

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs): TIMESHEETS FOR GRANT-FUNDED RESEARCH (VERSION 23 OCT 2018)

*Note, this guidance relates to Research and Innovation (R&I) timesheets required for some staff working on grant-funded projects. For information about Human Resources (HR) Division timesheets completed by hourly-paid staff in order to receive salary payment, please see the HR website.

Why are some staff required to complete monthly timesheets?

Staff members are required by LSE to complete timesheets when required by the terms and conditions of the research grants on which they are working or when necessary to determine the correct allocation of their staff costs.

Timesheets:

- Allow LSE to comply with grantor terms and conditions,
- Allow LSE to reconcile the distribution of staff's salary costs across project accounts,
- Allow LSE to calculate person-month effort per work package and per project on European Commission (EC) funded projects, and
- Serve as verification to auditors that work carried out by staff is consistent with the distribution of their pay costs and the tasks agreed under the terms of the applicable grant agreements.

In some cases, the completed timesheets determine the eligibility and amount of the individual's salary costs claimed. In these cases, if timesheets are not completed, then LSE will not receive reimbursement of the individual's salary costs. Timesheets may be reviewed by auditors. If they are found to be incomplete, LSE may be sanctioned, including 1) the inability to submit future proposals to the applicable grantor and/or 2) financial penalties. These sanctions may be applied school-wide, not just to individual projects.

Which staff members are required to complete monthly timesheets?

- All staff working on an EC Framework Programme 7 (FP7) funded research grants.

There may be some exceptions including but possibly not limited to:

- Marie Curie fellows who are full-time and paid according to fixed-rate monthly living and mobility allowances.
- Hourly-paid contractors who are paid on the basis of timesheets submitted to HR.

If using the hard-copy yellow HR timesheet, hourly-paid contractors may need to keep track of how their time is distributed across work packages and either write this information on the timesheet where there is blank space available or provide this information directly to R&I at the end of each reporting period. It is a best practice to indicate the work package distribution on the HR timesheet.

If using the new Excel-based HR timesheet, hourly paid contractors will need to print the timesheet and add physical signatures both for themselves and for their supervisors. Currently, R&I does not accept email confirmations as signatures. As well, they will need to use the free-text fields of the HR timesheet to indicate how their time is distributed across work packages and to provide a short description of the work performed.

For more information about FP7 timesheet requirements, please see:

- FP7 Grant Agreement – Annex II – General Conditions (in particular, Article II.15.1): http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/fp7/93289/fp7-ga-annex2_en.pdf
- Guide to Financial Issues Relating to FP7 Indirect Actions (in particular, Section 1: General Financial Provisions; Article II.15 of ECGA): http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/fp7/89556/financial_guidelines_en.pdf
- [All staff members working less than 100% of their contracted time on an EC Horizon 2020 \(H2020\) funded research grant.](#)

Horizon 2020 differs from FP7 in that staff members working 100% on a single EC Horizon 2020 project are not required to complete timesheets. However, these staff will need to keep track of how their time is distributed across work packages and provide this information to R&I at the end of each reporting period. Timesheets may still be desirable for such staff as a means of verifying that they indeed did work 100% on the project, recording the work package distribution, and documenting that the work carried out by the staff is consistent with the tasks agreed within the grant's scope of work.

In addition, staff members working 100% on a single Horizon 2020 project and not completing timesheets will be required to complete a declaration certifying that they have worked 100% on the project. A declaration must be completed for each reporting period. The form can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/legal/templ/templ_decl_excl-work_en.odt

As noted above for EC FP7 projects, there may be other exceptions to the requirement to keep timesheets, including hourly-paid contractors.

For more information about Horizon 2020 timesheet requirements, please see:

- Horizon 2020 Grant Agreement (in particular, Article 18.1.2: Records and other documentation to support the costs declared): http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/mga/gga/h2020-mga-gga-mono_en.pdf
- Horizon 2020 Annotated Model Grant Agreement: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf

- All directly-incurred staff members working less than 100% of their contracted time on a UK government-funded project using the Full Economic Cost (FEC) funding model.

This includes most UK Research Council awards.

