Research Accounts Bulletin 2016-01

News

Research Councils

Studentship FES

The FES reporting process has recently changed, and affected individuals have been contacted directly. Research Accounts will now be responsible for managing the financial reporting through Je-S and departmental users will have now had their ‘Finance Approver’ status removed. This does not affect the ability to carry out other actions within Je-S.

For more information please contact Shahina Begum on (6)16070

Travel categories for FES

The requirements of the Research Councils financial reporting FES are that costs should be disclosed at the same level of detail as on application. The University’s itemised approach has become burdensome, and Research Accounts is now looking to streamline this process.

Going forward, travel costs can be grouped under headings for FES reporting as follows:

- Team Meetings (UK)
- Team Meetings (non-UK)
- Collaboration meetings (UK)
- Collaboration meetings (non-UK)
- Conference (UK)
- Conference (non-UK)
- Visiting facilities (UK)
- Visiting facilities (non-UK)
• Visiting academics

The first and last dates of travel within each category ought to be noted (to confirm travel was undertaken during the life of the project). For specific conferences or trips, the locations/events should be included too.

A full policy document on Research Council travel reporting is available. This provides more information on the requirements of reporting travel to the Research Councils.

For more information please contact Klajdia Bullari on (6)16096

NIHR reporting

The Department of Health (DH) has written to the University regarding the NIHR funding stream. The note provided feedback on the completion of ASTOX forms in 2014 (the financial reporting).

The feedback includes:

1. When agreeing contracts and payment schedules, the ASTOX received in 2014 indicate that expenditure profiles often appear to over-estimate the needs of the project or when activities will occur. By over-estimating the resources required, the DH are now seeing in-year underspends against budget. This results in the DH having difficulty managing their total research budget. Common areas of over-costing include: patient recruitment targets and timescales; staff recruitment timescales; contracting timescales; timescales for gaining ethics and R&D approvals.

Please take care when planning the timeline of the project as the annual profiling of cost is important to the DH, ensure that forecasting represents a realistic consideration of the project progress.

1. Underspends incurred by universities are not being reported to the DH until late in the year, often very near to the year-end. The DH needs to be made aware of these earlier i.e. once you are aware of a potential underspend, as there is no guarantee that funds can be carried forward. The DH will then re-profile payments in-year to attempt to minimise underspends.

Please notify your Research Accounts advisor if you become aware of likely underspends, so that arrangements can be made to contact the DH.

1. ASTOX (financial reporting) should be completed on a cash basis not accruals. This does not affect the University as we already comply.
European Commission

Marie-Curie awards close out

A de minimis will now be used when making final payments to fellows where underpayment has arisen. The final payment should be processed to ensure full payment to the fellow; however, if after the on-costs are calculated, the fellow remains underpaid no additional payment will be required as long as the outstanding payment is less than £50.

Marie-Curie awards cost calculations

As in previous years, the calculation (grossing up) of University costs for Marie Curie-funded individuals has now been confirmed for the 2016/17 tax year. The percentage is 89.2% for those not in a University pension scheme and 78.3% for those enrolled in a pension scheme.

If you have any queries about this, please contact Tequila Osborne on (6)16064.

ERC narrative reports

Financial reporting for ERC projects must be submitted alongside the narrative reports required from the PI. Each PI will receive reminders from the EC to complete this report. Please can each department remind PIs of the obligations early in the reporting process to ensure timely submission of the financial reporting and narrative reports. If you need assistance with this, please contact your Research Accounts advisor and they can provide information on how this process should be completed.

Training

Audit training

A 90 minute session will provide a re-cap of recent audit outcomes and issues, auditor requirements and good practice to ensure efficient and issue-free audits. The discussions will be relevant to all sponsor audits, as well as providing information about EC certifications.

A session will be run at 2pm on Friday 18 March in the Sherrington Building Library (South Parks Road area).

For more information and to confirm your attendance please contact Samuel Hannis on (6)16061.
Reports

A 90 minute session will provide an overview of the reports available in Oracle Projects and how best to use these in the management and administration of research projects.

Sessions will be run at 10am on Tuesday 12 April in the Sherrington Building Library (South Parks Road area) and at 10am on Thursday 14 April in the Henry Wellcome building, room K (WTCHG at Churchill Hospital).

For more information and to confirm your attendance please contact Klajdia Bullari on (6)16096.

QR and Collaborations

A 45 minute session will cover the basis of charity and industry QR funding, and the processes that are required to ensure that these are claimed correctly by the university. The session will also consider accounting for collaborators.

Sessions will be run at 3pm on Monday 25 April and at 10am on Friday 29 April at Hythe Bridge Street (Ground floor: Lewis/Carroll room).

For more information and to confirm your attendance please contact Marius Apetrei on (6)16011.