



**SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**JOINT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE  
FOR TEACHERS**

**A FRAMEWORK FOR MAXIMISING  
ATTENDANCE AT WORK**

**(JNCT 1.8)**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The policy applies to all employees. Its overall aim is to enable the Council to deliver high quality, cost effective services, to establish a framework which treats all employees in a fair and consistent manner and to provide employee support and assistance which encourages employee well-being. Employees will be provided with a safe and healthy working environment and conditions of employment which facilitate work life balance and a healthy lifestyle.

The Policy places a particular emphasis on prevention by requiring managers to identify and address the causes of absence and by tackling issues at the earliest possible stage. It ensures that managers are aware of the options open to them when dealing with attendance issues. It also equips managers with flexibility to deal with absence issues in an appropriate manner by ensuring that a clear distinction is made between absence that is due to conduct and absence that is due to capability. In so doing the difference between employees unable to attend work through genuine ill health and those who will not attend work can be recognised, thereby ensuring that the correct level of help and support is given to employees in genuine need while enabling managers to deal with any abuse of procedures.

For the purposes of this policy the term 'manager' refers to any employee of the Council with people management or supervisory responsibilities and will include Head Teachers, DHT's, PT's or other appropriate nominated member of staff.

This policy has been developed jointly with Trade Union side in line with the principles of partnership working.

### **1.1 BENEFITS**

The benefits to the Council, its employees and customers include:

- Increased levels of productivity resulting in a higher quality of service;
- Minimised disruption to service delivery with improved continuity of customer contact/care;
- Support and assistance provided to employees at the earliest opportunity leading to improved employee well-being;
- Improved efficiency and employee morale resulting in reduced costs;
- The fair and consistent treatment of all employees.

### **1.2 OBJECTIVES**

The Policy is structured around five objectives and detailed within each of these are the required actions of the Council, its management and employees. The objectives are:

1. The provision of a safe working environment
2. To support employees to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle
3. To maximise attendance
4. The reduction and prevention of workplace ill health
5. The provision of management information on attendance

## **OBJECTIVE 1 – SAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

**AIM:** To provide employees with a safe working environment

### **1. ORGANISATIONAL ACTION**

- 1.1 To regularly review and develop the Council's Occupational Health and Safety Policy to ensure adherence to safe working practices.
- 1.2 To ensure the Council complies with its Health and Safety duties by arranging for the services of appropriately trained and experienced officers to provide professional health and safety advice

### **2. MANAGEMENT ACTION**

- 2.1 To ensure all employees receive the appropriate Health and Safety information and training, including details of their individual responsibilities.

A manager must ensure that all employees receive appropriate information, instruction and training in connection with their work activity and workplace(s) to enable them to carry out their work activities safely.

All employees must be informed of the location of the Safety Manual, the first aid box, details of the designated first aider, fire evacuation procedures as well as all other details as specified in the Essential Safety Information Notice contained within the Safety Manual.

Individual employees must be made aware of their individual health and safety responsibilities and managers must ensure that each employee undertakes the training required to ensure safe working.

- 2.2 To regularly review and audit the Health and Safety Policy, all associated procedures and safe systems at work to ensure these continue to meet the needs of the Council:

Auditing the effectiveness of the Health and Safety Policy and the appropriateness of the systems of work are essential to ensuring a safe workplace. Accordingly Managers must regularly review/audit how work is being carried out in terms of the safety of the practices undertaken. A joint approach with local trade union representative(s) to workplace audits, including an agreed programme of joint workplace audits is recommended.

- 2.3 Ensure all appropriate COSHH, DSE and risk assessments are complete and regularly review these assessments:

There are a range of routine assessments which must be completed in order to comply with the Health and Safety Policy. These include COSHH assessments where employees are working with chemicals, Display Screen Equipment assessments where employees use computers and risk assessments to identify workplace hazards. A manager must ensure that all appropriate assessments are completed. In the event of an accident/near accident or incident, managers must review all appropriate assessments and working practices.

- 2.4 Provide information to the Health & Safety and Employee Representatives:

Managers have a responsibility to provide information regarding occupational health and safety matters such as accident statistics, completed assessments and audit findings. This communication could be via team briefings or meetings, Joint Consultative Committees etc. Managers must also arrange for new employees to attend the Corporate Welcome Event and receive Directorate Induction at which general safety information and safety information specific to their workplace respectively must be provided.

### **3. EMPLOYEE ACTION**

#### **3.1 Be aware of their individual health and safety responsibilities:**

All employees must put themselves in a position where they fully understand their responsibilities with regard to health and safety. This includes participation in relevant training.

#### **3.2 Take action when an unsafe system or situation becomes apparent:**

Employees must not disregard any unsafe systems or situations which come to their attention whether in their own or in another workplace. Such matters must be brought to the attention of their manager or supervisor.

## **OBJECTIVE 2 – HEALTHY LIFESTYLE**

**AIM:** To encourage and assist every employee to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle

### **1. ORGANISATIONAL ACTION**

- 1.1 To introduce health promotions which encourage employees to adopt a balanced lifestyle and identify and address any personal health problems.
- 1.2 To continue to develop working conditions and Conditions of Service which support and encourage safe working, employee well-being and a work/life balance.
- 1.3 To survey the health of the workforce and offer assistance to employees in advance of their absence from work.
- 1.4 To work in partnership with external organisations to promote health improvement initiatives.

### **2. MANAGEMENT ACTION**

- 2.1 To arrange regular and ad hoc health checks and fitness assessments:

Via its Occupational Health Service the Council provides a range of regular health checks such as pre-employment health check, annual assessment for night workers, hearing assessments, driver health checks and fitness assessments. In addition, Occupational Health Services can arrange to medically examine employees and can access a physiotherapy service for employees. Details of these services will be provided regularly by the Occupational Health Service.

- 2.2 Be aware of and properly utilise the services offered by the Council to support employees.

All referrals to Occupational Health should be processed using the OHU referral form [ABS/FORM/1] and should be processed via HR. OHU will write to the employee regarding their appointment ABS/LET/7.

#### 2.2.1 Physiotherapy Service

Early access to physiotherapy service can prevent further deterioration of an employee's condition, facilitate an early return to work or prevent an absence from occurring in the first place. While physiotherapy is available for all Council employees whether present or absent from work, managers must ensure that physiotherapy is accessed via an OHU referral for any employee reporting a musculoskeletal condition.

#### 2.2.2 Employee Counselling Service.

The Council offers a range of counselling and welfare services for employees. Where an employee indicates he/she has a problem such as alcohol or drug misuse, financial problems, domestic difficulties, personal stress/depression, bereavement or illness of a relative the employee's manager should advise the employee of the service(s) provided by the Council and offer these services to the employee. These can be arranged by the Council's HR Support Officer who will also provide advice on these services. Managers can make referrals directly to the HR Support Officer or alternatively employees can self-refer.

Alternatively, Trade Unions can arrange an appointment with ECS on behalf of an employee via the HR Support Officer. Employees can also access the Employee Counselling Service independently.

### 2.2.3 Psychological Illness

Managers must automatically refer to the HR Support Officer details of employees reporting absent due to psychological illness. The HR Support Officer can provide, or arrange for the provision of, practical help and advice relevant to the cause of stress which in many instances can facilitate a return to work. Managers must ensure that appropriate support is accessed via an OHU referral for any employee reporting a psychological related condition.

### 2.2.4 Healthy Working Lives

Activities are co-ordinated through the Occupational Health and Safety Team. Anyone wishing to become involved in Healthy Working Lives or simply seeks further details should contact the Occupational Health and Safety Team.

## 2.3 Be aware of the Council's Smoke Free Policy:

The Council is committed to providing education and information for all employees on smoking issues including assistance for those who wish to stop smoking. The benefits of stopping smoking include a direct benefit to overall health of the individual as their risk of developing tobacco related diseases reduces. Employees are encouraged to pursue the various organisations and facilities that are widely available to provide cessation services. The Occupational Health department will provide additional information and advice in support of this.

## 2.4 To establish effective working relations with trade unions in respect of health improvement initiatives:

Managers should work in partnership with trade union representatives to support health improvement initiatives within the workplace and encourage employees to adopt a healthier lifestyle. This may include identifying health improvement initiatives to deal with matters arising from discussions on health and safety issues.

Where possible, managers should provide facilities to enable employees to take part in healthy living activities such as smoking cessation counselling and organised lifestyle events.

## 3. **EMPLOYEE ACTION**

3.1. Employees should make themselves continually aware of the lifestyle changes they can make to improve and maintain good health and in so doing maximise their attendance at work.

3.2. Employees are required to attend all early intervention mechanisms offered which are put in place to support them during periods of absence. Employees would be permitted time away from work to attend any follow up appointments / ongoing treatment if they have returned to work.

- 3.3. Employees should make themselves aware of and utilise the health based services and initiatives within the Council.
- 3.4. All employees should be aware of their responsibility in line with the Corporate Health and Safety Policy. This will include having due care for their own safety and health and that of others. Employees should report all accidents, incidents, near misses or cases of occupational ill health to management as soon as possible and highlight any issues that they consider to be hazardous within the workplace.

## OBJECTIVE 3 – MAXIMISING ATTENDANCE

**AIM:** To promote and support management actions which encourage maximum attendance.

### 1. ORGANISATIONAL ACTION

- 1.1 To establish maximising attendance as a core management competence.
- 1.2 To provide all managers with guidance on the purpose, content and desired outcomes for the absence management process together with appropriate training. This will enable managers to competently undertake all stages of attendance, identify patterns and frequencies of absences and motivate employees to attend work.
- 1.3 To screen the health of all new appointees for jobs within the Council via the Occupational Health service provider.

### 2. MANAGEMENT ACTION

- 2.1 All managers and supervisors should deal immediately, fairly and sensitively with their employees when they are absent from work:

Upon notification of an employee's absence the line manager should review the absence and complete ABS/FORM/3. If appropriate, personal contact should be made with the employee by telephone, home visit or arranged meeting. Early intervention is crucial and an essential first step is to ensure that when an employee is absent all relevant information is accurately and timeously recorded on the appropriate recording system.

By making direct contact, the manager may also be able to offer practical assistance and support. Where appropriate there should be liaison with the employee's trade union representative on the best method of maintaining contact.

Absence information must be regularly reviewed to enable appropriate action to be taken. *Appendix 1* outlines the responsibilities required of managers in dealing with absence issues. Managers and employees should be aware of the services available to employees (as detailed in Objective 2) and should utilise these as necessary

- 2.2 Maintain appropriate regular contact with absent employees:

When an employee is absent due to illness, particularly if the absence is lengthy, the manager must keep in regular contact. Employees can often feel isolated when absent from work and it is important therefore that managers maintain contact, offer support and assistance wherever possible and, notwithstanding the requirements of the 'Statement of Fitness for Work' ABS/GUIDE/2 (hereafter referred to as the 'fit note', discuss with the employee the options available to allow an early return to work (see 2.3 below).

