

# Induction: guidance for managers

## Manager's guidance on induction: introduction

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

- can make the difference between retaining or losing good staff
- is likely to shape the inductee's ability to do the job successfully
- in addition is likely to shape their perception of the role, the department and also the University itself
- can provide clarity on expectations regarding performance.

A key principle of the University's [staff development policy \[pdf\]](#) is that 'all staff receive an appropriately organised University and local induction in a timely fashion'. This theme is developed in our [policy on induction](#). The framework is designed to provide guidance as to how the manager can help to ensure that the induction is both timely and effective.

There are many examples of Induction good practice across the University. On the HR web site there is a variety of material that can help you, in particular an [induction checklist \[pdf\]](#) designed to identify the main activities which are likely to be required as part of the Induction. The checklist is not meant to be an exhaustive list and can be amended to reflect individual or departmental requirements. It also reflects the fact that much useful induction can begin before a person's first day at work. However, Induction is much more than the completion of a series of activities outlined on a checklist, and we hope here to provide a broad framework for the induction of new staff by addressing a number of key issues which will be relevant to those involved.

This framework is particularly relevant to staff that are new to the University of York, whether on permanent or fixed term contracts. For new international staff a number of [additional considerations](#) may be relevant. Much of it may also be relevant to existing staff that are new to a particular role. The induction of existing staff is covered more specifically in the final section: [Staff new to a role but not to the University](#).

# A Learner Centred Induction

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'Learner centred' means putting the learner at the centre of his or her induction in two ways:

- placing responsibility for successful development through the induction with the inductee and
- acknowledging that each inductee will have individual needs, based on their background, experience and ability

## Giving responsibility to the learner

There is a shared responsibility for staff development between individuals, line managers and training and development providers. New members of staff should be proactive and take ownership of their induction and not assume that induction is 'something done to them'. Induction should not be viewed just as a process where information is passed to a new starter.

Rather, the new starter should be encouraged where practical to take ownership for himself or herself. Such ownership is likely to increase the commitment of the new starter to the induction process. One key consideration is how can the activities on the [induction checklist \[pdf\]](#) be best completed with the active involvement of the new starter.

## Individual needs

The second element of this learner centred approach involves the consideration of the individual's needs. The actual pace of progress may necessitate a review of any plans originally agreed.

There is the danger we stereotype or make assumptions about the induction requirements of particular groups of new starters. Although we should avoid such stereotyping, the individual's background, experience and ability will also help to determine the nature of support an individual will require. Some examples of this:

- A school leaver with no experience of paid employment is likely to need greater support in terms of understanding the University's general rules and regulations as well as the nature of the job and where it fits into things

- A graduate with a number of year's work experience is unlikely to need the same degree of support. (S)he may be more used to self-directed learning and also have a degree of relevant experience which can be utilised
- Those new to the HE sector are likely to need more support and time to acclimatise to the sector and, more specifically, to the culture of the University
- A new starter who has moved to York may need additional information and support to that provided through the activities on the Induction Checklist. This is likely to be particularly true of [international staff](#).
- You will also find information on this web site of considerations relating specifically to [international staff](#) or [disabled staff](#). The University also subscribes to a [website dedicated to helping international staff coming to HEIs in the UK](#), with information on a wide range of topics.

For staff that are not new to the University but are new to a particular role, the individual will have already acquired a broader understanding of the University. However this may have been developed in a different department and therefore in a different context.

## Who is involved in induction?

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Although the new starter's line manager will normally have the overall responsibility for the new starter's induction, this does not mean (s)he will be the only person involved. Practice will vary according to departments.

Those involved in the induction other than the line manager may include:

- Other colleagues, often as 'subject experts'
- Other departments (for example, where the individual's role impacts on these departments)
- Those involved in centrally co-ordinated inductions, including the [central induction event](#)
- Those with specific roles in the process, for example, those staff responsible for arranging for the appropriate furniture, IT equipment and stationery before the individual starts.

### Colleagues, buddies or mentors

In many cases the new starter may be allocated 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, (s)he 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.

If the line manager involves a colleague / buddy / mentor in the induction process, 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, (s)he should be actively involved in the review of progress, although many of the day-to-day activities may have been delegated.

