

Probation Policy

Version: 1.0 | **Version effective date:** 31/08/2026

Supersedes: Probation Policy (January 2014)

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Queensland Public Trustee (QPT) whose employment with QPT is subject to a probationary period. The policy does not apply to:

- existing public sector employees
- casual employees
- fixed-term temporary employees
- consultants
- contractors
- persons already employed by QPT on a permanent basis who have already served a probation period and are transferred at level or promoted to another position within QPT
- senior executives or the chief executive officer
- circumstances where an exemption has been granted by the Public Trustee.

Purpose

QPT is committed to fostering a positive working environment where all employees feel supported and have a clear understanding of their duties and responsibilities. The purpose of this policy is to provide for probationary periods that apply to ensure consistent application of probation for QPT employees.

Policy statement

The purpose of a probation period is to provide an initial period to onboard and train a new employee and for the employee's manager to assess the employee's performance and conduct to determine their suitability for ongoing employment with QPT. A person whose employment is terminated during a probationary period is excluded from bringing an application for unfair dismissal under Section 315 of the *Industrial Relations Act 2016* ([IR Act](#).)

Principles

This policy ensures probationary periods for QPT employees are consistent, transparent, fair and comply with all relevant legislation. The key principles guiding probationary periods for QPT employees are as follows:

1. Positive Performance Management

- QPT promotes best practice workforce management by applying the positive performance management principles set out in section 85 of the *Public Sector Act 2022* (PS Act), including during any probationary period.

Probation Policy

2. Timely and Constructive Feedback

- During probationary periods, employees will receive prompt, appropriate, and ongoing feedback on their work performance, including recognition of acceptable and exceptional performance and clear guidance on areas requiring improvement.

3. Transparency and Shared Understanding

- QPT ensures a shared understanding of probationary periods by clearly informing prospective and current employees about applicable probation arrangements and expectations.
- Any probationary period exceeding three months must be reasonable in the circumstances and agreed in writing between QPT and the employee before employment commences.

4. Procedural Fairness

- Where performance or conduct issues arise during a probationary period, employees will be afforded natural justice, including the opportunity to respond before any decision is made regarding completion of probation.

5. Human Rights and Legislative Compliance

- All decisions made under this policy will be consistent with QPT's obligations under the *Human Rights Act 2019* (HR Act), PS Act, and the Positive Performance Management Directive (02/24), including commitments to reframing the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples.

6. Accountability and Record-Keeping

- QPT will thoroughly document and retain records of decisions relating to probation and the outcome of an employee's probationary period.

7. Continuous Improvement

- This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure ongoing compliance with legislative requirements and alignment with organisational needs.

Requirements

Probation period

Depending on the role, a new QPT employee will be required to serve a probationary period of either three (3) or six (6) months from the commencement of their employment with QPT.

In some roles, including entry level positions that require extensive formal or on-the-job training before suitability can be assessed, an initial probationary period of six months may need to be applied to these positions.

In QPT, employees appointed to the positions outlined in the table below will be subject to a **six-month** probationary period:

Job Title	Classification	Division	Length of probation
Administration Officer	AO2	Customer Experience and Delivery	6 months

Probation Policy

Job Title	Classification	Division	Length of probation
Public Trust Officer	AO3	Customer Experience and Delivery	6 months
Customer Support Consultant	AO3	Customer Experience and Delivery	6 months

The probationary period **must** be agreed in writing before a person commences employment with QPT and must be reasonable having regard to the nature and circumstances of the role. It is not possible to extend a probationary period after a person has commenced employment with QPT. Managers should seek advice from [People and Culture](#) if they are unsure if a probationary period longer than three months is appropriate.

The probationary period applicable to an employee will be set out in the role description and in the Acceptance of Appointment letter sent by QPT to the employee before the commencement of employment. All new employees must sign and return the Acceptance of Appointment letter prior to commencing employment with QPT. By signing and returning the Acceptance of Appointment letter the employee acknowledges and agrees with the probationary period that applies to their role.

A new permanent employee to QPT is not subject to a probationary period where they have completed a period of temporary employment with QPT (in any position) that equals or exceeds the probationary period for the role to which they subsequently secure a permanent appointment.

Generally, a new employee to QPT will not be placed on higher duties during the probation period.

Assessment of employee performance during probation period

After a new employee commences employment with QPT, the employee will be onboarded and trained. This will include completing a probation performance plan. The probation performance plan will define the performance expectations and objectives with key review checkpoints during the probationary period, providing the employee with a clear understanding of the requirements for successfully completing probation and ensuring access to relevant training and support to meet these expectations.

Throughout the probationary period, the employee's manager will provide prompt and appropriate feedback to the employee about the employee's work performance, including recognition of acceptable and exceptional work performance and feedback on areas of work performance that need improvement.

Consistent with the positive performance management principles in Section 85 of the [PS Act](#), where unacceptable work performance issues arise during the probation period which, if not resolved, may result in termination of the employee's employment during the probationary period, the employee will receive structured feedback, and be afforded reasonable timeframes to respond to the feedback before a decision is made about the outcome of the probationary period.

Formal reviews should be conducted with the employee during the probationary period (refer to the probation performance plan as a guide) including at:

- The probation mid-point (i.e. halfway through the probation period for the role); and
- The probation end point (i.e. at least two weeks prior to the expiration of the probationary period).

Depending on the length of the probationary period, it may be appropriate to have additional formal reviews. For example, if the probationary period is six months, it is recommended that formal reviews occur after the

Probation Policy

first month of employment, after three months of employment and after five months of employment.

The employee's manager must keep appropriate records of any formal reviews held with the employee including file notes and contact [People and Culture](#) for assistance with managing the employee's performance, where required.

Importantly, an employee's employment may be terminated in writing at any time during the probationary period for serious performance or conduct concerns.