Contact can include:

- A home visit or arranged meeting at a mutually suitable location
- Keeping in contact by telephone between visits/meetings
- Arranging for colleagues to visit

- Keeping the employee informed of workplace activities
- In order to support employees returning to work after a spell of long-term absence, an employee may benefit from the support of a 'buddy', who would normally be a colleague of the employee.

During the absence, the buddy will provide the employee with regular contact and may cover formal, informal and social issues. When the employee returns to work, the buddy should continue to provide support for the first few days or weeks as appropriate. Arrangements should be agreed with the employee prior to their return to work to ensure all relevant parties are aware of the arrangements.

- 2.3 Adopt a flexible approach to maximising attendance, including use of JNCT agreements on Special Leave and Flexible Working.

On many occasions Doctors will recommend on the fit note that an employee is able to return to work providing certain adjustments are made to working arrangements. Adjustments may include reduced hours, limiting the range of work activities for a short period or temporary redeployment. If temporary adjustments are not feasible or if they prove to be unsuccessful a permanent reduction in hours or alternative duties or job should be considered. In such circumstances managers should liaise with HR to agree the appropriateness of any proposed adjustments.

In situations where there is no indication on the fit note that a return to work is possible even with adjustments the manager must maintain contact with the employee and discuss support and adjustments to working arrangements which can facilitate a return to work. Other than in exceptional circumstances managers should be able to identify adjustments which enable the employee to return to work.

Managers should use the flexibility contained within the Scheme of Special Leave and other related JNCT agreements. These can help employees maintain their work/life balance by providing some time away from their workplace which may otherwise have resulted in sickness absence e.g. amending an employees time in the office by allowing home working

### 3. EMPLOYEE ACTION

- 3.1 It is the responsibility of all employees to make every effort to attend work. Employees should advise their line manager of absence from work at the earliest possible stage and adhere to ongoing absence notification procedures. Where employee cover has to be organised notification of absence must be prior to the normal start time. Employees will have a small information card providing the name and telephone number of their line manager and these reporting lines must be followed.
- 3.2 It is the employees responsibility to take all reasonable steps to facilitate an early return to work from any period of absence. In the event of absence employees must fulfil the notification procedures as outlined in *Appendix 3 'Trigger Points - Guidance'*.

## **OBJECTIVE 4 – REDUCE AND PREVENT CAUSES OF WORKPLACE ILL HEALTH**

**AIM:** To identify, reduce and prevent the causes of workplace ill health

### **1. ORGANISATIONAL ACTION**

- 1.1 To ensure employees are fit for their posts:
- a) In terms of health assessment; and
  - b) With the appropriate training and support required.
- 1.2 To train managers to use the risk assessment systems to identify the reasons for health problems in the workplace.
- 1.3 To give employees access to learning opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge.
- 1.4 To provide employees with guidance on personal effectiveness to enable them to balance all aspects of their life.
- 1.5 To provide early interventions for employees such as:
- Occupational Health Support
  - HR Support Officer
  - Physiotherapy
  - Employee Counselling Service
  - Confidential Help lines
  - Other professional support organisations

### **2. MANAGEMENT ACTION**

- 2.1 Promote positive health and lifestyle events within teams:

Health checks can be carried out by Occupational Health to alert employees and managers to health problems e.g. blood pressure, hearing, lifestyle, lung capacity, and a range of health promotion events are held by the Council throughout the year. Managers should encourage employees to participate in these events. Details of events will be provided by HR.

- 2.2 Review workplace ill health and develop appropriate responses:

Managers should review absence information, health and safety information, etc. to identify any issues which may be related to workplace ill health. Where areas for improvement are identified managers should take remedial action with assistance from Employee and Customer Services and/or Corporate Health and Safety where necessary.

- 2.3 Review management information and statistics related to workplace ill health, including absence levels, accident statistics and COSHH and Risk assessments:

Instances of work related stress, respect at work complaints and violent incidents will also be monitored. Where trends, exceptions or patterns are identified, appropriate remedial action will be taken. The type and nature of management information gathered will be monitored and amended where appropriate to reflect changing needs.

#### 2.4 Communicate and encourage feedback regarding workplace health issues.

Managers will routinely discuss workplace ill health with their employee group. Employees should be encouraged to contribute to discussions on whether and how improvements can be made to reduce or prevent the causes of workplace ill health. It is recommended that this should be a standing item on the agenda of team meetings.

#### 2.5 Recognise the causes and symptoms of stress in the workplace and take appropriate, preventative action.

Managers should assess the risk of stress by looking at potential contributing factors and take reasonable steps to address these. Such factors should be ascertained by undertaking a Stress Risk Assessment. For example managers should monitor working hours and workload demands and counsel employees who regularly work in excess of their contractual hours either through Flexible Working Hours Scheme or by working overtime.

Managers should be aware of signs of stress in their employee e.g. absence, poor productivity, reduced performance, mood changes, poor concentration and working long hours. Any employee citing a psychological related illness should be immediately referred to OHU via HR.

Appropriate training is available to help managers identify and manage stress in the workplace, and to help employees cope with stress.

Further information can be obtained by contacting the Human Resources Organisational Development Section.

### **3. EMPLOYEE ACTION**

#### 3.1 Be aware and take advantage of health promotion opportunities and events offered by the Council.

#### 3.2 Take advantage of the confidential helplines available through Employee and Customer Services.

#### 3.3 Treat all colleagues in a fair and respectful manner.

## **OBJECTIVE 5 – PROVISION OF MANAGEMENT INFORMATION**

**AIM:** To provide regular information on attendance to all stakeholders

### **1. ORGANISATIONAL ACTION**

- 1.1 Provide statistical analysis of attendance figures to all employees and managers.
- 1.2 Analyse national trends and developments in maximising attendance and keep managers and employees up to date on the national situation.
- 1.3 Ensure line managers are provided with regular information on attendance statistics across the Council as well as within their own area of responsibility.

### **2. MANAGEMENT ACTION**

- 2.1 Managers should make use of available communication methods to ensure that all employees are aware of the importance placed on good attendance. Information relating to attendance should be displayed in a user-friendly format and communicated to employees via newsletters, Joint Consultative Committees, and team briefing structures. Information must be provided within a reasonable timeframe as this will allow the appropriate action to be taken promptly thereby avoiding any unnecessary delay in an employee's return to work. As part of induction new recruits should be briefed on the absence policy, trigger points and notification procedures and advised that attendance records are monitored and action taken where necessary.

It may be useful to display trends relating to particular workgroups or teams although Managers must ensure that any information provided cannot identify individuals and that confidentiality is protected at all times.

- 2.2 Develop, maintain and fully utilise an efficient, electronic system for recording and reporting on attendance and to provide consistent, accurate and early information on attendance.
- 2.3 Ensure employees are informed of attendance levels. This can be achieved via individual meeting with employees, e.g., Performance & Development Review, Attendance Review meetings or via team/section/service meetings. Employees should be provided with attendance information on an individual / team and Service / Resource / Council wide basis.

### **3. EMPLOYEE ACTION**

- 3.1 Actively participate in discussions on attendance information to improve own and team attendance.

**APPENDIX 1**

# A FRAMEWORK FOR MAXIMISING ATTENDANCE

## GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS

### 1. RECORDING NOTIFIED ABSENCES

In order to qualify for statutory and occupational sickness allowance employees are required to report the reason for absence to their line manager on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> day of the absence and if possible indicate the date of return to work. Where the employee's absence period is 4 to 7 days, the employee will be required to complete a self-certification absence report on return to work. Where the employee's absence extends beyond 7 days, a self-certification absence report should be completed to cover the first 7 days of absence. Managers must ensure employees have received cards detailing the absence reporting procedures. Further information on entitlement to sickness allowance and notification arrangements can be found in Part 2 section 6 of the SNCT Handbook of Conditions of Service.

When an employee reports an absence, managers are responsible for ensuring that it is accurately and timeously recorded on the employee's attendance record and that the appropriate payroll documentation is processed. Managers should complete the Absence Reporting Form upon initial contact from an employee who is reporting unfit for work [ABS/FORM/3]

Managers should take particular care in respect of absences which may be related to disability (as defined under the DDA) or pregnancy related absences and will be required to carry out appropriate risk assessment or consider practical reasonable adjustments to the employee's role.

### 2. CONTACT DURING ABSENCE

Line managers must ensure that they remain in regular contact with any employee absent from work. This should include keeping the employee up to date with any policy and procedures developments, team minutes and other publications.

### 3. RETURN TO WORK DISCUSSIONS

Where an employee returns to work after an absence, South Ayrshire Council recommends that a return to work discussion is undertaken. This would normally be by the line manager and should normally take place on the day the employee returns to work. This allows the manager to discuss the absence with the employee and complete the Return to Work Form [ABS/FORM/2]. The return to work discussion may be conducted face-to-face where possible however could be conducted over the telephone where the manager and employee are in different locations. Managers should prepare for this meeting by ensuring they have information such as previous spells or patterns of absence from the employee's attendance record card. This meeting gives both the manager and the employee the opportunity to raise any issues in relation to the absence.

Guidance on preparing and conducting return to work discussions can be found in *Appendix 1* - ABS/GUIDE/1.

#### 4. REVIEWING THE ABSENCE

Absences are reviewed over a twelve month rolling period. For both short term persistent absence and long term continuous absence, a number of review points have been established. At each review point the manager is required to fully consider the circumstances surrounding the absence or absence record and the range of options available further advice and support is available from HR.

##### 4.1 REPEATED SHORT TERM AND PERSISTENT ABSENCE

REVIEW POINT 1:	RETURN FROM FIRST ABSENCE
<p>Action:</p> <p>It is recommended that a return to work discussion takes place which is recorded on an absence report form and the employees attendance record card. The Absence Report should be completed by the employee upon return to work and should be accompanied by a fit note for absences of 7 days or more. Support and assistance should be offered where appropriate.</p> <p>Reference Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence Reporting Form [ABS/FORM/3]</li> <li>• Absence Report [ABS/FORM/4]</li> <li>• Return to Work Form [ABS/FORM/2] and Guidance [ABS/GUIDE/1]</li> </ul>	
REVIEW POINT 2:	RETURN FROM SECOND ABSENCE
<p>Action:</p> <p>It is recommended that a further return to work discussion takes place which again should be recorded on the absence reporting form and the employees attendance record card. The Absence Report should be completed upon return to work and should be accompanied by a fit note for absences of 7 days or more. Support and assistance should be offered where appropriate.</p> <p>Employees should be made aware that an additional absence within the 12 month rolling period will result in an Attendance Review Meeting taking place where concern will be raised regarding the employees absence record.</p> <p>Reference Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence Reporting Form [ABS/FORM/3]</li> <li>• Absence Report [ABS/FORM/4]</li> <li>• Return to Work Form [ABS/FORM/2] and Guidance [ABS/GUIDE/1]</li> </ul>	

**REVIEW POINT 3:****RETURN FROM THIRD ABSENCE**

## Action:

There should be a return to work discussion where the employee is advised that an Attendance Review Meeting will be arranged. The employee should be invited to this meeting, in writing [ABS/LET/1], and given the right to representation.

