

OTTER (student)

OTTER is the Oxford Tool for Timesheet Entry and Reporting.

This system allows students to report on their monthly activities in the form of timesheets which can be approved by supervisors as appropriate. This system enables all NDM students on Tier 4 visas to comply with regulations as set out by the UK Border Agency.

Report functions are provided for administrators within the system, allowing them an overview of monthly periods.

If you are a student and need to submit timesheets, please use our SOP for students.

If you are a supervisor and need to approve/reject timesheets, please use our SOP for supervisors.

If you are an administrator and need an overview of the process and rights to add and delete students and supervisors, and link them as appropriate, please use our SOP for administrators.

SOP for students

As an NDM student currently on a Tier 4 student visa, your details will already be registered to OTTER. Details will include your name, your email address and your supervisor.

You will be sent an email at the beginning of each month that you are a student at NDM. This email will contain details of how many timesheets you need to complete and a link to your profile.

When you receive the email:

- Click on the link provided – this will take you to your profile. Please note: you do not need any login details to access your timesheets. If you need to access them you must use the link in the email which is secure.
- You will see a screen containing a timesheet for each month that you are required to complete.
- The options that you have for activities for that month are: study/research (Oxford), study/research (non-Oxford), annual leave, and sickness.
- You must complete the timesheet by clicking on the appropriate activity for each day, which will turn the box for that day green. You may choose two activities for one day (for example, you may have been studying for half a day and on annual leave for the other half), but you are not able to choose more than two activities per day.
- You must have at least one activity for each weekday i.e. days that show as light grey. You may include activities for days shaded dark grey (weekends and bank holidays), but you do not have to. You cannot complete activities for days in the future.
- Once you have completed a timesheet you can select the  icon underneath the timesheet. If the timesheet for that month is completed correctly this will send your timesheet to your supervisor for approval. If you have not completed it correctly (for example if you have specified

more than two activities for one day, or not specified an activity for a weekday) it will not allow you to select the icon and will inform you why.

- If you are completing a timesheet for a month which is not yet finished, you will not be able to send the timesheet to your supervisor for approval. If this is the case, when you select the  icon this will save your timesheet for when you go back into it and can complete the whole month.
- Once your timesheet has been sent to your supervisor they can either accept or reject it as they think to be appropriate.

If your timesheet is approved:

- You do not need to do anything else. Your timesheet has been accepted and is now kept on record.
- If you did want to retrospectively change a timesheet you will need to ask your supervisor to retrospectively reject it. You will then be sent an email to let you know it has been rejected and you can complete it and re-submit it.

If your timesheet is rejected:

- You will be sent an email informing you that your timesheet has been rejected. This email will contain the reason why your timesheet for that month has been rejected by your supervisor (unless you have already spoken about it, in which case they may not complete this section).
- Follow the link on the email and complete your timesheet correctly and re-submit.
- If your timesheet is rejected again you must follow this process again until it is accepted.

If you lose your email containing the OTTER link:

- If you delete the email containing the link to your outstanding timesheets you will not be able to access your profile.
- You will have to ask the administrator (email: graduate.studies@ndm.ox.ac.uk) to send another email to you containing the link, or wait until the 1st of the next month when a new email will be generated containing a link.
- Once they have done this you can follow the link and follow the process as specified above.
- Please note: once a new email has been generated, the link in the last email (e.g. from the previous month) will no longer work.

SOP for supervisors

If you are supervising an NDM student(s) who is currently on a Tier 4 student visa, your details will already be registered to OTTER. Details will include your name and email address, and these will be linked to the student(s) that you are supervising.

You will be sent an email at the beginning of each month that your student(s) is/are registered if you have any outstanding timesheets awaiting your approval. This email will contain the number of timesheets that your student(s) has/have submitted which are waiting for approval. Timesheets contain information for each month.

As a supervisor you can approve or reject timesheets as you see appropriate – if you think that the timesheet is an accurate reflection of the students' activities during that month you can accept it, but if you think that it is not correct you can reject it and ask the student to complete it again and re-submit.