# What should the Manager do?

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## i) Before the new recruit starts

Planning for induction can begin once the candidate has accepted the offer of employment and a start date agreed. Indeed the start date may be influenced by what preparation is required for the new starter's arrival. This planning should include a number of elements:

### **Making contact with your new starter**

You will need to decide if you wish to keep in contact with your new starter before (s)he 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. If the time between the acceptance of the offer and the actual start date is considerable, you may wish to do so, so that the prospective starter will feel part of the team and perhaps become aware of current developments at an early stage. Similarly you may feel that there is certain information that may be helpful at this point or indeed the prospective starter may already have requested information.

For offers of appointment sent out by HR Services, the information sent out with the accompanying letter is primarily around terms and conditions. In addition a limited amount of background information is included, which introduces areas such as [Health and Safety](#), [Equal Opportunities](#) and the [employee assistance scheme](#).

### **Putting the induction programme together**

You should put together an Induction programme for your new recruit. This will entail the planning of what specifically the recruit will need to learn or do during the induction period, but you will also need to give some broader consideration to both the objectives of this programme and its main elements and also to the standards of performance which you expect. These will be covered in more detail on the [Probation Review Form \[doc\]](#).

In most cases the induction period should be considered as the individual's first six months. For many staff this will coincide with their normal [probationary period](#). The degree of detail contained within the programme is likely to be greater for the first month, as further elements may be identified and agreed based on progress and

ongoing needs identified.

The programme or plan should have a balance between specific on job training and broader information regarding the department and the University itself. The vision and strategic objectives of the University, as encapsulated in the University Plan, for example, can help to provide a bigger picture. In addition you will need to consider the relevance of the training provided across the University. This could include the new starter's attendance on the [Central Induction event](#) as well as completion of the relevant elements of the University's [statutory and compliance training provision](#).

The plan may include the setting up or at least identifying a number of relevant meetings with other work colleagues or perhaps representatives from other departments. If appropriate, an induction colleague / buddy / mentor will have been identified and the plan discussed and agreed with that person. This should be discussed, clarified and agreed with your new employee on the first day of employment.

The [induction checklist \[pdf\]](#) should help you to ensure that the main elements and activities to be covered are incorporated into the Induction programme.

You should ensure that appropriate steps have been taken to ensure that the new starter will have the right environment set up for the joining date, including furniture, stationery, telephone, computer and other equipment.

## **ii) During the first Week**

Both the planning which you have already done and the [induction checklist \[pdf\]](#) will help you with both the first and subsequent weeks' induction. As has already been highlighted, the checklist is not meant to be an exhaustive one and can be amended to reflect individual and departmental requirements.

New starters are likely to be nervous and even apprehensive on their first day. They will be receiving a considerable amount of information so it is important to build their knowledge up gradually to avoid confusion or overload. The first day provides an opportunity to begin the assimilation to a new environment and with new colleagues, without providing an overwhelming amount of information or faces.

Suggested activities for the first day should include:

- Introducing the new recruit to team colleagues, including where appropriate the

starter's induction colleague / buddy / mentor

- Providing 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
- Introducing the new starter to his / her Induction programme and Checklist.

The first week will introduce a number of activities from your induction programme and [induction checklist \[pdf\]](#). These should include the key inputs of the job, information regarding the department, its workings and objectives and information about the University (for example any relevant on line induction material or certain key policies or procedures).

An increasing amount of material is available on line to support the induction process. This includes [guidance material for new starters](#) to help with their induction. This should be highlighted to your new starter at an early stage. For those new staff without access to a PC for their day-to-day work, consideration should be given as to how this information can be provided. Should computer access be provided for example for particular elements of Induction or is the information available in paper format?

This phased introduction may include meetings with other colleagues or perhaps with other departments.

As has already been seen, these activities may be delegated to a colleague or buddy.

### **Reviewing progress**

It is however important that if at all possible you sit down with your new starter at the end of the week to see how he or she is settling in. This review of the Induction programme so far should provide the opportunity to clarify and discuss any areas where understanding is confused or inadequate. In accordance with the principles of a learner centred induction, the inductee should be strongly encouraged to actively contribute to this discussion.

The Induction process should run alongside the [probation process](#). Together they should ensure the achievement of the following:

- The creation of a supportive working environment

- Allowing new staff to settle into the University
- The provision of a clear understanding of how well things need to be done in terms of a particular role
- Enabling new staff to learn the key elements of a role in an effective manner and within a realistic time-scale.

## Setting standards and expectations

The emphasis on the induction programme and [induction checklist \[pdf\]](#) is to identify what needs to be done. As well as agreeing what needs to be done, the inductee will need to understand **how well** things need to be done.