This meeting should be recorded and the agreed targets, review period and actions confirmed to the employee in writing [ABS/LET/3].

Concern should be raised regarding the employees level of absence and the potential that further absences may result in disciplinary or incapability procedures being considered.

Other than in exceptional circumstances e.g. where the reason for absence is hospital treatment, employees will be required to attend an attendance review meeting after a third spell of absence.

Discussions should be recorded and the employees attendance record card updated. The Absence Report should be completed upon return to work and should be accompanied by a 'Fit Note' for absences of 7 days or more.

## Reference Documents:

- Absence Reporting Form [ABS/FORM/3]
- Absence Report [ABS/FORM/4]
- Return to Work Form [ABS/FORM/2] and Guidance [ABS/GUIDE/1]
- Invite to Attendance Review Meeting [ABS/LET/1]
- Attendance Review Meeting Outcome/Agreed Actions [ABS/LET/3]

**REVIEW POINT 4:****RETURN FROM SUBSEQUENT ABSENCES**

## Action:

The absence should be reviewed and further action in terms of disciplinary or incapability procedures must be considered. Thereafter an appropriate meeting with the employee should be convened.

## Reference Documents:

- Invite to Attendance Review Meeting – Subsequent Absences[ABS/LET/2]
- Attendance Review Meeting Outcome/Agreed Actions [ABS/LET/2]
- Absence Reporting Form [ABS/FORM/3]
- Absence Report [ABS/FORM/4]
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Capability Procedures

## 4.2 LONG TERM CONTINUOUS ABSENCE

Long term absence is characterised by a continuous absence of 4 weeks or more.

Managers are responsible for maintaining regular contact with employees through formal attendance review meetings, the method of contact between the manager and the employee should be agreed at the review meeting. Only in exceptional circumstances this may be considered inappropriate e.g. hospitalisation; however in such instances alternative arrangements should be put in place to maintain contact. Such arrangements should be documented and followed up in writing.

Depending on the circumstances relating to an employees absence it may be appropriate to consider alternative solutions. As part of discussions/meetings with employees consideration should be given to ill-health retiral or incapability. The applicable timescales will be dependent upon the facts of the particular situation.

<b>REVIEW POINT 1:</b>	<b>FIRST NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE BEING LONG TERM</b>
<p>Action:</p> <p>An Attendance Review Meeting should be arranged by the manager and involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee</li> <li>• Manager</li> <li>• HR Adviser / Officer.</li> <li>• Employees Representative</li> </ul> <p>The employee should be invited to this meeting, in writing [ABS/LET/1], and given the right to representation. The discussion should be recorded and any actions or targets agreed. These should be confirmed in writing to the employee [ABS/LET/2]</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the location of the meeting and if it is not appropriate for this to take place in the work setting then alternatives should be considered.</p>	
<b>REVIEW POINT 2:</b>	<b>EVERY 4 WEEKS OR; WHEN NEW INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM GP/EMPLOYEE / MEDICAL ADVISER</b>
<p>Action:</p> <p>An Attendance Review Meeting should be arranged by the manager and involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee</li> <li>• Manager</li> <li>• HR Adviser / Officer.</li> <li>• Employees Representative</li> </ul> <p>The employee should be invited to this meeting, in writing [ABS/LET/1], and given the right to representation. The discussion should be recorded and any actions or targets agreed. These should be confirmed in writing to the employee [ABS/LET/2]</p> <p>At this stage a Rehabilitation Plan should be considered in preparation for the employee</p>	

returning to work (see Section 12 below).

Consideration should be given to ill-health retiral or incapability (see Sections 6 and 10 below). These should be discussed in the employees presence at the Attendance Review Meeting and confirmed, in writing, to the employee [ABS/LET/4]

## 5. ATTENDANCE REVIEW MEETINGS

These are held where a more formal discussion about an absence/absence record is required. An employee has the right to be accompanied at this meeting, normally by their trade union representative. These meetings should be arranged by the manager and are designed to:

- Discuss the absence/illness and any associated issues;
- Examine the reasons for absence and how improved attendance could be achieved;
- For an absent employee to consider how a return to work could be facilitated e.g. a return to a different job or work pattern or a phased return.
- In the final instance to consider ill health retirement or termination on the grounds of incapability or disciplinary action for misconduct.

Both the manager and the employee must consider what can reasonably be altered to allow the employee to return to work. In this respect a flexible approach to work and working arrangements is expected. The discussion may also involve consideration of a referral to the Council's Medical Adviser or any other available support or employee service. The focus of this meeting will be to determine what action(s) can be taken either by employee or manager to enable an early return to work for the employee. Once completed, the detail and outcome of the meeting must be confirmed to the employee and the information recorded on the employee's attendance record.

HR can be present to provide assistance where required. If the manager conducts the Attendance Review Meeting without the presence of HR they must ensure that their HR Adviser/Officer is fully updated and copied into written correspondence sent to the employee.

Standard letters, which may be used for these meetings, are included in *Appendix 3* However they are for guidance only and may be adapted to suit an employee's particular circumstance. In such circumstances managers should seek guidance from HR.

## 6. DEALING WITH ISSUES OF INCAPABILITY

The Employment Rights Act 1996 defines capability as "*ability assessed by reference to skill, aptitude, health or any other physical or mental quality*".

Both long-term and short term absence due to an underlying health reason will be dealt with via the incapability procedures. It is important to note the distinction between termination on the grounds of incapability and disciplinary action (possible dismissal) for absence as a result of conduct. Where an employee has been persistently absent with a high number of short term absences caused by an underlying health problem and where attendance levels become

unacceptable this should be dealt with as a capability issue and progressed as necessary via the incapability procedures.

Where an employee indicates that a return to work is possible but further recovery time is required the manager must advise the employee about the opportunity to apply for unpaid leave of absence. This option should be considered prior to a decision being made to terminate employment on the grounds of incapability.

When dealing with attendance issues, managers must be aware of the Councils policy on the Employment of People with Disabilities as well as the provisions of the Equality Act. Both the Council and the Equality Act covers individuals who suffer from a disability or serious illness, including disabilities such as visual/hearing impairment, progressing of fluctuating conditions such as muscular dystrophy, arthritis, cancer, HIV, Aids, Epilepsy, diabetes and M.E.

During the course of an employee's absence, and as part of the regular personal contact between the manager and employee, discussion will have taken place regarding the employee's return to work to their original job or to another post. It is important that employees are given appropriate time to recover from their illness or treatment. However where it is identified through the process of consultation that a return is not possible, the manager and employee must give due consideration to ill health retirement or dismissal due to incapability where the employee does not meet the ill health retirement requirements or is not a member of an occupational pension scheme.

Termination on the grounds of incapability may be appropriate where:

- The employee is not superannuated therefore can't be ill-health retired; or
- An application for ill health retirement has not been approved; and
- Every other option for a return to work has been considered but found to be unsuccessful or inappropriate.

Termination on the grounds of incapability should only be considered where:

- An employee is no longer capable of undertaking their duties.
- The job/work location cannot be 'reasonably adjusted' to accommodate their situation.
- An offer(s) of redeployment to alternative duties has been made and rejected by the employee.
- There are no redeployment opportunities within the Council.
- Ill health retirement is not appropriate

The incapability process will take due account of national terms and conditions relating to sickness allowance and notification arrangements.

If termination is a possible course of action the manager must have discussed this option with her/his HR Manager and the employee at an earlier stage and confirmed this to the employee in the letter(s) issued after the Attendance Review Meeting(s). At all times in this process it is important to have relevant and up to date information from the Council's Occupational Health Adviser.

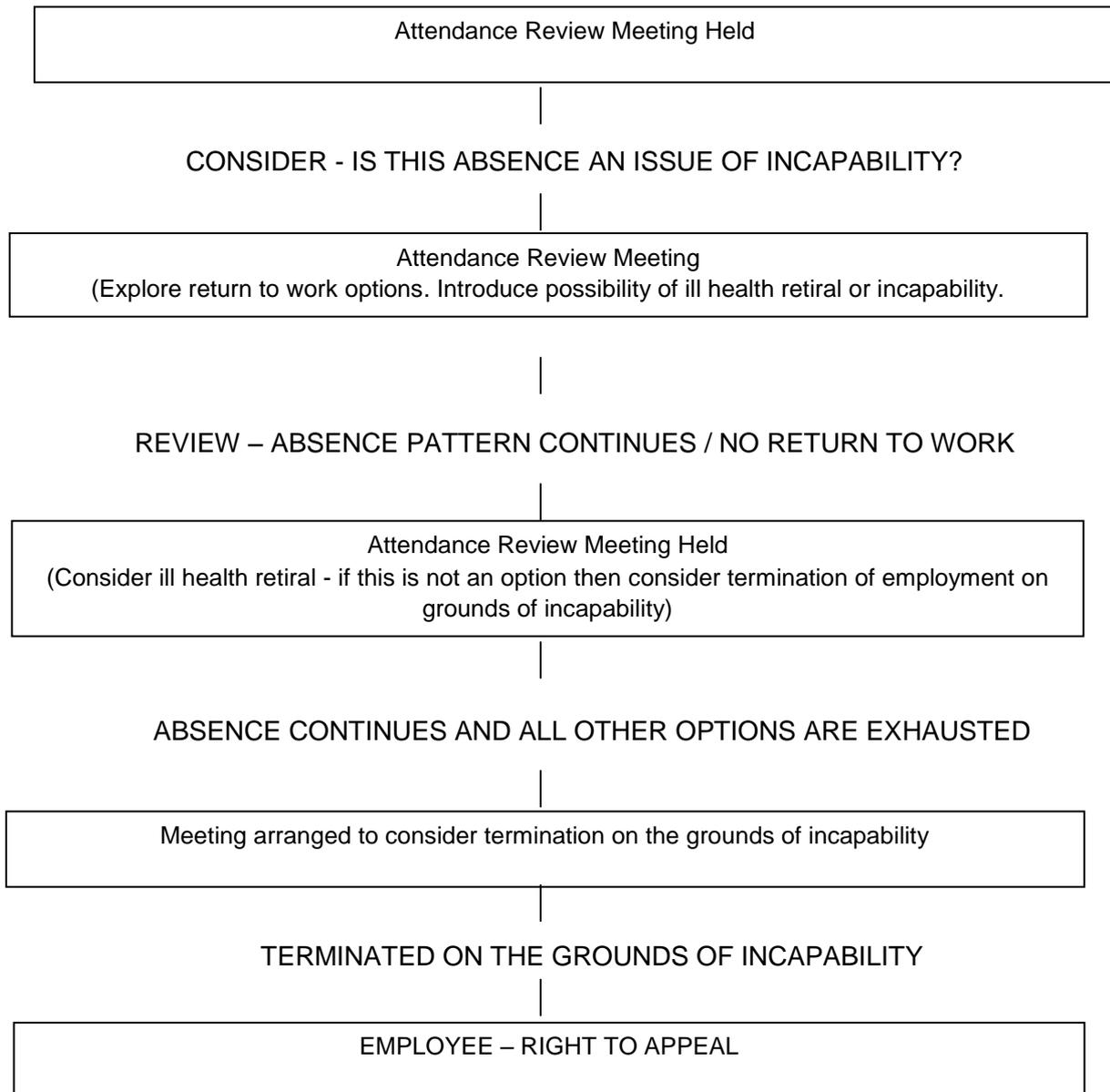
When convening a meeting to consider termination of employment on the grounds of incapability, managers must ensure that the appropriate process is followed:

