

TIMETABLING AND ROOM BOOKING POLICY

Rev 2.3 (Jun 2023)

Procedures, Roles and Responsibilities

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Summary and Overview

Introduction

1. Timetabling and teaching-space management is designed to make best use of the estate for the benefit of all stakeholders and to progress the University towards the Strategy Map targets where possible.
2. In order to deliver an accessible and inspirational learning experience to:
 - a. inspire our students to attain the highest academic and professional standards,
 - b. ensure our students have a world-class University experience,
 - c. improve core processes and performance,
 - d. increase academic time for research and innovation,
 - e. create a sustainable environment which enables the University to meet its strategic objectivesthe University requires an effective method of managing teaching space.
3. This document sets out the University's policy, roles and responsibilities and procedures in respect of the production of the University's teaching timetable and the booking of teaching space.

Purpose and Scope

4. This policy covers all activities taking place in space attributed to teaching and learning on campus and all teaching and learning activities on campus regardless of space attribution. It does not cover the use of University spaces which are not attributed to teaching and learning and teaching and learning activities using non-University space.
5. This policy applies from the start of the academic year identified in the [revision history \(p. 11\)](#).

Guiding Principles

6. All scheduled activities covered under the scope of this policy will be held centrally in the University's timetabling software the use of which will be administered by Planning and Business Intelligence.
7. The data held in the University's timetabling software will be an accurate representation of what is forecast to happen and, as the year progresses, what actually happened on campus, to allow for effective staff, student, equipment and estate management.
8. Students are to be taught in the most appropriate teaching space available for the teaching and learning activities taking place and taking account of the resources and technologies required by staff in order to teach effectively.
9. The use of the system and the structures in place must facilitate accurate management information to be obtained regarding the use of space and staff resources.

The Teaching Year

10. The teaching year is defined by the University and the dates are published
11. Standard teaching takes place in three blocks throughout the year. These are defined by the University and may vary depending on the dates of things such as public holidays (See Appendix 1)

The Teaching Week

12. The University weekly timetable has a 7-day scope from 7.00am to 10.00pm beginning on Monday and ending on Sunday.
13. The scope for standard UG teaching is four full days and one-half day:
 - a. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:00 am to 6:00 pm
 - b. Wednesday 9:00 am to 1:00 pmEfforts will be made to reduce the length of the standard teaching day where possible. In some areas, it will be impossible not to deliver teaching on Wednesday afternoons.

Teaching Activity

14. A teaching activity is a group of teaching events spanning a module year with the same event category and student population. As an example a module may have 1 lecture event each week which all students attend and 3 seminar events each week with 1/3 of the students at each seminar, there would be four teaching activities for this module.
15. Teaching activities should be assigned staff members and week numbers to facilitate automated scheduling.
16. Teaching activities can be assigned specialist room types.
17. Teaching activities should not be assigned specific rooms or time periods in the week by schools without consultation with Planning and Business Intelligence.

Teaching Events

18. A teaching event is defined as a single occurrence of a teaching activity.
19. All teaching events must be added to the timetable by School or Central timetable staff. The ad-hoc room booking system must not be used to scheduled teaching events
20. Where possible the duration of timetabled activities should be in whole hour multiples to avoid under-utilisation space.
21. Details of all undergraduate and postgraduate taught events in space attributed to teaching and learning must be held within Scientia without exception.
22. Teaching events are given an activity type. These are categorised according to Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) to facilitate matching teaching activities to funding categories.
23. All teaching and learning events must appear on a student's timetable unless agreed otherwise with Planning and Business Intelligence and the Space Management Group. The aim is to include all University driven student activities, not simply academic module teaching (e.g. self-guided study, personal tutorial etc.)
24. A teaching event may be timetabled if it or a part of it is optional for the student; however, capacity must be assured for all possible students attending at the same time. If the attendance of the students is managed locally to assure that not all attend the event at the same time, then this must be reflected in the timetable by separating the event into multiples.

