ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES · CHECKED 10 NOVEMBER 2026

Return to work interview form

For the conversation when someone comes back after being off sick: a welcome, and a check that they have what they need. One page, filled in together. **Fifteen minutes, in private.**

WHO, AND THE ABSENCE

Name _____ **Role** _____ **Who they're talking to** _____

First day off _____ **Back on** _____ **Working days missed** _____

Other absences in the last 12 months (dates, and whether they're linked to the same condition) _____

1. HOW ARE YOU?

Start here, before the paperwork. They don't have to share a diagnosis, and you don't need one to support them.

What they'd like you to know, and anything they can't do yet or shouldn't for a while _____

Fit note or medical advice (not fit / may be fit, and what it suggests) _____ **Ready to be back?** (yes / with changes / look again on) _____

2. WHAT CHANGED WHILE YOU WERE AWAY

In the team, with customers or in the way things are done, that affects their role _____

3. WHAT WOULD HELP

- ☐ Phased return
- ☐ Different hours
- ☐ Different duties
- ☐ Equipment or set-up
- ☐ Time off for appointments
- ☐ Someone to talk to
- ☐ Nothing for now

What we agreed, who does what and by when _____

If their condition could be a disability, changes like these are how you help them stay in work, and the law expects you to consider them. Cost and the size of your business are taken into account. Note what you looked at and why.

4. THE PLAN

What starts when _____ **Look again on** _____ **Phased return ends** _____

Pay for the hours worked, and for the hours not worked (normal pay, company sick pay or SSP for full days off) _____

5. WHAT STAYS BETWEEN US

What colleagues have been told _____ **What they'd rather keep private** _____

Manager's initials and date _____ **Their initials and date** _____ **Written up on** _____

FOR THE MANAGER

Before

- ☐ Somewhere private, phones away
- ☐ Fit note and any report read beforehand
- ☐ A welcome. The same conversation for everyone
- ☐ If a disability may be involved, think about what would help beforehand

AFTERWARDS

- ☐ Written up the same day, as if they'll read it
- ☐ Health details kept apart from the general file
- ☐ Review date in the diary, changes confirmed in writing

If it isn't the first absence

Look at the pattern together and ask what's behind it. Review points in a policy open a conversation, never a warning on their own. Pregnancy-related absence never counts against anyone, and disability-related absence needs its own view.

Send us your what-ifs.

Someone off sick and no process to follow? Employee Relations Support runs it with you.

The detail is in our long-term sickness guide.

General information for employers in England, Scotland and Wales, not legal advice. Northern Ireland has its own employment law. A return to work meeting isn't a legal requirement; Acas recommends one. Checked against GOV.UK, Acas and legislation.gov.uk on 10 November 2026. Free to use in your own business.

What If HR
hello@whatifhr.co.uk