Directly-incurred staff members are those who are budgeted under the grant's Directly-Incurred budget heading and/or are paid directly from the grant account (i.e. not paid via MSLs). Staff budgeted under the grant's Directly Allocated budget heading do not need to keep monthly timesheets.

For more information about UKRC timesheet requirements, please see TRAC Update No. 3, dated October 2009: <http://www.jcpsg.ac.uk/guidance/revisions/>.

- Other staff members if required by the terms and conditions of the research grant against which their time is being reported. R&I will review the terms and conditions of each research grant to determine whether monthly timesheets are required.

Who completes the timesheet template?

The staff member to which the timesheet relates should complete, sign and date the timesheet. The timesheet should then be counter-signed by the staff member's line manager or the project's Principal Investigator.

We recognize that in some cases, the timesheet may be completed by the departmental/centre manager or other administrative staff on behalf of the staff member. In these cases, the staff member should review the timesheet carefully and request any corrections before printing and signing.

How do I obtain a timesheet template?

If this is your first award that requires timesheets, your Research Awards Manager (RAM) will send you a timesheet template by email. The timesheet template will usually cover an 18-month period with 18 worksheets, one worksheet for each month.

If this is not your first award, then your RAM will update your existing timesheet template for you. Your RAM may also add additional timesheet templates if your new award extends beyond the time period covered by your existing timesheet template.

If you have not been contacted by your RAM or your existing timesheet has not been updated to include your new award, please request a new or updated timesheet template from him/her.

When should I complete my monthly timesheet?

You should begin completing monthly timesheets as soon as you begin working on a grant-funded project that requires their completion. Timesheets should be completed monthly in arrears by the 5th school business day of the following month.

I work on more than one project, should I complete a separate timesheet for each?

You should complete only one monthly timesheet which shows 100% of your contracted time at LSE and divides the hours worked across each project and your other activities.

Your RAM will set up your timesheet template to include all of your grant-funded projects and work packages if applicable in the template's drop-down menus. If you don't see one of your projects or work packages in the timesheet template's drop-down menus, please ask your RAM to update the template.

Do I report only the hours that I worked on a grant?

Your monthly timesheet must show 100% of your contracted time at LSE regardless of the percentage of time allocated to the project requiring the completion of the timesheet. This includes time spent on grant-funded research, other activities (such as teaching, administrative tasks, other research, etc.), and absences (annual leave, sick leave, etc.).

How many hours should I report each day?

The monthly timesheets should include all of your productive hours worked, allocated to each project or activity, as well as any absences. The hours reported should match your contracted hours per your contract of employment with LSE.

For example, if you work full-time then you should show 7 hours each day excluding weekends. If you work less than full-time, report only your contracted hours. For example, if you work 60% FTE, then you should report 4.2 hours per day or a total of 21 hours spread out over a week.

What if I worked paid overtime?

If the overtime worked is paid, then please contact your RAM for more information. Overtime payments may be chargeable to the EC if:

- the overtime is actually paid;
- the overtime is necessary to the project and in conformity with the School's national legislation, and
- it is the policy of the School to pay overtime.

Paid overtime hours must be accounted for separately from the standard working hours and so should not be shown on the timesheet.

What if I work unpaid overtime?

You should record on your timesheet only your contracted hours. If you are full-time and therefore contracted to work 35 hours per week, then you should only show 7 hours worked per day. Part-time staff should report their hours on a pro-rata basis.

If you worked more than your contracted hours in a day, there are various considerations for how to reflect this on your timesheet while only reporting your contracted hours:

