

Policy: On Call Arrangements

Administrative and Professional
Services, Technical Services and
Operational Services Staff

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Definitions	1
3	Scope	1
4	Principles	1
5	Arrangements	2
6	Standby Payment	2
7	Call-out Payment	3
8	Working Time Regulations	3
9	Policy Review	3

Policy: On Call Arrangements

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1 Introduction

The Pay Modernisation project recognised that it would be necessary to develop a harmonised set of terms and conditions of employment which both met current needs and circumstances and provided the University with the capacity to respond flexibly in terms of working patterns which meet future business requirements.

In taking this work forward it is clear that in some areas of the University groups of staff have been providing an on call service but that the basis of these arrangements and the associated allowances paid have differed across departments.

2 Definitions

Standby is defined as time outwith core working hours of the University during which period staff need to be available, or on call, in order to respond to user or operational service requirements. It should be noted that periods of time on standby do not constitute “working time” within the definition of the Working Time Directive. Payment for this service is defined as a standby payment.

While on call a member of staff may need to respond to a request for assistance within their normal work area for example by providing telephone advice and guidance remotely or by arranging to attend personally at their workplace. Payment in this case is defined as a call-out payment and is applicable from the point of contact or call out requiring work to be undertaken. All such time worked constitutes working time within the definition of the Working Time Directive.

3 Scope

This policy applies to staff in the Administrative and Professional Services, Technical Services and Operational Services staff categories only, in recognition of the fact that staff in other staff categories are not required to formally adopt on-call arrangements.

4 Principles

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that staff who may be required to provide an essential on call-service in order to respond to service user needs and operational service requirements are rewarded on a consistent, fair and equitable basis.

With this in mind, the following arrangements are proposed:

- On-call rotas will only be used where there is a demonstrable need to ensure adequate out of hours cover for essential services and where it is essential to ensure that there is a response to the failure of any critical system or service. It is for Heads of Department, in consultation with Human Resources, to identify where such out of hours services are required. Any proposals should be based on the area having a sustained and consistent business requirement to provide services out of hours, as opposed to occasions that are covered by either overtime or regular non-standard working patterns.
- On-call rotas will continue to be managed on a voluntary basis for existing staff in employment as at 31 December 2010, unless contracts of employment specify otherwise. All staff members who possess the necessary levels of knowledge, skills and experience will be invited to ‘opt-in’ to the rota system so that every eligible member of staff will have the same opportunity to receive on-call and call-out payments.
- Staff employed from 1 January 2011 or appointed to a new post internally on or after this date will be contractually required to participate where it is determined that this is an

essential requirement of the job. If this is the case the requirement will be specified in the employment contract and further particulars for the post.

- Managers will seek, wherever possible, to minimise any inconvenience of being on call.
- Where existing arrangements meet the needs of the service there will be no requirement to alter the current arrangements. In some areas of the University, it may be that an adequate level of cover can be provided by staff who have agreed that they may be contacted (for whatever good reason) to provide a service appropriate to the needs of the department, on an entirely voluntary basis.
- Any payment or time off in lieu where voluntary arrangements apply will be agreed on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Head of Department. In cases where a service is provided on an entirely voluntary basis it should be noted that there is no obligation on staff either to respond to or to provide a service.

5 Arrangements

Arrangements for standby rotas will be put in place by departments with a commitment that adequate notice is provided and that appropriate communication takes place with Security Services and Safety Services to ensure that health and safety considerations are taken into account.

Members of staff who are on standby are required to respond to a call out and must be capable of attending work when they are contacted. Staff must not consume alcohol or take substances which could impact on their fitness to respond to a call out or undertake any necessary tasks. This may impact on social arrangements which will need to be considered at the time of undertaking standby. If an individual becomes unwell and unable to undertake work during a standby period the relevant line manager should be notified as soon as possible. Rota arrangements will be reviewed on a regular basis, bearing in mind changes in staffing levels, the pattern and nature of call-outs and other relevant factors.

Where the nature of the work demands it, the University will supply and pay for whatever specialist equipment is necessary for the on-call member of staff to provide the necessary level of service, e.g. a PC or laptop, pre-arranged routes for accessing additional support, internet access, a mobile 'phone etc. The appropriate manager and the member of staff will agree, in advance of being placed on a rota system, the type and nature of support which will be required.

6 Standby Payment

A standby period will normally be one week i.e. Monday to Sunday. On call rotas may vary to include either all hours outside core hours, i.e. 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday or all hours outside the staff member's normal pattern of work over a seven day period from Monday to Sunday where this differs. Public and University holidays will be included in standby periods.

Staff who are on standby and may be required to respond to call-outs will receive payment on the following basis:

Anticipated Weekly Frequency of On-Call	Value of Allowance as % of Salary
Average of 1 in 3 or more frequent	9%
Between 1 in 6 but less than 1 in 3	5%
Between 1 in 9 but less than 1 in 6	2.5%
Between 1 in 12 but less than 1 in 9	1.5%

All such payments will be pensionable. Where a member of staff is absent due to sickness standby payments will cease where the absence is continuous for four weeks or more.

7 Call-out Payment

Requests for call-out must either come from a named University staff member who has, by local arrangement, previously been provided with the authority to call out specified groups of staff or from an agreed automated alarm or monitoring system or service, or from the University's Security Services staff.

Where attendance at the workplace is required as a result of a call-out request payment will be made for a minimum of three hours at double the normal hourly rate. Where working time, including travelling time, exceeds three hours, payment will be made at double time for all hours worked.

8 Working Time Regulations

Heads of Department should monitor the frequency and length of call-outs and unplanned out of hours working on a regular basis to ensure that no member of staff is required to undertake additional work which may be detrimental to their health and wellbeing. In doing so Heads of Department should be aware of the requirements of the Working Time Regulations (1998), in particular in relation to the following areas of legislation:

- A limit of an average of 48 hours work a week over a 17 week period
- A limit of an average of 8 hours work in 24 hours for night workers
- A daily rest period of 11 uninterrupted hours between each working day
- A weekly rest period of one whole day a week or 2 days a fortnight
- A rest break of at least 20 minutes for a working day of more than 6 hours

Further advice on compliance with the Working Time Regulations (1998) is available from your Human Resources team.

9 Policy Review

The operation of this policy will be reviewed after its first full year of operation to ensure that it is meeting all necessary University requirements and to test that implementation has complied with the University's duty of care in relation to issues of working time and staff wellbeing. Thereafter the policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.