



# Timetabling and Room Booking Policy

Version number 1.7

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Policy owner:	Academic Registrar

## 1. The guiding principles of the policy are to:

1. Ensure the University's commitment to delivering the best possible timetable for our students. Ensure that student and staff time, University space and other resources are scheduled effectively across the institution.
2. Ensure that all staff involved in timetabling:
  - Are aware of their responsibilities in the timetabling process;
  - Engage fully with the timetabling process; and,
  - Meet associated deadlines.
3. Ensure that students are taught in the most appropriate teaching accommodation available.
4. Ensure that University space is managed effectively to support learning and teaching.
5. Ensure all activities, whether for teaching, examinations, or other activities that require the allocation of space are managed within the University's approved timetabling and room booking system.
6. Ensure that students and staff have easy access to accurate, up-to-date timetable and room availability information.
7. Optimise the utilisation of University space (including teaching and examination space, meeting room space and other resources).

## 2. Teaching times and examination periods

- 2.1 The University's terms and semester dates are available at:  
<https://le.ac.uk/about/info/term-semester-dates>
- 2.2 For the majority of programmes the teaching year is split into two semesters over three terms:
  - Term one has 11 teaching weeks and 1 induction week.
  - Term two has 11 teaching weeks and 1 exam week.
  - Term three has 1 revision week and 3 exam weeks.
- 2.3 The standard University teaching hours are from 09.00 to 18.00, Monday to Friday.
- 2.4 All classes will be scheduled to commence on the hour and finish ten minutes before the scheduled finish time to allow for changeover. Any non-teaching activity utilising teaching space during teaching hours must adhere to these timings to avoid disruption to teaching.
- 2.5 The University's Examination periods are available at:  
<https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/sas2/assessments/examdates>
- 2.6 Examinations may be held Monday through to Saturday inclusive and could be scheduled for up to three sessions per day, including a late afternoon session in exceptional cases, and subject to timetabling requirements.

## 3. Scheduled teaching

- 3.1 The University timetabling process will be managed by the Timetabling Business Process Owner supported by the Timetabling, Examinations and Room Booking Team, and Timetabling Coordinators. Please see Appendix 1 for role definitions.



- 3.2 The Timetabling Business Process Owner will publish a [Timetable Production Schedule](#) for each academic year.
- 3.3 To avoid post publication changes, all academic and professional services staff involved in timetabling are required to meet the deadlines set out in the [Timetable Production Schedule](#).
- 3.4 Teaching for undergraduate students should not normally be scheduled after 13.00 on Wednesdays to allow students to participate in co-curricular activities and sporting activities. Exceptions to this may include activities accommodating or delivered in conjunction with external partners, occasional activities requiring large scale student attendance (e.g. departmental tests) or where availability of specialist equipment makes this unavoidable. Undergraduate students in the Schools of Medicine and Allied Health Professionals are also an exception.
- 3.5 Every effort will be made to ensure that students and staff do not have to attend two single hours of teaching at the extremes of the day (e.g. 9.00 and 17.00 classes on the same day, with no teaching in between).
- 3.6 Wherever possible, staff and students will not be assigned more than four consecutive hours of teaching without a break. A lunch hour will be incorporated into the timetable where three consecutive hours fall across the times 12.00-15.00. It is recognised that there may be exceptions to this, for example long practical sessions lasting four or more hours during which time breaks are organised informally within the session.
- 3.7 All University timetabling staff are responsible for working together to produce a clash free timetable wherever possible. The Timetabling, Examinations and Room Booking Team may be involved in facilitating negotiations to find the best outcome for all parties and ensure the successful delivery of all programmes.
- 3.8 Major / Minor degree programmes may include some elements of delivery via lecture capture (Reflect) or other means owing to the high level of module combinations and resulting scheduling complexity.
- 3.9 Modules with enrolments exceeding the capacity of the largest single venue on campus will require double teaching and / or live streaming between multiple venues. This may also be a requirement for any other large lectures and some large laboratory-based classes where, owing to the competing demands placed on the estate, a single venue of the appropriate size cannot be allocated.

