Induction: guidance for managers

Induction

This guidance is provided to assist line managers in planning an effective induction programme that enables all staff new to the university, or existing staff who are moving into a new role within the university, to settle into their new role and environment and enable them to deliver what is expected of them quickly and effectively.

The guidance is not meant to replace effective induction procedures where these already exist in departments but rather complement them or provide a good practice framework where little or no departmental induction procedures exist.

Placing the employee at the centre of his or her induction is key to ensuring that they are fully involved in their induction process, have a dynamic experience and that it does not feel as if it is something that is being done to them.

Purpose of Induction

The success of the University of York depends upon our ability to recruit and retain excellent people at every level. An effective induction:

- should provide clarity on expectations regarding performance
- can make the difference between retaining or losing good staff
- is likely to shape the inductee's ability to do the job successfully
- will shape their perception of the role, the department and also the University itself
- enables the new starter to integrate into their new role, team and department, quickly and effectively

In order to meet these objectives the University has introduced an integrated approach to induction, which enables the employee to find out about the University, Department and their role.
Planning an Induction

To enable new members of staff to transition into their new role quickly and effectively, they should be provided with a planned induction programme covering information on the University, Department and their role. For those new to the University, it will run concurrently with the probation process.

Planning an induction programme should begin once the candidate has accepted the offer of employment and a start date has been agreed. It is important to remember that induction is not a one-off event. It may take up to six months to fully conclude and should be viewed as a development continuum which feeds into the probationary process, ongoing discussions through the year and eventually the annual performance review.

The emphasis on the induction programme and induction checklist [pdf] is to identify what needs to be done. As well as agreeing what they needs to do, the new starter will need to understand how well things need to be done.

During an employee’s initial induction period, they will need to assimilate a great deal of information. So in developing an induction plan, the responsible manager should follow these few principles:-

- Avoid over-loading as too intensive an information-giving session or period is likely to be ineffective
- Prioritise what information you need to provide when
- Ensure you are clear about their work objectives and expected standards of performance
- Ensure that the information that you are planning to provide has a relevance to their job or the University
- Ask the employee on their first day or preferably before they arrive, how they best learn and adapt the programme to meet these. Remember that people learn in different ways
- Involve other people, an important part of the induction process is getting to know your new colleagues and their work environment
- Do not assume that a current or returning employee does not need to follow an induction programme, they will
Remember that one size will not fit all. The length and content of the induction programme will vary depending on the complexity of the new employee’s role and their previous experience and background.
Preparing an induction programme

The induction programme should be planned making use of the Employee Induction Checklist. The checklist provides a generic framework and therefore some topics will not be relevant and others not included may be essential so room has been left for you to add this in. It is acknowledged that the timescale will vary according to the role and person.

If your new starter is an international member of staff, then please refer to the specific guidance given on inducting international staff.

Pre-arrival

You will need to decide if you wish to keep in contact with your new starter before they joins. There is no 'rule' as to whether or not you should do so, but in certain situations you may feel that this would be appropriate so that the prospective starter will feel part of the team and perhaps become aware of current developments at an early stage. You may feel that there are some key meetings they would benefit from attending or certain information that may be helpful to pass onto them before they arrive.

Decide whether you are going to allocate an induction colleague, buddy or mentor. There will be a number of considerations if you decide to allocate this role, including experience, expertise, personality and workload. The exact role may vary, but the individual is likely to be the new starter’s immediate point of contact within the department. As well as providing specific information and support with activities, if the new starter’s colleague has more of a mentoring role, they may also provide more informal contact and information with the new colleague. This could involve helping to provide an understanding of the culture, the ‘unwritten rules’ and the way things get done in practice.

Ensure their workspace, e.g. furniture, phone and IT equipment is ready for their first day, and that the requests for their ID card and required system access rights have been set-up.

If an induction colleague, buddy or mentor is identified, it is important to agree on actual roles and responsibilities. As the line manager is normally responsible for ensuring that staff receive an appropriate induction, they should be actively involved in the review of
progress, although many of the day-to-day activities may have been delegated.

For offers of appointment sent out by HR, the information sent out with the accompanying letter is primarily around terms and conditions, together with a number of forms they have to complete such as, pre-employment screening and occupational health form.

**First day**

The first day provides an opportunity to begin the assimilation to a new environment and with new colleagues. It is important that the new starter is made to feel welcome without providing an overwhelming amount of information or faces.