Within the first week a [Probation Review Form \[doc\]](#) should be agreed and completed by the line manager and the new employee. The form's objectives are to clarify the performance standards expected and the support, training and feedback necessary to achieve those standards. Once agreed and communicated, the line manager should use the probationary period to monitor the success of the new staff member in meeting these standards.

There is a [Probation Procedure for Academic Staff](#) and a [Probation Procedure for Support Staff \(including Research only and Teaching only staff\)](#).

For Support Staff (including Research only and Teaching only), Part 1 of the [Probation Review Form \[doc\]](#) should be completed within the first week of joining. This should identify both objectives for the new starter in terms of performance (*Section A*) as well as those development activities and objectives which may help the achievement of these performance standards ( *Section B*). It may not however always be possible to produce a complete development plan at this early stage, and a second meeting, which should be held within the first month, may be required to do this.

Both the agreed performance objectives and any identified training needs should be phrased according to the acronym SMART, i.e.

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**chievable
- **R**ealistic
- **T**ime-bound

In accordance with the learner centred approach, the discussion should be two-way, with the new starter encouraged to contribute and in particular to help to identify training and development needs. The motivation of the individual learner to want to achieve these needs will also be key. The needs identified, as we have seen, will be based on the individual's background, experience and ability.

The [Staff Development Resource Centre](#) contains information which may help you with the review of performance and the identification of training and development needs. The sections on *Developing People* and *Performance Management* may be particularly relevant. In terms of more general considerations for induction, you may also find the section on *Recruitment and Induction* of use, in particular *Induct a new Team Member*.

## 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 Review Form \[doc\]](#) (support staff) should be completed after 3 and 6 months, but good practice would be to ensure meetings are held on a more regular basis, perhaps monthly. As a result of this 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 Review Form 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:

- Should the induction colleague / buddy / mentor be involved in the meeting?
- Should you include feedback from others on the performance of the inductee? If so how will this feedback be 'owned' by you?
- In accordance with the learner centred approach already discussed, how can you ensure that the style of the meeting ensures that the inductee 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 your responsibility to ensure that records are kept of meetings and to ensure that the [Probation Review Form \[doc\]](#) (support staff) is appropriately completed and signed.

It is recommended that the new starter attends the [central induction event](#) as soon as possible. The programme includes a number of sessions which introduce staff to the University in a broader context. The varied and interactive style also provide opportunities to meet and network with new colleagues across the University. The central induction is appropriate for all newly appointed staff – support, academic, teaching or research.

In addition a number of centrally provided induction events are provided for staff that are moving into specific roles. In some cases the individual will be new to the University itself, in other cases (s)he will be an existing member of the University who is new to the particular role.

## **The end of the Induction Period**

As we have seen, the induction period should normally be considered as the individual's first six months, which may in many cases coincide with the individual's probationary period. Staff undergoing probation will not be subject to the [Performance Review process](#) until the probationary period is successfully completed. Nevertheless many principles of Performance Review are also appropriate to reviewing the probationary / induction process and line managers new to the reviewing of staff performance may find the [Performance Review training](#) of relevance.

If the Induction period of 6 months coincides with the individual's probationary period and performance has been satisfactory, you should verbally confirm at the end of this period that your staff member has met the requirements of the post. The final part of the Probation Review Form should also be completed, indicating that the appointment has been confirmed. A copy of the completed form should be held within your department in line with data protection guidance. HR Services do not require a copy of the Probation Review Form where performance is satisfactory during the normal probationary period or where the applicant is confirmed at the end of the normal probationary period.

Upon confirmation, your staff member will subsequently be subject to the University's [Performance Review process](#). The principles for agreeing and reviewing performance which you have used during the Induction period will continue to be relevant for

subsequent performance review. Development needs for example which may have been identified during the Induction period may continue to be actioned and reviewed after that period.

For certain groups of staff, such as academics and staff within Grades 6 – 8, the normal six month induction period will not completely coincide with the probation period. In such cases, the [probation policy](#) and the appropriate probation process will continue to be relevant after the completion of the individual's induction.

Should you decide that performance by the end of the induction period is unsatisfactory, this may lead to an extension of the probationary period. Any difficulties in terms of meeting standards of performance should have been identified and discussed on an ongoing basis at the review meetings held during the induction period.

