

DCU Policy and Procedures for Lone/Out of Hours Working

1. Definitions

- 1.1 This policy is designed to guide all staff and postgraduate students of Dublin City University on the procedures required for lone or out of hours working.
NOTE: Unsupervised Out of Hours work by Undergraduate Students is strictly prohibited
- 1.2 Nothing in this policy shall supersede in whole or in part the duties of employers or employees under
(a) Existing statutory provisions relevant to health, safety and welfare at work
(b) Common law
(c) University Safety Statement
- 1.3 Dublin City University strongly recommends that in the interest of health, safety and personal security, lone / out of hours work should only be undertaken when absolutely necessary and no other alternatives are available
- 1.4 Lone working/out of hours working is defined as follows
Any Laboratory / Experimental work undertaken outside of 9am-5.15 pm Monday – Friday
Any other work undertaken outside of 7am-10pm Monday – Friday and during the hours of 9am -6pm on Saturday, Sunday & Bank Holidays.
NOTE: All buildings must be vacated by 6pm on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank holidays when they will be subject to full lock up
NOTE: At Christmas & Easter the campus will close down for a specified number of days and access will only be granted under exceptional circumstances.
- 1.5 The Following Risk Categories apply to Lone / Out of Hours Working

Category A Risk (Unacceptable)	Activities to be carried out 9am – 5pm Mon – Fri only
Category B Risk (High)	Activities to be carried out only by experienced researchers with competent ‘Buddy’ in attendance
Category C Risk (Medium)	Activities to be carried out by sufficiently competent researchers (may or may not require Buddy)
Category D Risk (Low)	Activities to be carried out by any postgraduate student / staff member (e.g. computer work)

2. PROCEDURES

- 2.1 The Head of each School/Unit is responsible for drawing up a master list of typical research activities, undertaking a risk assessment for each activity, and categorising the risk associated with those activities in accordance with the definitions contained in 1.5 above.
- 2.2 Based on an assessment of their experience and knowledge, each postgraduate student will be defined as competent for a range of activities within the risk categories established in 2.1. This assessment will be completed by the postgraduate student's academic supervisor. (Note: This assessment may be reviewed/upgraded periodically)
- 2.3 Staff members in individual Schools / Units / centre's will be considered competent to engage in Category D activities. Staff members must be authorised by the Head of School / Centre / Unit to engage in Category B & C activities out of hours.
- 2.4 All persons requiring 'Out of Hours' access must have completed an annual 'Safety/Security' Induction prior to gaining access.
- 2.5 The School Safety Officer will hold the master record of activities, associated risk categories and defined competencies. He/She will also retain an up to date listing of all of those who have attended the 'Safety/Security' Induction.
- 2.6 Once an activity is on the master list, and the user defined as competent, the simple approval form should be authorised by the School Safety Officer or his appointed representative and a listing of all those authorised for after hour's access submitted to Security in order to permit lone/out of hours working.
- 2.7 Where a proposed 'out of hours' activity has not been previously risk assessed (not on Master list) the Academic Supervisor (or Head of School in the case of a staff member) must ensure a risk assessment is carried out, categorise the risk and assess the competence of the person. In consultation with the School Safety Officer, that activity & associated risk category can then be added to the School/Unit master list.
- 2.8 Security will hold the list of personnel approved for lone/out of hours working in each building. All authorised persons must log onto the 'Out of Hours' Website immediately on entering the building or as soon as their work activity is defined as 'out of hours' according to the definitions contained in 1.4 above. All persons leaving the building must log off the 'Out of hours' website, thus notifying security that they are no longer in the building.
Note: Where in exceptional circumstances, web access is unavailable to the researcher he/she must check in with Security on x8990 and similarly check out before he/she leaves the building.
- 2.9 Where the Fire alarm is activated in the building after hours, those evacuating the building must assemble at the building fire assembly point. Otherwise emergency services will assume that they are still in the building.
- 2.10 In order to ensure the safety and security of persons working in buildings 'out of hours', access to each building is strictly limited to those authorised by the School / Unit / Centre concerned. Authorised persons must not admit any other person to the building out of hours. Persons claiming to be authorised but without a swipe access card or key should be referred to Security for access.
- 2.11 Researchers or Staff members who in exceptional circumstances, due to the nature of their research work, require access during 'Lock-Up' must seek authorisation for such access from the Dean of Research. The Dean of Research will liaise with DCU Security to arrange such 'once-off' access.
Breaches of the above procedure will result in sanctions including revocation of out of hour's access rights

Risk Assessment Form for Lone / Out of Hours Work

This form should be completed by a competent assessor for any procedure/system of work to be carried out 'out of hours' by any staff member, postgraduate, postdoctoral worker or visitor. This form should be completed and copied to the School Safety Officer.

Activity being Assessed	
Name of Assessor	
Known or expected hazards associated with the activity (note also particular hazards if any due to lone working)	
Measures to be taken to reduce the level of risk (i.e. controls)	
Maximum possible harm with controls in place	
Training / Competence Prerequisite?	
Category of Risk Assigned	
Competent 'Buddy' Required Yes/No	
Emergency Action to be taken 'out of hours'	
References, if any	