## 6.1 THE INCAPABILITY PROCESS

- 6.1.1 At an early stage in the absence as possible, the manager and employee should formally meet to discuss the absence. As part of the Attendance Review Meetings and where an employees attendance is continuing to cause concern, despite all efforts by the manager and HR to provide support and guidance, the manager should explain to the employee that termination of employment on the grounds of incapability may be considered. The content of this discussion should be confirmed in writing to the employee using Attendance Review Meeting Outcome [ABS/LET/4].
- 6.1.2 A medical examination should be arranged and the subsequent report from the Council's Medical Adviser considered.
- 6.1.3 If as a result of the Attendance Review Meeting(s), the medical examination report, and in accordance with business/service demands, termination of contract is considered to be the only remaining alternative, the employee should be asked to attend a meeting with the employee's line manager and T.U. representative.
- 6.1.4 The meeting will be convened broadly in accordance with the agreed disciplinary procedures which apply to the employee i.e. the employee will be advised of the purpose of the meeting in writing and will have the right to be represented. The employee can explain their views on the case being presented by the management. As a result of the process a decision will be reached and the employee will be advised of the decision in writing.
- 6.1.5 Whilst the process is broadly similar, Managers must recognise that incapability is not a conduct issue and therefore not a disciplinary matter.
- 6.1.6 Employees who are dissatisfied at the decision to terminate their employment on the grounds of incapability are entitled to appeal this decision. If they chose to do so the appeals process contained in the Council's Disciplinary Procedures should be used.

## THE PROCESS – HOW TO DEAL WITH ISSUES OF INCAPABILITY

THIS WILL NORMALLY BE WHEN THERE IS AN UNDERLYING MEDICAL CONDITION



Note: the employee has the right to be represented at all stages of the above procedures.

## **7. DEALING WITH ISSUES OF CONDUCT**

Where there is an unacceptable level of short term absences this should be treated as a case of misconduct. In instances where the employee's attendance reaches an unacceptable level and where no underlying medical condition is identified this should be addressed through the Council's Disciplinary Procedures. Only in exceptional circumstances will disciplinary procedures not be invoked, if, following 3 periods of absence in any rolling year there has been no improvement. When dealing with repeated short-term absence, managers must:

### **1. Review the attendance record and the reasons for absence in a fair and consistent manner:**

Managers should use the return to work discussion and attendance review meetings to discuss the nature of the employee's illness and explore any patterns. This may highlight any underlying medical conditions although proper medical advice should be sought before a decision is made.

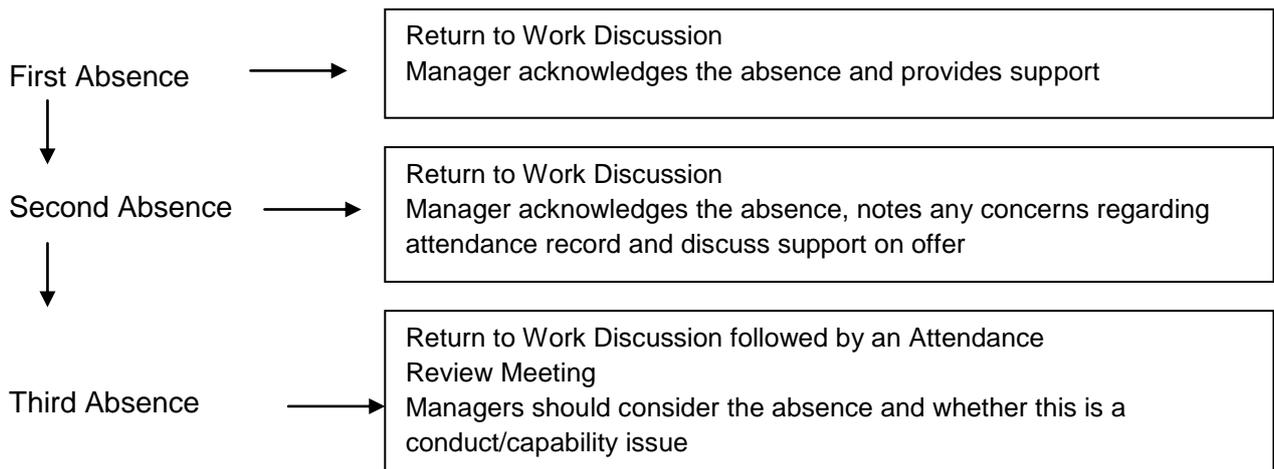
### **2. Encourage the employee to discuss any issues:**

Decisions must be based on the facts of the case. To ensure that all of the facts are available employees should be made to feel comfortable in being able to talk about any issues related to their absences. Where appropriate an alternative line manager may be required to have this discussion.

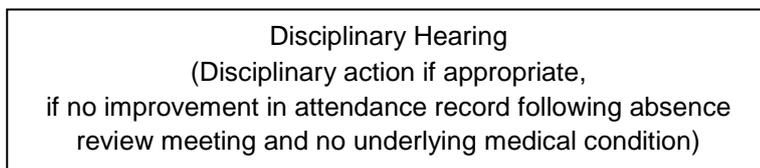
### **3. Appropriate warnings of dismissal if things don't improve:**

If there is no improvement in the attendance record, no underlying medical condition and no reason to assume that an employee's attendance will improve, this should be progressed via the disciplinary procedures. However, where it is clear that there is an underlying medical condition for which there is unlikely to be any improvement, the incapability procedures should be used.

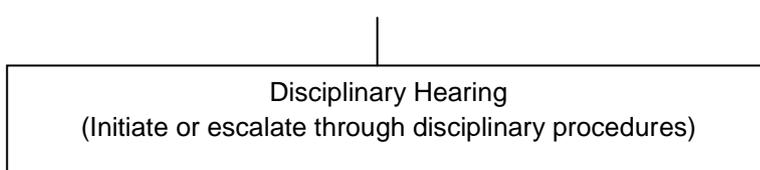
## THE PROCESS - HOW TO DEAL WITH ISSUES OF CONDUCT



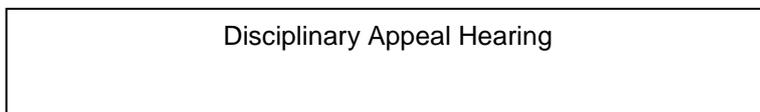
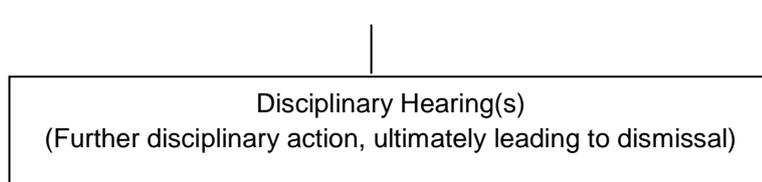
### DISCIPLINARY HEARING



### REVIEW – CONTINUING ABSENCES RELATED TO CONDUCT



### REVIEW – CONTINUING ABSENCES RELATED TO CONDUCT



Note: These stages are governed by the requirements of the Council's disciplinary procedures.

## 8. REDEPLOYMENT

An employee may require to be redeployed in the following circumstances:

1. **The employee is suffering from a temporary medical condition/injury which will not permit them to undertake their main duties for the period of their recovery.**

In such circumstances the manager should consider any temporary restrictions or amendments to an employees duties and hours. If this is not appropriate then temporary redeployment must be considered.

2. **If an employee is considered permanently unfit to undertake their current duties but is not considered permanently unfit for work, ill health retirement is not appropriate.**

In such circumstances the employee should be considered for redeployment. Prior to redeployment being considered, the manager must consider whether reasonable adjustments to the employee's existing post can be made to allow the employee to remain in that post.

In considering redeployment opportunities, a Skills Profile [ABS/FORM/5] must be completed in conjunction with the employee and considered in line with the Councils Managing Change Policy.

The Skills Profile details the employee's skills and abilities as well as any identified limitations. The profile should not be limited to work based skills but should also include skills/aptitudes from activities outwith work. A copy of the Skills Profile is contained within *Appendix 3*.

Throughout this process the manager must keep in contact with the Employee and Customer Services team who will coordinate redeployment. In the first instance redeployment within the particular service area will be sought and only if that is not possible will redeployment into another service be explored.

## 9. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

What is "reasonable" depends on how effective the adaptation would be in overcoming any disadvantage faced by the employee, how practicable it is and how reasonable the cost of providing the adjustment would be. All of these factors should be considered.

Reasonable adjustments could involve:

- Adjustment of the workload/duties e.g. by making alternative arrangements when an employee cannot easily use a telephone
- Working as part of a team rather than as a lone worker
- Not being required to drive/travel or arrange alternative means of transport
- Altering working hours
- Adjust/limit/remove shift workings
- Moving an employee to a more accessible location or arranging home working

- Aids and Adaptations to the working environment/equipment used. e.g. by installing a stair lift, ramp or automatic doors or providing adapted equipment such as large screen monitor or adapted key board
- Supporting an employee by providing specialised training.

Where an employee has a medical condition which requires surgery or for which she/he is undergoing or awaiting treatment a reasonable adjustment could be recognition that the employee's absence level may be higher than normal during that particular period.

