

acas working for everyone
to resolve and prevent
workplace problems

**Greater Manchester
Good Employment
Charter – Share and
Learn**

**Recruitment and
onboarding**

**Helen Houghton
Karen Lester**





Temperature



Fire alarm



Refreshments



Bathrooms



Interactions and
expectations



Information



Feedback



Distractions

Agenda



- Welcome, introductions and housekeeping
- Equality Act refresher
- Recruitment
- Onboarding and probation
- Discussion challenge
- Q&A



**List some
important qualities
you would look
for in a new
employer**



**List some of the
things that would
make you
decline a job
offer**

Equality Act - refresher



Is this unlawful?

The Bolton Pensioner's jogging club seeks a new treasurer; she must be mature, of UK origin, heterosexual and a regular churchgoer.

The successful candidate will be a keen jogger, enjoy needlework and will have a cheerful and sunny disposition.

The protected characteristics

Age

Disability

**Gender
reassignment**

**Marriage
& civil
partnership**

**Pregnancy
& maternity**

Race

**Religion
or belief**

Sex

**Sexual
orientation**

The Equality Act 2010 sets out different types of discrimination:

- **Direct discrimination**
 - Direct
 - Association
 - Perception
- **Indirect discrimination**
- **Harassment and sexual harassment**
- **Victimisation**
- **Discrimination that applies to disability protected characteristic**
 - Arising from disability
 - Failure to make reasonable adjustments



Making decisions related to protected characteristics

Employers can take action and/or justify business decisions based on protected characteristics, in some circumstances.

Taking positive action:

- ✓ Is voluntary
- ✓ Applies to recruitment, training and promotion
- ✓ Can help under-represented or disadvantaged groups
- ✓ Gather evidence to support decisions
- ✓ Seek advice

Employers can **objectively justify** decisions if they can prove:

- ✓ A legitimate aim
- ✓ Proportionate means

It applies to:

- ✓ Indirect
- ✓ Arising from disability
- ✓ Ordinary direct: age

Activity: the use of technology and artificial intelligence (AI)

Group 1

- How can the use of technology and AI enhance efforts to promote equality, diversity and inclusion during recruitment?

Group 2

- What equality, diversity and inclusion risks can arise when using technology and AI during recruitment?



Activity: the benefits and risks of using technology and AI

Benefits

- Reduces human bias in initial screening
- Enables anonymised applications
- Improves accessibility for neurodivergent applicants
- Enables data driven diversity monitoring
- Provides consistency during assessment

Risks

- Algorithmic bias
- Digital exclusion
- Bias when AI misinterprets facial expressions or tone
- Lack of reasonable adjustments
- Over-reliance on automation
- Privacy and transparency
- Unintended discrimination

Inclusive practice when using technology and AI

To support equality, diversity and inclusion:

- Follow [responsible AI in recruitment](#) guidance on Gov.uk
- Conduct an equality impact assessment (EIA)
- Regularly check and test for bias and accessibility
- Use fair and diverse data
- Make adjustments for people who need them
- Keep humans involved
- Providing training and upskilling
- Be open about how you use technology and AI
- Protect personal data

What is a probation period?

