

Employment on an hourly wage basis at ETH Zurich

Information sheet

Employment

In cases where staff work irregular hours, daily or hourly wages can be stipulated (Art. 35 PersO-FIT). The terms of employment are regulated by a fixed-term employment contract under public law. In general, a probation period does not apply for employment on an hourly wage. The contract term ends without notice once the contract expires.

The hourly wage or daily allowance are to be understood as gross wages. Public holiday and annual leave allowance are included in this. This is 10.64 percent for five weeks of annual leave and 13.04 percent for six weeks of annual leave respectively. Work on Sundays and public holidays is compensated with the standard time-and-a-half pay rate. The number of hours worked is usually reported at the beginning of the following month. This means that the hours worked from the previous month are paid in the current payroll.

Categories

Teaching assistants

Principles

Teaching assistant positions not only offer qualified students an interesting part-time job, they are also a way to promote young talent and can often act as a stepping stone into doctoral studies. A teaching assistant position should not lead to an extension of the duration of study (section 1 [Rector's guidelines for the occupation and employment of teaching assistants and the allocation of budget funds](#) ↓*(in German)*).

Working as a teaching assistant is only permitted for the duration of study and can only be carried out by students from ETH Zurich or other Swiss universities. Since the actual purpose of the stay in Switzerland is to study, working hours are restricted as follows: students are permitted to work a maximum of 15 hours per week during semesters and 41 hours (full-time) per week during semester breaks.

Areas of activity

Teaching assistants funded by the rector will only be given teaching-related tasks. As a general rule, this will be the supervision of students in exercises and internships, especially for courses with a large number of students. In addition to this, they are responsible for assisting lecturers with preparing, carrying out and reviewing courses, and in particular with marking assessments.

Applying for a teaching assistant position

Applications for teaching assistant positions must be approved via workflow by the budget officer or the deputy. The authority to sign can also be delegated to the budget officer for the particular identification number under which the teaching assistant is to be employed.

The following documents must be submitted by either the institution or the professor:

- Personal data sheet
- Copy of enrolment confirmation
- Copy of residence permit

Wage

The gross hourly wage for teaching assistants is CHF 28.00 (from 1 February 2024: CHF 30.70). In exceptional cases (depending on the requirement), higher hourly wages can be discussed with the respective HR Partner.

Work permit

Students from EU/EFTA countries can take up a position with a valid permit stating 'training with gainful employment up to 15 hours'.

Exception: Persons who do not have this note in their permit must apply for a permit via HR Administration and may only start work after the permit has been issued.

Students from non EU/EFTA countries require a work permit. This can be obtained through the HR department. Due to the public authorities' lengthy processing times, employment applications are to be sent to the HR department two

months before employment is due to commence (subject to budget approval). Employment can commence as soon as the official approval has been made available to the HR department.

Bachelor students from non EU/EFTA countries also need to wait for a period of six months after commencing their studies before they can be employed as a teaching assistant. Master's students only have a six-month waiting period if the teaching assistance is not related to their studies. The extended confirmation of enrolment is required for the proof of "relation to studies".

- The application for a work permit is submitted to the employer (ETH Zurich, HR Operations).
- The approval for the start date is sent to the future employee in writing.
- Work can only commence after receiving approval from HR Operations.

Compulsory health insurance

EU/EFTA teaching assistants: The exemption from compulsory insurance on the basis of the European Health Insurance Card is only granted if no income is earned during the studies. As soon as an income is earned (even if it is very low), insurance cover is no longer guaranteed. The teaching assistants are obliged to take out a Swiss basic insurance or one of the available insurance packages for students (analogous to students from third countries).

Third-country assistants: As a rule, third-country nationals have already taken out insurance with one of the available insurance packages for students and do not have to adjust their insurance.

Employees on an hourly wage basis

Employees who work in administrative or technical fields are generally employed on a permanent full-time or permanent part-time basis. Circumventing these regulations by employing people on an hourly wage basis is not permitted.

If a particular situation arises in which employment on an hourly wage basis is justified, the hourly rate must be clarified with the respective HR Partner. The hourly rate is determined by the complexity of the position, i.e. it is calculated based on the requirements of the respective job description.

Adjustments to hourly wages can be reviewed when changing jobs internally, when taking on a new scope of work, and as part of the collective bargaining rounds. Applications to have hourly wages reviewed must be submitted to the HR Partner via the supervisor in a timely manner.

Duration of employment

If an employee joins or leaves ETH in less than one month, the withholding tax rate will be calculated on the basis of a whole month. To ensure that employees with withholding tax liability are not disadvantaged, HR recommends setting the entry date to the 1st of the month and the end of the contract to the end of the month.

Insurance

Insurance coverage is determined by the amount of hours expected to be worked and the contract term. Both of these considerations serve as a basis for the employee's risk insurance, accident insurance and pension fund coverage. The scope of employment must be estimated and recorded in ETHIS upon commencing, so that the employee's insurance benefits take effect.

	SUVA – occupational accidents Occupational accidents are covered.
Accident insurance	SUVA – non-occupational accidents If weekly working hours are less than eight hours, accident insurance coverage lapses for non-occupational accidents, i.e. accidents outside of work are not covered.
Risk insurance	As a general rule, risk insurance covers those with a fixed-term employment contract of up to three months and a yearly salary under CHF 22'050.00 (OPA entry threshold 2024).
Pension fund	Employees with a fixed-term employment contract longer than three months and a yearly salary higher than CHF 22'050.00 are obliged to make contributions to their pension fund.

Read more: [Information sheet on accident insurance SUVA and additional insurance AXA](#)

Read more: [Information sheet on risk insurance](#)

Continued pay

Hourly-paid employees are entitled to continued payment of wages in the event of illness or accident in accordance with Art. 36a Para. 5 Personnel Ordinance ETH. To ensure that continued payment of wages can be granted, the accident report must be made via the online form and, in the event of illness, the doctor's certificate must be sent to HR Administration. The continued payment of wages in the event of an accident is calculated by HR Payroll. In case of illness, the ETHIS workflow 'hourly notifications' must be initiated.

Hourly wage calculation

Basis

Average hours worked per year (full-time) = 2,050

Calculation of the hourly wage

Yearly salary (full-time)/2,050 = hourly wage plus annual leave allowance

	For five weeks	For six weeks
Annual leave allowance	10.64%	13.04%

If an employee is already receiving a pension, 80 per cent of the monthly salary will be used as the basis for calculation.

Calculation of an hourly wage

The calculation of an hourly wage for a part-time employee on an hourly wage basis is as follows:

Yearly salary (full-time)	+ annual leave allowance (in %)	Gross hourly wage in CHF
80'000	10.64	43.20
80'000	13.04	44.10

Scientific assistants I

Yearly salary (full-time)	+ annual leave allowance (in %)	Gross hourly wage in CHF
75'300	10.64	40.65

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