



On Call Policy

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1. Introduction

Across some parts of the University, staff may be required to participate in on-call rotas to enable us to respond to unplanned events requiring urgent attention with business-critical systems and services, outside of core business hours (Monday – Friday, 9am to 5pm).

In this policy, you'll find information about the types of on-call arrangements in place at Strathclyde, the stand-by allowances and call-out payments that are payable, our expectations of you while you're on call, how to submit a claim and more.

Please note, if this policy refers to additional guidance, FAQs, online forms, or training, these are accessible to University colleagues on our [People Hub](#).

2. Who is Covered by This Policy?

This policy applies to staff in the Administrative and Professional Services, Technical Services and Operational Services job families, in Grades 1 – 10, who participate in an approved out-of-hours (on-call) rota or other call-out arrangements. Staff in other job families should refer to their specific Terms and Conditions of Employment, as entitlements may vary.

If you're participating in **planned events** outside core business hours, such as open days, conferences, or graduations, or if you work a shift pattern, you should refer to our [Overtime Policy](#) and/or our [Shift Working Policy](#).

3. What Are On-Call Arrangements?

An On-Call arrangement is a contractual arrangement between you and the University to be available for on-call work either on site, at home or elsewhere, and to work as and when required. It includes both being on 'standby', as well as actual work carried out because of a 'call-out request'.

- **Standby** is defined as time outside your normal weekly contractual working hours, during which you're required to be available, or 'on-call', and ready to respond to urgent user or operational service requirements. Periods of time on standby do not count as "working time" within the definition of the Working Time Regulations.

- **Call-Out Request** - while on standby you may be called upon to carry out urgent work or respond to a request for assistance. You may, for example, need to provide telephone advice and guidance remotely, log into University systems remotely and undertake work as required, or attend personally on site. All such time worked, including travelling time, counts as working time within the definition of the Working Time Regulations.

4. What is Expected of You

If you're a member of staff, you are expected to:

- be contactable and able to respond to a contact request within a reasonable time.
- attend the workplace within a reasonable time (if work cannot be undertaken remotely).
- not take any alcohol or other substances which might impact your fitness to respond to a call-out. Please refer to our [Alcohol, Drug and Substance Misuse](#) policy for more information.
- let your manager, [Human Resources](#), or [Occupational Health](#) know if you're pregnant, or have any medical condition which may impact your ability to do on-call duties.

If you're a manager, you are expected to:

- involve and consult with team members before introducing, or making changes to, on-call arrangements. Remember some staff can find it particularly challenging to work unsocial hours (for example those with caring responsibilities, those with a medical condition, or for religious reasons).
- ensure on-call rotas are discussed and agreed in advance with your Head of Department and Human Resources.
- ensure on-call arrangements comply with the [Working Time Regulations](#), specifically in relation to rest periods and compensatory rest, and health assessments for night work, where applicable.
- conduct occupational risk assessments for on-call arrangements and put safeguards in place to support safe call-out working practices.
- review on-call rotas on a regular basis to ensure the out-of-hours service is being delivered in the safest and most cost-effective way.

Any abuse of this policy may lead to action being taken under our [Disciplinary Procedure](#) including removal from the on-call rota.

5. Standby & Call-Out Arrangements

5.1. Formal Arrangements

If you're in a role where formal on-call arrangements are in place, you'll normally receive a standby allowance (see below), unless other contractual arrangements are in place.

If you're recruited into a post where participating in an on-call rota is an essential part of the job, then this will be set out in your employment contract and further particulars for the post. For existing staff, consultation will take place and notice will be given before any new arrangements are introduced.

5.2. Voluntary 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 on an entirely voluntary basis, without the need for an established on-call rota.

In cases where a service is provided on an entirely voluntary basis, you won't be entitled to receive a standby allowance, and there's no requirement for you to respond to a call-out. If you do respond to a call out, your Head of department may authorise, at their discretion, payment, or equivalent time off in lieu (TOIL) in accordance with our call out payment rates_(see below).