## 4. University space

- 4.1 All space within the University is considered to be a University-wide resource. Spaces are categorised as follows:
  - 4.1.1 Teaching space;
  - 4.1.2 Examination space;
  - 4.1.3 Specialist space;
  - 4.1.4 Conferencing space;
  - 4.1.5 Sports and Active Life space;
  - 4.1.6 Meeting space; and,
  - 4.1.7 Student experience space.
- 4.2 Teaching space is defined as all teaching rooms (i.e. lecture theatres, seminar rooms, laboratories and PC suites). These spaces are allocated by the University's Timetabling, Examinations and Room Booking Team or the designated Timetabling Coordinator as per the agreed [business process](#).
- 4.3 Examination space is defined as any University space where exam activity could take place. This includes any University approved externally sourced space.
- 4.4 Specialist space is defined as University space containing specialist equipment or facilities (e.g. wet laboratory facilities) required for the effective delivery of certain programmes of study. In this case no substitution of rooms would be possible and the room would solely be used for this purpose.

- 4.5 Conferencing space is defined as University space used for internal and external conferencing events. This space includes all Stamford Court and College Court space and the booking and management of this space is out of scope of this policy document.
- 4.5.1 Sports and Active Life facilities are defined as University space used for sports and recreation. This space includes such spaces as the Danielle Brown and Roger Bettles Sports Centres, Charles Wilson Sports Hall, University Squash Courts and Stoughton Road Playing Fields, and the booking and management of this space is out of scope of this policy document
- 4.6 Meeting space is defined as any University space that is solely used for meetings. This space is not included in the teaching room pool. Exceptions to this are staff office space that is managed by the named occupier(s).
- 4.7 Student experience space is defined as any University space that is predominantly used by students as informal study areas or social activities. This space wouldn't typically be booked for other purposes, but may, on occasion be used for University events and functions. All student experience space will be recorded within the University's approved timetabling and room booking system and bookings should be directed to the Timetabling, Examinations and Room Bookings team.
- 4.8 The University is responsible for the utilisation and management of that space. All teaching, examination and meeting space must be managed within the University's timetabling and room booking system.
- 4.9 In some cases staff offices may be used for timetabled personal tutor activities. In those instances the staff offices must also be held in the University's approved timetabling and room booking system in order for the activity venue to be displayed in personalised calendars.
- 4.10 For all University owned space, Audio Visual equipment (AV) is maintained by Learning and Teaching Room Support (LTRS) and the physical environment is managed by the Estates and Campus Services (ECS) Division.
- 4.11 Teaching space may be allocated for non-teaching activities once the room allocation for teaching activities has been completed in accordance with the [Timetable Production Schedule](#). Meeting space can be booked at any time independent of the Timetable Production Schedule.
- 4.12 All other University space is managed by Estates and Campus Services and is outside of this policy.

## 5. Space allocation responsibilities

- 5.1 The Timetabling, Examinations and Room Booking Team are responsible for the allocation of space to all teaching and examination activities.
- 5.2 Timetable Coordinators are responsible for the allocation of specialist teaching space (i.e. wet laboratories) to activities prior to the main scheduling process.
- 5.3 University Staff are responsible for managing their own meeting room bookings within the approved room booking system. Please see section 11.

## 6. Teaching activities

- 6.1 All teaching activities must be managed within the University's timetabling and room booking system in order to ensure:
- 6.1.1 Comprehensive and accurate staff and student timetables are produced;
- 6.1.2 The student experience is not negatively impacted due to incomplete records within downstream systems (e.g. attendance management and lecture capture);



- 6.1.3 The allocation of University space for teaching activities is optimal and fair; and,  
6.1.4 Any resource clashes are avoided.
- 6.2 Timetabling Coordinators and Module Convenors must work closely to ensure timetabling requirements are accurately recorded in the system prior to the deadlines outlined in the Timetable Production Schedule.
- 6.3 Module Convenors and teaching staff are responsible for:
- 6.3.1 Providing accurate module delivery information to their Timetabling Coordinator by the dates published in the annual schedule for curriculum planning and the [Timetable Production Schedule](#).
- 6.3.2 In the absence of an assigned Module Convenor, Directors of Learning and Teaching are responsible for nominating a suitable deputy to ensure the key University deadlines are met.
- 6.3.3 Immediately notifying their Timetabling Coordinator of unavoidable post scheduling/publication changes (as outlined in section 8 below). There may be a negative impact on students in relation to attendance management records, lecture capture and their personalised calendar if the Timetabling Coordinator is not notified.
- 6.4 Timetabling Coordinators are responsible for ensuring:
- 6.4.1 Teaching activities are correctly defined within the system so that any equipment or room requirements (i.e. lecture, seminar, laboratory, PC suite) can be allocated at the point of scheduling.
- 6.4.2 Teaching activity sub-group sizes are accurately recorded so that appropriate space can be allocated.
- 6.4.3 Overbooking does not occur due to artificially inflated event sizes. Exceptions to this may include class tests where additional spacing is required between candidates.
- 6.4.4 Team taught activities are entered as 'variant activities' within the timetabling system to ensure the responsible academic is reflected on personalised staff and student timetables
- 6.4.5 Any other individual preferences in relation to the allocation of space are not entered as timetabling requirements.
- 6.4.6 Communicating any issues with travel time for programmes scheduled at Brookfield. Issues must be communicated to the Timetabling, Examinations and Room Booking Team as soon as possible upon initial publication of the room allocations.
- 6.4.7 The system is updated immediately to reflect unavoidable post scheduling/publication changes (as outlined in section 8 below).

