



Lone and Out of Hours Working Policy

1.0 Purpose

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

2.0 Scope

This Policy applies to all units of the university, both academic and support, including research centres. These are all hereinafter collectively referred to as the 'university'.

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 Act
- (b) Common law
- (c) University Framework Safety Statement

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.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 Lone working/out of hours working is defined as follows:

- Any Laboratory / Experimental work undertaken outside of 9am-6 pm Monday – Friday
- Any other work undertaken outside of 7am-6pm Monday – Friday
- Any other work undertaken at weekends or Bank Holidays.

It is noted that evening and weekend lectures are scheduled on a regular basis and that these activities constitute normal low risk activities. This policy is designed to address where staff members or postgraduate students are working alone out of hours or working in higher risk environments such as laboratories out of hours.

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 may close down for a specified number of days and access will only be granted under exceptional circumstances.

3.2 The Following Risk Categories apply to Lone / Out of Hours Working

Category A Risk (Unacceptable activity for Out of Hours)	Activities to be carried out 9am – 6pm Monday – Friday <u>only</u>
Category B Risk (High)	Activities to be carried out only by experienced researchers with another person e.g. buddy system to be present at all times Safezone ‘Check-in’ is compulsory.
Category C Risk (Medium)	Activities to be carried out by sufficiently competent researchers (may or may not require another person e.g. buddy system to be present depending on the activity) Safezone ‘Check-in’ is compulsory.
Category D Risk (Low)	Activities to be carried out by any postgraduate student / staff member (eg computer work/ computing labs or lectures) Safezone ‘Check-in’ advised.

4.0 PROCEDURES

- 4.1 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 3.2 above.
- 4.2 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 3.2. This assessment will be completed by the postgraduate student’s academic supervisor. (Note: This assessment may be reviewed/upgraded periodically)
- 4.3 Staff members in individual Schools / Units / centres 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.



- 4.4 All persons requiring 'Out of Hours' access to engage in Category B & C activities (as shown in the above table) must have completed a 'Safety/Security' Induction prior to gaining access.
- 4.5 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.
- 4.6 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 hours access submitted to Security in order to permit lone/out of hours working.
- 4.7 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.
- 4.8 Security will hold the list of personnel approved for lone/out of hours working in each building. All authorised persons must 'Check-in' on the DCU Safe Zone App (see Section 3 below) 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.

It is advised that staff and students should consider using the Check-in' function on the Safe Zone App outside of normal working hours (9am-6pm Monday to Friday) for their own safety and wellbeing in the knowledge that Security will be informed of their presence and location in a building.

Note: Where in exceptional circumstances, if the Safe Zone App is unavailable to the researcher he/she must check in with Security on x5999 and similarly check out before he/she leaves the building.

Category B and Category C activities require 'Check-in' using the Safezone app at intervals designated and agreed by Security. Typically 'Check-in' is required at a minimum every hour.

- 4.9 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.
- 4.10 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.

4.11 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 Vice-President for Research, using the DCU out of hours Policy, Lock-up Exceptional Access Request From The Vice-President for Research will liaise with DCU Security to arrange such 'once-off' access.

4.12 Breaches of the above procedure will result in sanctions including revocation of out of hours access rights.

5.0 The SafeZone App

The University has launched a free app service to give round-the-clock safety reassurance to staff and students. The SafeZone is a simple-to-use application that is *free* to download from the Apple App store and Google Play. Further details on the App and how to use it are available at: (www.dcu.ie/ocoo/safezoneatdcu.shtml)

6.0 Policy Review

A formal review will be carried out on a 3 year basis unless there is a change informed by legislation, Best Practice or incident analysis. If there are no amendments to the Policy following the review process, the date and detail on the version tracking box will still be updated.

7.0 Version control

Document Name	Lone and Out of Hours Work Policy	
Version Reference	2.0	
Document Owner	Health & Safety Office	
Approved by	DCU Executive	
Approval Date	February 08 th 2018	
Review date	February 08 th 2021	

7.0 Appendices

1. Approval Form for Lone/Out of hours work
2. Risk Assessment Form for Lone/Out of hours work
3. Lock up Exceptional Access Request



Approval Form for Lone/Out of Hours Work

This Form to be completed by Academic Supervisor and/or Head of School for each Postgraduate Student or Staff Member requiring 'Out of Hours' access

Approved Name			
School / Unit			
Category of Staff Member / Postgrad			
Locations where work will be conducted (<i>room nos</i>)		DCU Contact Extn:	
Listing of Authorised Activities	Risk Category	Buddy Req'd Y/N	
	Sign:	Date:	
Supervisor			
Staff Member/Postgraduate student			
Staff Member/Postgraduate student Lone/Out of Hours Induction Training	Version Number of Policy:		
School Safety Officer			
Received by Security			



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 (ie controls)	
Maximum possible harm with controls in place	
Training / Competence Prerequisite?	
Category of Risk Assigned	
Competent 'Buddy' Required Yes/No	
Safezone 'Check-in' required Yes/No	
Emergency Action to be taken 'out of hours'	
References, if any	



DCU Out of Hours Policy Lock-Up* Exceptional Access Request

(Please complete & forward to the Office of Vice-President for Research & copy to Health & Safety Office)

Name of Requester (Academic Supervisor / Staff member)	
School / Centre / Unit	
Date & Time access is required	
Proposed Work	
Why can this work not be completed during normal / out of hours times?	
Has this work been risk assessed & signed off by Head of School / Centre?	
Names of those who require access**	
Locations where work will be carried out (Building & Room Number(s))	
Estimated duration of work (Start & Finish times)	

I certify that I have read the DCU Out of Hours policy document and that the work detailed above complies with the terms and conditions of out of hours access

Signature of Requester: _____ Date: _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY OFFICE OF VICE-PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH

I hereby authorise exceptional access during 'Lock Up' for the dates & times & persons noted above: Signature: _____ Print Name: _____ Date: _____ Office of VP to forward authorisation to Security by e-mail & hard copy

* Lock-Up = 6pm Saturday – 9am Sunday, 6pm Sunday – 7am Monday, 6pm Bank Holiday Monday– 7am Tuesday. Specified days (pre-notified) at Christmas & Easter

** Those requiring access must already be authorised by Head of School / Centre to work 'Out of Hours'

Approved by Executive on February 8th 2018