Suggested activities for the first day include:

- Introduction to team colleagues, including where appropriate the starter’s induction colleague / buddy / mentor
- A tour of the workplace, ensuring that the new starter has appropriate access and is also aware of the basic ‘environmental’ arrangements (e.g. toilets, lunch and break facilities, fire procedure etc.)
- Ensuring that all necessary paperwork has been completed and received, including details relating to payroll and pensions
- Familiarisation with their Induction programme

**During the first week**

The first week should focus on explaining and discussing the key aspects of their role, the goals and objectives of their immediate team and how they in turn contribute to the objectives of their department and the university. It is also important that time is given for the new starter to get to know their wider environment of the campus, and become familiar with any systems, policies or procedures that are important for their role.

At the end of the first week it is recommended that the manager meets with the new employee to check on how they are settling in and:

- Review the induction programme and check their understanding of the information they have been given up to this point
- Agree how to clarify or revisit any areas where understanding is confused or inadequate

http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/managers/induction
• Explain what is expected of them in subsequent weeks
• Have the initial probation meeting following the probation process.

After the first week

Induction activities will continue to take place based on the induction programme and induction checklist [pdf]. In addition progress should be reviewed on an ongoing basis, both formally and informally. The probation process should be followed, and it is considered good practice to ensure meetings are held on a more regular basis, perhaps monthly. As a result of the dialogue between the manager and the inductee, both parties should have a clear idea and agreement as to how things are going. In addition, should any issues arise, they can be addressed as soon as possible.

At the review meetings, the Probation documentation should provide the main support documentation. The induction programme and checklist can also be used to see if things are 'on track' in terms of completing the activities identified.

You may need to consider the following with regards to the review meetings:

• If one has been appointed, how you will involve the induction colleague, buddy or mentor?
• Should you include feedback from others on the performance of the new starter? If so how will this feedback be 'owned' by you?
• How can you ensure that the style of the meeting ensures that the new starter actively participates in the review of how things are going?
• Are there any new development needs identified and if so how does this affect the Induction programme?

It is recommended that new starters attend the central induction as soon as possible and certainly within 4 to 8 weeks of joining and that they also take the opportunity to attend the SMG induction briefing. Both these events are designed to complement the departmental induction and include a number of sessions which introduce staff to the University in a broader context, members of SMG. The varied and interactive style also provide opportunities to meet and network with new colleagues across the University. Both events are appropriate for all newly appointed staff – support, academic, teaching or research.

The end of the induction period

http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/managers/induction
At the conclusion of the induction process the employee and their manager should sign and date the checklist to signify that the process has been completed. It is recommended that this be held in the department.

**Evaluation**

Six months after a member of staff has either joined the University or has transferred into a new role, they are sent an on-line survey to complete. The results are reviewed and reported as part of HR’s annual report to Council.
Role specific inductions

In addition to the framework already outlined that is applicable to all staff, when planning the induction programme of your new starters, you should also take into consideration the following role specific information.

**New academic staff:** all new staff are eligible to register on the Postgraduate Certificate of Academic Practice (PGCAP). Those with less than three years teaching experience are contractually required to complete the programme. Managers should allocate time for participation on this within the academic workload.

**New research staff:** should familiarise themselves with the handout ‘Research staff: twelve things to help you settle into your new role.’

**All research staff** need to familiarise themselves with the University's standards and expectations for the conduct of research. As part of the University's research community, all research staff need to read, understand and ensure that they comply with the following key policies:

- [Code of Practice on Research Integrity](https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/research-integrity-and-ethics/)
- [Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance](https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/research-integrity-and-ethics/)
- [Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure](https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/research-integrity-and-ethics/)

Further information can be found at [https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/research-integrity-and-ethics/](https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/research-integrity-and-ethics/)

**New Heads of Departments** are provided with a separate induction programme. For further information please contact [leadership-development@york.ac.uk](mailto:leadership-development@york.ac.uk)

Academic Support Office run an annual conference in September for **Chairs of Boards of Studies and Chairs of Graduate School Boards**, supplemented by a 2 hour workshop in each of the Spring and Summer terms. For further information please contact [aso@york.ac.uk](mailto:aso@york.ac.uk)

Support for **Chairs of Boards of Examiners** is provided by Registry Services. For further information please contact [registry-services@york.ac.uk](mailto:registry-services@york.ac.uk)

**Staff taking up roles in Colleges** will receive a separate College Induction Plan. For further information please contact [academic-registrar@york.ac.uk](mailto:academic-registrar@york.ac.uk)

[http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/managers/induction](http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/managers/induction)