



What is probation?

Probation is the name given to the initial 12-month period of working as a public servant. It is a structured way of providing support for beginning teachers in the workplace.

Probation applies to all teachers taking up positions within the NT Public Service for the first time or returning to teaching after an absence of three years or more. It also applies to teachers that have joined the public school system from Catholic or Independent schools.

Similarly if you are from interstate, even if you are assessed as proficient, you will be subject to a probationary period, although this can be shortened to 6 months if you have at least five years of proven teaching experience. Probation also applies to contract appointments of two terms or more.

What is the process?

The Commissioner of Public Employment has set guidelines for the process:

- ◆ Employee to be provided with probation details in a timely manner after commencement
- ◆ Employee to be given information about expected duties, standards, performance and conduct
- ◆ Appropriate assistance and support to be given during probation period
- ◆ The process is documented in writing
- ◆ Assessment of suitability and capability for role
- ◆ The employee is given regular performance feedback and opportunity to discuss with manager
- ◆ Notification of outcomes is provided, including providing an opportunity for the employee to respond to adverse decisions.

What do I need to do?

- ◆ Be proactive—find a mentor within your school and work collaboratively with them to seek feedback on specific areas of performance. Your mentor must not be a member of the probation panel.
- ◆ The school will set up a probation panel to monitor and assess your practice. While probation panels can consist of two or three members, the AEU NT recommends panels of three.
- ◆ Familiarise yourself with the Teacher Probation Policy—there are timelines for the procedures and descriptions of the paperwork that needs to be lodged.
- ◆ Have your lessons observed by your mentor and other peers. This should include time for a discussion following the observed session.
- ◆ You will be expected to constructively participate in the process by assessing your performance against the proficient level of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*.
- ◆ Maintain records of professional development. It is important that you retain your own copies of any forms or documents that are required in the process.
- ◆ Take part in regular review meetings. Be prepared for these meetings by bringing evidence of your practice and be open to constructive feedback.

References and further information

Clause 29 of the 2014-2017 [Teacher and Educator Enterprise Agreement](#)

[Employment Instruction Number 2—Probation](#)
ocpe.nt.gov.au

[Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#)

Department of Education—[Teacher Probation Policy](#)