Teaching Space

25. A register of space attributed to teaching and learning or other timetabled activities will be held by Planning and Business Intelligence and kept up to date within the Scientia system. The system will also include 'virtual space' that is referenced for information (e.g. Off site, specific meeting points etc.)
26. All space used for, or suitable for, teaching and learning must be held on the teaching and learning space register and be made available for automated and ad hoc scheduling.
27. Teaching space can be defined as specialist in consultation with Planning and Business Intelligence however care must be taken to ensure this specialism is as broad as possible to allow as many students to use the room as is practicable.
28. When developments at School level require the conversion of general teaching space for specialist or other purposes, this should be discussed and agreed with the VCO, who will consult Planning and Business Intelligence about the impact on timetabling across the University. Such conversations should take place at an early stage in the development of new courses, modules or changes in delivery.
29. Any suitable space on campus which is unused for one full term, where there are no intentions for the space to be used for teaching and learning will become teaching and learning space for the subsequent term provided that this will not have an evidenced negative effect on the University's overall strategic aims.
30. Schools and services may be fined for booking rooms and failing to use them, and for systematically block booking spaces which are not then regularly used at the times indicated. Spot checks will be undertaken.

Teaching Staff

31. Teaching staff are defined as staff on an academic contract with an element of teaching.
32. The School shall determine the allocation of teaching staff to teaching and learning activities using any local method.
33. Teaching activities can be assigned to more than one staff member in order to facilitate auto-scheduling but teaching events must be a true reflection of the staff member(s) projected to be present in the room during that event.
34. Staff will not ordinarily be timetabled for two consecutive events between 12:00 and 14:00.
35. Access to space for staff with a disability is a priority and must follow the institution's policy on disability access.
36. Staff will not ordinarily be timetabled for all five standard days in any teaching week.
37. Staff timetabled teaching demands will comply with the standard academic staff 'Duties and Hours of Work'

Students

38. For full-time, undergraduate students, classes can be scheduled any time during standard teaching times and students are expected to be available to attend during these times.
39. Students will not ordinarily be timetabled for two consecutive events between 12:00 and 1400 where practicable.
40. Students will not ordinarily be timetabled for more than four consecutive hours. If events run for four hours or more, then a break from the event should be given by the staff member to the students of no fewer than 20 minutes.
41. Access to space for students with a disability is a priority and must follow the institution's policy on disability access.
42. Students will be timetabled in their home zone whenever possible and this zone will generally be where their course administration offices are located.

Non-teaching events

43. Non-teaching and learning events cannot normally be held during standard teaching hours in peak teaching weeks unless booked through the web room booking system. Where there is an urgent need for space for non-teaching activities then only Deans may make the decision to prioritise those activities over teaching activities for their own students, even when this means re-allocating student teaching - this should be kept to an absolute minimum. Staff should seek to timetable non-teaching activities outside standard periods wherever possible. The DVC will arbitrate where there are inter-school disputes with respect to the use of space for non-teaching activities.
44. The exceptions are Open Days for which space will be found institutionally and Applicant Visit Days, for which space must be allocated by the individual school in negotiation with other schools where necessary.
45. Student Society bookings are made via the Student Union Societies staff.

Roles and Responsibilities

Space Management Group

46. The strategic development of the use of University space that is used in University driven student activity is the responsibility of the Space Management Group. It is overseen by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and has its own terms of reference and membership remit.

Planning and Business Intelligence

47. Planning and Business Intelligence is responsible for determining the detail of the annual procedure for schools to follow regarding the use of the Scientia software.
48. The Service is also responsible for the automated scheduling of teaching events, the maintenance of the register of rooms used for teaching and learning activities, the development and maintenance of the University's timetable website via T4 and providing guidance to all users of the system when necessary.
49. The Service is responsible for policing the data within the Scientia system to ensure it is consistent with the policies contained within this document.
50. Production of reports on KPIs requested by the Space Management Group will be the responsibility of Planning and Business Intelligence.
51. Planning and Business Intelligence will chair and minute the Timetable Users Group.

School Timetablers

52. School timetablers are expected to follow the annual procedure as set by Planning and Business Intelligence and to liaise with the Service if completion of any task is not possible in the time specified.
53. School timetablers must liaise with the School to collect all required data for automated scheduling and ad hoc scheduling.
54. It is the School timetablers' responsibility to ensure that the data within Scientia is an accurate representation of what is projected to happen and post-event what has actually happened on campus including which staff members were actually in the room at the time with the exception of events cancelled due to staff illness which must remain on the system provided the illness is for less than two full weeks.
55. The Central Timetabling Service and School timetablers will work together ensuring the all staff hostkeys within Scientia are updated to match the staff members' unique ID as defined by Planning and Business Intelligence within a reasonable time period to facilitate matching Scientia data against HR data.
56. School timetablers must prioritise attendance at the Timetable Users Group and seek to send a substitute should attendance be impossible.

