



Timetabling Policy and Procedures

Version 8

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Document Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change
1.00	Jul-14	Dean of Students	Approved in principle by Directorate
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7.01	Jan-16	Chief Information Officer and OCIO Business Manager	Update following Timetabling Project Sub Team meeting
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7.04	26-Feb-16	OCIO Business Manager	Update following Timetabling Project Team meeting
7.05	15-Apr-16	Chief Information Officer	Update following Timetabling Project Board meeting
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8	April 20	Timetabling team and Quality Office	For noting at Senate

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1. Introduction

Timetabling facilitates the class scheduling, academic staff timetables and student timetables including room allocation.

The process is shared between Registry and senior academic staff across the University and is supported by Estates and Facilities, Academic and Educational Developments and linked to processes within Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions and Management Information Systems (MIS).

2. Purpose, scope and structure

The purpose of the Timetabling Policy and Procedures is to:

- Establish key guiding principles for University timetabling arrangements
- Provide a timetabling system that meets the needs of students and optimises the University's accommodation and is as efficient as possible
- Define the core teaching hours per week, standard lesson duration, types of teaching space and types of teaching events
- Establish governance arrangements for the enforcement and monitoring of the Timetabling Policy and Procedures.

3. Responsibilities

This is a University policy developed and administered by the Registry who is responsible for providing, maintaining and enforcing it.

The timetabling arrangements, including the Timetabling Policy, will be reviewed annually by the Registry, Associate Deans and Director of RILC to ensure that they are consistent with developments across the University.

4. Guiding principles

The University timetabling arrangements are informed by guiding institutional procedures which aim to:

- **Support students**
 - Support the delivery of the highest quality learning and teaching
 - Have consideration of student needs when constructing timetables
 - Ensure that students are taught in the most appropriate teaching accommodation
 - Minimise student and staff travel across campus
 - Deliver personalised timetables for both staff and students, available online 24 hours a day, seven days a week
 - Provide easy access to timely and accurate timetabling and room booking information via the web
- **Optimise space utilisation and be as efficient as possible**
 - Provide a University-wide approach to timetabling and room booking
 - Optimise utilisation of the University's teaching space by using the full teaching week, the full teaching day and all suitable accommodation
 - Ensure that timetabling processes and the planning cycle are aligned with other related processes and planning cycles such as curriculum development, staff recruitment and student module choices
 - Ensure that all stakeholders use the same data sources

- Ensure that relevant validation and programme development committees consult with the Registry on the introduction of new programmes, and major changes to existing programmes, to assess the impact on existing timetabling and space requirements and observe the relevant deadlines for doing this.

5. Student needs

The timetabling team need to optimise teaching spaces throughout the working week. Where possible, the team will avoid known frustrations for students and construct timetables by aiming to meet the following:

- Students will have a maximum of **four** consecutive hours of teaching activity in any one day.
- Students will have a maximum of **six** hours of total teaching activity in any one day.
- Gaps in excess of **three** hours between classes on a single day will be avoided
- At least **two** teaching hours will be scheduled in any one day.
- Wednesday afternoons from 13.00 onwards will be free from teaching modules to enable undergraduate students to participate in sporting, club and society events.

However it should be noted that due to the complexities of timetabling across the University and particular requirements of some programmes the above will not always be possible. This includes timetables for students who have failed and are required to retake modules.

6. Teaching times

- **Teaching year and terms:** in line with the published [University academic calendar](#).
- **Teaching week:** core teaching week is Monday to Friday, weekends used for agreed specified programmes. This to be agreed by the programme team and confirmed at programme validation.
- **Core teaching hours:** 09:00 to 19:00 hours, up to 21:00 hours for agreed specified programmes.
- **Class start times and duration:** classes will start on the hour, with a duration integers capped at 3 for Undergraduate students and 4 for Postgraduate students. No classes will be permitted to start at times other than on the hour with the exception of Global Perspectives seminars which are permitted to have half integer durations and can start at half past the hour. The appendix lists the current types of teaching spaces and activities, together with a recommended maximum teaching length for each type of activity.
- **Class finish times:** classes should finish ten minutes before the nominal end time to allow staff and students to move from one class to another, and to allow the next occupants of a room to be ready in time for the next class or event.
- **Lunch breaks:** Lunch breaks will be an hour minimum.

The timetable will be constructed to balance the needs of students, avoiding timetable clashes, optimising space, and fitting in with the teaching times listed above.

7. Teaching Staff

- 7.1. Teaching staff are defined as academic staff holding posts which include teaching responsibilities, and external staff appointed to teach specific teaching events or modules. Teaching staff may hold full-time, part-time or Visiting Lecturer contracts.

