

Step 4: Preparing for return to work

KEY FACTS:

- All too often, people rush back to work – to the same job, and same responsibilities. This can be overwhelming and usually happens because an alternative has not been discussed. However, others do not return soon enough – and the longer they take off, the more daunting the prospect of returning to work feels.
- A gradual return to work may be an option. If your workplace is able to accommodate it, you are able to combine Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) and paid work: to do this, you need to work for two back-to-back days each week. See the [Fit for Work website](#) for further information about the implications of a gradual return for SSP.
- Having a mental health issue does not always affect your ability to work. Also, your mental ill-health may not be due to work, however, if you feel that yours does or is, you can request some changes to your work in order to return to work and continue to do your job well. Keep these in mind as you prepare for your return to work.
- Whether or not you can make changes to your job, or the way it is carried out, being aware of your trigger points is important. This awareness will give you the information to take to your employer, and help you put in place ways of managing your triggers on your return.

WHAT TO DO:

The exercises in this step will help you think about your return to work. You can work through them on your own, or you may find it helpful to talk them through with a friend, family member or colleague. You do not need to show them to your employer. However, you may find it helpful to work through them before you meet with your employer. After doing the exercises, have a look at the [‘Return to Work Conversation’](#) to help you think about what you want to say, and how you want to say it.

EXERCISE:

[Identifying your signs, symptoms and triggers](#)

EXERCISE:

[Your readiness to return to work](#)

EXERCISE:

[About your work](#)

CHECKLIST:

[Checklist to make the first day back much easier](#)



WHAT TO SAY:

When you feel ready to return to work, let your employer know. Use the template email/letter below to edit and send to your employer to help you with this. Try to include as much information as you can.



TEMPLATE EMAIL/LETTER:

[Intention to return to work letter/ email to edit and send to your employer.](#)