Schools

57. It is the individual schools' responsibility to ensure that current institutional policies regarding staff workload are followed when allocating staff to teaching activities.
58. Schools must ensure that modules are validated in a timely manner and entered onto the student records system for inclusion in the timetable system except where unavoidable external imperatives exist.
59. Schools must also ensure that school timetablers have the resources and information needed to undertake the task of scheduling.

Teaching Staff

60. It is the teaching staff member's responsibility to read, check and respond to timetables within three weeks of the draft timetables being published. Any changes required by an academic staff member after this three-week period may not be incorporated into the timetable due to the detrimental and onward effect the changes would have on the timetable.
61. Teaching staff must leave teaching spaces in a tidy condition, ensuring that whiteboards/blackboards are cleaned at the end of each teaching event, furniture is returned to its standard configuration, AV equipment and lights are turned off and all additional teaching materials are removed.
62. Teaching events must finish at least ten minutes before the scheduled end of the event to allow for the subsequent room event to begin promptly.
63. It is the teaching staff member's responsibility to ensure that the relevant school timetabler is made aware of teaching activities or events that are cancelled, moved to another room or have a change of staff member from the officially documented timetable.
64. Teaching staff should regularly check their timetables using the online system. There is an iCal feed made available for staff as an alternative view of the timetable. It is helpful to those planning non-teaching activities if teaching staff can use their Microsoft Outlook calendar to store the teaching events they are attributed to, though there is an acknowledged time penalty associated with this.
65. Where there are issues with the attendance monitoring system then Teaching staff should report this to the appropriate office, but it is also useful for them to report it to the timetable team where this is different.

Students

66. Whilst teaching event clashes are actively avoided within the timetabling system, it is the student's responsibility to notify the school office of any teaching event clashes which do unfortunately affect their ability to attend all of their scheduled activities.
67. It is the student's responsibility to regularly check their timetable for any changes and additional events.
68. It is the student's responsibility to reach timetabled sessions on time and register their attendance where required.

Estates and Facilities

69. The Estates and Facilities Service is responsible for ensuring that there is always enough suitable teaching space for all necessary teaching activities to take place throughout the year and will work towards having sufficient space to allow for contingencies across all room sizes and specifications.
70. Refurbishment of space on the teaching space register should not normally take place during standard teaching weeks.
71. Any refurbishment of space on the teaching space register must be booked into the Scientia system at least two months prior with liaison with the school in which the space is nominally attributed to ensure that the impact on students taught outside of standard teaching weeks is kept to a minimum.

Computing Services

72. Computing Services will ensure that there is always an available timetabling system in place that is maintained and supported as specified by the software supplier.
73. Computing Services are responsible for liaising with Planning and Business Intelligence and the software provider where the timetable system does not adequately meet the needs of the University as determined by the Space Management Group and implementing any fixes and upgrades advised by the provider in a timely manner.

Student Services

74. In accordance with University policy student services must ensure that the relevant school and Planning and Business Intelligence are made aware of any adjustments that are required and that school staff are trained to understand the importance of reasonable adjustments for students.
75. Student Services must notify the school where there will be support personnel present in a teaching event to ensure that the maximum capacity of the room is not exceeded

Procedures

The Timetable Process

76. Planning and Information Services will maintain the procedures documentation and will produce a process plan which will be regularly updated throughout the cycle and be made available to all school timetablers through the Timetable Users Group. This documentation is transient both proactively and reactively and so is not available to this policy.

Constraints

77. The Space Management Group will maintain a list of constraints and consult on changes to the list, currently the constraints are (with no preference for one over another):
 - a. Full-time undergraduate students should not normally be timetabled outside of standard teaching hours.
 - b. Students should not normally be timetabled for two consecutive events between the hours of 12:00 pm and 14.00pm.
 - c. Students will not ordinarily be timetabled for more than four consecutive hours.
 - d. Staff should not normally be timetabled for two consecutive events between the hours of 12.00pm and 14.00pm.
 - e. Staff should not be scheduled for five consecutive days of teaching.

Timetable Publication

78. The draft timetable will normally be open to staff in a phased distribution determined by Schools, by the first Tuesday in June with a three-week window for feedback.
79. The draft timetable will normally be open to continuing students by the first Tuesday in July.
80. Full publication to all students will normally be by first Tuesday in September.

