

WORKLOAD REDUCTIONS – FAQs

What are workload reductions?

External project funding is essential to enable the school to maintain and improve the standard of our research. Workload reductions are possible when the full cost of a given researcher is covered for a certain period by a foundation or another external source of funding. In return, the researcher undertakes to dedicate all his/her working hours during the period in question to the project for which external funding has been granted.

When a researcher is granted a full workload reduction for a specific period of time to take part in an externally funded project, the department concerned can provide cover for the teaching which the researcher is unable to provide during the project period. Consequently, the school recommends that external project applications should allow for workload reductions as far as this is possible.

What is the difference between workload reductions covering teaching and full workload reductions?

Full workload reductions

The school will be compensated for the full cost of researchers for whom full workload reductions have been granted. Full workload reductions make it possible to find replacement teaching staff at a corresponding level. Full workload reductions also mean that the researchers concerned undertake to invest all their working hours (including hours spent normally on teaching, administration and research) in the externally funded project in question.

Workload reductions covering teaching

Some sources of funding only cover workload reductions covering teaching. In such cases, researchers are only relieved of their teaching duties and the school only receives compensation for 60% of their salaries during the period of such reductions. Workload reductions covering teaching do not make it possible to purchase replacement teaching staff at a corresponding level. So widespread workload reductions covering teaching are a problem not only for the school budget, but also with regard to our objective of providing research-based teaching.

When are workload reductions covering teaching relevant – and to what extent are they possible?

For financial reasons, the school only allows workload reductions covering teaching to a very limited extent. Before submitting applications for funding which does not cover full workload reductions, applicants must arrange the extent to which they can be granted a workload reduction covering teaching with their head of school and department.

By arrangement with the school and head of department, workload reductions covering teaching may be possible if the source of funding in question does not offer full workload reductions.

Are there any limits to the amount of workload reduction you can apply for?

Workload reductions reflect a high level of research activity, and in general the school always encourages its researchers to apply for workload reductions when they join research projects. However, most departments do not want the level of workload reductions to be so high that researchers have to be relieved of their teaching responsibilities for very long periods of time. So workload reductions are always subject to the approval of the head of school and the head of department before applications are submitted. And the level of workload reductions may be limited if researchers cannot teach for very long periods of time.

NB: ERC projects usually require a very high level of workload reduction for the years in question, something which the heads of school and department naturally understand.

What does co-financing of research time mean?

When researchers take part in externally financed projects, the school asks them to contribute co-financing in the form of some of their research time in addition to the months for which they have been granted a workload reduction. The degree of co-financing depends on how much research time the member of staff concerned has available (typically 40% of their working hours), and on any other research commitments during the project period.

NB: Co-financed time is always research time which is not registered in timesheets. It reflects the fact that researchers will probably spend time on the project outside the months for which a workload reduction has been granted.

Whose approval is required for workload reductions?

The timing of workload reductions and the way in which they can be organised in relation to other commitments must be agreed with your head of department. All project budgets, including agreements on workload reductions, are subject to the approval of the head of school (via the research consultant) before project applications are submitted.

How are workload reductions calculated and registered by the school?

The proportion of your workload reduction which consists of teaching hours must be registered in your timesheet (Vip-O-Matic). The proportion of your workload reduction which consists of research time is not registered in your timesheet. A full workload reduction (comprising research hours and teaching hours) will be as follows:

The sum of the amount applied for and granted in each workload reduction is divided by the price of employing a given researcher for a month (= the cost of the researcher). The cost of an associate professor is about DKK 50,000 per month (the research support office will produce a specific calculation for the researchers involved). Most associate professors are employed to do 60% teaching and 40% research per month. If you have one month of full workload reduction, 60% of this time will be teaching hours (registered in your timesheet), and 40% will be research time.

How to calculate a workload reduction:

1. An associate professor has been granted DKK 100,000 for a full workload reduction.

2. Let us assume that an associate professor costs DKK 50,000 per month: $100,000/50,000 =$ two months of workload reduction.
3. A full working month amounts to 136.9 hours. A two-month workload reduction means that the researcher will invest $136.9 \times 2 = 273.8$ working hours in the project.
4. Associate professors normally spend 60% of their working hours on teaching and administration, and 40% on research.

Timesheets only include the hours spent on teaching and administration. So we only register 60% of the 273.8 working hours in the Vip-O-Matic system. A full workload reduction for two months will be registered as $273.8 \times 0.6 = 164.2$ hours.

What does one month of full workload reduction mean for the member of staff in question?

A one-month workload reduction means that you are relieved of your normal obligations for one month in order to take part in an externally financed research project. This means that all the time you would normally spend on research and teaching must now be spent on research in the project for which the workload reduction has been granted.

There are 136.9 working hours in a month. Members of the school's academic staff normally spend 60% of their time on teaching and 40% on research. Our timesheets are only used to register teaching hours.

So one month of workload reduction means that 82 hours will be registered in the timesheet, corresponding to a workload reduction covering teaching ($136.9 \times 0.6 = 82.1$ hours). The remaining 40% of the working hours which the researcher has undertaken to spend on the project will consist of the time he/she normally spends on research ($136.9 \times 0.4 = 54.7$ hours).

What does six months of full workload reduction mean for the member of staff in question?

A six-month workload reduction (one semester) means that you are relieved of your normal obligations for an entire semester in order to take part in a research project. This means that all the time you would normally spend on research and teaching for an entire semester must now be spent on the project for which the workload reduction has been granted.

In a six-month period there are 821.4 working hours. If your time is divided into 60% teaching and 40% research, 492.8 hours will be registered in your timesheet for a workload reduction covering teaching for a full semester ($821.4 \times 0.6 = 492.8$ hours). The remaining 40% of your working hours, which you must spend on the project, will consist of the time you normally spend on research for this six-month period ($821.4 \times 0.4 = 328.5$ hours).

Who should I contact when I have been granted a workload reduction?

You should contact the research consultant. If your grant includes a workload reduction, she will register this in the Vip-O-Matic system.

What is commissioned research?

When the university's staff perform consultancy tasks which could in principle be performed by other people, the university is not allowed to undercut the market. So the following recommended

hourly rates must be applied (applicable as of 1 February 2015). Please contact Arts Finance for help to produce tenders and make calculations.

Income-generating activities – recommended hourly rates (as of 1 April 2019)

- Professors: DKK 1,539
- Associate professors: DKK 1,220
- Assistant professors/postdocs/research assistants with a PhD: DKK 1,007
- PhD students/research assistants without a PhD: DKK 850
- Students: DKK 385

What is co-financed research?

When the university's staff take part in research collaborations with external partners other than large public and private foundations – and in commissioned research projects – the school may choose to co-finance such projects and the hourly rates are subject to negotiation. Please contact the head of school and the research consultant when a specific agreement on the hourly rates of researchers has to be negotiated. This is because it is often necessary to specify hourly rates including overheads, administration etc. to make sure that the school is covered sufficiently.

In principle, the recommended hourly rates are as follows:

Grant-financed research – hourly rates

- Professors: DKK 932
- Associate professors: DKK 788
- Assistant professors/postdocs/research assistants with a PhD: DKK 695
- PhD students/research assistants without a PhD: DKK 566
- Students: DKK 329

Please feel free to contact research consultant Signe Engelbreth Larsen if you have any further questions: saelarsen@cas.au.dk.