## Other Elements of Induction

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### Staff in academic or research roles who are new to the University

The framework outlined is relevant to both academic and research staff new to the University of York. Additional elements of their induction will be provided centrally, including:

- **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:** an [induction workshop](#) is available at the beginning of the academic year: **all early career researchers should be encouraged to attend.**

Both academic and research staff who are new to the University are in addition strongly encouraged to attend the Central Induction event, which dovetails with rather than duplicates the above role inductions.

### Staff new to certain other roles

#### Heads of Departments

For the academic year 2009 -10 new academic HoDs will commence the Strategic Leadership Programme prior to taking up their new role. Additional 'bite sized' sessions will also be introduced to address some of the more practical requirements of their role.

#### College Welfare Teams

A 2 to 3 day programme is held before the beginning of the academic year for those involved in the welfare provision system within the Colleges. This is available for both new and existing team members.

#### Chairs and Administrators of Boards of Studies, Graduate School Boards and Boards of Examiners

A series of induction briefings is available; all staff taking up these offices are expected to attend.

Should these staff also be new to the University, the framework already outlined will also be relevant.

### **Staff previously on temporary or fixed-term contracts**

You may want to draw up an induction programme and decide which activities from the [induction checklist \[pdf\]](#) will be relevant, taking into account the individual's current levels of experience and understanding and any induction which the individual has already received in the role. These factors will determine the length of the Induction period, which you may feel will not need to be as long as six months. The individual however may be subject to the normal probationary period for that role if this has not already been completed.

### **Redeployed staff**

If a member of staff is successfully redeployed after a trial period the framework described in the next section may then prove relevant. If a successful probationary period has already been completed in a comparable role, the [probation process](#) will not be applicable.

## Staff new to a Role but not to the University

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Much of the framework already outlined for staff new to the University will be appropriate in the case of existing staff that transfer to a new role. The Induction should be [learner centred](#), while [a number of different people may be involved in the induction](#) in addition to the line manager. Should a mentor be appointed, (s)he may assume a slightly different role to somebody who is acting as a mentor to a new starter at the University.

In the case of a promotion, the line manager will need to determine how much of an induction is required. You will need to consider questions such as:

- How different is the new role to the previous one?
- What objectives will now be relevant?
- What new skills does the individual need to develop to successfully fulfil the new role?

### What should the Manager do?

#### Before the staff member joins the team

You should put together an Induction programme for your new staff member. This should build on the individual's existing knowledge – of the University, the department and the role. Even a member of staff who has worked at the University for some time may have a different understanding of the University to what is required for the new role.

The individual's levels of experience and understanding may determine the length of the induction period, which you may feel will not need to be as long as 6 months (the normal period for new recruits).

The [induction checklist \[pdf\]](#) should help the construction of the programme, although not all the activities listed on it will be relevant in this situation.

You should ensure that the new team member has the appropriate equipment and furniture for when (s)he joins.

#### During the first Week

As with the induction of new recruits, the first week should introduce a number of activities from the induction programme and [induction checklist \[pdf\]](#). These should

include the key inputs of the job and, if appropriate, information regarding the Department. The latter could include information on its structure, plans, resources, policies and procedures. Also consider if there is any information about the University relevant to this role which the individual is unlikely to have encountered in previous roles.

In many cases a probationary period will not be required. If a member of staff who has satisfactorily completed a period of probation is then transferred to a comparable post within a different department of the University, a period of probation is not required, unless the new role is substantially different and requires a new range of skills and attributes. Should you require further advice on specific situations, please contact your [HR Manager](#).

Even in situations where the probationary process is not applicable, it is equally important to clarify the standards of performance required and to agree the support, training and feedback necessary to achieve these standards. Performance objectives should be discussed and agreed within the first week. In many cases the [objective-led model document \[doc\]](#) used in [Performance Review](#), (which may have been adapted at a local level), can be used to record this. Although the Performance Review documentation is normally completed in the context of annual objectives, you may agree with your inductee that it is more appropriate to complete it in relation to the period of the Induction.

The [Self Development Resource Centre](#) contains information which may help you with the review of performance and the identification of training and development needs. The sections on *Developing People* and *Performance Management* may be particularly relevant.

### **After the first Week**

Based on the induction programme and [induction checklist \[pdf\]](#), the induction activities should continue to take place. In addition progress should be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Review meetings could be held monthly, as is suggested for new recruits. If the probationary process is not applicable, such reviews where appropriate can be documented on the appropriate [Performance Review Form](#).

