



First Step Employment Advisor

Tel: 0300 123 9122

First Step, Elmwood, Tynefield Drive, Penrith,
Cumbria, CA11 8JA

Facilitated discussions – information for employers

1. What is a facilitated discussion?

This is an impartial discussion facilitated by a First Step Employment Advisor with the employee and the employer.

2. Is this the same as the employee being represented by a Trade Union?

No. Our advice is impartial and considers your business needs and well as the employee's needs.

3. Will you be able to advocate on behalf of the employee?

Yes. We can advocate on behalf of the employee to explain how their mental health is being affected at work. This is usually agreed before the meeting and requires the written consent of the employee.

4. Can the employer ask for information about mental health?

We can offer advice about managing common mild to moderate mental health conditions in the workplace. We can only share information about the employee if they have given us written permission to do so.

5. What is the purpose of a facilitated meeting?

We believe that facilitating an informal discussion to address any worries or concerns leads to better outcomes for the employee and the employer. It also enables any issues to be addressed quickly without the need to follow a more formal procedure which can be stressful for the employee. In most cases we can resolve matters to everyone's satisfaction. This can lead to helping the employee to recover and increase their productivity in work.



6. What happens if we are unable to reach a mutual agreement about the issues?

If the issues cannot be resolved mutually then we can advise both parties about their employment rights and obligations. This may include signposting to ACAS or independent legal advice. We are unable to mediate in specific disputes or offer representation.