

Academic Probation

A Guide to the Process of Academic Probation at
The University of Warwick

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Probation Process

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- Probation Review Group
- Responsibilities of Head of Department
- Probationer's responsibilities
- Probation Annual Review
- Criteria
- APP TE
- Completion of Probation
- Non completion of Probation
- Appeals Process



Introduction

The purpose of probation is to allow newly appointed academic staff a period of time to reach a position where they are able to demonstrate a proven ability in teaching, research and academic service/management.

Those involved....

- Probation Review Group
- Heads of Department
- Probationer
- Mentor
- Academic Processes team, HR
- Academic Development Centre

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Length of Probation

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- The usual length of academic probation is five years
- Differs to many other UK institutions because there is automatic promotion to Associate Professor following complete of probation
- Probation will be extended automatically when a probationer is on parental or long-term sick leave
- Heads of Departments may recommend staff for early completion of probation in terms of performance where they deem it appropriate
- In no case may the total period of probation (excluding regulated absence under University policies on parental leave, sickness, etc) be more than five years, with a sixth and final year's notice

Probation Review Group

- A sub-group of the Academic Staff Committee
- Representatives from each Faculty
- Holds meetings in Autumn, Spring & Summer terms to discuss probationers progress
- Currently c.220 Assistant Professors subject to Academic Probation
- The meeting in which a probationer is reviewed is normally determined by their start date:

Start date	Meeting
1 November – 29 February	Autumn
1 March – 31 May	Spring
1 June – 31 October	Summer



Probation Review Group responsibilities

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- Monitoring probationers and deciding whether to confirm appointment at the end of probation;
- Considering annual reports from the Head of Department on the progress of all probationers (using submitted proforma and current CV in the approved style);
- Advising departments and probationers of any concerns and deciding whether probation can continue;
- Agreeing remedial action if it considers a probationer is at any point during probation likely to fail to reach the required standard;
- Considering cases for completion and early completion of probation;
- Considering cases where the Head of Department recommends that a probationer's appointment should be terminated at the end of the probationary period

Responsibilities of Head of Department

- Discussing and agreeing explicitly with the probationer the targets for the completion of probation and measures that will be used for assessing their progress against these targets (with the University's progression and promotion framework as context);
- Holding an annual meeting to discuss progress and achievements in line with the criteria and targets and talk through any problems encountered by the probationer which are adversely affecting progress and what might be done to improve the situation;
- Submitting to the Probation Review Group a report on each probationer in the department ensuring that any issues from the previous report or feedback from earlier PRG meetings are addressed;
- Making recommendations to PRG for completion or non completion of probation;
- Providing each probationer with a mentor from within the department;
- Ensuring that the mentor relationship is maintained throughout the probation period.

Probationer's Responsibilities

- Developing their academic career in line with the agreed criteria for probation and targets set by the department (with the University's progression and promotion framework as context);
- Keeping in regular contact with their mentor;
- Keeping their mentor and Head of Department informed of research, teaching and administrative activities;
- Working in a collegial way;
- Maintaining a portfolio of evidence to support progress;
- Identifying promptly any difficulties in meeting the agreed targets;
- Providing a current CV using the guidance notes.

Probation Criteria

The broad criteria against which colleagues' contribution will be assessed are:

- Research
- Teaching
- Impact, Outreach, engagement
- Leadership, Collegiality and Management

Regulation 4 of University Statutes governs probation but detail is provided in the Probation Policy.

PATHWAY	RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP	TEACHING AND LEARNING	IMPACT, OUTREACH, ENGAGEMENT	COLLEGIALITY, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
FA9 - Professor				
To be achieved through meeting minimum thresholds in each of the four key areas of activity as detailed below				
Total minimum score = 22				
Research and Teaching	7	5	4	4
Teaching Focused	3	8	4	4
Research Focused	8	3	4	4
FA8 - Reader				
To be achieved through meeting minimum thresholds in each of the four key areas of activity as detailed below				
Total minimum score = 20				
Research and Teaching	6	4	3	3
Teaching Focused	3	7	3	3
Research Focused	7	3	3	3
FA8 - Associate Professor				
To be achieved through meeting minimum thresholds in each of the four key areas of activity as detailed below				
Total minimum score = 18				
Research and Teaching	5	4	3	3
Teaching Focused	3	6	3	3
Research Focused	6	3	3	3
FA7				
To be achieved through meeting minimum thresholds in each of the four key areas of activity as detailed below				
Total minimum score = 14				
Research and Teaching	4	3	2	2
Teaching Focused	2	5	2	2
Research Focused	5	2	2	2



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This is an integrated framework for all career pathways. You are on the R&T pathway and to complete probation we expect you to reach the standard required for an Associate Professor.