5.3. Call-Out Requests

Requests for call-out must be received from one of the following:

- a named staff member who has the authority to call out specified groups of staff or
- an automated alarm or monitoring system or service, or
- the University's Security Services staff.

5.4. Returning to Work After a Call-Out

Standby time does not count as 'working time'. However, if you need to respond to a call-out (on-site or remotely), you should talk to your manager to find out when you're required to start work the next day. This will depend on the time of the call-out and how long you were working for.

6. Standby Allowance and Call-Out Payments

6.1. Standby Periods

A standby period normally lasts for one week (Monday to Sunday). It can include either all hours outside core business hours or, all hours outside of your normal pattern of work if this is different. Your manager will advise you which applies.

Public holidays and University closure days are included in standby periods.

6.2. Standby Allowance Rates

If you're on standby as part of an approved on-call rota and may be required to respond to callouts, you'll receive a standby allowance. There are four different standby allowance rates. Which rate you receive will be based on how many times within the rota you're required to be on call.

For example, if you're required to be on call, on average, one week out of every three, you'll get a 9% standby allowance. If you're only required to be on call one week out of every seven, you'll get a 2.5% standby allowance.

Anticipated Frequency of On-Call	Value of Allowance as a % of Salary
Average of 1 in 3, or more frequent	9%
1 in 4, 1 in 5 or 1 in 6	5%
1 in 7, 1 in 8 or 1 in 9	2.5%
1 in 10, 1 in 11 or 1 in 12	1.5%

The standby allowance is paid monthly on top of your basic salary. It is pensionable and is subject to tax and NI deductions.

If you're absent due to sickness for a continuous period of four weeks or more, your standby allowance will stop.

6.3. Call-Out Payment Rates

If you're required to work (either remotely or on site) because of a call-out request, you'll receive a minimum payment of three hours at double your normal hourly rate, inclusive of travel time (where applicable).

Where your working time, including travelling time, exceeds three hours, you'll be paid at double time for all hours worked.

The double time payment rate applies to both full and part-time staff, and to work done on any day of the week, including public holidays and University closure days.

Your normal hourly rate is calculated without overtime enhancements, allowances, or other additional payments. Call-out payments are non-pensionable and subject to tax and NI deductions.

6.4. Further Call-Outs

A call-out begins when you're first contacted and ends after the call-out task has been completed (including travelling time, where appropriate).

However, if you receive a further call-out, this will be treated as a continuation of the initial call-out unless:

- For work done on-site, you have since returned home.
- For work done remotely, three or more hours have lapsed since completion of the call-out task.

If a further call-out is treated as a continuation of the initial call-out then:

- You'll only get the minimum payment of three hours at double time for the initial call-out, and
- Any additional work undertaken because of a subsequent call-out will be paid at double time for actual hours worked.

6.5. Claiming Call-Out Payments

All claims for call-out payments should be made by completing an [overtime working claim form](#) (staff login required).

Call-out payments are paid one month in arrears. For example, if you work additional hours following a call-out request in January, you'll receive payment for these hours in February's pay.

You must submit your claim and get it approved by your manager before the [payroll deadline](#) (staff login required), to ensure payment is made at the end of the relevant month.

7. Health and Safety

Call-out work often takes place at night, in adverse weather, and may involve lone working or present other challenging situations. If you're a manager, you must assess the risk to lone and out-of-hours staff, prior to work commencing by completing a risk assessment in consultation with the team members involved. For further information and guidance go to [Safety, Wellbeing and Resilience](#) (staff login required).

8. Stopping On-Call Arrangements

If business needs change, we may need to amend or withdraw on-call arrangements. If this happens, we'll discuss and consult with you (and other staff members involved) and give you a minimum of four weeks' notice of any change. We'll not look to recover any allowance already paid to you during this period.

9. Further Information and Support

If you have any queries about this policy, please talk to your manager or contact [Human Resources](#).

10. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed by Human Resources on a regular basis. To see when the next review is due, please refer to our [Policy Review Schedule](#) (staff login required) on our People Hub.