See Appendix 1 for actual dates.

Room Bookings

81. All requests for rooms must initially be made through the web room booking system when available. Planning and Business Intelligence or School Timetablers are only to be consulted by staff regarding room booking if there is no available room and no possible way to change the date or time of an event. In this instance a room cannot be guaranteed.
82. Estates and Facilities must be consulted for room access and layout for each room booking made through the web room booking system.
83. The Web Room Booking system should be available to staff from the fourth Tuesday in September (See Appendix 1 for actual date)

Review of the Timetabling Policy

84. This policy will be regularly reviewed by Planning and Business Intelligence such that any major changes can be presented to the Teaching Space Management Group and ultimately to The University Teaching and Learning Committee and/or the Senior Management Team for approval.
85. The implementation of the policy will be audited by Planning and Business Intelligence using available data and in conversation with the School Timetablers and Students' Union. The results of any audit will be passed to School Managers for comment before being presented to the Teaching-Space Management Group.

Appendix 1 - Year Specific Information

Dates

The date in this appendix are year specific and so this appendix is appropriate only for the identified dates.

The Teaching Year 22/23

		Date	Day	Week Number	Number of weeks
Timetable database	Start	01/08/22	Monday	1	52
	End	30/07/23	Sunday	52	

Welcome Week	w/c	19/09/22		8		
Term 1	Start	26/09/22	Monday	9	12	
	End	18/12/22	Sunday	20		
Consolidation Week	w/c	09/01/23	Monday	24		
Term 2	Start	16/01/23	Monday	25	10	
	End	26/03/23	Sunday	34		
	Easter Holiday					
		Start	17/04/23	Monday	38	2
	End	30/04/23	Sunday	39		
Revision Week	w/c	01/05/23		40		

Publication Schedule

First draft to limited staff by	07/06/22	Tuesday	Distribution list managed by Schools
First draft to returning students by	05/07/22	Tuesday	
Full publication to all students	03/09/22	Tuesday	

Other Dates

Web Room Booking opens	27/09/22	Tuesday	
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The Teaching Year 23/24

		Date	Day	Week Number	Number of weeks
Timetable database	Start	31/07/23	Monday	1	52
	End	28/07/24	Sunday	52	

Welcome Week	w/c	18/09/23		8	
Term 1	Start	25/09/23	Monday	9	12
	End	17/12/23	Sunday	20	
Consolidation Week	w/c	08/01/24	Monday	24	
Term 2	Start	15/04/24	Monday	25	10
	End	24/03/24	Sunday	34	
Easter Holiday					
	Start	15/04/24	Monday	38	2
	End	28/04/24	Sunday	39	
Revision Week	w/c	29/04/24		40	

Publication Schedule

First draft to limited staff by	06/06/23	Tuesday	Distribution list managed by Schools
First draft to returning students by	04/07/23	Tuesday	
Full publication to all students	05/09/23	Tuesday	

Other Dates

Web Room Booking opens	26/09/23	Tuesday	
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Policy Sign Off, Ownership and Revision Information

Sign-Off and Ownership Details

Document name:	TIMETABLING AND ROOM BOOKING POLICY
Version Number:	Rev 2.3 (Jun 2023)
Equality Impact Assessment:	
Approved by:	The University Teaching and Learning Committee (UTLC) (under Chair's action)
Date Approved:	26/6/2023
Date for Review:	February 2024
Author:	Timetabling Manger
Owner (if different from above):	Head of Planning and Business Intelligence
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Related Policies/Procedures:	

Revision History

Version	Date	Revision description/Summary of changes	Policy Active From Academic Period	Author
V2.3	Jun 2023	References to times adjusted for on hour starts in 22/23. Appendix 1 updated for 23/24	23/24	D.Peberdy
V2.2	Sep 2022	Appendix 1 (year specific data) updated to hold 21/22 and 22/23 timetable dates	22/23	D.Peberdy
V2.1	Feb 2020	Appendix 1 (year specific data) updated to hold 20/21 timetable dates	19/20	D.Peberdy
V2.0	Feb 2019	Updated references to Planning, some refinement of language and slight alteration to timetable period scope description and staff allocation	19/20	D.Peberdy
V1.0	Feb 2018	First draft of new policy	17/18	D Peberdy (based on the previous policy by P Youngson)