

# Probation Policy

A template built for the 6-month qualifying period.

SAFE TO ADOPT TODAY

Nothing in this policy depends on the ERA 2025 reforms taking effect — it simply prepares you for them by default.

## 01 Purpose & Scope

This policy applies **uniformly to all new employees**. Probation is an assessment period, not a rights-free zone. The following statutory rights apply from day one, regardless of probationary status:

Statutory sick pay

Paternity leave

Protection from discrimination

Whistleblowing protection

## 02 Duration

The standard probationary period is **3 months**. One extension of up to **2 months** is permitted only where genuine doubt remains *and* the employee has been told, in writing, what must improve.

**3** mo  
Standard

**+2** mo  
Extension (once)

**5** mo  
Hard ceiling

**Footnote:** pair this policy with a contract clause defining probationary notice (commonly one week) — without one, full contractual notice applies from day one.

### Why 5 months, not 6?

From 1 January 2027, employees can claim unfair dismissal at **6 months' service**. Your confirmation decision must be made, communicated and actioned before that line — and statutory notice counts toward continuous service, so a dismissal at month 5½ may still carry the employee past 6 months. A 6-month probation leaves **zero margin**. **Decide early.**

## 03 Review Structure

### Week 1

Expectations set in writing — objectives, standards, support available.

### Week 6

Mid-probation review, documented. Employee told clearly if off-track.

### Week 10

Final review and confirmation decision. Sits at week 10 deliberately: two weeks to communicate and action the outcome before the period expires.

### If extended

Revised written objectives; further review no later than week 18.

## 04 Outcomes

### Confirm

The standard successful outcome — employment continues.

### Extend — once only

Where genuine doubt remains and improvements are set in writing.

### Do not confirm

Suitability not met. Exit on the applicable notice: the probationary notice period stated in the contract, or the statutory minimum (one week after one month's service), whichever is greater.

**Non-confirmation requires:** a meeting arranged with notice · the right to be accompanied (offered as good practice) · reasons given in writing · contractual notice honoured.

## 05 Support Obligations

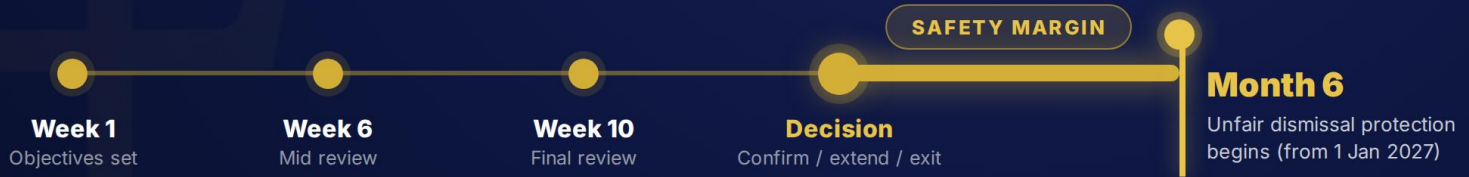
The employer will provide induction, training, regular one-to-ones and reasonable adjustments where relevant.

From 2027, **"they were in probation" is not a defence**. "We set clear standards, gave genuine support, reviewed honestly and documented everything" is.

# Running Probation Properly

The manager's guide to a reform-ready process.

## THE PROCESS — AND YOUR SAFETY MARGIN



## The Five Documentation Points

- 1** **Written objectives** at week 1.
- 2** **Week-6 review notes**, shared with the employee.
- 3** **Any concerns raised** — in writing, at the time.
- 4** **Week-10 review notes** and the decision rationale.
- 5** The **outcome letter**.

## Common Failure Modes

### The silent probation

No reviews — then sudden non-confirmation at month 5.

### The rolling extension

Using the extension to avoid a decision.

### The undocumented warning

"I told them verbally" is worth nothing at tribunal.

**This template can't chase your managers for the week-6 review. Trident Command can.**

Probation reviews scheduled, logged and acknowledged automatically. Cut the PDFs.

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