This standard requires a certain minimum level of performance across each of 4 areas of activity, but also allows for individuals to be recognised for differential contributions.



How this works



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- Each score in the framework is translated into a stated expectation around level of performance (band 5 in research means “national eminence and authority for the quality and impact of their research and scholarship”).
- You demonstrate that you have met this standard/criterion using a range of evidence (and we give examples of the kind of evidence you might use).
- The nature/value of the evidence may be discipline specific and your HoD/mentor will be able to advise.
- You may use other forms of evidence if they are appropriate – our list is not exclusive!



Research: Minimum requirement and indicative evidence



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Band 5 Has achieved **national eminence and authority for the quality and impact of their research and scholarship** and is developing an international profile

- Ability to sustain the publication of research that is clearly of a national standard.
- Evidence of ability to access external funding for research related activity
- Supervision of PhDs
- Recognition within the institution and beyond for scholarship or research based innovation in learning and teaching
- Teaching related publications (journals, textbooks or conferences)
- Action research outputs
- Research and evidence gathering that informs policy development (institutionally, nationally or internationally)
- Scholarly based contributions to professional bodies, governmental organisations or sector bodies

Teaching: Minimum requirement and indicative evidence

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Band 4 Able to **design, deliver, evaluate and assess teaching to a good standard**, to engage effectively with students and collaborate with colleagues to inform the enhancement of own and others' teaching practices.

- Feedback from student, peers and seniors relating the impact of changes made to teaching practices to benefit learning. May include own structured evaluation using scholarly methods to evaluate innovations and changes in teaching practices.
- Creative and effective use of different methods of delivery and support to benefit learning, inclusivity and/or widening participation.
- Constructive engagement with personal tutoring with positive feedback from personal tutees and Departmental Senior Tutor review
- Fellowship of the HEA or equivalent professional body

APPTE!





Impact, Outreach, Engagement: Minimum requirement and indicative evidence



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Band 3 Developing a **reputation and recognition with key stakeholders for the broader value of specialist activity**

- Involvement in key projects, conferences and events (e.g. organising committees)
- Evidence of the ability to set up and develop relationships with external organisations or other Universities
- Evidence of the ability to generate business for the University
- National or international student recruitment activity



Leadership, Collegiality and Management: Minimum requirement and indicative evidence



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- Band 3** Demonstrate the ability actively to organise and manage activity in support of academic processes, showing emerging leadership ability within immediate group.
- Active participation in departmental (or divisional) policy initiatives, possibly through membership of departmental committees (e.g. helping to organise student activities, assisting with admissions and recruitment, assisting with seminar/event organisation, etc.)
 - Successful initiatives or innovations in administrative processes, or taking on significant departmental (or divisional) responsibilities which are carried out successfully



Academic and Professional Pathway for Teaching Excellence (APPTE)



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- Probationary staff are required to successfully complete the APPTE
- Heads of Department and Probation Review Group receive a progress report from the Academic Development Centre detailing their progress towards APPTE