## 10. ILL-HEALTH RETIREMENT

As part of the discussions/meetings with employees, consideration should be given to the option of ill health retirement where:

1. The employee meets the criteria for qualifying for ill health retirement
2. Every other option for a return to work has been considered.

### 10.1. ILL-HEALTH RETIREMENT CRITERIA

The Scottish Public Pensions Scheme provide for a range of approaches to ill-health retirement, each having a separate pensions benefits package. To qualify for ill health retirement the Scottish Public Pensions Agency must be satisfied that the teacher is **permanently** incapable of teaching.

There are two levels of permanent ill-health benefits payable:

- Partial Incapacity Benefit (PIB) - where a teacher becomes incapable of teaching but can undertake other employment
- Total Incapacity Benefit (TIB) - where a teacher satisfies the criteria of Partial Incapacity Benefit and the teacher's ability to carry out any work is impaired by more than 90% and is likely to be so on a permanent basis.

The Scottish Public Pensions Scheme regulations state that all applications for ill health retirement must be made through the teacher's employer.

Medical information must be provided to support the teacher's application. The information can be provided by the Occupational Health Adviser, if they are familiar with the teacher's case or, if not or the teacher prefers, the information can be provided by the teacher's GP. It should be noted however, that GPs or Specialists may charge for this service.

The Scottish Public Pensions Agency advise that applications for ill health retirement can take up to 4 months to process.

Further details of the Scheme can be found at [www.sppa.gov.uk](http://www.sppa.gov.uk). Also, teachers are encouraged to contact their Trade Union representative for further advice.

## **11. INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS / VIOLENT INCIDENTS**

The Framework for Maximising Attendance at Work aims to be proactive by tackling issues before they become problems and demonstrating an ongoing concern for employee's health and wellbeing. Where any absence from work is as a result of an industrial injury or workplace ill health, the manager must ensure that the terms of the Health and Safety policy and appropriate accident reporting procedures are followed.

In order to limit or prevent accidents/injury it is essential that the workplace/activities is subject to Risk Assessment. Where an employee has suffered an industrial injury or there is the possibility of workplace ill health, Managers should seek advice from the Occupational Health and Safety Team.

Where a teacher is absent from work as a result of sustaining an injury due to a work related accident, or as a victim of a violent crime in the workplace, the employee will be entitled to a separate allowance which will not be counted towards reckonable service for sickness allowance. Such accidents or incidents must be recorded in the school accident book and in Internal incident form must be placed in the teacher's personnel file. Further details on this can be provided by HR. A separate agreement is available on the Wire relating to the reporting of Violence and Aggression Against School Staff. (JNCT 2.6)

## **12. REHABILITATION PLAN**

A rehabilitation plan does not need to be elaborate. Its purpose is to set out the action(s) and target(s) to be achieved by both the manager and the employee to enable an employee to successfully return to work after a lengthy absence.

The Rehabilitation Plan would be produced as part of the ongoing contact between the employee and their manager whilst they were absent and may include input from HR and TU where appropriate. It should concentrate on the steps to be taken to working towards a return to work and might include:

- Arrangements leading up to the employees return e.g. a visit to the office or meeting colleagues informally for an update on work related developments.
- Arrangements for a return to work e.g. a work update/briefing session by the Manager.
- Employees returning from a lengthy period of absence should be invited to participate in the Corporate Welcome event.
- Post return monitoring to ensure employee is settling into work e.g. a meeting at the end of the first day and the end of the first week and so on, as appropriate to ensure any concerns are resolved.

## **13. MEDICAL EXAMINATION**

The Council has an Occupational Health Adviser who is available to provide occupational health advice and, where appropriate, will medically examine employees. Referrals to occupational health should be processed via the relevant HR section using form ABS/FORM/1.

Employees should only be referred for medical examination where:

- The employee has been absent and the manager wants to ask Occupational Health Adviser if the employee is fit to undertake a specific range of duties; and/or
- The employee has requested ill health retiral; and/or
- The manager is considering disciplinary action and the employee reports continuing underlying health problems.

Employees should not be referred for a medical examination without careful consideration of what would be gained by doing so. Where there is any uncertainty HR will forward details of the case to the Occupational Health Adviser who will determine whether or not a medical examination would be beneficial.

If a medical examination is required the manager should inform the employee and the reasons for the decision. The employee should be notified in writing that the referral is being made [ABS/LET/5].

To process a request for a medical examination the Request for Medical Exam form [ABS/FORM/6] should be completed via HR and forwarded to OHU. The Medical Consent Form will be completed by OHU when the employee attends for their examination. You should arrange to meet with the employee following receipt of the Medical Advisers report [ABS/LET/1] and confirm the outcome of the discussion in writing outlining all key points discussed and any actions/targets agreed [ABS/LET/6].

Under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988, employees have a right to access the information provided by their G.P. Details are provided in the guidance note which accompanies the Medical Consent form.

If the employee is unwilling to sign the medical consent form, they should be advised they will still be required to attend the Council Medical Adviser for a Medical Examination and a decision will be taken regarding employment based on the information available to the Manager.

After the medical examination a report from the Council's Medical Adviser will be prepared. In line with general medical Council guidance employees have the right to view the medical report before it is issued. Other than factual inaccuracies employees are not permitted to make changes to the report. This part of the process will take no more than 5 days following which the report will be issued to the Employee and Customer Services section who will forward to the relevant manager. The manager should consider the contents of the report including any follow-up action and thereafter arrange an Attendance Review Meeting with the employee to discuss using Attendance Review Meeting following Medical examination [ABS/LET/6].

#### **14. UNPAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

In some instances Managers will have to deal with employees who during the course of their absence have exhausted their sickness allowance.

In such circumstances the employee must submit a written application requesting unpaid leave of absence along with a letter of support from their GP which must indicate a likely return to work date.

The manager in conjunction with Employee and Customer Services will consider the request and advise the employee in writing of the decision.

Unpaid leave of absence will normally be granted for a period of no more than 13 weeks and a review must be made prior to the expiry of the 13 week period. At this stage a further application for 13 weeks unpaid leave of absence can be made. Again the manager in conjunction with Employee and Customer Services will consider the request and advise the employee in writing of the decision. Only in exceptional circumstances will unpaid leave of absence extend beyond 26 weeks and this would be considered by the Head of Service.

## **15. SUPPORT MECHANISMS FOR EMPLOYEES**

More information on the following support mechanisms can be obtained from HR, Occupational Health and Health and Safety:

- Occupational Health Services
- Physiotherapy
- Counselling Services
- HR Support Officer
- Flexible Working Initiatives
- Alternative Therapies

**STANDARD DOCUMENTATION**

Throughout the Framework for Maximising Attendance at Work various standard forms and letters are referred to.

These are for guidance only and may be adapted to suit particular circumstances. In these situations managers should seek guidance from HR.

**FORMS**

ABS/FORM/1	Referral to Occupational Health
ABS/FORM/2	Return to Work Interview
ABS/FORM/3	Absence Reporting Form
ABS/FORM/4	Absence Report
ABS/FORM/5	Skills Profile

**LETTERS**

ABS/LET/1	Attendance Review Meeting Invite
ABS/LET/2	Attendance Review Meeting Invite – Subsequent Absences
ABS/LET/3	Attendance Review Meeting Outcome/Actions Agreed
ABS/LET/4	Attendance Review Meeting Outcome – Long Term Absence
ABS/LET/5	Notification of Medical Examination
ABS/LET/6	Attendance Review Meeting Invite – following Medical Examination
ABS/LET/7	Invite to Occupational Health

**RELEVANT POLICY & GUIDANCE**

ABS/GUIDE/1	Return to Work Interview - Guidance
ABS/GUIDE/2	Sample 'Statement of Fitness for Work'
ABS/GUIDE/3	Classifications of Absence



## REFERRAL TO OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

**To be completed by HR**

Date received by Occupational Health

--

**Employee Details:**

Employee Name	
DOB	
Employee Number	
Home Telephone	
Mobile Telephone	
Work Telephone	
Address	

**Post Details:**

Job Title	
Section	
Cost Centre/Account Codes (in case GP/Specialist report requested)	
Location of Post	
Type of Post	
Permanent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contractor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full Time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part Time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job Share	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sessional	<input type="checkbox"/>
Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Casual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please tick all above which apply	

**Please describe below the principal duties of the post:**

--

**Please tick the reason for referral:**

Recurrent short term absence – non recurrent cause	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recurrent short term absence – single cause	<input type="checkbox"/>
Long term sickness absence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health conditions which may be exacerbated by occupational exposure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Investigation of workplace injury/illness	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identify limitations of ability to undertake work tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns regarding change in behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Supplementary job task profile of exposure levels**

(Please tick as appropriate: information gained from employee line manager)

Rate of exposure (working day)	Never 0%	Rarely 30%	Frequently Up to 60%	Constantly Over 60%
Fork lift truck	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lone working	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outside work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extremes of temperature	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shift/night work/on-call duties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supervision of staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer/DSE work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-DSE desk work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Noise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exposure to hazardous substances (solvents/liquids etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Specify:				
Inhalation exposure to hazardous substances (solvents/liquids etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specify:				
Other hazards – hazardous dirty waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specify:				
<b>Rate of exposure (working day)</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Constantly</b>
	<b>0%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>Up to 60%</b>	<b>Over 60%</b>
Ionising radiation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lasers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manual handling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crawling/crouching/kneeling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sitting/standing/stopping/twisting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reaching above shoulder height	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climbing heights – steps ladders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working at heights – scaffold/roof work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)				

**Please describe the nature of the problem which has initiated referral to OH:**

--

**Please tick all questions which you wish answered by OH:**

1. Is the employee fit for work?	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When will the employee become fit to work?	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Is the employee likely to have further absences due to this illness	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Is the medical problem likely to be caused or made worse by current work activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Is the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) likely to apply?	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. What support, if any, should be provided to aid the employee back to work	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Is there an underlying medical condition, which could account for these absences?	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Does the employee meet the criteria for ill health retiral?	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Other questions (please be as specific as possible)	<input type="checkbox"/>

**HR contact details**

Name	
Department	
Phone number:	
Referring HR contact signature	
Date of referral	

## Referral Process Checklist

The referring manager/HR have discussed the reason for the OH referral with the employee	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will provide the employee with a copy of this form at his/her request	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have completed all relevant sections within this referral form, specifying the particular question which I require OH to answer	<input type="checkbox"/>
The employee has been made aware that a report answering these questions will be returned to the referring person in HR a copy of which will be provided to the employee at his/her request	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have attached the employee's past sickness absence details (where applicable/available) for the past year	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have provided the Cost Centre/Account Codes for any recharging	<input type="checkbox"/>

