

Biometric attendance

Human resources and payroll

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How fingerprint or face device check-ins become attendance, lateness and payroll days, and how to correct mistakes.

Intermediate · About 30 minutes · Version 1.0 · Updated 17 November 2026

Plan availability

Included in the **Enterprise** plan. Contact us if you want to upgrade.

Overview

A biometric device, such as a fingerprint or face reader, records when each person arrives and leaves. Hesabu ERP turns those **check-ins** into **attendance**, decides who was late or absent, and uses the result when you run **payroll**.

Setting up the connection between the device and Hesabu ERP is done by our team. This article explains what happens inside Hesabu ERP once the device is connected, and what HR does every day and month.

How it fits together

1. The person puts a finger or face to the **device**.
2. The device sends the time and the person's device ID to Hesabu ERP. It is saved as an **Employee Checkin** with the type **IN** or **OUT**.
3. At a set time, Hesabu ERP reads the check-ins for each **shift** and creates one **Attendance** record per person per day: *Present*, *Half Day*, *Absent* or *On Leave*.
4. Payroll counts the days from attendance. See Running payroll and payslips.

Before you start

- A biometric device installed and connected by our team. Contact us to set it up.
- Employees created. See Employees.
- Shifts created and assigned. See Shifts and rosters.
- The **HR Manager** role.

Steps

1. Link each employee to their device ID

1. Open the **Employee** record.

2. In the attendance section, enter the **Attendance Device ID (Biometric/RF tag ID)** (the number the person was enrolled with on the device).
3. Save. Every device ID must be **unique**.

Staff are **enrolled** (their finger or face registered) on the device itself, by whoever manages it. Keep the device's user list and your employee list matching.

2. Set up the shift for automatic attendance

1. Open the **Shift Type**.
2. Tick **Enable Auto Attendance**.
3. Choose how check-ins are read: - **Strictly based on Log Type in Employee Checkin**: use when the device sends IN and OUT. - **Alternating entries as IN and OUT during the same shift**: use when the device sends only a time. The first punch is IN, the next OUT, and so on.
4. Set the **Begin check-in before shift start time** and **Allow check-out after shift end time**, in minutes, so early and late punches count for the right shift.
5. Choose **Working Hours Calculation Based On**: *First Check-in and Last Check-out*, or *Every Valid Check-in and Check-out*.
6. Set **Working Hours Threshold for Half Day** and for **Absent**. Less than the first is a half day, and less than the second is absent.
7. Set the **Late Entry Grace Period** and **Early Exit Grace Period**, and tick **Enable Late Entry Marking** or **Enable Early Exit Marking** if you want those flagged on the attendance. See Shifts and rosters.
8. Set **Process Attendance After** to the date you go live, so old records are not changed. Tick **Mark Auto Attendance on Holidays** only if staff who punch in on a holiday should be marked present.
9. Save. **Last Sync of Checkin** shows when the device data was last read.

3. Check that it works

1. Ask two or three staff to punch in and out.
2. Open **Employee Checkin** and look for their records with the correct time and type.
3. The next day, open **Attendance**. You should see a record for each, created automatically.
4. Check the status against what you expected.
5. If a punch is not linked to a shift, open the **Employee Checkin** and click **Fetch Shift**.

4. Every day

- Look at **Employee Checkin** for the previous day to confirm the device is sending data. If there are none, the device or its connection is down. Contact us.
- Open the **Monthly Attendance Sheet** for a quick view.

5. Correct mistakes

Situation	What to do
Someone forgot to punch	The employee or manager creates an **Attendance Request** with the date and reason. When approved, attendance is created
A wrong punch	Open the **Employee Checkin**, and correct or delete it. Then recreate the attendance for that day
Person on approved leave	Attendance is marked **On Leave** from the leave application. See Leave types, allocations and applications
Device was off for the day	Enter the day's attendance manually, or create the check-ins by hand, with a note
Someone punched for another person	Treat it as a disciplinary matter. Correct the record and tell the HR officer

Always keep a note of why a change was made.

6. At month end

1. Run through the **Monthly Attendance Sheet**. Look for absent days that should be leave, and half days that need review.
2. Make sure all attendance is **submitted**. Draft attendance is ignored.
3. Run payroll. See Running payroll and payslips. Days absent and leave without pay reduce the salary.

Practical example

A shop opens at 8:00 with a 10-minute grace period. Wanjiru punches in at 8:04 and out at 17:02: present. Otieno punches in at 8:20 and out at 12:15, so his working hours are below the half-day threshold: half day. Kamau does not punch at all and has no leave, so he is marked absent. He tells HR he was in a meeting off site, and his manager creates an attendance request. After approval, he is changed to present.

Privacy and fairness

Fingerprints and face data are **sensitive personal data** under the Kenya Data Protection Act. Before you start:

- Tell staff what you collect, why, and who can see it, and get their **written consent**.
- Limit who can view attendance and check-in records. See Permissions and restricting access.
- Keep the device and its software secure, and delete data for people who have left, as the law and your policy require.
- Ask your lawyer to review your policy.

Hesabu ERP stores the **times** and IDs it receives. Whether the device keeps fingerprint templates, and where, depends on the device. Ask our team and the device supplier.

Important notes

- Biometrics tells you **when** someone punched, not whether they worked. Use it with supervision.
- The device clock must be right. A clock that is wrong by minutes causes false late marks. Ask us to check it if staff complain.
- Employees who work in the field or from home need **Attendance Requests** or manual attendance.

Common mistakes

- Two employees sharing a device ID.
- Forgetting **Enable Auto Attendance** on the shift, so check-ins never become attendance.
- Not submitting attendance before payroll.
- Editing an attendance record without recording why.

Troubleshooting

Problem	Likely cause
Check-ins appear, but no attendance is created	Auto attendance is off on the shift, the employee has no shift, or **Process Attendance After** is later than the check-in date
A person has no check-ins	Their device ID is missing or wrong on the employee record
Everyone is marked late	Wrong shift start time, or the device clock is out
An overnight shift shows absent	The shift crosses midnight and is not set up as a night shift. See Shifts and rosters
No check-ins at all	The device or its connection is down. Contact us

Who to contact

Our team, for the device connection and any change to it. Call or WhatsApp us with your workspace address and the device model.

Next steps

Read Running payroll and payslips and the HR officer guide.

Related documentation

- Attendance
- Shifts and rosters
- Running payroll and payslips
- Employees
- Leave types, allocations and applications