- 1) Proportionately: Consider how your effort was distributed across the day and report your hours on a proportionate rather than actual basis. For example, if you worked 10 hours in a day but are only contracted to work 7 hours and spent 6 hours working on Project A and 4 hours working on Project B, then you could report on your timesheet 4.2 hours worked on Project A (60% of your contracted time) and 2.8 hours worked on Project B (40% of your contracted time). You are not reporting more hours than you actually worked on each project.*
- 2) As Budgeted: Consider how your effort is budgeted across projects. For example, if you worked 10 hours in a day but are only contracted to work 7 hours and spent 6 hours working on project A and 4 hours worked on project B but are budgeted to work 50% on both, then you could report on your timesheet 3.5 hours worked on each project. You are not reporting more hours than you actually worked on each project.*
- 3) 9 to 5: Consider how your effort was distributed across your standard working hours. For example, if you worked 6 hours on Project A and 1 hour on Project B between 9:00am and 5:00pm and then worked 3 more hours on Project B after 5:00pm, then you could report on your timesheet 6 hours worked on Project A and 1 hour worked on Project B. You are not reporting more hours than you actually worked on each project.*

However you decide to allocate your effort, do not report more than your actual hours worked on a particular project, only potentially less.

What if I work on weekends or on school closure days?

Do not report any time worked on weekends or school closure days.

If you do work on these days, you may want to adjust the proportion of hours assigned to time worked on the weekdays before or after to more accurately reflect the proportion of your time worked on various activities over the course of a week or several weeks.

What if I am on annual, sick, or other leave?

Absences for annual leave, sick leave, bank holidays, and LSE school closure days (Easter, Christmas, etc.) should be reported on the monthly timesheet.

I am budgeted to work a particular % on the project for the life of the project, can I just report that same % worked on the project each business day?

Staff should endeavour to record their time as actually worked. Auditors have queried when time worked is reported consistently across time as they anticipate that the level of effort worked on a project will vary. They have also queried when time is reported in anything other than 20 or 15-minute increments. If personnel are paid a particular % from a project, it is okay if the % of time worked on the project varies across days, weeks, or even months as long as the overall % is close to that budgeted.

What are work packages?

If you are working on an EC FP7 or Horizon 2020 project, your time may need to be reported against work packages. Enter a separate line for each project and for each work package. If you are uncertain what work package should be used, consult your project's Description of Work or contact your RAM.

In some cases, a grant may use a different terminology than 'work package' such as 'goals'. If this is the case and hours do need to be broken-out into such categories, then your RAM will set up your timesheet with the appropriate choices in the drop-down menu.

Do I need to get the timesheet authorized?

Yes, the completed monthly timesheet must be printed and signed by both the employee and his/her supervisor. In most cases, the supervisor will be the project's Principal Investigator. Timesheets for Principal Investigators should be signed by their line managers or their Heads of Department.

The Principal Investigator is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the timesheets for all staff that are required to complete them are completed accurately, submitted in a timely manner, and authorized.

Are electronic signatures allowed?

We currently require original, physical signatures on timesheets if time is reported as worked on European Commission funded projects. Electronic signatures may be accepted on timesheets that do not include European Commission funded projects unless original signatures are explicitly required by an award's terms and conditions.

Where do I send the completed and authorized timesheets?

Hard copy originals of completed and authorised timesheets should be sent to your RAM on a monthly basis by hand-delivery or internal mail.

You may also want to scan completed timesheets, save them for your own records, and send the scans to your RAM by email.

What should I do with the original signed copy of the timesheet?

Send your original timesheets to R&I to be placed in your timesheet file.

Will I be reminded to complete my timesheet?

You should set-up your own monthly reminder to complete your timesheet.

R&I may send generic monthly reminders, or your RAM may contact you with a reminder as needed. However, you should not rely on R&I reminders.

I was sent a reminder to complete my timesheet, but I don't think I need to complete one?

Please contact your RAM. They will confirm whether you need to complete monthly timesheets. It may be that your RAM needs to remove your name from the monthly email list.

I have another question, who should I ask?

Please direct any other questions to your RAM. You can find a list on R&I's website of departments/centres and their RAM contact.

Other Helpful Documents:

1. [Timesheets – Timesheet Completion Process](#)
This document provides a one-page step-by-step overview of the monthly R&I timesheet completion process.
2. [Timesheets – Frequently Asked Questions](#)
This document provides answers to frequently asked questions about R&I timesheets.
3. [Timesheets – How to Complete a Timesheet](#)
This document provides an overview of how to complete the Excel-based timesheet template.

You can find these on R&I's website at:

<https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/research-division/manage-your-award/during-your-project>