



Probationary procedures for University/Senior/Academic Research Fellowships

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1. Introduction

1.1. The following probationary procedures will apply to:

- University Research Fellows appointed in the central exercises after 2004;
- Externally funded Research Fellows on special Fellowships from the Research Councils, the Royal Society and other analogous bodies appointed after 1st September 2004 (see Appendix);
- Academic Fellows appointed to posts supported by the Academic Fellowships Scheme of the Research Councils in 2004 and subsequent years.

1.2. A key part of the process to allow an individual to progress to a substantive academic post is that of probationary review. In the case of staff appointed to Lectureships such reviews take into account the full range of duties of an academic post (administration, research and teaching) and are normally no longer than 2 years in duration. It is, however, appropriate that the probationary path for a holder of one of these prestigious Fellowships should, in the early stage, focus more specifically on the individual's research performance. It is, therefore, a condition of appointment that the Fellow

should have clear, challenging and appropriate research targets, set at the outset of the Fellowship in agreement with the head of school. At a point later in the Fellowship (after 2 years for 3 and 4 year appointments and after 3 years for 5 year appointments), the Fellow's research performance will be assessed in the light of these targets.

- 1.3. Subject to a satisfactory review at this first stage in the Fellowship, confirming that the Fellow is establishing an appropriate career as an independent researcher of actual or potential international standing, further probationary targets will be agreed which include elements of teaching and administration alongside research (in the case of externally funded Fellowships this will depend on the conditions of the Fellowship and in the case of Academic Fellows will include outreach to schools¹), preparing the Fellow for a subsequent transfer to an Academic post and allowing the Fellow to complete the University's normal probationary requirements for academic staff within the period of the Fellowship. Although the revised targets will normally include elements of teaching and administration (except where this is waived at the outset of the Fellowship due to previous experience as a University Lecturer), these components will not be expected to exceed half of the workload of a full member of the academic staff in the Fellow's disciplinary area and would consist mainly of teaching duties.
- 1.4. In the event that the conditions of an externally funded Fellowship do not allow the Fellow to carry out any teaching or administration during the Fellowship, providing the Fellow successfully completes the initial probationary review, the probation requirements in the event of a subsequent Academic appointment will be reviewed on an individual basis.

2. Procedures for initial probationary review

- 2.1. The underlying principle of the probationary procedures for University/Senior/Academic Research Fellows will be in accordance with the policy on Procedure and Management of Probation. This includes the nomination of a senior member of staff to act as mentor/probationary adviser throughout the probationary period and the completion of a probation plan at the beginning of the initial and final stages of the probation process.
- 2.2.
- 2.3. The central feature of the initial probationary review of research performance (after 2 or 3 years as appropriate) is confirmation, to the satisfaction of a small review panel, including a reviewer external to the Fellow's school, that the Fellow has established him/herself as a competent, independent researcher of actual or potential international standing and is thus placed to move to the next stage of probation which, if successfully completed, may result in an Academic appointment.
- 2.4. In order to allow the review panel to come to a judgment, the following steps will normally be followed:
 - 2.4.1. A review group will be established by the Fellow's Head of School, chaired by a senior (normally professorial) member of the Fellow's school with one further reviewer from within the school and one external reviewer (if appropriate, this reviewer may also be external to the University). The review group would not normally include either the Fellow's mentor or the Head of School:

¹ Where Fellows will go out to try to enthuse young people, for example, within the Science Ambassadors programme, to inspire young people, support out of school activities, offer mentoring and career guidance and act as role models

- 2.4.2. The chair of the review group will let the Fellow know that the group has been established, and advise both the Fellow and the Director of Human Resources of the group's membership and the timetable for its work.
- 2.4.3. The Fellow will submit for review a dossier of information supporting her/his claim to independent research status and demonstrating that she/he has achieved the research targets set at the outset of the Fellowship.
- 2.4.4. The Fellow may wish to consult carefully with her/his school mentor as to the evidence most appropriate to her/his field, but the dossier should include:
- a statement describing the research targets and their relevance to the Fellow's programme;
 - a general statement of activity;
 - specific evidence relating to targets;
 - measures of international peer esteem.

And might include:

- copies of papers published in or submitted to international journals;
 - other relevant outputs or measures
 - any other such evidence as the individual determines appropriate
- 2.4.5. Copies of the dossier will be distributed to the review group, who may then wish to request supplementary information. There will be a formal meeting of the review group, first in private to discuss the material submitted and then with the Fellow to review the Fellowship. The characteristics of this meeting will be:
- a dialogue of peers;
 - an opportunity for the Fellow to establish, orally and by reference to the submitted material, her/his credentials as an independent researcher;
 - an analysis (by reference to this discussion and to specific performance indicators within the submitted material) of the international peer status of the scholarship, professional standing and performance of the Fellow.

