

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

The purpose of this document is to ensure that decision makers consider the impact of their policies and procedures on those who share protected characteristics. An EqIA should be undertaken for new practices or changes to current practices that could directly or indirectly affect staff, students and stakeholders.

Title of the Action Considered:	Probation Procedure
Impact Assessed by:	Kerry Maguire
Signature(s) of assessor(s):	
Date of Impact Assessment:	May 2024

Step 1: (a) Identify the aims of the action.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) What is the purpose of the action? (ii) Why has this action been come about? (iii) How does the action seek to achieve its purpose?
<p>The aim of the above procedure is to ensure new employees understand the College's expectations of them, provide an opportunity for new staff to demonstrate their suitability for the role and clarifying line managers' role in assessing suitability for the role. The probationary period provides a framework to assess new employees' performance and suitability over a reasonable timeframe and identify and address any early difficulties which may occur.</p> <p>In particular, the procedure is designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage and support new employees during the first few months of their employment to enable them to achieve the expected standards of performance and conduct in their role; • Provide clear guidance to managers and staff in the application of the Probationary Procedure; • Ensure that probationary reviews are handled in a fair and consistent manner; • Allow action to be taken where there are genuine concerns regarding an employee's suitability for the post.

Step 1: (b) Identify who is affected by the action.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Who benefits from this action? (ii) How does the group of people benefit from the action? (iii) Who does not benefit from the action? Is anyone disadvantaged either directly or indirectly? (iv) If so, how is the group of people disadvantaged by this action?
<p>All staff newly appointed to the college will be subject to a probationary period. All staff will benefit from the clear setting of expectations and objectives and a formal probation plan and induction programme.</p> <p>Discrimination during a probationary period could occur in various ways including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unconscious bias leading to unfair assessment by line managers during probation • inconsistent assessment during probation, such as holding certain groups to a higher standard • inadequate training or support to meet job requirements, resulting in discriminatory outcomes

- inadequate communication such as failing to provide clear expectations or feedback during probation, may make it difficult for certain employees to succeed.

To prevent such discrimination, clear and consistent evaluations should be implemented, using objective measurement of performance where possible. Regular review meetings must take place to ensure feedback during probation and an early opportunity to raise any concerns. Any decision to extend probation or terminate employment must be taken following HR advice.

In particular, staff on very fractional part time contracts may be disadvantaged due to fewer working hours in which to demonstrate suitability for the role. Staff with sickness absence during the probation period may also be disadvantaged due to the impact on time available to demonstrate suitability for the role, and this may adversely affect staff with disabilities. In such cases an extension to probation is available to allow additional time for support and meeting standards of performance.

Step 2: Consultation

Where an action is organisation specific, it can be useful to consult those that will be directly impacted. This may not always be appropriate or proportionate. It may be useful to explore other types of information available such as college data, Listening to Learners, cultural surveys etc.

Is a consultation required for any stage of this process?	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
Consultation with recognised trade unions.	
Where a consultation was identified as being proportionate and appropriate	
(i)	Outline the analysis of the data gathered during the consultation
(ii)	The recommendations identified following this analysis
The procedure is consulted with via trade union representatives. Data on number of new starts by protected characteristics provides a base line on new staff numbers, however data on successful completion of probationary periods will be required to be collected and analysed after the introduction of the procedure.	

Step 3: Consider the evidence and assess impact by protected characteristic.

(i)	What data or evidence have you used to consider the impact of the action on each protected characteristic? For example student/staff demographic data; consultation responses; national data/reports. If you lack data/evidence, where else could you look for/gather data? Is this reasonable/proportionate to the change proposed?
(ii)	Referring to the evidence you do have available, would this policy positively or negatively impact on those who share protected characteristics?
(iii)	If there is an identified impact, where negative, detail the action required to mitigate this impact. Where positive or no impact, are there any other actions that could be identified to further enhance the positive impacts of the action?