Outcomes of the probationary period

A decision about whether the employee has successfully completed the probationary period must be made and communicated to the employee **prior** to the conclusion of the probationary period to:

- confirm the employee's employment with QPT; or
- terminate the employee's employment.

If a decision is made to terminate the employee's employment during the probationary period, the IR Act provides that, generally, notice of termination is not required to be given to an employee during a probationary period. People and Culture should be contacted if there are any questions about employee notice periods.

If, by the end of the probationary period, a decision has not been made about an employee's employment their appointment will be deemed to have been confirmed.

Once an employee's employment is confirmed, it is important to continue supporting their development and monitoring their performance. This should be done through the Performance Development Agreement (PDA), process which outlines clear goals, expectations, and opportunities for growth.

Managers should work collaboratively with employees to review and update the PDA regularly to ensure alignment with organisational objectives and individual career development.

Delegation

It is important to ensure that the person authorising and approving decisions relating to probationary periods within QPT has the relevant authority to do so. For further information refer to QPT's human resources (HR) Delegations as updated from time to time, a copy of which can be located at [QPT HR Delegations](#).

Record keeping and confidentiality

Documentation relating to the confirmation or termination of an employee's employment is strictly confidential and will be stored securely. Information obtained by QPT under this policy should be retained on the employee's personnel file. QPT is committed to ensuring preservation of the privacy of that information as far as possible and that it complies with QPT's obligations including obligations under the [PS Act](#), [PS Regulation](#), [Public Records Act 2002 \(PR Act\)](#), [Right to Information Act 2009 \(RTI Act\)](#), [Information Privacy Act 2009 \(IP Act\)](#), and any other obligations including the [Queensland Government Retention and Disposal Schedule](#).

Probation Policy

Policy controls and managing non-compliance

This policy will be reviewed every three years and/or upon any legislative change. Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all QPT employees. Managers must ensure the policy is embedded into practice within their teams, and staff are required to report any instances of non-compliance immediately through their manager.

Roles and responsibilities

Position	Responsibility	Audit criteria
Employee	• Signing and returning the Acceptance of Appointment letter prior to the commencement date • Participating in all induction activities and onboarding training requirements.	• A record of the signed and returned Acceptance of Appointment Letter captured in Content Manager in employee's personal file • A record of compliance with mandatory onboarding training captured in the Learning Management System Learn@QPT.
Manager	• Ensuring employees are aware of the probationary period applicable to their role (if any) • Ensure the management of the employee, including during the probationary period, is consistent with the positive performance management principles and QPT's positive performance management policy • Provide continued support and feedback to employees during the probationary period including discussing progress with employees and refining objectives where necessary • Undertaking appropriate steps to manage unsatisfactory performance during the probation period where necessary including appropriately addressing the performance with the employee prior to the end of the probationary period • Ensuring employees are treated fairly and equitably during the probationary period including providing natural justice, where required • Ensuring appropriate delegated authority is in place to make a decision regarding employee's probationary period and if so, make a decision about whether the employee has successfully completed their probationary period	• Policy is published and communicated to managers • P&C provide advice and support on interpretation and application of the Policy.

Probation Policy

Position	Responsibility	Audit criteria
	- Otherwise, ensure the person making decision about employee's probationary period holds the relevant authority to make the decision - Ensure decisions about probation are properly documented and confidentiality and privacy maintained - Make decisions under this policy in a manner that complies with the HR Act.	
People and Culture	- Ensure policy is updated as appropriate - Support managers and persons making decisions about probationary periods.	- Policy remains current - Records of consultation, approval, and communication are retained by P&C in Content Manager - Policy is published on QPT's intranet.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Acceptance of Appointment letter	A letter offering employment to a prospective employee which includes the terms of the probationary period applying to the role.
Delegate	The person with the relevant delegated power to make a decision as outlined in the QPT's human resources delegations as amended from time to time.
HR Act	<i>Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)</i>
IR Act	<i>Industrial Relations Act 2016 (Qld)</i>
IP Act	<i>Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)</i>
PS Act	<i>Public Sector Act 2022 (Qld)</i>
PS Regulation	Public Sector Regulation 2023 (Qld)
Probation period / probationary period	A defined period at the start of an employee's employment with QPT during which QPT has the opportunity to assess whether the employee is suitable for the role they have been recruited to. The probation period commences on the first day the employee commences working for QPT.
PR Act	<i>Public Records Act 2002 (Qld)</i>

Probation Policy

Term	Definition
Public Trustee of Queensland and Chief Executive	The head of the QPT. The Public Trustee of Queensland appointed under the <i>Public Trustee Act 1978</i> .
QPT	Queensland Public Trustee, also known as the Public Trust Office, a public service entity under section 9 the Public Sector Act 2022 , and section 7 Public Trustee Act 1978
RTI Act	<i>Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld)</i>

Legislation and other compliance obligations

- [Human Rights Act 2019 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Industrial Relations Act 2016](#)
- [Information Privacy Act 2009](#)
- [Public Records Act 2023](#)
- [Public Sector Act 2022](#)
- [Public Sector Ethics Act 1994](#)
- [Public Sector Regulation 2023](#)
- [Right to Information Act 2009](#)
- [Recruitment and Selection \(Directive 07/23\)](#)
- [Positive Performance Management Directive \(02/24\)](#)
- [QLD Public Service Code of Conduct](#)
- [Queensland Public Service Officers and Other Employees Award – State 2015](#)

Supporting documents

- [Recruitment and Selection Policy](#)
- [Probation Performance Plan](#)
- [QPT HR Delegations](#)
- [Workplace Conduct Policy](#)

Contact

For further information, please contact:

People and Culture/People Services

Email: HRM-Enquiries@pt.qld.gov.au