3. Outcome

- 3.1. The review group will prepare a short report of its considerations, including a recommendation as to whether or not this part of the probation has been successfully completed. The report will, by reference to the evidence submitted to the group and the group's deliberations on that evidence and on its meeting with the Fellow, indicate whether:
- the Fellow has achieved her/his research objectives and;
 - the Fellow has achieved independent research status and;
 - the Fellow has achieved, or demonstrated the potential to achieve, international standing or;
 - the Fellow has yet to reach her/his objectives and/or that she/he does not yet have international standing as an independent researcher.
- 3.2. The report and recommendation will be submitted to the Head of School who will forward it to the relevant Human Resources Manager. The H.R. Manager will then forward the report to the Pro-Vice Chancellors for Research and for Staff who will jointly decide whether or not the Fellow has reached an acceptable standard of performance to allow progression to the next stage of probation.

4. Action

- 4.1. If the review group makes a positive recommendation and if this recommendation is confirmed by the Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Research and Staff, the Fellow will proceed to the next stage of the Fellowship probationary process (unless the conditions of an externally funded Fellowship prevent this). This will normally include targets for teaching and administration (and, in the case of Academic Fellows, outreach activities) which would not be expected to exceed half of the workload of a full member of the academic staff in the Fellow's disciplinary area and would consist mainly of teaching duties. The second stage probation plan will include career development opportunities in teaching and administration. The Fellow will also be expected to follow the 'Certificate in Teaching and Learning in HE' run by the University.
- 4.2. If it is not possible at this stage to establish that the Fellow has reached the status of an independent researcher with actual or potential international standing and/or that she/he has not yet achieved the agreed research objectives, then the review group will meet with the Head of School and at least one of the following: the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Staff, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research, the Research Pro-Dean of the relevant Faculty, to re-assess the probationary terms with a view to:
 - setting new targets if that is appropriate or;
 - reconsidering the need to extend the first stage of probation (in the case of University Research Fellows this would result in extending the overall period of the Fellowship) or;
 - in extreme cases, considering the potential need to terminate employment in accordance with the University's standard probationary procedures for Academic and Academic Related (Professional and Managerial) Staff.
- 4.3. This meeting will also be attended by a senior member of the Human Resources team.

5. Procedures for final probationary review

- 5.1. A further probation plan must be completed for the final stage of the probation process within 2 months of successful completion of the initial stage.
- 5.2. No later than three months before the end of the Fellowship the Head of School will arrange a further meeting of the review group (where possible including the same members as the earlier meeting) to review progress towards the final stage targets and make a further recommendation to the Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Staff and Research. The review procedure will be the same as at the initial probationary review except that, on this occasion, the Fellow will be expected to have demonstrated his/her ability to undertake satisfactorily the full range of duties of an Academic member of staff. (See final Probationary Review Form Section A for documentation to be provided by the Research Fellow.)

For Fellows on a permanent contract

- 5.3. If the review group makes a positive recommendation and if this recommendation is confirmed by the Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Research and Staff, the Fellow will transfer to an Academic post² within the relevant School without the need for further probation.

² See "transfer to an academic position" and "promotion beyond grade 8"

For Fellows on a fixed term contract

- 5.4. If the review group makes a positive recommendation and if this recommendation is confirmed by the Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Research and Staff, the Fellow may be offered an Academic post* within the relevant School without the need for further probation.
- 5.5. If the review group and/or the Pro-Vice-Chancellors are unable to recommend appointment to an Academic post for staff on a permanent contract, or whose appointment end date extends beyond the end of the probationary period, the reports of the Review Group and the Pro-Vice-Chancellors will be considered in accordance with the University's standard probationary procedures for Academic and Academic Related (Professional and Managerial) Staff.

6. Transfer to an academic position

- 6.1. Transfer to an Academic position at the end of a Fellowship will normally be as follows:
 - Those on Grade 8 (including Discretionary Increments) will transfer to an academic position with the title Lecturer.
 - Those on Grade 9 will transfer to an academic position with the title Lecturer on completion of the Fellowship unless he/she has successfully applied for promotion to Senior Lecturer/Associate Professor or Reader (see promotion beyond Grade 8).