**RETURN TO WORK INTERVIEW FORM**  
[to be completed by the Line Manager]

**EMPLOYEE:**

Name:		NI Number	
Employee Number:		Job Title:	
Directorate:		Service:	

**PREVIOUS ABSENCE RECORD – LAST 12 MONTHS:**

Dates of previous absence	Reason for absence	Total days absent

**CURRENT ABSENCE DETAILS:**

First day of absence	
Last day of absence	
Return to work date	
Reason for absence & classification (refer to ABS/GUIDE/3)	
Return to work interview date	

**RETURN TO WORK DISCUSSION / ACTION:**

Has the employee been updated on any issues that occurred during his/her absence?	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
Is any re-training required (for long term absences)?				
Are there any issues the employee wishes to raise following their recent absence?				
Has the trigger point for further action been reached i.e. Attendance Review Meeting (3 periods of sickness absence in rolling 12 months). If so has the employee been made aware of this?	Detail:			
Is there any further action/advice required:	<input type="checkbox"/> OHU Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Physiotherapy Reasonable Adjustments: <input type="checkbox"/> Phased return <input type="checkbox"/> Altered hours <input type="checkbox"/> Amended duties <input type="checkbox"/> Workplace Adaptations  Other:			

Signed (Employee): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed (Manager/Supervisor): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ABSENCE REPORTING FORM**

[to be completed by the Line Manager upon initial contact from employee who is reporting unfit for work. Copy held with Return to Work paperwork]

**EMPLOYEE:**

Name:		NI Number	
Employee number:		Job title:	
Directorate:		Service:	

**ABSENCE DETAIL:**

Notification day:		Notification date:	
Notification time:		Received by:	
Did employee make contact in person:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
If not who made contact and why:			

**QUESTIONS TO ASK:**

1.	Is this your first day of illness?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If not note first day:
2.	What is the reason for your absence? (refer to ABS/GUIDE/3)	
3.	Any action required:	<input type="checkbox"/> OHU Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Physiotherapy Reasonable Adjustments: <input type="checkbox"/> Phased return <input type="checkbox"/> Altered hours <input type="checkbox"/> Amended duties <input type="checkbox"/> Workplace Adaptations  Other:
4.	How long do you think you will be absent?	
5.	Are you arranging to see your G.P.?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
6.	If you are unable to return to work by _____ (day 4 of absence) you must contact me again no later than _____ (specify time, normally within 1 hour of shift start time)	
7.	Do you have any outstanding work/deadlines/meetings that require cover/action while you are absent?	
8.	Is there anything else we need to know?	
9.	Is there any additional support/advice I can give to help?	

Signed (Manager/Supervisor): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**ABSENCE REPORT**

**PART 1 TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYEE ON RETURN TO WORK**

*Note: For absences of 4-7 calendar days, this form requires to be submitted. Where absence continues beyond 7 calendar days, this form requires to be submitted to cover days 1-7, together with a Statement of Fitness for Work (MED3 04/10)*

**EMPLOYMENT**

Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Employee number: \_\_\_\_\_

**EMPLOYEE DETAILS**

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_  
 First name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 NI number: \_\_\_\_\_

**PERIOD OF ABSENCE**

First day: Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Last day: Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Leave blank if absence is continuing beyond 7 calendar days, and this form is submitted with a Statement of Fitness for Work (MED3 04/10)

**ABSENCE REASON:**

Give details of the reason for your absence:  
 (Note: 'illness', 'unwell', 'sick' or 'pregnant' are not sufficient)

If injured at work, give date and details of the accident, including the date of entry in the Accident Book or Register:

Details: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of accident: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date entered in Accident Book \_\_\_\_\_

If you have visited your GP or a hospital during your absence, please state:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Doctor's name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Advice: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**EMPLOYEE DECLARATION**

I declare that the above statement is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that to give false or misleading information can result in disciplinary action, which may amount to dismissal.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PART 2 TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISOR**

I declare that I have discussed the above with the employee.

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Previous absence report date**

From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

This form is used to establish reasons for absence and a record of attendance. It will be securely stored and only authorised personnel will have access to it.

**REDEPLOYMENT – SKILLS PROFILE**

This information will be used to assist us in the process of redeploying you. Please be assured that we will endeavour to redeploy you to a suitable post and that the information will be treated confidentially. Some posts require us to conduct a Disclosure Scotland Check. No appointments will be made until this check has been completed.

To allow you to be considered for all suitable opportunities please ensure the Skills Profile is completed fully. Should you require any assistance please contact HR.

<b>CURRENT DETAILS:</b>	
<b>NAME</b>	
<b>ADDRESS</b>	
<b>CONTACT NUMBERS:</b>	
<b>WORK</b>	
<b>HOME</b>	
<b>DATE OF BIRTH</b>	
<b>NI NUMBER</b>	
<b>EMPLOYEE NUMBER</b>	
<b>START DATE</b>	
<b>MEMBER OF PENSION SCHEME</b>	*YES / NO
<b>JOB TITLE</b>	
<b>DIRECTORATE/SERVICE</b>	
<b>LOCATION</b>	
<b>CURRENT HOURS</b>	Hours:  * Full Time / Part Time / Job Share
<b>LEVEL/GRADE/SCP</b>	
<b>SALARY</b>	

<b>LINE MANAGER</b>	
<b>CURRENT DUTIES</b> (Attach Job Description if available)	
<b>QUALIFICATIONS</b>	
<b>WORK EXPERIENCE –</b> Including experience gained prior to joining South Ayrshire Council and any interests outwith work	
<b>REDEPLOYMENT PREFERENCES</b>	
<b>PREFERRED TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT</b>  <b>Include client groups - elderly, children, etc).</b> .          <b>What re-training would you require and will you undertake?</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> :          2 <sup>nd</sup> :          3 <sup>rd</sup> :

<b>PREFERRED WORK LOCATION</b>	
<b>PREFERRED WORKING HOURS</b>	
<b>LIMITATIONS:</b>  Are there any limitations to your physical ability to carry out certain tasks?	
<b>WOULD YOU REQUIRE INTERVIEW TRAINING?</b>	*YES/ NO
<b>ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION TO SUPPORT YOUR SKILLS PROFILE</b>	

**\*Please delete as appropriate**

I confirm that the information contained in this Skills Profile is, to my knowledge, correct.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

For Office Use Only

<b>Date received</b>	
<b>Received By</b>	

**This form is used to provide information as to your suitability to be re-deployed and will be stored securely and can only be accessed by those involved in the selection process.**

XXXXXX

**Executive Director: XXXXXX**

Location: xxxxxxx  
LP-32 AYR  
Tel: 01292 XXXXXX Fax: 01292 XXXXXX  
Email: XXXXXXXX  
Our Ref: XX/XXX Your Ref:  
Date: XXXX  
If phoning or calling ask for XXXXXX

NAME  
ADDRESS 1  
ADDRESS 2  
ADDRESS 3  
POSTCODE

Dear NAME

**ATTENDANCE REVIEW MEETING**

As a result of your absence I would ask you to attend a meeting with myself at TIME on DATE.

The reason for this is to discuss your absence record in accordance with the Councils Framework for Maximising Attendance at Work and to ensure you receive any support and assistance available should you require it.

Should the date, time or venue be unsuitable please do not hesitate to contact NAME to allow alternative arrangements to be made.

You may, if you wish, be accompanied by a friend, colleague or trade union representative.

Yours sincerely

NAME  
**DESIGNATION**

**XXXXXX****Executive Director: XXXXXX**

Location: xxxxxxx  
LP-32 AYR  
Tel: 01292 XXXXXX Fax: 01292 XXXXXX  
Email: XXXXXXXX  
Our Ref: XX/XXX Your Ref:  
Date: XXXX  
If phoning or calling ask for XXXXXX

NAME  
ADDRESS 1  
ADDRESS 2  
ADDRESS 3  
POSTCODE

Dear NAME

**ATTENDANCE REVIEW MEETING**

I refer to our attendance review meeting held on DATE at which we discussed and agreed XXXX (detail what was agreed). I note that you have since been absent on DATE/remain absent from work and as a result I would ask you to attend a review meeting with me at TIME on DATE.

\* The reason for this meeting is to discuss your attendance level since the last attendance review meeting and to ensure you have any support and assistance required to improve this.

\*\* The reason for this meeting is to discuss your continuing absence since the last attendance review meeting and to ensure you have all the support and assistance required to improve this.

Should the date, time or venue be unsuitable please do not hesitate to contact NAME to allow alternative arrangements to be made.

You may, if you wish, be accompanied by a friend, colleague or trade union representative.

Yours sincerely

NAME  
**DESIGNATION**

\* Delete/amend as appropriate

XXXXXX

**Executive Director: XXXXXX**

Location: xxxxxxx  
LP-32 AYR  
Tel: 01292 XXXXXX Fax: 01292 XXXXXX  
Email: XXXXXXXX  
Our Ref: XX/XXX Your Ref:  
Date: XXXX  
If phoning or calling ask for XXXXXX

NAME  
ADDRESS 1  
ADDRESS 2  
ADDRESS 3  
POSTCODE

Dear NAME

**ATTENANCE REVIEW MEETING OUTCOME**

I am writing following our meeting which took place on DATE at which you were accompanied by NAME.

At our meeting we discussed your attendance levels at work / XXXXX (detail what was discussed).

We agreed that (INSERT BRIEF SUMMARY OF AGREED TARGETS/EXPECTATIONS) and that a formal review of your attendance from DATE until DATE will take place. The findings of this review will be discussed with yourself at your next Attendance Review Meeting which has been scheduled for TIME / DATE.

However should you be absent throughout the review period this meeting may be held earlier.

I should remind you that as discussed, if your attendance does not improve over this review period, then disciplinary action may be initiated.

Yours sincerely

NAME  
**DESIGNATION**

XXXXXX

**Executive Director: XXXXXX**

Location: xxxxxxx  
LP-32 AYR  
Tel: 01292 XXXXXX Fax: 01292 XXXXXX  
Email: XXXXXXXX  
Our Ref: XX/XXX Your Ref:  
Date: XXXX  
If phoning or calling ask for XXXXXX

NAME  
ADDRESS 1  
ADDRESS 2  
ADDRESS 3  
POSTCODE

Dear NAME

**ATTENDANCE REVIEW MEETING OUTCOME**

I am writing following our meeting which took place on DATE at which you were accompanied by NAME. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss your current period of absence.

At our meeting we discussed XXXX (insert details on options discussed and considered e.g. flexible return to work, reasonable adjustments, redeployment, ill-health retiral, termination on the grounds of incapability etc).

It was agreed that (details of agreed action). In the meantime I will keep in touch in order to ensure you receive any further assistance/information that you require.

In the meantime, should you require further information please do not hesitate to contact NAME on TELEPHONE NUMBER.

