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**How to conduct a return to work meeting**

Managers are required to discuss each period of sickness absence with a member of staff on their return to work. In many cases, this may just amount to a brief discussion to welcome them back to work, identify the reason for the absence and confirm they are fully fit to return and resume normal duties.

Where absence is becoming a cause for concern (eg if a pattern is evidence or trigger points have been reached) a more details discussion may need to take place.

The return to work discussion should take place on the day that the member of staff returns – or as near as possible. Wherever possible, a return to work meeting should take place face to face, but it can be appropriate to hold a discussion on the phone if this isn’t possible.

Before the meeting, managers should check the attendance record of the member of staff for the previous 12 months and review notes from any previous return to work meetings. If a trigger point has been reached, ensure the member of staff is aware – see our separate guidance on this.

During the meeting, managers should seek confirmation that the member of staff is fit to return to work. The absence record should be reviewed. If appropriate, discuss a referral to Occupational Health. Ensure that a self-certification form is competed and check if a Fit Note has been submitted.

If there are any established patters of absence or trigger points have been reached, discuss if there are any underlying health issues, if any support is required to improve the attendance record and any actions required. Re-establish your expectations regarding attendance. Set a review period if appropriate.

If the member of staff believes the absence is work related, listen carefully and given them the opportunity to highlight and relevant issues. Consider referring to support services, such as Occupational Health or the University counseling service. Discuss options for additional support – ask the member of staff what they need.

Check if the absence relates to disability, pregnancy or a work related accident.

A record should be kept of all return to work discussions.

Further advice can be obtained from HR where required.