- 7.2. The Heads of Programmes shall determine the allocation of teaching staff to teaching events with the support of the Associate Dean/Director of RILC/Faculty Manager.
- 7.3. Constraints on the availability of teaching staff for teaching during the teaching week are handled in accordance with the following policy:
 - 7.3.1. Academic Staff shall be scheduled to teach at any time during the teaching week (see Section 6)
 - 7.3.2. Part-time and external staff shall be scheduled to teach at a time specified by the faculty, in accordance with the contractual arrangements relevant to each individual. The Assistant Registrar – Student Records will establish staff teaching availability from the appropriate Faculty Manager and Associate Dean/Director of RILC or Assistant Dean.
 - 7.3.3. For staff with caring responsibilities, requests related to constraints around availability for teaching are handled in accordance with the University's Flexible Working Policy. In order to approve such requests, the Dean/Associate Dean/Director of RILC is required to sign the Teaching Availability Approval Form to confirm to the Assistant Registrar – Student Records that the request (i) has been considered in accordance with the Flexible Working Policy; (ii) has been submitted to Human Resources (HR will confirm what has been agreed to the Assistant Registrar – Student Records); and (iii) will not have a detrimental impact on the department's teaching.
 - 7.3.4. Constraints that are not related to caring responsibilities but which may still impact on availability for teaching are considered by the Dean/Associate Deans/Director of RILC, who are required to sign the Teaching Availability Approval Form to confirm that the request has been considered and will not have a detrimental impact on the department's teaching.
- 7.4. Associate Deans/Director of RILC shall be responsible for ensuring that teaching staff are available for teaching in accordance with the Timetabling Policy. Associate Deans/Director of RILC may delegate authority to make such decisions to a named individual.
- 7.5. Syllabus Plus shall hold the definitive record of teaching staff availability.
- 7.6. In accordance with the University's policy on equality and diversity, the University will make every effort to accommodate staff with individual requirements relating to disabilities. Staff requiring individual arrangements must inform their Faculty as soon as possible in order that they can be taken into account when scheduling teaching.

8. Teaching events

Teaching events are normally associated with an approved module, which may contribute to a programme leading to an award of the University. The format of modules includes the following information:

- Start date of the module
- Module duration in weeks
- Number of teaching events per week
- Format and duration of teaching events
- Teaching staff who will deliver the event

9. Prioritisation of rooming

For the purpose of this policy, teaching space is allocated in accordance with the following priorities (listed in order of priority):

1. Teaching activities. Priority is given to cases where a student or member of staff has a disability requiring particular arrangements or a reasonable adjustment.
 - a. Students' disability needs, balanced against the impact that these may have on the wider student experience.
 - b. The pedagogical needs of teaching programmes/modules, including any equipment and space requirements.
 - c. Classroom sizes, space utilisation per class student, and their implications for the student experience.
 - d. Length of course, in accordance with length of module.
2. End of term examinations.
3. Induction week and student registration.
4. Short and summer courses
5. Research Activities / Programme validation events / University open days and/or activities / Committee meetings

Other events will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis, e.g:

- One-off bookings for meetings (governed outside the Timetabling Policy).
- CPD activity.
- External bookings including conferences can only be accommodated if there is availability after all teaching activities, open days and other University activities have been booked.

It is assumed that if the requirements for equipment and room size are met, then the room is suitable for teaching. Any comments, complaints or suggestions regarding the layout, design, decoration, location, or ambience of a room should be directed to the Estates and Facilities Department and will not constitute good grounds for changing location.

Classes will be allocated to rooms on the basis of forecast requirements. Relocation of a class may be required, subject to significant deviation from the forecast, in order to achieve a best fit later, but there will be an aim to keep the impact to a minimum. The Timetabling Team will request relevant teams from across the University assist with forward planning to ensure that appropriate rooms are booked well in advance for anticipated events in the academic cycle. Rooms block booked in advance for student events (e.g. registration) should be released as soon as possible if not required so they can be booked externally for events by Conferences or ad-hoc room bookings.

10. Appendix

10.1. Teaching Activities

Activity code	Activity Name	Definition	Duration (60, 120, 180)
Teaching, learning and assessment activities			
DEMONSTRATION	Demonstration	A session involving the demonstration of a practical technique or skill.	60
EXAM	Exams	Final exams.	n/a
FIELDTRIP	Fieldtrip	Practical work conducted at an external site.	60, 120, 180
GROUP TUTORIAL	Group Tutorial	A meeting involving small group supervision, feedback or detailed discussion on a particular topic or project.	60
INDIVIDUAL TUTORIAL	Individual Tutorial	A meeting involving one-to-one, feedback or detailed discussion on a particular topic or project.	
LAB	Laboratory	Learning activity supported by IT.	60, 120, 180, 240
LECTURE	Lecture	A presentation or talk on a particular topic.	60, 120, 180
SEMINAR	Seminar	A discussion or classroom session focusing on a particular topic or project.	60, 120, 180
PRACTICAL	Practical classes and workshops	A session involving the development and practical application of a particular skill or technique.	60, 120, 180
School-specific activities			
CLINICAL SUPERVISION	Clinical Supervision	Class supervision received by students for client work.	120
PPD	Professional & Personal Development	Group reflection on personal and professional development.	60

RESEARCH SUPERVISION	Research Supervision	Supervision received by students when writing their dissertation / thesis.	60, 120
SKILLS	Skills Session	Small group learning and practice of generic counselling skills	60, 120
Other activities			
EVENT	Event	Pre-planned internal or external events, including student inductions, registrations, conferences etc...	60, 120, 180
MEETING	Meeting	Ad-hoc internal or external meetings	n/a

9.2. Teaching Spaces

- Cinema
- Classroom
- Design Lab
- Laboratory
- Lecture Theatre
- Meeting Room
- Photo Lab
- Practice Room
- Reuters
- Studio