

TIMETABLING AND ROOM BOOKING POLICY

Rev 2.5 (May 2025)

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 objectives
- the 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. The timetabling function of the University is overseen by the Central Timetabling Service as part of Planning and Business Intelligence
7. 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 the Central Timetabling Service.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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

11. The teaching year is defined by the University and the dates are published
12. 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

13. The University weekly timetable has a 7-day scope from 7.00am to 10.00pm beginning on Monday and ending on Sunday.
 14. 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 pm
- Efforts 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

15. 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.
16. Teaching activities should be assigned staff members and week numbers to facilitate automated scheduling.
17. Teaching activities can be assigned specialist room types.
18. 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

19. A teaching event is defined as a single occurrence of a teaching activity.
20. All teaching events must be added to the timetable by Central timetable staff, or other staff approved by the Central Timetable Service. The ad-hoc room booking system must not be used to scheduled teaching events
21. Where possible the duration of timetabled activities should be in whole hour multiples to avoid under-utilisation of space.
22. Details of all undergraduate and postgraduate taught events in space attributed to teaching and learning must be held within Scientia without exception.
23. Teaching events are given an activity type. These are used to make delivery plans as transparent and understandable to staff and students as possible. If required these can be mapped to Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) types.
24. 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.)
25. 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

26. 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.)
27. 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.
28. Teaching space can be defined as specialist in consultation with Planning and Business Intelligence and subject to periodic review by the Space Management Group, however care must be taken to ensure this specialism has the minimum impact on room flexibility possible to allow as many students to use the room as is practicable.
29. 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.
30. 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.

Teaching Staff

31. Teaching staff for the purposes of this policy are defined as staff linked to academic delivery.
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..

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 Resource Booker 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. Space for Open Days and Applicant Visit Days is requested by the Marketing Staff with responsibility of for those activities via the central timetabling service. Three weeks before the event those space requests are processed.
Space for Open Days is considered the priority and adjustments in other activities are made to accommodate them. For Applicant Visit Days any clashes with existing activities are negotiated between the marketing staff, the timetable service and school staff.
45. Student Society bookings are made via the Student Union Societies staff using Resource Booker unless the resource is unavailable on that system in which case the SU work with the Central Timetabling Service to book space.

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: Central Timetabling Service

47. The Central Timetabling Service manages use of and access to the University Timetabling System and other linked systems (for example the Resource Booker tool)
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 The Central Timetabling Service and more broadly the wider Planning and Business Intelligence team.
51. Planning and Business Intelligence will chair and minute the School Timetable Review Groups.
52. 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. Timetablers will liaise with the School to collect all required data for automated scheduling and ad hoc scheduling.
54. It is the Central Timetabling Service's 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.
55. The Central Timetabling Service will ensure the staff hostkeys within Scientia match the staff members' unique ID as provided by HR or Outlook data to facilitate matching Scientia data against HR data.

Schools

56. It is the individual schools' responsibility to ensure that current institutional policies regarding staff workload are followed when allocating staff to teaching activities.
57. 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.
58. Schools must also ensure that relevant staff are able to provide timetablers with the appropriate teaching delivery requirements and associated information needed to deliver a timetable in line with the timeline (see appendix 1).

Teaching Staff

59. 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.

60. 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.
61. 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.
62. It is the responsibility of the teaching staff member or their line manager to ensure that the Timetable Service is made aware of teaching activities or events that are cancelled or changed. If a room or staffing change is required, then that should be arranged with the Central Timetabling Service prior to the activity commencing unless in exceptional circumstances. In these cases the room change must be notified to the Central Timetabling Service as soon as is practicable after the activity ends..
63. 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, and it is not expected.
64. 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

65. 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.
66. It is the student's responsibility to regularly check their timetable for any changes and additional events.
67. It is the student's responsibility to reach timetabled sessions on time and register their attendance where required.

Estates and Facilities

68. 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.
69. Refurbishment of space on the teaching space register should not normally take place during standard teaching weeks.
70. 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

71. 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.
72. 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

73. 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.
74. 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

Timetable Group

75. The Timetable Group is the standing group associated with Process/System owner (Head of Planning and Business Intelligence) whose responsibilities as defined by SPPIB include:
 - a. Continuous improvement
 - b. Standardisation of processes
 - c. Achieving efficiencies
 - d. Generation of business cases and project management
 - e. Risk management
76. The Group reports into UTLC at least twice yearly.

School Timetable Operations Review Groups

77. With the centralisation of timetabling Planning and Business Intelligence, the service has set up School Timetable Operations Review Groups (STORG). These are to allow school nuanced commentary and feedback on each part of the timetabling cycle
78. STORG meetings are Chaired by the Timetabling Manager and facilitated by the timetabling service. Membership includes Timetabling Officers specialising in that school's area, the School Operations Manager, Academics responsible for key curriculum

decisions, and where appropriate, representatives from Technical, Course Operations and Quality teams.

