# 

# Fit Notes – Guidance

## What is a ‘Fit Note’

This is to enable people with a medical condition to return to work with suitable support from their employer rather than simply being signed off sick for an extensive period when, in some cases, staff can continue to work as they recover from their condition.

The ‘sick note’ or doctor’s medical certificate/statement replaced by the ‘Statement of Fitness for Work’ ('fit note') with effect from 6 April 2010.

[Sample of fit note](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/med3-fitnote-sample.pdf)

The GP will be able to make suggestions on the fit note that could facilitate the person returning to work rather than issuing a certificate for sickness absence. So the fit note will either state the person is either:

* unfit for work; or
* may be fit for work.

If the member of staff is unable to work, the GP will state this on the form and provide a date or period of time that they should remain away from work. However, if the GP feels the person could do some work depending upon their health condition they will confirm this as ‘may be fit for work’.

This could be through a:

* phased return to work
* flexible working
* amended duties
* workplace adaptations.

The GP will also provide general details of the functional effect of the individual's condition and may advise that an occupational health report is sought to facilitate a return. The advice given by the GP is not binding on the employer but is a suggestion of what, in their medical opinion, may help the person to return to work.

Managers are responsible for considering whether the suggestions may be accommodated and should seek advice from Human Resources. If there are concerns about accommodating a suggestion made by the GP, we would need to discuss this with the individual, carry out a health and safety risk assessment and may need to seek further medical advice

If the employee does not accept the offer of a return to work, this should be discussed with them to establish why and further advice from the GP and/or occupational health may be required.

## How long is the GP’s advice in place for?

The GP will state the period that the advice in the Statement covers. The Statement may cover a period of up to a maximum of 3 months during the first 6 months of sickness.

## Returning to work

The member of staff is expected to return to work on their next normal working day following the expiry of the Statement unless the GP has specifically noted that the employee needs to revisit their GP for a further assessment prior to returning to work.

The employee may return before the Statement expires subject to agreement by the University.

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HR Department