Protected Characteristic	Evidence	Impact	Action Required
Disability	<p>19.81% of staff declared a disability.</p> <p>Adjustments can be put in place for disabled staff where required.</p>	Positive	<p>Continued Monitoring will take place to ensure no disadvantage to new staff with disabilities.</p> <p>Any additional support for disabled employees can be identified through formal probation review meetings. For example, this may include an extension to the probationary period where required, and reasonable adjustments if required.</p>
Sex (man or woman)	The college is 58% female and 42% male.	Neutral	<p>Continued Monitoring will take place to ensure no disadvantage in terms of successful completion of probation.</p> <p>Any additional support can be identified through formal probation review meetings. This may include an extension to the probationary period where required, for example, for very fractional part time posts where completion of all objectives has not been possible.</p>
Race (refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins)	The college has a diverse range of nationalities and background. There is no evidence to indicate race would impact on successful completion of probationary periods.	Neutral	Continued Monitoring will take place to ensure race does not impact on successful completion of probation.
Age	The majority of staff are split almost evenly in the three age groups encompassing 35 to 64 age groupings (80%)	Positive	<p>Continued Monitoring will take place to analyse any impact of age on successful completion of probation.</p> <p>Any additional support will be identified through formal probation review meetings. For example, extension of probation period where required. This could impact staff at either end of the age spectrum, such as very young staff in their first role, or less digitally-confident staff.</p>
Gender Reassignment (the process of transitioning from one gender to another)	There is no substantive data available on this characteristic to reach any conclusions	Neutral	<p>Continued Monitoring will take place.</p> <p>Any additional support can be identified through formal probation review meetings.</p>

Sexual Orientation (whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes)	There is no evidence to indicate sexual orientation would impact on successful completion of probationary periods.	Neutral	Continued Monitoring will take place.
Religion and Belief (including no belief)	There is no evidence to indicate religion would impact on successful completion of probationary periods.	Neutral	Continued Monitoring will take place.
Pregnancy and Maternity	There is no data available on this characteristic in relation to newly appointed staff.	Positive	Continued Monitoring will take place. Any additional support can be identified through formal probation review meetings. For example, adjustments to probation timing can be arranged to take account of maternity leave or pregnancy-related absence to ensure no disadvantage.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	55% of staff are married and 25% are not with non-declared or other accounting for the remaining %.	Neutral	Continued Monitoring will take place.
Other Identified Groups (e.g. carers, care experienced, SIMD10 and 20)	There is no data available on this characteristic to reach any conclusions.	Neutral	Continued Monitoring will take place.

(iv) If it has been identified that more evidence is required, detail the action plan to collect that evidence and identify the timescale for this;

Data on outcomes of probationary periods for new staff will be collected and analysed annually to assess any impact on groups with protected characteristics. Ongoing monitoring will allow assessment of any disadvantage resulting from a probationary period.

Step 4: Decision Making

Select an option below that identifies the next stage of the implementation stage;	
No amendment to the action is required. It has been concluded that the action is robust with no negative impact.	x
Adjustments the action are required to take steps to meet the general duty and reduce negative impact on those who share protected characteristics.	
Adverse impact has been identified but a decision has been made to implement the action without adjustment.	
Adverse effects have been identified and the impact cannot be justified or be considered reasonable or proportionate. The action will not proceed.	

Step 5: Publication:

It is best practice to publish Equality Impact Assessments. It may not always be appropriate to publish EqIAs at the time of development.

	Does this group need to be aware of this EqIA?	How will information be shared with this group?
Students	No	
Employees	Yes	This is shared and published on the college Sharepoint site. Line managers will be trained on Probation procedures at the implementation stage.
Partner organisations & stakeholders	No	
Other - please state:	No	
Are there any barriers to communicating with the groups identified?	No	
If yes, how will any barriers to communication be overcome?		

Step 6: Monitoring and Review

Is monitoring required as part of the process of implementation?	Yes
If yes, how will this policy/decision be monitored to assess its impact on protected characteristics groups? E.g. will qualitative/quantitative data be collected? Survey, Student Council, Listening to Learners sessions?	Ongoing data is collected and analysed
Staff member/designation responsible for ensuring monitoring/review takes place:	HR
Review date:	2026

Please send the completed EqlA to equality@forthvalley.ac.uk

If you require any assistance in completing an EqlA, please contact equality@forthvalley.ac.uk