

Probation Extension Letter

Letter · UK · Updated 2026-08-09 · Square brackets are placeholders to replace with your own details.

A probation extension letter is the written confirmation from an employer that an employee's probationary period is being extended — stating the reason, the new end date, what the employee must demonstrate, the support they will receive, and when the final review will take place.

The letter matters because timing decides whether the extension holds. Acas guidance is clear that an extension must be confirmed in writing before the original probation period ends — left until after the end date it could be a breach of contract, and the employee has arguably passed by default. A dated letter, sent in time and acknowledged, is the evidence that the extension was real.

This template gives you the full letter text with placeholders, plus when to use it, what to check before sending, and how to deliver and file it so the extension stands up later.

When to use this letter

Use this letter when a probation review has concluded that the evidence is genuinely incomplete — improvement is underway but unproven, absence has interrupted the assessment, or the role changed part-way through — and the contract or probation policy allows an extension. It confirms in writing what was agreed at the extension meeting: the reason, the new end date, what must be demonstrated, the support provided, and when the final review happens.

Do not use an extension to postpone a decision you already have the evidence to make. If the standard has clearly not been met and is not going to be, the honest route is the non-confirmation procedure in your probation policy; if the person has clearly passed, confirm them. Serial extensions help nobody and weaken your position rather than strengthening it.

What to check first

- The contract or probation policy provides for an extension. If both are silent, an imposed extension is risky and may need the employee's agreement — take advice before relying on this letter.
- The original probation period has not expired. Acas guidance is clear that an extension must be confirmed before the original end date — confirming it afterwards could be a breach of contract.
- A meeting has happened first. This letter confirms a conversation in which the reason, objectives, and support were discussed and as far as possible agreed — it must never be the first the employee hears of it.
- The reason is genuine and already on the record. Review notes should show the concerns being raised as they arose; an extension that appears from nowhere at the end date is hard to defend.
- The decision is clean of discrimination. Extending because of absence linked to disability, pregnancy, or another protected characteristic needs particular care — consider reasonable adjustments for disabled employees, and take advice if in doubt.
-

Whether the written statement of employment particulars needs updating — probation length and conditions are part of the required particulars, and Acas guidance covers the deadline for notifying changes.

The letter template

[Date]

Dear [employee first name],

Re: Extension of your probationary period

Following our meeting on [date of meeting], I am writing to confirm that [Your company] is extending your probationary period, which was due to end on [original end date]. Your probation will now end on [new end date]. The extension is made under [the probation clause in your employment contract / our probation policy], and all other terms of your employment are unchanged.

We are extending your probation because [state the specific reason plainly — e.g. your performance in [area] has not yet consistently reached the standard discussed at your reviews on [dates], and we believe you can reach it with more time and support / your absence from [date] to [date] means we have not been able to complete a fair assessment]. This is not a final decision about your employment — the purpose of the extension is to give you a fair opportunity to show the standard the role requires.

By [new end date], you will need to demonstrate: [objective 1 — specific and measurable]; [objective 2]; [objective 3 — add or remove as needed].

To support you during the extension, [Your company] will provide: [support — e.g. training on [topic], weekly one-to-ones with your manager, the adjustments agreed on [date]]. If anything is getting in the way of your progress, please raise it with [manager name/role] straight away rather than waiting for a review.

We will check in on [dates/frequency] and hold your final probation review with [manager name/role] on [date — set this before the new end date]. At that review we will decide whether to confirm your employment or, if the required standard has not been met, to end it, and we will confirm the outcome and the reasons to you in writing. Your notice period during the extended probation remains [notice period], as stated in your contract.

If you would like to discuss anything in this letter, or you think anything in it is wrong, please speak to [manager name/role] or [HR contact] as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

[Job title], [Your company]

I acknowledge receipt of this letter: [employee signature and date — optional, but a dated acknowledgment is worth asking for]

Delivery and record-keeping

-

Hand the letter over at, or immediately after, the extension meeting — and always before the original end date. Follow up any verbal confirmation in writing the same day; Acas confirms a letter or email both work.

- Ask the employee to sign or reply to acknowledge receipt, and file the letter, the acknowledgment, and the meeting notes on the personnel file in [system/location].
- Diary the check-ins, the final review, and the new end date in the manager's calendar and [HR system] the day the letter goes out — a missed final review recreates the original problem.
- Tell payroll and benefits administrators if anything is triggered by confirmation of employment, so nothing switches on or off at the wrong date.
- Update the written statement of employment particulars where the extension changes its terms, within the timeframe in Acas guidance.

How to use this template

1. Check the contract and probation policy provide for an extension before relying on this letter — if both are silent, take advice, because you may need the employee's agreement.
2. Hold the extension meeting first and agree the plan — the letter confirms a conversation, it must never replace one.
3. Replace every [bracketed placeholder], making the reason and objectives specific enough that a stranger could judge at the final review whether they were met.
4. Send the letter before the original probation end date, and diary the check-ins, final review, and new end date the same day.
5. File the letter and acknowledgment on the personnel file, and update the written statement of particulars if the extension changes its terms.

Official guidance

- › [ACAS — Extending a probation period](#)
- › [ACAS — Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures](#)
- › [GOV.UK — Employment contracts and conditions](#)

This template is provided in good faith and for general information — it is not legal advice. Adapt it to your organisation and, where your sector carries specific legal requirements, have the finished document reviewed by a qualified adviser. The live version at <https://trainedteam.com/templates/probation-extension-letter-template> is kept current; this file is a snapshot.