedule of dates for reviews.
- i) *Complete the Induction Checklist:* and ensure that it is signed by both the line manager and the new employee.
- j) *Send the completed and signed checklist to the HR Contact.*
- k) *Confirm to all staff in the Department and the Human Resources Department that the new staff member has taken up duty.*
- l) *Ensure that the new staff member is helped to settle in and assisted with any difficulties or queries they may have.*

**PHASE 3. EARLY EMPLOYMENT PERIOD WITHIN ONE YEAR**

**3.4 Responsibility of HR Contact**

Ensure that the completed Induction Checklist is received in HR

Phone the new staff member within two weeks of commencement to maintain contact and answer any questions they may have.

**3.5 Responsibility of Designated Colleague/Buddy**

*Maintain regular contact with the new staff member during the early employment period and be available to provide any assistance required over the first year of employment.* The kind of assistance that may be provided would be quite general e.g. where to locate materials, how to work the photo-copier etc.

**3.6 Responsibility of Line Manager**

Maintain regular contact with the new staff member to ensure they are settling in and to clarify any early employment issues that arise.

Ensure that the Probation Procedures are followed as outlined in the Probation Policy.

Ensure that the staff member is facilitated to attend all relevant Induction and job related training programmes.

**3.7 Responsibility of Staff Development Department**

**Annual Welcome Reception**

The President will formally welcome all new staff at an Annual Welcome Reception each September. Formal presentations will be made on the structures, policy and plans of the Institute. The various functions and operations of the Institute will be showcased and staff from these areas will be in attendance to meet with new staff and answer any questions.

**Regular Staff Induction Training Days**

Newly appointed staff must participate in the Staff Induction Training Days organised by the Staff Development Department which take place on a quarterly basis.

*(Online Induction Training Programmes & Resources will also be developed).*

Information sessions are provided on the following:

- ✓ Brief Introduction to DIT
- ✓ DIT HR Policies (e.g. Equality, Dignity & Respect)
- ✓ Probation and PMDS systems
- ✓ HR Procedures/Leave Arrangements
- ✓ Other benefits
- ✓ Fee support, Study leave, Exam leave Schemes
- ✓ Finance Procedures
- ✓ Pension Arrangements – Personal Options
- ✓ Employee Assistance

- ✓ Information Technology Systems in DIT
- ✓ Health, Safety & Welfare for staff at DIT
- ✓ Awareness Training on the DIT Dignity at Work Anti Bullying & Harassment Policy.

### **Induction for Academic Staff**

An Annual Induction Seminar for new academic staff will take place each October. Topics for the programme include

- Introduction to Research at DIT
- Academic Contractual Duties
- Progression & other Career Development Opportunities
- Quality Assurance Procedures
- Academic Council
- Library Facilities at DIT
- An outline of the activities of Learning Teaching & Technology Centre

(All new Assistant Lecturers and Lecturers who do not hold a teaching qualification or equivalent on appointment will be facilitated to undertake a Postgraduate Diploma in Third Level Learning through the centre)

### **3.8 Responsibility of Directors**

#### **College/Directorate Staff Induction Days**

- Organise regular Induction Sessions.
- Formally address and welcome new staff.
- Outline the strategies of the College/Directorate, the structure, the activities, relevant local policies and procedures and any current developments or projects.
- Provide an overview of the academic programmes and activities.
- Conclude with a Reception where there will be an opportunity for new staff to meet management and colleagues
- The number of College/Directorate Induction Sessions will be determined by the numbers of new staff and when they commence but there will at least one per annum.

### **4. Induction to new roles (i.e. on transfer or promotion within DIT)**

Where a staff member is transferred or promoted within DIT, all of the steps at Phase 3 above should be followed. (It will only be necessary to outline the Probation Procedures and schedule Probation Review meetings where the staff member has not completed the required probationary period of service (ref; Probation Policy).

#### **STAFF PROBATION POLICY**

*‘As the most important resource in the Institute, staff will have access to the resources and facilities necessary to enable them to develop and expand their knowledge, skills and qualifications so that they may realise their full potential in relation to the evolving needs of the Institute and their own career development’.*

***The DIT Charter on Staff Development for 2000 and Beyond***

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The appointment of staff members covered by this Policy is subject to a satisfactory probationary period.

**2 OBJECTIVES**

To support new staff members and their managers to ensure new staff members are given the opportunity to learn what is required and to identify areas in need of training and development.

Managers should have regular communication and periodic meetings with new staff members to ensure:

- Staff are settling into their role and are receiving the right amount of support and training necessary to succeed.
- That any issues can be resolved at an early stage and promptly.
- Where necessary, to take appropriate steps if staff members have not met the requirements/expected standards of the job.