If the individual has been with the University for more than a few months before joining your team, it is unlikely that (s)he will benefit from attending the [central induction event](#). In some cases however one or more of the role specific inductions already described

may be appropriate .

### **The end of the Induction Period**

Where the new team member is not subject to probation, (s)he should be managed under the Performance Review process. Any performance issues should be highlighted and discussed at the earliest possible opportunity.

At the end of the Induction period, a new Performance Review Form should be agreed for the next period. Any development needs which have not yet been met should continue to be addressed in the next period.

## Inducting international staff

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The University employs a number of staff from overseas and is committed to ensuring that they experience a smooth start to their employment at York. During 2010 Human Resources conducted some focus groups with recently joined international staff, which raised the following issues.

### Cultural awareness

For international staff that have not worked or lived in the UK previously induction should cover the department's approach to:

- Behaviour with and towards students and colleagues
- Attitudes toward issues of equality including reference to the University [policy on equal opportunities in employment](#)

We offer a [cultural awareness training course](#). This course focuses on generally being culturally aware rather than focussing on UK culture, but can give a helpful perspective.

For new academic members of staff, include information on academic standards applied by the University and your department. Remember to include the UK's attitude to plagiarism. Ensure new staff have access to the Examinations and Graduation Office website which contains the [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) including University guidance on plagiarism, an online tutorial on plagiarism and details of the referencing conventions for individual departments at York, as well as any departmental information on plagiarism.

### Settling in

Depending on the circumstances that apply for each international new starter it may help to be flexible and allow them some time off to open bank accounts, sort out accommodation and schools. This demonstrates our commitment to help staff feel comfortable and at home here. Allowing time to deal with practical matters relating to relocation means the new member of staff can then focus on their work.

**Note: it is imperative that your new starter sets up a bank account very quickly as it is impossible for them to be paid without one.**

Where people have used the University's Welcome Advisor service these things may well be in hand and support already provided. For more information on this service contact Helen Staley, Recruitment Advisor [helen.staley@york.ac.uk](mailto:helen.staley@york.ac.uk).

## The first few days

Nominate an appropriate person in your department to meet your new starter. This person needs to take responsibility to ensure that the induction plan is in place in advance of your member of staff starting.

Identify a buddy/ mentor for your new starter. This should be someone who has both the time and inclination to befriend and help your new member of staff. The buddy may be the same person as the person greeting your new starter, or can be different.

Remember to include the basic introduction into your department, which you provide for all new staff. Our [induction pages](#) on the website give helpful information and checklists. For Academic staff, it may be useful to cover the following in addition:

- Marking standards
- Academic protocols
- Time off to attend conferences, deliver seminars etc.
- Other departmental protocols
- Research funding and how it works

Give some consideration to other types of support that may be required for people coming either with families, partners and those that come alone. There will most likely be differing types of support required for each of these scenarios. Be aware of the issue of loneliness, this can affect people who come alone and can also impact on partners that are not working.

It is a good idea in these first few days to be clear with your employee about what you expect of them. An initial discussion about objectives is good practice and ensures there are no misunderstandings. At the same time covering how progress is monitored in your department means that everyone is clear at the start.

## Terms and conditions

Recent feedback has shown that not all our international new starters understand their Terms and Conditions of Employment, providing some practical help on this would be

well received. In particular help in relation to:

- Salary sacrifice for pensions (see [Rewards Extra](#))
- Private health insurance and the NHS (see [Rewards Extra](#))
- [Pay progression](#)
- [Promotion criteria for Academic, Research and Teaching staff](#)

## The University Induction

Remember to book your new starter on the University's [central induction course](#), if this has not already been done. This induction gives people the opportunity to create a network beyond their own department, introduces people to our colleges, allows people to see and hear from some of the University's senior people and gives a wider introduction to the University.

We also provide a booklet aimed at [International Staff Relocating to York](#) .

## Follow up

The first few days may be a very positive experience for your new starter and you may feel they have settled in well. As the novelty wears off and the reality of living and working in the UK starts to take hold, your new member of staff may feel they are struggling and this may or may not be obvious. Regular meetings with the member of staff will help them feel supported through this period of adjustment and help to keep them (or start them) contributing. Remember that there is also a [Counselling and Employee Assistance programme](#) available for free, providing confidential information, support and counselling on a wide range of work and personal issues and is also available for the immediate family of your new member of staff.