7. Promotion beyond Grade 8

- 7.1. At any point during the Fellowship the Fellow may apply for promotion at the appropriate time.
- 7.2. For those appointed on Grade 7 such application would be to Grade 8 through the promotions exercise for Academic and Related (Professional and Managerial) Staff.
- 7.3. Staff on Grade 8 who wish to apply for promotion have three options as follows:
 - Application for promotion to Grade 9. In this case, the Fellow's title would remain that of Lecturer on transfer to an Academic position at the end of the Fellowship and his/her salary level and incremental progression be protected. In order to attain the title and status of Senior Lecturer/Associate Professor or Reader the Fellow would need to make a successful promotion application in the normal way.
 - Application for promotion to Reader. If such application were successful, the Fellow would immediately be awarded the title and status of Reader and the School will be asked to consider whether they wish to recommend waiving the remainder of the probation period (It is recognised that, in some cases, it may be beneficial for the Fellow to continue probation in order to develop his/her skills in teaching and administration). Where the decision is taken to recommend early completion of probation, the Fellow will be expected to undertake the normal range of duties expected of colleagues in that grade in the relevant School.
 - Application for promotion to Senior Lecturer/Associate Professor. If such application were successful, the Fellow would immediately be awarded the title and status of Senior Lecturer/Associate Professor and with no further requirement for probation assessment. The Fellow will be expected to undertake the normal range of duties expected of colleagues in that grade in the relevant School.

- 7.4. If an application for promotion to Senior Lecturer/Associate Professor or Reader is unsuccessful, the Fellow may subsequently apply for promotion to grade 9.
- 7.5. Staff on Grade 9 may choose to apply for a Promotional Chair. If such an application is successful, he/she will be awarded the title of Professor and the School will be asked to consider whether they wish to recommend waiving the remainder of the probation period (It is recognised that, in some cases, it may be beneficial for the Fellow to continue probation in order to develop his/her skills in teaching and administration). with no further requirement for probation assessment. Where the decision is taken to recommend early completion of probation, the Fellow will be expected to undertake the normal range of duties expected of colleagues in that grade in the relevant School.

Appendix 1

Groups eligible for the University/Senior Research/Academic Fellowship probationary arrangements

1. University/Academic Research Fellows

These are Research Staff appointed under the University Research Fellowship Scheme which commenced in 1995 or the Research Councils' Academic Fellowship Scheme which commenced in 2004. These are permanent appointments and, subject to successful completion of probation, the Fellows will move to permanent Academic appointments at the end of the Fellowship.

2. Externally funded Senior Research Fellows

2.1. These probationary arrangements will also be a condition of employment of Research Staff awarded "Senior Research Fellowships" by the Research Councils and analogous bodies, for example:

- MRC
 - Senior Non-Clinical Fellowships
 - Senior Clinical Fellowships
 - Career Development Awards
- BBSRC
 - Senior Fellowships
 - Advanced Fellowships
- Wellcome
 - Advanced Training Fellowships
 - Research Career Development Fellowships
 - Advanced Fellowships
- PPARC
 - Advanced Fellowships
- EPSRC
 - Advanced Fellowships
 - Senior Fellowships
- British Heart Foundation
 - Intermediate Research Fellowships
 - Senior Research Fellowships
- NERC
 - Advanced Research Fellowships
 - Senior Research Fellowships
- Royal Society Fellowships
 - University Fellowships

2.2. Subject to an appointment of at least 3 years such Fellows will be able to complete the initial stage of this probation procedure at the end of year 2 (for Fellowships of 3 or 4 years) or Year 3 (for Fellowships of 5 years). If the conditions of the Fellowship allow

the Fellow to undertake some duties other than Research during the Fellowship it may also be possible for him/her to complete the second stage of the process.

- 2.3. If both stages are successfully completed, no further probation will be required in the event that the Fellow is subsequently appointed to an Academic position. If it is only possible to successfully complete the first stage of probation, probation requirements in the event of an appointment to an Academic position will be reviewed on an individual basis.

University/Senior Research Fellowship scheme - initial probationary review probation plan

To be completed by the Head of School and returned to Human Resources within 2 months of the member of staff commencing employment.

