**Return to Work Discussion**

**Purpose**

* To welcome the employee back to work.
* To ensure the employee is fit to return to work.
* To identify the cause of absence.
* To agree a way forward, if relevant.
* To up-date the employee on what’s been happening in the workplace.
* Remember this is an informal meeting and not a disciplinary hearing; the purpose is to establish the cause of absence and any possible underlying cause.

**Preparation**

* Ensure that you have a suitable location to hold the review. It should be held in a private location and not in the middle of an open-plan office.
* Gather information on the employee’s current period of absence and also previous absences.
* Be prepared to discuss patterns or trends of absence, if relevant.
* Approach the meeting with an open mind.

**Discussion**

The nature of the discussion will vary according to the frequency, length or nature of the absence, but some of the following points may be relevant:

* Welcome the employee back.
* Be positive, highlight that they have been missed.
* Explain purpose of the meeting is to establish why they have been absent from work.
* Try and determine the cause of absence, be sensitive and calm if personal problems or stress are discussed.
* Listen to the employee, give them chance to explain.
* Respect their privacy if they do not wish to discuss the reasons for absence. If this does happen then you can offer them the option to speak to somebody else. If not then you should highlight that if you don’t know the problem you are unable to help and their absence will continue to be monitored.
* If the absence is work-related, what can be done to help.
* Establish of the employee is undergoing any treatment, will time off be required for medical appointments.
* Are there any other factors contributing to the absence.
* Place current absence in the context of previous absences.
* Explain the impact of their absence on the colleagues within the Institute/School/Department.
* Explain that their absence will continue to be monitored.
* Agree the next steps, such as a follow-up review, referral to Occupational Health, attend a training course.

**Recording**

* Ensure that the correct certification has been provided.
* Complete the return to work form, ensuring that both parties sign to confirm their agreement in what is recorded.



**Return to Work Discussion Form**

**This form must be completed by the line manager (after discussion with employee) on the employee’s return to work following ANY period of sickness absence.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name:** |  | Faculty / Service: |  |
| **Job Title:** |  | **Staff No.:** *(payslip)* |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **First Working Day Absent:**  *(state the time if part of a day)* |  | **Last Working Day Absent:**  *(not the first day back at work)* |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Length of absence:** (number of working days or hours lost) |  |
| **Has the individual had other sickness absence in the last 12 months?** | Yes / No |
| **Did the staff member visit:** Hospital / Doctor / Dentist / Clinic / None *(delete as appropriate)* | |
| **Are support measures or adjustments to duties/environment/hours recommended by Occupational Health or the GP’s fit note?** | Yes / No |

*Please contact Human Resources for advice about support & adjustments.*

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| **Key points discussed and actions agreed:** Check that the employee is fit to return and has the appropriate medical certificate(s); discuss relevant prior absence or underlying conditions; consider support or adjustments; provide an update on work issues. |
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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **I confirm that this represents an accurate record of issues discussed and actions agreed.** | | | |
| **Signature:** (employee) |  | **Date:** |  |
| **Signature:** (manager) |  | **Date:** |  |
|  | | | |

**Please retain a copy of this form for your records and forward the original to Human Resources where it will be held on the personal file for monitoring absence and wellbeing.**