**3. REVIEW MEETINGS**

The probationary period is aligned to the duration of the employment contract. Three standard meetings should take place during the period of probation

- 1) Informal Review meetings,
- 2) A Mid Term Review meeting and
- 3) A Final Review Meeting.

*It is advised that other regular communication should take place throughout the period of probation.*

<b>Table 1. Timelines for Probation Periods and Review meetings by contract type**</b>				
	<b>Duration of Probation</b>	<b>Informal Review</b>	<b>Mid Term Review</b>	<b>Final Review</b>
Permanent Contracts, Contracts of Indefinite Duration, Fixed Term of 2 years + (Wholetime & Part Time)	12 months	At 3 months & at 9 months	At 6 months	At 10 months
Fixed term Contracts of 1 – 2 years duration (wholetime and part time). All pro-rata Contracts, All Hourly paid contracts	4 months	At 8 weeks	None	At 3 months
Fixed term contracts of 6 months to 1 year (Wholetime & Part time)	2 months	At 4 weeks	None	At 2 months
Fixed Term Contracts of less than 6 months (Wholetime & Part time)	1 month	At 2 weeks	None	At 1 month

Specified Purpose (Wholetime & Part time)	The HR Department will determine the timelines for individual Specified Purpose contracts. They will be dependent on the circumstances of each contract.
Note 1: Where a review session for an academic member of staff falls during the academic holidays, the meetings should be brought forward to take place prior to the commencement of the holidays.	
Note 2. ** Where changes to contractual status arise during probation see paragraph 6 below.	

**INFORMAL REVIEW**

**3.1 Informal Review**

It is recommended that informal review meetings take place during the probationary period in accordance with the above timelines.

The informal progress review(s) should consist of a conversation on how the staff member is settling in, on any difficulties that they are experiencing and on any issues that have come to the attention of the Line Manager. Actions that would alleviate any of the issues raised should be agreed and taken prior to the Mid Term Review/Final Review, as appropriate.

**FORMAL REVIEW**

**3.2 Formal Review**

To ensure that the final recommendation in relation to the appointment is made on a sound and fair basis, a process of assessment of the staff member's performance/capabilities should be carried out. This requires the Line Manager to carry out a review of the staff member's performance within the timelines indicated above. **It is important that Managers notify the Human Resources Department and seek guidance as early as possible where there are indications of serious performance or behaviour issues.**

**3.3 Probation Report Forms**

There are 3 Probation Report Forms to assist the process which can be found at the end of this policy:

1. PPF1 – Probation Preparation Form (Manager) – to be completed by the manager prior to each formal review meeting and to be used as a reference point at the meeting.
2. PPF2 – Probation Preparation Form (Staff Member) – to be completed by the staff member prior to each formal review meeting and to be used as a reference point at the meeting.
3. PRF – Probation Report Form – to be completed during each formal review meeting, signed by both parties and submitted by the manager to the Human Resources Department.

## MID TERM REVIEW

### 3.4 *The mid-term review\**

Prior to **mid-term**, the Line Manager and Staff Member will separately complete the relevant forms which they will bring to the Review Meeting.

Where applicable, the first formal assessment takes place halfway through the probationary period in accordance with the timelines shown in Table 1 above. . However, it should be borne in mind that the Induction Process, as outlined in the Induction Policy, will have been ongoing ahead of this review. Any early issues/development needs will have been identified and steps taken to address them.

As well as establishing that the staff member has been properly introduced to the job, the workplace and the Institute, the questions on the form should help the manager and staff member focus on performance, training needs and other required supports.

### 3.5 *The Review Meeting*

The Line Manager and the staff member will meet at an agreed time and venue to discuss the issues raised and documented on the forms. Sufficient time should be allocated for the meeting and each form should be taken in turn. The tone of the meeting should be positive and encouraging. The discussion should be centred on:

- The Induction Process to date;
- Progress and planned developments in relation to each element of the job;
- Actions agreed to be taken by either party.

At the end of the meeting, the Probation Report Form which includes an action plan, must be completed and signed by both parties. Both parties will retain a copy of that form.

The Line Manager must write to the Head of Human Resources immediately after that meeting to confirm that it has taken place and enclose a copy of the Mid Term Review Report signed by both parties.

***Where particular development needs or serious performance difficulties have been identified, the Line Manager must write formally to the staff member highlighting these areas. This letter will emphasise the actions that need to be taken and the implications should no satisfactory improvement take place, which could include termination of contract. This letter should be copied to the Human Resources Department.***

***Support will be given to the staff member between the mid-term and final probation review. It may be appropriate to hold another review meeting between the mid-term and the final review meeting. In this case, the same procedures as outlined above will apply***

### 3.6 ***Final Probation Review\****

The final review should take place within the timelines shown in Table 1. Prior to this date, the Line Manager and Staff Member will separately complete the relevant forms and bring them to the Review Meeting. In cases where there has been a mid-term review, in completing the forms, the manager and staff member should focus on the outcomes of the Mid-Term Review and any other issues that may have arisen in the meantime.