Name of member of staff on probation	School
Name of Nominated Mentor/Adviser	Type of Fellowship ³ : Length of Fellowship Date of Appointment
Research Objectives for initial probationary period:	
Plans for providing guidance, developmental opportunities and for monitoring and evaluating progress:	
I confirm that I have discussed the above plan with the adviser and member of staff	
<p>_____ Head of School _____ Date</p> <p>_____ Probationer _____ Date</p>	

³ University/Academic Research Fellowship/Externally Funded Senior Research Fellowship

Initial probationary review – section A

Research Fellow's report

Name:	School:
Date Fellowship commenced:	
<p>You are required to submit a report to a review group convened by your Head of School demonstrating that you have achieved the research targets agreed at the outset of your Fellowship. This report must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a statement describing the research targets and their relevance to your programme• a general statement of activity• specific evidence relating to targets• measures of international peer esteem <p>and might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• copies of papers published in or submitted to international journals• other relevant outputs or measures• any other such evidence as you determine appropriate	

Initial probationary review – section B

Review group's report

Names, grades and School of review panel members:			
	Name	Grade	School
1.			
2.			
3.			
<p>The review group should appoint a Chairperson from amongst the group and should complete overleaf, or attach separately, a report of the Fellow's progress to date, signed by the Chairperson on behalf of the group. The report (which must include a recommendation as to whether or not this part of the probation has been successfully completed) will, by reference to the evidence submitted to the group and the group's deliberations on that evidence and on its meeting with the Fellow, indicate whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the Fellow has achieved her/his research objectives and;• the Fellow has achieved independent research status and;• the Fellow has achieved, or demonstrated the potential to achieve, international standing or; the Fellow has yet to reach her/his objectives and/or that she/he does not yet have international standing as an independent researcher. <p>This report will be submitted to the Head of School who will forward it to the relevant Human Resources Manager, along with the Research Fellow's report, for submission to the Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Research and Staff who will jointly decide whether the Fellow has successfully completed probation and may progress to the next stage of his/her probation within the Fellowship scheme.</p>			

Final probationary review – probation plan

To be completed by the Head of School and returned to Human Resources **within 2 months of the member of staff completing the first stage of probation.**

Name of member of staff on probation	School
Name of Nominated Mentor/Adviser	Type of Fellowship ⁴ : Length of Fellowship Date of Appointment
Research, Teaching and Administration Objectives (and in the case of Academic Fellows, outreach activities) for the final probationary period:	
Plans for providing guidance, developmental opportunities and for monitoring and evaluating progress:	
I confirm that I have discussed the above plan with the adviser and member of staff	
<p>_____ Head of School _____ Date</p> <p>_____ Probationer _____ Date</p> <p>I have seen and agreed the above plan</p>	

⁴⁴ University/Academic Research Fellowship/Externally Funded Senior Research Fellowship

Final probationary review – section A

Research Fellow's report

Name:	School:
Date Fellowship commenced:	
<p>You are required to submit a report to a review group convened by your Head of School demonstrating that you have achieved the targets agreed at the commencement of the second stage of your Fellowship and have achieved the skills required to move into a permanent Academic post. This report must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a statement describing the targets and their relevance to your programme• a general statement of activity (including reference to research, teaching and administration)• specific evidence relating to targets (including reference to research, teaching and administration)• measures of international peer esteem <p>and might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• copies of papers published in or submitted to international journals• other relevant outputs or measures• any other such evidence as you determine appropriate, which may be of the following kind:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- evidence of satisfactory teaching performance judged by such evaluation methods as your School employs e.g. course reviews, peer observation and student questionnaires;- a capacity to teach at different levels;- efficient setting, marking and assessment of course work and examinations;- a contribution to the planning and development of modules within the relevant subject area;- evidence of the impact of research and scholarship on teaching;- efficient performance of routine administrative duties, either within or on behalf of the School.	

Final probationary review – section B

Review group's report

Names, grades and School of review panel members:			
	Name	Grade	School
1.			
2.			
3.			
<p>The review group should appoint a Chairperson from amongst the group and attach a report of the Fellow's progress to date signed by the Chairperson on behalf of the group. The report (which must include a recommendation as to whether or not the Fellow has demonstrated his/her ability to undertake the full range of duties of an Academic member of staff) will, by reference to the evidence submitted to the group and the group's deliberations on that evidence and on its meeting with the Fellow, indicate whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the Fellow has achieved her/his second stage research objectives and;• the Fellow has met such acceptable standards in his/her teaching and administrative duties as are required of a member of the University's Academic Staff <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the Fellow has yet to reach her/his research objectives and that she/he does not meet such acceptable standards in his/her teaching and administrative duties as are required of a member of the University's Academic Staff. <p>This report must be submitted to the Head of School who will forward it to the relevant Human Resources Manager for submission to the Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Research and Staff who will jointly decide whether the Fellow has successfully completed probation and may be appointed to a permanent Academic post within his/her School.</p>			