

Frequently Asked Questions

Implementation of the Independent Hours Body Recommendations in relation to the Haddington Road Agreement Hours for public sector workers.

1. What are the Haddington Road Agreement (HRA) Hours?

Under the Haddington Road agreement on 1 July 2013, the hours of most civil servants and public servants were increased as follows:

- Those with a pre-HRA working week of 35 hours or less (net of rest breaks) had their weekly hours increased to a minimum of 37.
- Those with a pre-HRA working week greater than 35 hours, but less than 39 hours (net of rest breaks), had their weekly hours increased to 39.
- The hours of those working 39 hours or more per week remained the same.

In most cases, the additional hours were added to the length of each working day. For example, a working day of 6 hours and 57 minutes (net of rest breaks) increased to 7 hours and 24 minutes.

2. Why were the HRA subject to a review?

Under the terms of the Building Momentum public service agreement, an Independent Body chaired by Kieran Mulvey, former chief executive of the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC), was established to consider the additional working hours arising from the HRA and to make appropriate recommendations.

3. What did the Independent Body recommend?

The Independent Body has recommended that working time is restored to pre-HRA levels for the majority of civil and public servants where working hours were increased in 2013 (and in 2015). The Body has also recommended that there should be a standardised minimum full-time working week of 35 hours across the public service.

4. What are the new weekly hours by grade?

All grades in Staff category	Weekly hours 01 st July 2022
Administrative / Professional	35
IT Services	35
Library	35
Technical Officers	37.5

If your grade is not included in the above table, your hours remain unaltered.

5. What happens on 1 July 2022?

For those staff whose hours increased as a result of the HRA, the reversion of those additional hours will take effect.

- The working week will be restored to pre-HRA levels with effect from 01st July 2022.
- A standardised minimum full-time working week of 35 hours net will apply across the public service.
- Working hours for any grade will not be less than the level that applied prior to HRA (subject to the minimum full-time working week above).

6. What hours should I work if I do not work on a full-time basis?

Those who do not work full-time will have their working time adjusted on a pro-rata basis.

7. Can individuals who are currently working pre-HRA hours with a commensurate pay reduction remain on pre-HRA hours or will they all need to move to the new hours?

Where an individual opted to remain on their pre-HRA hours under the terms of previous public service agreements, they may opt to remain on those working hours or opt to move to the new 35 hour working week with an appropriate adjustment in pay in both scenarios.

For example, on implementation of the reduced working hours, individuals who remain on pre-HRA hours (less than 35 hours a week) a pro-rata adjustment should be applied resulting in a smaller pay reduction than that which applies at present i.e., the current reduction in pay for staff with these arrangements should decrease to reflect the fact that pre-HRA hours for affected staff have been restored.

8. Can I now opt to work the pre-HRA hours?

No, if you are not currently working the pre-HRA hours, you will not have the option to work these hours.

This option has been ring-fenced to those who availed of this arrangement under previous public service agreements.

9. I started working in the Public Service after the introduction of the HRA hours, does the restoration of hours apply to me?

Yes, this applies to all civil and public servants including those who commenced work after July 2013.

10. Will there be any changes to annual leave arising from the restoration of the hours?

The restoration of hours will not impact on annual leave entitlements.

11. Are the hours of attendance changing?

The standard office hours will continue to be 09.00 to 17.30 Monday to Friday, with a minimum 30-minute lunch break. Staff should agree their individual attendance arrangements with their Head of Department or Line Manager.

12. Are there any changes to the working hours of Academic staff?

The Independent Body is of the opinion that no recommendation regarding working/contract hours involving Academic Grades is appropriate at this stage given that this sector is currently under review by both the OECD and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and that the review may lead to new contractual arrangements for academic staff.