

## **UCC Research Timesheet Policy**

### **1. Introduction:**

This policy relates to research project timesheets required by staff working on funded research projects. For information relating to timesheets required for payroll purposes please refer to the HR website.

Staff engaged in research projects must complete timesheets when required by the terms and conditions of the research grants on which they are working or when required to determine the correct allocation of their staff costs.

Staff whose pay costs are not directly funded by a research project but are contributing effort to the project for match-funding purposes are required to maintain timesheets so that their efforts can be correctly valued.

Completion of timesheets enables UCC to:

- Be compliant with the funding agency's terms and conditions
- Reconcile the distribution of staff's salary costs across research project accounts
- Calculate person month effort per work package and per project on EC funded projects
- Show evidence to auditors that work carried out by staff is consistent with the distribution of their pay costs and tasks agreed under the terms of the applicable grant agreement.

### **2. Responsibility for timesheet completion:**

The member of staff to whom the timesheet relates is responsible for completing, signing and dating the timesheet. The member of staff should then seek authorisation by acquiring the signature of the staff member's line manager or the project's Principal Investigator.

In a case where a timesheet may be completed by a departmental / research centre member of staff then the person to whom the timesheet relates should review the timesheet carefully and request any changes before completing and signing the timesheet.

Staff should begin to complete timesheets as soon as they begin working on a research project that requires a timesheet. Timesheets should be completed monthly, in arrears, ideally by the 5<sup>th</sup> working day of the following month.

### 3. Location of Timesheet Templates:

In order to ensure that you are using the most up to date version of UCC's timesheet template then you should download a blank template from here, <https://www.ucc.ie/en/financeoffice/research/>. Please ensure that you access the timesheet for the correct year.

### 4. How much time to record on a timesheet:

Staff should complete only **one** timesheet per month and must show 100% of your time worked in line with the contract hours as per your employment contract.

The total hours reported in a timesheet should reflect your contracted hours as per your contract of employment with UCC. E.g. If you work a full time 39 hour week over 5 days then your total hours per day should be 7.80. If you are a part time member of staff then your hours should be pro-rated appropriately.

### 5. "Productive Hours":

Standard annual productive hours of full time UCC staff has been set at **1,720 hours**. This value should be pro-rated for staff members who are contracted to work on a part-time basis.

Productive hours **include** time spent on:

- a) Research projects
- b) Teaching
- c) Administration\*
- d) Training\*
- e) Other tasks relating to the performance of your role

Productive hours **exclude**:

- a) Annual Leave
- b) Sick Leave
- c) Bank Holidays
- d) Other periods of leave, including parental and maternity leaves.

**\* -Note, however, if any of the these type of activities are directly linked to a research project then that time should be recorded as "Research Project" time, allocated to the appropriate work package. E.g. Training specific to achieving research project objectives which have been set out in the research project grant application should be recorded as a research Project activity.**

Productive hours reported over a calendar year should equal to **1,720 hours** or the appropriate pro-rated amount for part-time members of staff.

Actual productive hours may be less than 1,720 hours (or pro-rated equivalent) in cases where the staff member has had longer than standard leave during the given year.

In order to ensure compliance in meeting the productive hours targets of 1,720 hours in a year the staff members' annual leave should be taken in compliance with UCC's Annual Leave policy, <https://www.ucc.ie/en/hr/policies/leave/annual-leave/>.

## **6. Considerations where a staff member works more than contracted hours:**

Staff should only record their contracted hours on a timesheet. If a situation arises where a staff member works more than their contracted hours then the following solutions can be considered when completing a timesheet:

- a) **Pro-rated Approach:** Consider how your effort was distributed across the day and report your hours on a proportional rather than actual basis. E.g. A member of staff is contracted to work 7.8 hours per day. That person worked 10 hours in a day, 6 hours on project A and 4 hours on project B. In this case, the member of staff can report on their timesheet 4.7 hours (60% of contracted time) on project A and 3.1 hours (40% of contracted time) on project B.
- b) **As per Budget:** Consider how your effort is budgeted across projects. E.g. A member of staff is contracted to work 7.8 hours per day. That person worked 10 hours in a day, 6 hours on project A and 4 hours on project B. The member of staff is contracted / budgeted to work 50% on project A and 50% on project B. In this case, the member of staff can report on their timesheet 3.9 hours (50% of contracted time) for both projects.

In both scenarios set out above the staff member is not reporting more hours than they actually worked on research projects. In no case should a staff member report more hours in a given day than “actually” worked on a project, only potentially less where hours worked exceed contracted hours.

## **7. Weekends / Bank Holidays / University Closure Days:**

Staff should not report time worked on weekends, bank holidays or days when the university is closed on their timesheets.

If a member of staff does work on these days then they may consider adjustment to the proportion of hours assigned to time worked on the weekdays before or after to more accurately reflect the proportion of time worked on various activities over the course of a week or several weeks.

## **8. Annual / Sick / Other Leaves:**

Absences for annual leave, sick leave and other leaves should be recorded at the contracted daily hours in the timesheet.

## **9. Staff Members working on more than one research project:**

Staff should endeavour to record their time as is actually worked. Auditors may query when time worked is reported consistently across time, as they would anticipate the level of effort worked on a project might vary from day to day.

If staff are paid a particular percentage from a project then it is acceptable if the percentage of time worked on the project varies across days or even weeks as long as the overall percentage is aligned to that budgeted.

If you are working on a European Union funded project your time may need to be reported against work packages. When completing a timesheet then enter a separate line per work package for each project worked on during the month covered by the relevant timesheet.

#### **10. Authorisation:**

Completed monthly timesheets must be signed by both the member of staff and his or her supervisor. The approval signatures must be by a wet signature. (During the COVID pandemic, an electronic signature is acceptable once the timesheet is accompanied by an email from the approver confirming authorisation of the attached timesheet.) In most cases, the supervisor will be the project's Principal Investigator. Timesheets for Principal Investigators should be signed by their line manager or their Head of Department.

The Principal Investigator has ultimately responsibility for ensuring that the timesheets for all staff members working on their projects are completed accurately, submitted in a timely manner and appropriately authorized.

Hard copy originals of completed and authorized timesheets should be sent to your supervisor or appropriate person, on a monthly basis. Staff may also want to scan completed timesheets, save them for their own records, and send the scans to the Principal Investigator.

A member of the Finance Office – Office of Research Grants and Contracts will contact the Principal Investigator at the time of claim to request the completed original signed timesheets to them.

#### **11. Queries:**

If you have any queries relating to the above policy or general timesheet queries then please contact the relevant person at the Office of Research Grants & Contracts, or email [kevin.goggin@ucc.ie](mailto:kevin.goggin@ucc.ie) directly.