

# TIMETABLING PROTOCOLS

## Timetabling Guidance

### 1. Guiding Principles

To produce a timetable that:

- 1.1 Accords with the strategy of the University and encompasses innovation in developing new and existing programmes.
- 1.2 Enhances the delivery of high quality teaching and learning which enables all students to complete the requirements of their courses and contributes positively to their learning experience.
- 1.3 Makes the most effective use possible of student and staff time, space and facilities.
- 1.4 Is informed by and takes account of equality and diversity needs for both students and staff to ensure parity and fairness.
- 1.5 Ensures that students are taught in the most appropriate teaching accommodation and scheduled teaching always takes priority.
- 1.6 Ensures consistency and provide a unified approach to timetabling.
- 1.7 Takes account of different learning strategies and allocates space accordingly.
- 1.8 Is available in good time prior to the start of the academic session and is accessible to all staff and students.
- 1.9 Can meet unexpected contingencies; encompass' innovation in developing new and existing programmes.
- 1.10 Takes account of requirements of teaching and research.

### 2. Timetabling Protocols

- 2.1 Timetabling is a core process and underpins the University's principle objectives to deliver a high quality teaching and learning experience for all students as well as supporting the needs of academic staff and optimising the use of teaching/learning space. The following protocols aim to safeguard these principles.

In devising the timetable and in the allocation of space the following hierarchy shall apply as far as is practicable:

During the academic year, activities shall be prioritised as follows:

- Examinations (including national accredited examinations);
- Core undergraduate and postgraduate teaching;
- Optional undergraduate and postgraduate teaching;

- Elective undergraduate teaching;
  - Non-teaching events, including, academic events, staff development, outreach and conferences,
  - Validations, reviews, meetings;
  - Student bookings/student support;
  - Social activities.
- 2.2 Outside the academic year, examinations, teaching and learning activities will take priority, although advanced committed bookings will need to be honoured.
- 2.3 The timetable shall cover all staff-student teaching/learning contact activities for all years of all UG and PG courses offered by Keele, other than personal tutoring, self-study and unsupervised dissertation/project sessions.
- 2.4 Unless otherwise approved by the Timetabling Steering Group, all designated teaching spaces (except dedicated research spaces used also for teaching) shall be regarded as 'University rooms'<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.5 The duration of a timetable slot shall be one hour. All timetabling slots will commence on the hour, with 50 minutes of teaching and 10 minutes to allow for the room to be vacated and re-occupied.
- 2.6 The core working week shall be Monday to Friday and departments may extend teaching into Saturday and Sunday, for undergraduate<sup>2</sup>, postgraduate and CPD courses.
- 2.7 With the exception of Wednesday, the core working day for all courses offered in the full time mode shall be 9am to 6pm with a possible extension until 7pm<sup>3</sup> where the need arises to meet the demands of the academic programme.
- 2.8 On Wednesday, the core working day for all undergraduate courses offered in the full time mode shall be 9am to 1pm. The University aims to minimise teaching on Wednesday afternoons. However, in certain circumstances some teaching must be scheduled on Wednesday afternoons, these include postgraduate teaching, enrichment activities e.g. languages and some laboratory teaching.
- 2.9 In respect of part-time courses, the working day may extend to 9pm.
- 2.10 Wherever possible, no student or member of staff should be timetabled for more than four consecutive timetable slots. Where this does occur, staff and students shall normally have at least a one hour break.
- 2.11 All staff designated as research active should have time in the week where they are free of student contact. The formulation of the timetable will seek to

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<sup>1</sup> Former departmental teaching space should be allocated according to the priorities of the department and suitable fit, and then made available for general use.

<sup>2</sup> Undergraduate activities e.g. field courses

<sup>3</sup> Where an extension of hours is being considered, individual carer requirements for both staff and students will be taken in to account where possible.

maximise time for research including, where appropriate, providing staff with a research day.

- 2.12 A member of staff should be named against all scheduled activities on the timetable.
  - 2.13 Within the priorities of 2.1 above, the activities with the largest numbers of students shall be timetabled first.
  - 2.14 The facilities required for an activity should be matched to the facilities available.
  - 2.15 Timetables should be published as early as possible, but no later than 15 September for semester 1 and 15 December for semester 2 in a unified electronic format.
  - 2.16 Any changes to timetables, after their publication, must be kept to a minimum so as to avoid unnecessary disruption across other Schools. Examples of where changes to timetables may occur include:
    - Evaluation of a module by students resulting in a module delivery being changed
    - Change in student numbers (where the allocated room is now too small/large)
    - An allocated room or building is unsuitable for Health & Safety reasons
    - Reasonable adjustments are necessary to accommodate students and staff with special arrangements
    - An allocated room does not provide the required teaching facilities needed
    - Changes to timetables must be notified to students in a professional manner
    - Staff illness
  - 2.17 Changes to the timetable due to planned construction/ maintenance work will be kept to a minimum as such works will be scheduled in advance in liaison with Timetabling.
  - 2.18 All teaching must be scheduled within the relevant timetable block<sup>4</sup>.
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<sup>4</sup> Except Single Honours where the activity is not shared with another cohort e.g. Dual Honours