Yours sincerely

NAME  
**DESIGNATION**

**XXXXXX****Executive Director: XXXXXX**

Location: xxxxxxx  
LP-32 AYR  
Tel: 01292 XXXXXX Fax: 01292 XXXXXX  
Email: XXXXXXXX  
Our Ref: XX/XXX Your Ref:  
Date: XXXX  
If phoning or calling ask for XXXXXX

NAME  
ADDRESS 1  
ADDRESS 2  
ADDRESS 3  
POSTCODE

Dear NAME

**NOTIFICATION OF MEDICAL EXAMINATION**

As a result of your absence level I have requested via Employee and Customer Services to request that the Council's Occupational Health Department arrange for you to attend a medical examination.

The arrangements for the medical examination will be sent directly to you from Occupational Health and I would ask you to contact them directly if these arrangements are unsuitable.

This is an important step in ensuring the Council provide the appropriate level of support to you throughout your period of absence and I would reiterate that it is a requirement for you to attend this appointment.

I will contact you once I have received the medical report in order that arrangements can be made to discuss the report and its recommendations as appropriate.

In the meantime, should you wish to discuss this further please do not hesitate to contact NAME on TELEPHONE NUMBER.

Yours sincerely

NAME  
**DESIGNATION**

XXXXXX

**Executive Director: XXXXXX**

Location: xxxxxxx

LP-32 AYR

Tel: 01292 XXXXXX

Fax: 01292 XXXXXX

Email: XXXXXXXX

Our Ref: XX/XXX

Your Ref:

Date: XXXX

If phoning or calling ask for XXXXXX

NAME

ADDRESS 1

ADDRESS 2

ADDRESS 3

POSTCODE

Dear NAME

**ATTENDANCE REVIEW MEETING FOLLOWING MEDICAL EXAMINATION**

I refer to our attendance review meeting held on DATE and following your medical examination which took place on DATE. I can confirm that I have received a copy of the report and the Medical Advisor has recommended (details of the recommendations/conclusions from the Medical Advisors report).

\* In order to facilitate an early return to work we discussed the possibility of reasonable adjustments and agreed XXXXXXXXXXXX.

\*\* The following improvement measures/actions were agreed (brief summary of what measures/actions were agreed) and regular review meetings to monitor progress will be arranged.

\*\*\* Should you fail to return to work before DATE then the Council may have to consider terminating your employment on the grounds of incapability due to ill health.

In the meantime, should you wish to discuss this further please do not hesitate to contact NAME on TELEPHONE.

Yours sincerely

NAME

**DESIGNATION**

\* Delete/amend as appropriate

Private & Confidential

NAME  
ADDRESS

**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT APPOINTMENT**

Dear NAME

Following a referral from Employee and Customer Services (HR) an appointment has been arranged for you to attend our department to see Occupational Health Nurse Advisor XXXXX on:

DATE:	
TIME:	
ADDRESS:	12 Bath Place, Ayr, KA7 1DP
TELEPHONE/FAX:	01292 612 611
OFFICE HOURS:	Monday – Thursday 9.00am – 5.00pm Friday 9.00am – 4.00pm

All information will be treated in strictest confidence and if you are taking any medications at present please bring these with you.

The aim of the referral is to understand better any health issues you may have which are impacting your ability to do your job. Without the benefit of guidance from Occupational Health your managers can only provide support based on the information available to them. It is therefore in your interests to attend the above appointment.

**If for any reason you are unable to attend, please inform us immediately and an alternative appointment can be arranged and the appointment to be re-allocated to someone else.**

Please inform your immediate supervisor that you have this appointment on receipt of this letter.

Yours sincerely

NAME  
**DESIGNATION** [OHU]

## RETURN TO WORK INTERVIEW GUIDANCE

As outlined in Appendix 1, it is recommended that a return to work discussion is undertaken when an employee returns from a period of sickness absence. The following structure may be of benefit to line managers prior to conducting the interview:

- **R** – Remember to prepare for each interview. Line managers should ensure interviews are held in private without interruption (where possible). Line managers should ensure they have all the relevant details in front of them prior to commencing the interview.
- **E** – Ensure the Framework for Maximising Attendance at Work is applied consistently. All interviews should be carried out with the same balance of sensitivity to individual circumstances whilst adhering to the absence guidelines. Managers should demonstrate their concern for the employees well-being and inform them that their contribution was missed during their period of absence.
- **T** – Two-way dialogue throughout the interview maintains a positive line of communication between the line manager and the employee. This provides employees with an opportunity to discuss any health or other concerns they have in private. Line managers should ask open-ended questions that need answering with a bit more than ‘yes’ or ‘no’.
- **U** – Use professional advice. Managers should seek relevant guidance from appropriate sources which may be of assistance to the employee i.e. HR, OHU etc.
- **R** – Record and document relevant detail from the interview on the employees attendance record. Line Managers must ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). Details of an employees health are categorised as ‘sensitive personal data’ under the DPA.
- **N** – Notify relevant personnel of any issues or agreed actions/outcomes. Line managers should follow up on any agreed actions and meet with the employee to discuss if necessary.

Given that a proportion of absences may be related to stress related conditions it may be appropriate to ask questions relevant to this topic during the return to work interview. In this respect the Health & Safety Executive have developed the Management Standards approach designed to assist in reducing work related stress. The standards cover 6 key areas of work that, if not properly managed, can be associated with poor health and well-being, lower productivity and increased sickness absence. Therefore, it may be useful to construct a Return to Work Interview using the standards as a guide. For further guidance you should refer to HR.

- **Demands:** workload, work patterns and the work environment
- **Control:** how much say people have in the way they do their work
- **Support:** encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the council, line management and colleagues
- **Relationships:** promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
- **Role:** whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles
- **Change:** how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation.

**SAMPLE 'STATEMENT OF FITNESS FOR WORK'**

**Statement of Fitness for Work  
For social security or Statutory Sick Pay**

Patient's name

I assessed your case on:

and, because of the following condition(s):

I advise you that:  you are not fit for work.  
 you may be fit for work taking account of the following advice:

If available, and with your employer's agreement, you may benefit from:

- a phased return to work
- amended duties
- altered hours
- workplace adaptations

Comments, including functional effects of your condition(s):

Sample

This will be the case for

or from  to

I will/will not need to assess your fitness for work again at the end of this period.  
*(Please delete as applicable)*

Doctor's signature

Date of statement

Doctor's address

Med 3 04/10

## CLASSIFICATIONS OF ABSENCE

(The list of examples provided is not exhaustive)

### 1. Gastrointestinal Problems

Sickness and diarrhoea, IBS, gastric or bowel disease, ulcers, dyspepsia, hiatus hernia, Crohn's disease, cirrhosis, liver failure, obesity, alcoholism and drug abuse

### 2. Cardiovascular / Blood

Hepatitis, anaemia, neutropenia, heart disease of any kind, angina, circulation, vascular disease, arteriosclerosis, hypertension, varicose veins, cerebrovascular accident and stroke

### 3. Psychological

Anxiety, depression, nervous debility, post natal depression, chronic fatigue syndrome, traumatic stress disorder, stress reactions, schizophrenia and insomnia

### 4. Musculoskeletal

Broken bones, arthritis, neck and back pain or strain, sciatica, prolapsed intervertebral disk, degeneration of spine, osteoporosis, trauma, spondylolithesis, spondylitis and spondylosis

### 5. Respiratory

Viruses, colds, flu, bronchitis, asthma, glandular fever and chronic obstructive airways disease

### 6. Tumours / Cancer

Of any kind

### 7. Neurological / Endocrine

Migraines, headaches, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, cerebal palsy, neuralgia, diabetes, thyroid disease and pancreatitis.

### 8. Genitourinary / Gynaecological

Hysterectomy, pelvic floor repair, miscarriage, renal disease, incontinence, cystitis, prostate disease

### 9. Skin

Dermatitis, eczema and psoriasis

### 10. Eye/Ear/Nose/Throat/Mouth

Deafness, ear infections Meniere's disease, rhinitis, nasal polyps, visual impairment, eye infections, cataract, glaucoma

### 11. Infectious Disease

Measles, meningitis, mumps, chicken pox and rubella

### 12. Hospitalisation / Surgical & Post Op

Of any kind

## A FRAMEWORK FOR MAXIMISING ATTENDANCE AT WORK

### TRIGGER POINTS

#### TRIGGER 1

- Notification of first day of absence (Day 1 – 7)

#### TRIGGER 2

- On receipt of 'Statement of Fitness for Work (Day 8 – 28)

#### TRIGGER 3

- Absence reaches 4 weeks (Day 29+)

#### TRIGGER 4

- Long term continuous absence

#### TRIGGER 5

- Return to work interview to take place face to face within 24 hours of employee returning to work

**TRIGGER 1 – NOTIFICATION ON FIRST DAY OF ABSENCE (DAY 1 – 7)**

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY	LINE MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY	OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH RESPONSIBILITY	HUMAN RESOURCES ADVISER/OFFICER OR SENIOR MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY
<p>Phone your Manager in person where possible. Ensure you are aware of your Managers telephone number. Information to be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reason for absence</li> <li>Anticipated duration of absence</li> <li>Pending work to be covered</li> <li>Anticipated return to work date if known</li> </ul> <p>If absent for more than 3 calendar days you should contact your Manager on the 4<sup>th</sup> calendar day to advise whether absence will continue beyond 7 calendar days.</p>	<p>Contact the employee as soon as possible if he/she does not make contact with you or another Supervisor and has not reported for their shift.</p> <p>Upon initial notification complete Absence Reporting Form [ABS/FORM/3].</p> <p>Consider referral to OHU [ABS/FORM/1] where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absence related to psychological condition</li> <li>Absence related to musculoskeletal condition</li> <li>Absence related to a work place injury</li> <li>Ongoing medical condition</li> </ul> <p>Completed OHU referral forwarded to HR contact for submission to OHU.</p> <p>The Line Manager must ensure that the attendance record card is fully updated.</p> <p>The Line Manager should review the employees attendance record/previous absence spells in last 12 months.</p> <p>After initial contact if the employee does not make contact on the 4<sup>th</sup> calendar day the Line Manager will contact the employee.</p>	<p>Referral received from Line Manager via HR in cases of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absence related to psychological condition</li> <li>Absence related to musculoskeletal condition</li> <li>Absence related to a work place injury</li> <li>Ongoing medical condition</li> </ul> <p>OHU to assess referral and sent appointment letter to employee.</p> <p>Advise the employee of the appropriate support mechanisms available i.e. Healthy Working Lives/Employee Well Being Programme</p> <p>Send copies of the assessment reports to HR Manager/Officer or other nominated employee advising of fitness to work, light duties, restrictions and prognosis</p>	<p>The Human Resources contact will provide the Line Manager with advice and guidance, as appropriate, particularly in relation to light, rehabilitative or redeployed duties.</p> <p>HR to review the OHU referral when received from the Line Manager and ensure all relevant areas covered, sign and forward to OHU for action.</p> <p>Make contact with employee where appropriate i.e. absence related to work place issues.</p>
<p align="center"><b>• IF THE EMPLOYEE RETURNS TO WORK AT ANY STAGE IN THE ABOVE PROCESS REFER TO RETURN TO WORK TRIGGER [5]</b></p>			

