

Three Counties Academy Trust



Probationary Period Procedure for Support Staff #HR21

Last amended 5th July 2026 (v1.0)

Policy lifespan: As determined by Hoople HR. Subject to annual compliance check. Next full review 31st January 2028.

Statement of intent

At Three Counties Academy Trust (TCAT), we want to invest in our staff and provide them with a secure and long-lasting relationship as employees of TCAT.

As a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) we determine arrangements for our support staff in any of our schools but will use the county standard procedure as detailed in this document in respect of new support staff to which the criteria set out apply.

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear, consistent, and fair procedures to enable support staff to transition to a confirmed role within TCAT.

All new employees designated as support staff are required to satisfactorily complete a 6-month probationary period before they can be confirmed in a role. This is not required for internal appointments (i.e., an employee moves to a different job within the school) or where a new employee joins directly from another local authority or between LA maintained and voluntary controlled schools (i.e., they have continuous service), providing they have already completed their probationary period. It does, however, apply where there has been any break in continuous local government service.

The purpose of this initial review period is to assist TCAT in determining whether or not to confirm a new employee in the role. It provides a framework so that managers can assess a new employee's performance, and to identify and provide any support that is necessary.

In addition to this procedure TCAT has a number of other arrangements in place to support employees to achieve the high standards of performance and conduct expected of them, and to reach their full potential. These include TCAT's induction policy and performance appraisal, and a comprehensive training and development programme. All new employees must have a performance appraisal and development discussion as part of their job induction process, during which the standards of performance and any immediate training needs will be identified. This will support a new employee in the early stages of their career with TCAT and help them complete the probationary period without any problems.

Though the policy refers to "Headteacher", some support staff within TCAT are line managed by the Chief Finance Officer where they are administrative or site-based staff. In respect of these staff, the CFO will administer the process contained within this policy. Note also that references to the 'school' within the policy will be taken to be any member school of TCAT.

Teachers are employed under different terms and conditions of employment and have separate arrangements.

To that effect, we subscribe to and use the Probationary Period Procedure for Support Staff for all categories of schools (HR021) as set out by our HR partners Hoople and used across the county of Herefordshire. The latest version of this policy will be the version used if and when need arises.

The latest (HR021) Probationary Period Procedure for Support Staff for all categories of schools can be obtained on request from the TCAT Central Team or from the Headteacher/Head of School and is the full and unabridged version as ratified by Hoople and adopted by the TCAT Trust Board.

Please note, where Hoople can at times have not ratified a new version of a policy before their planned review date, we will always use the latest version available, even where that may fall outside date scope until Hoople have approved a replacement.