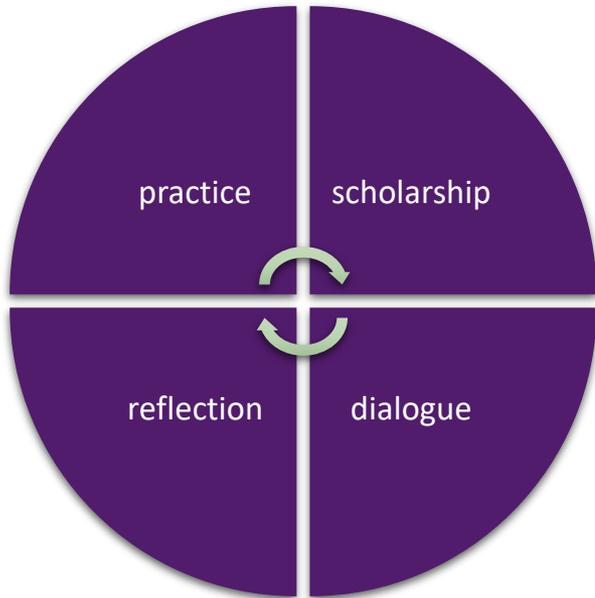


Academic and Professional Pathway for Teaching Excellence (APPTE)

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- Accredited to award Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA)
- 12 month online via Moodle (c. 2-4 hours per week)
- Monthly hang-outs with Programme leaders (optional)
- Small group activities
- Formative assessment (drafts of summative pieces)
- Developmental teaching observations: APP TE lead; departmental mentor; reciprocal peer observation or dialogue

Foundations of APPTE



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- Authentic formative and summative assessment supports development of practice
- Introduces theory as framework for understanding teaching & learning and fosters engagement with pedagogic research to provide evidence-base for practice
- Small group activities create opportunities for collaboration, dialogue, sharing of practice and peer support
- Programme focuses upon individual as a reflective practitioner: responsive to disciplinary context

- Teaching excellence: excellence in practice and policy.
- Research & Education at Warwick: supervision, personal tutoring.
- Teaching as enquiry: reflective & scholarly practice.
- Design & assessment: module design, principles of assessment.
- Feedback for learning: effective marking and feedback.
- Teaching in context: engagement; autonomy; collaboration; inclusivity.
- Theories of learning

APPTE – Partial Exemptions

- Hold Fellowship (FHEA) or Senior Fellowship (SFHEA)
 - Send us copy of your Fellowship Certificate
 - Complete Part 1 of APP TE (first 3 months)
- Previously completed similar programme at other HE and/or significant experience of teaching in HE
 - Complete application form to evidence intended learning outcomes
 - Complete Part 1 of APP TE (first 3 months)
 - Gain HEA Fellowship by completing APP TE assessment or APP EXP pathway to Fellowship (narrative or dialogue).

Beyond APSTE

Probationary staff should undertake further teaching observations (two per year – one mentor and one peer) and continue to engage in reflective practice by keeping an online portfolio after the completion of APSTE (i.e. years 2-5 of probation)

Communication

- Important to build a picture for the Probation Review Group (PRG) of your progress (evidence your trajectory)
- Probationers will receive letters from PRG, with Heads of Department copied in, providing updates and feedback on their progress
- Four-way process of communication:
 - Probation Review Group
 - Heads of Department
 - Probationer
 - Mentor



Completion of Probation

- At the end of the probation period the department can either:
 - Recommend completion of probation
 - Put forward an adverse recommendation
- A case for early completion can be put forward if a probationer is deemed to have met the criteria in advance of their probation end date
- If PRG agree with the department's decision to complete probation the Probationer will be promoted to Associate Professor

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Adverse Recommendation

- If the department recommend that a probationer should not complete probation, they will need to provide a full and detailed explanation why completion cannot be confirmed
- PRG can also decide that a probationer should not complete probation, even if the department's recommendation is to complete
- PRG can also choose to override the department's recommendation regarding non-completion
- If an adverse recommendation is received, we will write to the probationer and they will be given the opportunity to either attend the meeting in person to present their case or submit a statement. We will also contact up to 3 referees of the probationer's choice.
- There is an appeals process
- The full process for an adverse recommendation is detailed in regulation 4 of the University's regulations.



Summary

- Communication is vital
- Meeting the four criteria and individual targets is key
- Probation cannot be confirmed until you have attended the residential and APPTTE is complete
- PRG is the decision making body



Useful contacts



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- Any questions regarding Academic Probation should be emailed to the Academic Processes team within HR at academicprocesses@warwick.ac.uk
- Any questions regarding APPTE should be emailed to APPTE@warwick.ac.uk

Any questions?

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