79. STORG meetings are run 4 times a year at key points in the timetabling cycle and findings will inform changes in this policy where required and with consultation with the Head of Planning Business and Intelligence and the Timetabling Review Group. Findings are fed into the Timetable Group

Procedures

The Timetable Process

80. 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 Timetablers and relevant staff. This documentation is a living document that is updated both proactively and reactively and so is not included in this policy.

Constraints

81. 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):
- Full-time undergraduate students should not normally be timetabled outside of standard teaching hours.
 - Students should not normally be timetabled for two consecutive events between the hours of 12:00 pm and 14:00pm.
 - Students will not ordinarily be timetabled for more than four consecutive hours.
 - Where possible students will be given at least one day free of teaching per week
 - Staff should not normally be timetabled for more than four consecutive hours.
 - Staff should not normally be scheduled for five consecutive days of teaching per week.
 - The time between the start of the first activity and the end of the last activity on any day for both Staff and students should not normally exceed 8 hours

Timetable Publication

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

See Appendix 1 for actual dates.

Room Bookings

85. All requests for rooms must initially be made through the Resource Booker system when available. The Central Timetabling Service should only 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.
86. Estates and Facilities must be consulted for room access and layout for each room booking made through the Resource Booker system.
87. The Resource Booker system's availability is dependent on the resource being booked and the permission of the user to book that resource but, in general for most normally available rooms this should be from the fourth Tuesday in September (See Appendix 1 for actual date)

Review of the Timetabling Policy

88. This policy will be regularly reviewed by Planning and Business Intelligence such that any major changes can be presented to the Space Management Group and ultimately to The University Teaching and Learning Committee and/or the Senior Management Team for approval as appropriate.
89. The implementation of the policy will be audited by Planning and Business Intelligence using available data and in conversation with the School Timetable Operations Groups and Students' Union. The results of any audit will be presented to the relevant committees.

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 term dates given are for standard Full time UG teaching. Other teaching scopes will differ.

The Teaching Year 25/26		Date	Day	Week Number	Number of weeks
Timetable database	Start	28/07/25	Monday	1	52
	End	26/07/26	Sunday	52	

Welcome Week	w/c	22/09/25	Monday	9	1
Term 1	Start	29/09/25	Monday	9	12
	End	21/12/25	Sunday	21	
Consolidation Week	w/c	12/01/26	Monday	25	1
Term 2	Start	13/01/25	Monday	25	10
	Break	29/03/26	Sunday	35	
	Easter Holiday				2
	Restart	20/04/26	Monday	39	
	End	03/05/26	Sunday	40	
Revision Week	w/c	04/05/26	Monday	41	

Target Publication Schedule

First draft to limited staff	03/06/25	Tuesday	Distribution list managed by Schools
First draft to returning students	01/07/25	Tuesday	
Full publication to all students	02/09/25	Tuesday	

Other Dates

Resource Booker opens	30/09/25	Tuesday	
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The Teaching Year 26/27

		Date	Day	Week Number	Number of weeks
Timetable database	Start	27/07/26	Monday	1	52
	End	25/07/27	Sunday	52	

Welcome Week	w/c	21/09/26	Monday	9	1
Term 1	Start	28/09/26	Monday	10	12
	End	20/12/26	Sunday	21	
Consolidation Week	w/c	11/01/27	Monday	25	1
Term 2	Start	18/01/27	Monday	26	9
	Break	21/03/27	Sunday	34	
	Easter Holiday				
	Restart	12/04/27	Monday	38	3
	End	02/05/27	Sunday	40	
Revision Week	w/c	03/05/27	Monday	41	

Target Publication Schedule

First draft to limited staff	02/06/26	Tuesday	Distribution list managed by Schools
First draft to returning students	07/07/26	Tuesday	
Full publication to all students	08/09/26	Tuesday	

Other Dates

Web Room Booking opens	29/09/26	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 2.5 (May 2025)
Equality Impact Assessment:	
Approved by:	The University Teaching and Learning Committee (UTLC)
Date Approved:	28/05/2025
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Author:	Timetabling Manger
Owner (if different from above):	Head of Planning and Business Intelligence
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Compliance Checks:	Review of feedback from staff and students
Related Policies/Procedures:	

Revision History

Version	Date	Revision description/Summary of changes	Policy Active From Academic Period	Author
V2.4	Feb 2025	Adjusted to account for centralisation of Timetable Service. Appendix 1 updated for 25/26 & 26/27	25/26	D.Peberdy
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)