**TRIGGER 2 – ON RECEIPT OF A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE (DAY 8 – 28)**

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY	LINE MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY	OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH RESPONSIBILITY	HUMAN RESOURCES ADVISER/OFFICER OR SENIOR MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY
<p>See GP for 'Statement for Fitness to Work (Fit Note).</p> <p>Submit 'Fit Note' to Line Manager within 3 calendar days after the 8<sup>th</sup> calendar day of absence (i.e. must reach your Line Manager by the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> calendar day of absence).</p> <p>Continue to submit Statement of Fitness for Work to Line Manager until return to work. These should be dated to cover the entire absence period.</p> <p>Maintain regular contact with your Line Manager i.e. on a weekly basis on your progress and anticipated return to work date.</p>	<p>Maintain regular contact with the employee on a weekly basis.</p> <p>Ensure the employee is kept up to date regarding changes in the workplace, send out communications, pay slips etc.</p> <p>Advise the employee of the support mechanisms available.</p> <p>Continue to liaise with the HR contact.</p> <p>Refer to OHU via HR if required and not already considered.</p> <p>Liaise with OH Advisor if required.</p> <p>Ensure that attendance record card is kept updated with any changes/updates.</p>	<p>Action any previous OH referrals within this time period following notification of absence i.e. all employees to be seen within 2 weeks of referral.</p> <p>Arrange appointment and assess the employee upon receipt of OHU referral.</p> <p>Advise the employee of support mechanisms available.</p> <p>Send copies of assessment report to HR contact advising of fitness to work, light, rehabilitative duties, restriction, prognosis and any return to work date.</p> <p>Reassess employee as required or arrange alternative support i.e. physiotherapy, CBT, recommend stress risk assessment.</p>	<p>Continue to provide the Line Manager with support and guidance where appropriate.</p> <p>HR to review the OHU referral when received from the Line Manager and ensure all relevant areas covered, sign and forward to OHU for action.</p> <p>Liaise with OHU where relevant and update line manager.</p> <p>Make contact with employee where appropriate i.e. absence related to work place issues which was not previously apparent.</p>
<p align="center"><b>• IF THE EMPLOYEE RETURNS TO WORK AT ANY STAGE IN THE ABOVE PROCESS REFER TO RETURN TO WORK TRIGGER [5]</b></p>			

**TRIGGER 3 – ABSENCE REACHES 4 WEEKS – ATTENDANCE REVIEW MEETING (DAY 29+)**

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY	LINE MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY	OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH RESPONSIBILITY	HUMAN RESOURCES ADVISER/OFFICER OR SENIOR MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY
<p>Where an absence exceeds four weeks an Attendance Review Meeting will be held involving the employee, Line Manager, HR and employee representative.</p> <p>Employees are required to attend and should advise if the date is not suitable. ARM will be re-scheduled on one more occasion to a more suitable time and if the employee does not attend their absence will be reviewed in their absence and appropriate action taken.</p> <p>Continue to submit Statement of Fitness for Work to Line Manager until return to work. These should be dated to cover the entire absence period.</p> <p>Maintain regular contact with your Line Manager i.e. on a weekly basis on your progress and anticipated return to work date.</p>	<p>Schedule Attendance Review Meeting as soon as absence reaches 28 days and confirm the appointment, in writing, to the employee [ABS/LET/1].</p> <p>Prepare for ARM and update attendees in relation to absence record, contact made to date, any OHU referrals/progress and any likely return to work date if known.</p> <p>Maintain regular contact with employee on a weekly basis.</p> <p>Ensure the employee is aware of the support mechanisms which are available.</p> <p>Refer to OHU if not already done.</p> <p>Ensure the employee is kept up to date regarding changes in the workplace, send out communications, pay slips etc.</p> <p>Update attendance record that Attendance Review Meeting has taken place.</p>	<p>Arrange appointment and assess the employee upon receipt of OHU referral.</p> <p>Ascertain likely return to work date.</p> <p>Schedule further contact/sessions dependant on nature of employee case.</p> <p>Advise employee of support mechanisms available and put in place appropriate support for employee.</p> <p>Consider requirement for GP/Specialist report (consent form must be signed by the employee).</p> <p>Send copies of assessment report to HR contact advising of fitness to work, light, rehabilitative duties, restrictions, prognosis and any return to work date.</p>	<p>Attend Attendance Review Meeting if required.</p> <p>Provide support and guidance to Line Manager in preparing and conducting the meeting.</p> <p>Ensure that manager is aware of requirement to update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance record card</li> <li>• Employee in writing of discussion at Attendance Review Meeting [ABS/LET/4]</li> </ul> <p>Maintain regular contact with the employee where appropriate.</p> <p>Work with the Line Manager to arrange appropriate return to work plan taking cognisance of the 'fit-note' recommendations i.e.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phased return to work</li> <li>• Workplace adaptations</li> <li>• Amended duties</li> <li>• Altered hours of work</li> </ul>
<p align="center">• IF THE EMPLOYEE RETURNS TO WORK AT ANY STAGE IN THE ABOVE PROCESS REFER TO RETURN TO WORK TRIGGER [5]</p>			

### TRIGGER 4 – LONG TERM CONTINUOUS ABSENCE – 4 WEEKS OR MORE

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY	LINE MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY	OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH RESPONSIBILITY	HUMAN RESOURCES ADVISER/OFFICER OR SENIOR MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY
<p>Continue to submit Statement of Fitness for Work to Line Manager until to return to work. These should be continuous covering the entire absence period.</p> <p>Maintain regular contact with your Line Manager i.e. on a weekly basis on your progress and anticipated return to work date.</p> <p>Attend all early intervention mechanisms arranged i.e. OHU reviews, specialist appointments, attendance review meetings etc.</p>	<p>Maintain regular contact with the employee through formal Attendance Review Meetings.</p> <p>Depending on the circumstances relating to an employees absence it may be appropriate to consider alternative solutions.</p> <p>As part of the formal discussions/meetings with employees consideration should be given to ill-health retiral or incapability. The timescales will be dependent upon the facts of the particular situation.</p> <p>Line managers should seek continual guidance from HR.</p> <p>Refer to OHU via HR if not already actioned.</p>	<p>Arrange appointment and assess the employee upon receipt of OHU referral.</p> <p>Ascertain likely return to work date.</p> <p>Schedule further contact/sessions dependant on nature of employee case.</p> <p>Advise employee of support mechanisms available and put in place appropriate support for employee.</p> <p>Consider requirement for GP/Specialist report (consent form must be signed by the employee).</p> <p>Send copies of assessment report to HR contact advising of fitness to work, light, rehabilitative duties, restrictions, prognosis and any return to work date.</p>	<p>Attend Attendance Review Meeting if required.</p> <p>Provide support and guidance to Line Manager in preparing and conducting the meeting. In addition, provide guidance around the alternative solutions that managers must consider i.e. redeployment, reasonable adjustments, ill-health, incapability etc.</p> <p>Ensure that manager is aware of requirement to update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance record card</li> <li>• Employee in writing of discussion at Attendance Review Meeting [ABS/LET/4]</li> </ul> <p>Maintain regular contact with the employee where appropriate.</p> <p>Work with the Line Manager to arrange appropriate return to work plan taking cognisance of the 'fit-note' recommendations i.e.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phased return to work</li> <li>• Workplace adaptations</li> <li>• Amended duties</li> <li>• Altered hours of work</li> </ul>
<p><b>• IF THE EMPLOYEE RETURNS TO WORK AT ANY STAGE IN THE ABOVE PROCESS REFER TO RETURN TO WORK TRIGGER [5]</b></p>			

**TRIGGER 5 – RETURN TO WORK – TO BE COMPLETED WITHIN 24 HOURS OF EMPLOYEE RETURNING TO WORK**

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY	LINE MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY	OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH RESPONSIBILITY	HUMAN RESOURCES ADVISER/OFFICER OR SENIOR MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY
<p>Complete Sickness Report [ABS/FORM/4].</p> <p>Attend return to work interview and sign return to work form [ABS/FORM/2].</p> <p>Provide any outstanding Fit Notes ensuring the full period of absence is covered continuously.</p> <p>If you have been absent 3 or more times in the previous 12 months your Line Manager will arrange for an Attendance Review Meeting. A review period will be considered to allow a formal review of your attendance over a given period of time.</p> <p>If there is no improvement in your attendance record throughout a review period, or if there is continuing cause for concern, then disciplinary action may be initiated.</p>	<p>Conduct return to work interview within 24 hours of employee returning.</p> <p>Ensure that the Return to Work Interview form is completed and signed [ABS/FORM/2 and ABS/GUIDE/1].</p> <p>Take cognisance of any guidance on the 'Fit Note' – seek support from HR if required.</p> <p>Ensure individual is up to date with all relevant changes which may have occurred during absence i.e. Team Briefings, Council updates etc.</p> <p>If 3 or more absences in 12 months period arrange for Attendance Review Meeting to take place.</p> <p>Where the employees attendance reaches an unacceptable level and where no underlying medical condition is identified this should be addressed through the council's Disciplinary Policy. [See <i>Appendix 1 – section 7</i>]</p>	<p>If the employee does not require further assessment/review by OHU the involvement of OHU is complete.</p> <p>For all other cases OHU should liaise with the relevant HR Officer and line manager providing advice in relation to reasonable adjustments, phased return etc.</p> <p>Where an individual does require reasonable adjustments [taking cognisance of the fit note recommendations] OHU should provide the HR Officer and line manager with regular updates until the employee is fit to return to the full duties of their post.</p>	<p>The HR Officer should identify appropriate reasonable adjustments, in conjunction with the Line Manager and complete a formal Rehabilitative Plan.</p> <p>Where an employee has had 3 or more spells of absence in a 12 month period the Line Manager should be guided in completing an Attendance Review Meeting.</p> <p>Where the employees attendance reaches an unacceptable level and where no underlying medical condition is identified this should be addressed through the Council's Disciplinary Procedures.</p> <p>Where there is no requirement for OHU assessment or Attendance Review Meeting the role of HR is complete.</p>