When you receive the email:

- You will receive an email at the beginning of each month detailing how many timesheets you have awaiting approval.
- Follow the link on the email which will take you to your profile. Please note: you do not need any login details to access your timesheets. If you need to access your account you must use the link in the email, which is secure.
- When you follow the link you will see a screen containing all of the timesheets that you need to approve. The boxes that are shaded in green indicate the activity that the student has done for each day. There may be two activities selected for one day, but there cannot be more than two and there cannot be less than one. If the student feels it is appropriate they may have selected an activity for weekends/bank holidays also, although this is not necessary.
- If you believe that the timesheet is an accurate representation of the student's activities for that month you can accept the timesheet by selecting the green icon. This will move the timesheet to your 'historical approvals' tab across the top of the page.
- If you do not believe that the timesheet is an accurate representation of the student's activities for that month you can reject the timesheet by selecting the red icon. You will then be asked to input a reason why the timesheet has been rejected. An email is then triggered to the student informing them that their timesheet has been rejected. They can re-complete and re-submit the timesheet. If they do this, the timesheet will then be included in the next month's email that is sent to you to remind you that you have outstanding approvals. If you are happy with the amendments you can now accept it, or if you are still unhappy you can reject it and follow the process once again.
- Please note: once a new email has been generated, the link in the last email (i.e. from the previous month) will no longer work.

Historical rejections:

- A student cannot edit timesheets which have been approved. If they want to make a change to a timesheet once it has been approved, they will have to ask you to retrospectively reject it.
- Go to the 'historical approvals' tab. There will be a copy of each of the timesheets that you have approved. Find the timesheet in question and select the reject icon. You will have to complete the same process as if you were rejecting it at the time – i.e. complete a reason why it is being rejected.

This will be sent to the student in an email and they can then amend the timesheet and resubmit it for you to approve.

If you lose your email containing the OTTER link:

- If you delete the email containing the link to your outstanding timesheets you will not be able to access the system.
- You will have to ask the administrator (email: graduate.studies@ndm.ox.ac.uk) to send another email to you containing the link.

SOP for administrators

Types of Users

There are three types of user in OTTER (student):

- **Students:** students are required to complete a timesheet for each month that they are registered as a student with NDM. They can choose from four activities (research/study (Oxford), research/study (non-Oxford), annual leave, and sickness). They must choose at least one activity for each work day (non-bank holiday week day), and can choose up to two activities. If they wish they can also choose activities for weekends/bank holidays, but this is not necessary. They submit their timesheets to their supervisors.
- **Supervisors:** supervisors are required to accept or reject timesheets submitted by students as is appropriate. If they think that the timesheet is an accurate portrayal of the student's activities they may approve the timesheet, and if they do not think it is accurate they can reject the timesheet which means that the student must re-complete and re-submit it.
- **Administrators:** administrators have login access to OTTER which enables them to add students and supervisors, and link them accordingly. Administrators can also 'force' emails to be sent to students/supervisors in addition to the automatic emails which are sent on the 1st of each month, and run reports on the timesheets that have been submitted.

Accessing the system:

- Direct your browser to: <http://tools.ndm.ox.ac.uk/otter/student-admin>
- Type in your username and password

Adding supervisors:

- Go to the 'supervisors' tab at the top of the page.
- Add the name of the supervisor and their main email address (this is the address that all OTTER correspondence will be directed to). Select the  icon. They have now been added as a supervisor.
- Please note: it is easiest to add the supervisor before you add the student if you wish to link them.

Adding students:

- Go to the 'students' tab at the top of the page.
- Add the name, main email address (this is the address that all OTTER correspondence will be directed to. Enter the start and end dates that the student is to be registered as a student with NDM. Select the correct supervisor from the drop down box. Select the  icon.
- Once you have added a student and linked them to a supervisor, the student will receive an email on the 1st of each month of the period. The supervisor will receive an email requesting them to approve the students' timesheets.

'Forcing' emails:

- In addition to the automatic emails which are sent at the beginning of each month, you may want to send additional email from OTTER requesting students to submit timesheets, or supervisors to approve/reject them. For example, a student/supervisor may have lost the link to their profile and need another email with the link sent to them.
- Go to the 'email' tab at the top of the page.
- Use the appropriate area depending on whether you are sending an email to a student or a supervisor.
- Choose the student/supervisor from the drop down list.
- You may want to add content to the subject/message of the email. If not, the subject and message will be sent as standard text from OTTER.
- If the student/supervisor has no outstanding timesheets (for example, if a supervisor has lost the link to their profile but wishes to retrospectively reject a timesheet) you must select the 'send if nothing outstanding' box.
- Select 'go' and this will generate the email.

Reporting:

- You may wish to run a monthly report of OTTER timesheets.
- Go to the 'reporting' tab at the top of the page.
- Select the month that you wish to run the report for. Please note: you cannot limit a report by person, only by month.
- Select 'go'.
- This will export the report into Microsoft Excel where you will be able to see the figures submitted by each student registered. Report details will include: the student's name, days submitted for each activity in a given month, status of the timesheet, supervisor, and approver.