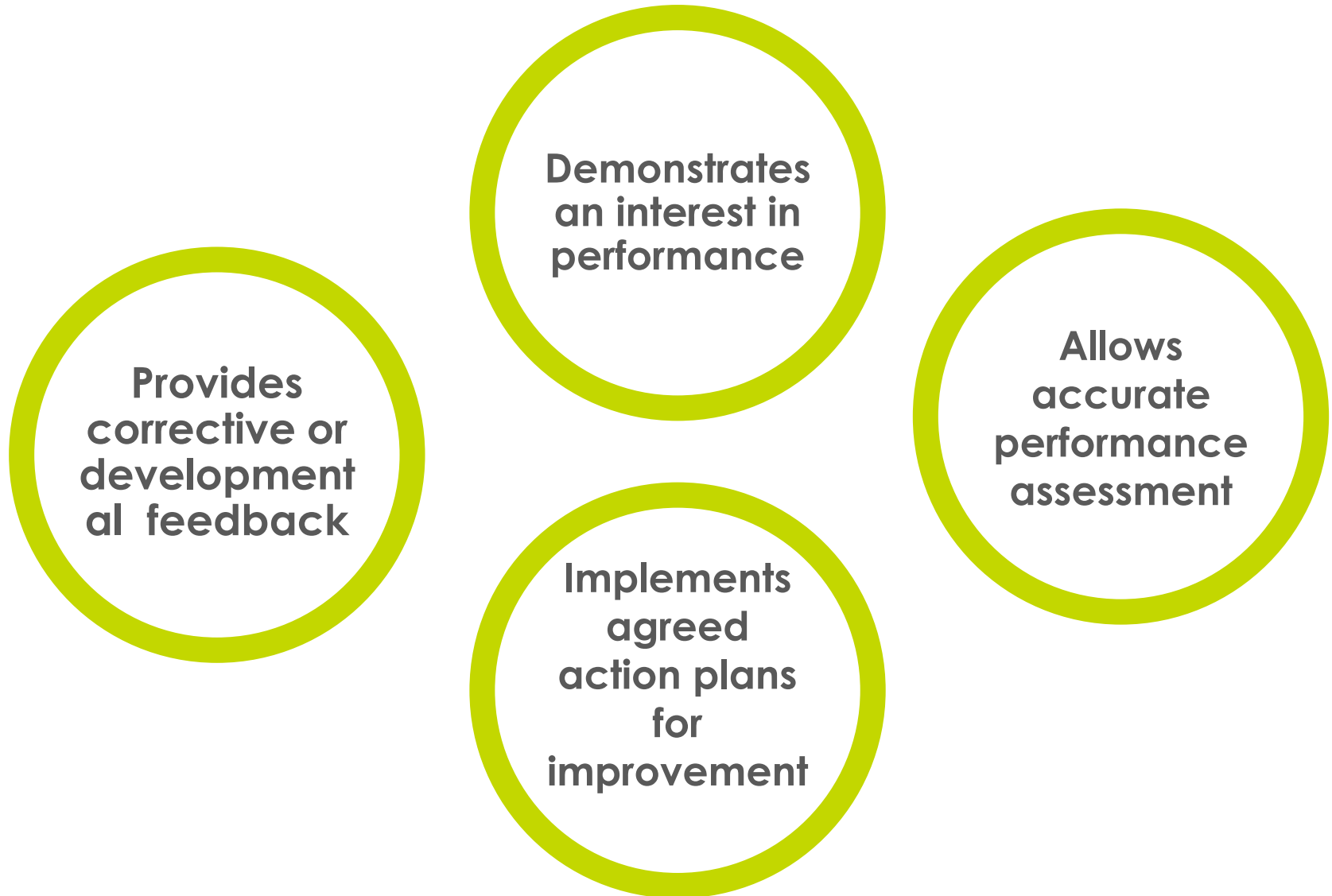
What is a probation period?

It is

- ✓ a contractually defined time during which employer and employee can test job fit
- ✓ a learning period for the new employee

It isn't

- × a timeframe within which an employee can be dismissed:
 - without good reason
 - or without using statutory procedures



What changes are upcoming?

Employment Right Acts 2025



From **January 2027** the qualifying period for making claims of unfair dismissal at an employment tribunal will **reduce to 6 months**.

This will apply to anyone hired from 01 July 2026 so it is essential that your probation procedures are up to date.



What should you do now if you haven't already?

- Ensure probation procedures are up to date
- Train managers on the changes and importance of probation procedures
- Ensure managers are undertaking regular reviews



Making the most of the probation period

Setting behavioural expectations

- How an employee carries out their work
- Agreed between managers and staff
- Provide clear guidance
- Create a framework setting out positive and negative actions for each behaviour



Top tips for conducting regular catch ups



- Set time aside before the catch up to ensure you are prepared
- Set a regular meeting in the employee's calendar to block book time to meet
- Don't rush
- Ensure you have somewhere private
- Take notes from the meeting and save in a central place in line with GDPR
- Be open to feedback



Manager preparation for conducting regular catch ups

- Employee's performance?
 - What evidence is there?
 - How do they relate to colleagues?
 - What do I want to explain, ask or share?
 - How can I help them develop?
 - How should the meeting run?
 - How do I deal with disagreements?



Feedback

- **F**requently
- **A**ccurate
- **S**pecific
- **T**imely
- Praise Sandwich
- 'AID'
- 'SBIBI'
- UHT (difficult situations)

Further support



In-company
training

Acas
website

Webinars

Tools and
templates

Mediation

Helpline
0300 123 1100

E-Learning

Conciliation

Workshops
and projects