In other cases the focus for the completion of the forms should be the performance of the staff member, training needs and other required supports.

### 3.7 ***The Final Review Meeting***

The Line Manager and the staff member will meet at an agreed time and venue. Sufficient time should be allocated for the meeting and each form should be taken in turn. The discussion should be centred around:

- The Mid-Term Review Report (where applicable)
- Performance, training needs and required supports;
- Actions agreed to be taken by either party;

At the end of the meeting the **Probation Report Form** must be completed and signed by both parties who will retain copies. The form will include a record of any actions and one of three possible recommendations:

1. the appointment should be confirmed;
2. the appointment should be terminated in accordance with DIT procedures
3. the probationary period may be extended (see 3.8 below)

Immediately after the meeting the Line Manager must inform the HR department in writing that the meeting has taken place and must enclose a copy of the report signed by both parties.

The Head of Human Resources or designated Senior Human Resources officer will review the file and either approve or reject the recommendation.

- Where the confirmation of appointment is recommended and approved, the HR Department will write to the staff member notifying them of the outcome and confirming the appointment.
- Where termination of appointment is recommended and approved, the HR Department will write to the staff member notifying them of the outcome and initiating termination procedures in accordance with DIT policy.
- Where an extension is recommended and approved, the HR Department will write to the staff member notifying them of the reasons for the extension and offering appropriate help and support, if necessary. The staff member will also be advised of the possible outcomes at the end of the extended probation (i.e. confirmation of employment or termination.)

To encourage discussion and feedback during the extension period a **further mid-extension review** will be required, as well as a **final end of extension probation report**. The procedures as outlined above apply.

If the recommendation is rejected, the Head of Human Resources or designated Senior Human Resources Officer will meet the Line Manager to discuss the case and agree appropriate action. The action agreed will depend on the individual circumstances of the case. The HR Department will write to the staff member formally notifying them of the outcome.

The manager may within five working days of notification of the decision, submit in writing, an appeal of the decision to the Director of Human Resources.

### **3.8 Extensions to Probation**

In exceptional circumstances and only in the case of staff members employed on contracts of at least two years duration, the probationary period may be extended for a further period. .

Extensions of probation should only be recommended for a period not exceeding six months and must be approved by HR.

***(Example: A newly appointed staff member is absent through illness for a six month period during their probation. There should be a six month extension to their probationary period in lieu of the time missed as there has not been sufficient time at work to assess their performance in the job.)***

### **4.1 Changes to Contractual Status During Probation**

If a member of staff is promoted, transferred or has any other change to their contractual status, the probation period applicable to their new contract type will apply (*See Table 1 for details of probation durations*).

If the staff member has already completed satisfactory service equal to or greater than the probation period duration of the new contract type they will be deemed to have already completed their probation.

***(Example 1: If a staff member who has been employed for 3 years is promoted to a Permanent Wholetime post which carries a 12 month probation, they will have been deemed to have already completed their probation as they have already served in excess of 12 months.)***

If the staff member has completed less service than the new probation period they will serve the outstanding number of months on probation before a final review is completed.

***(Example 2: If a staff member is employed as a Permanent Wholetime Clerical Officer and after 5 months is promoted to a Permanent Wholetime Assistant Staff Office position, they will still have 7 months probation to complete. In cases such as this, there should be an Informal Review after approximately nine months service with the Institute followed by a Final Formal Review.)***

***(Example 3: If a Fixed Term Wholetime Clerical Officer is appointed as a Permanent Wholetime Clerical Officer after 3 months service, the staff member will need to serve a further 9 months probation. In cases such as this the Probation process should continue with the Mid-Term Review at 6 months.)***

Where a staff member transfers to a position within the same grade but reporting to a new Line Manager, the existing Line Manager must arrange a Special Review Meeting in accordance with above procedures. A copy of that Probation Report Form (PRF) must be forwarded to the new Line Manager.

**QUERIES ON THIS POLICY**

Contact: Resourcing & Benefits, Human Resources Department

E-Mail: [hr@dit.ie](mailto:hr@dit.ie)

***The services of the HR Department\* are available to management and staff to clarify any issues in relation to the operation of this policy and provide any necessary support.***

**\*HR Contacts :**

***Denis Murphy, Director of Corporate Services– Tel: 01 220 5179***

***Mary Malone, Head of Human Resources – Tel: 01 220 5041***

***Paul Butler, Head of Workplace Relations – Tel: 01 220 5155***