## 7. Scheduling priorities

- 7.1 Teaching always take priority over non-teaching activities during core teaching hours, with the exception of annual pre-booked University activities, including:
- Examinations;
  - Degree ceremonies;
  - Formal University committees and groups;
  - Careers fairs; and,
  - UCAS open days (normally held on Wednesday afternoons).
- 7.2 Regular, full semester, teaching activities take precedence over ad-hoc or uneven teaching patterns in the scheduling process. This makes the most effective use of space and aims to provide the best student experience.
- 7.3 Training and teaching activities provided by the Doctoral College for postgraduate research students will, wherever possible, be scheduled in consistent rooms, and may take priority over other activities.
- 7.4 If for a pedagogical or accessibility reason a specific, but non-specialist room, building or site is required, this should be requested during the Timetabling Data Collection period as outlined in the [Timetable Production Schedule](#). Where space is available, this will be allocated accordingly.



- 7.5 When allocating space to activities efforts will be made to maximise 'home base' teaching and to minimise travel time between consecutively scheduled activities.
- 7.6 Travel time will be taken into account between main campus and the Brookfield site. Due to the University's small footprint, the 10 minute change over time between activities is deemed to be sufficient to travel between all other buildings.
- 7.7 In line with the University's strategy and action plan on equality and diversity, the University will accommodate staff and students with, for example, disabilities, carer responsibilities, religious beliefs, etc. The University has a legal duty to be 'anticipatory' to the needs of disabled staff and students, including timetabling, rooms bookings and room access, and will always take this into account.

## 8. Post publication timetable changes

- 8.1 Changes to the published timetable are considered detrimental to the student experience and should be limited to those that are deemed essential to the delivery of a module or programme. Those with a negative impact include changes to:
- Date;
  - Time;
  - Duration;
  - Location; and,
  - Module delivery (change in number of sessions delivered).
- 8.2 Where teaching staff availability changes post timetable publication, and would cause one of the changes listed in section 8.1, Module Convenors are responsible for exploring suitable teaching staff alternatives to ensure the activity remains in situ. This is subject to Head of Department approval and should be explored prior to invoking the post publication change process. Please refer to section 6.3.3.
- 8.3 Post publication changes will only be made for the following reasons and where critical to the successful delivery of teaching, or where the student experience is negatively affected otherwise:
- Clash of staff availability due to the appointment of new staff, transfers or periods of notice;
  - Unexpected and unavoidable absence affecting the availability of teaching staff;
  - The scheduled room is unsuitable for purpose (does not contain the required working equipment, unexpected incident such as fire or flood); and,
  - Insufficient room capacity as a result of course and module changes, normally made within the first two weeks of the academic year.
- 8.4 Requests will be reviewed by the Timetabling, Examinations and Room Booking Team and any changes that are deemed to have a negative impact on the student experience will require approval from the Academic Registrar. *Schedule A* provides examples of "typical" acceptable/unacceptable change requests: this schedule will be updated as change requests are received.
- 8.5 Management reporting of departmental change requests will be published each semester in order to highlight patterns of change and identify areas of student dissatisfaction.

## 9. Availability of students

- 9.1 Full-time students will be expected to be available to attend teaching within the standard University hours, 9.00-18.00. (Except Wednesdays when it is 09.00-13.00 for campus undergraduate students). The exceptions to this are as detailed in section 3.4.
- 9.2 Teaching activities for part-time students will be scheduled according to the pattern approved for the programme.

## 10. Availability of teaching staff

- 10.1 Full-time staff will be available to teach within the standard University teaching hours which are from 09.00 to 18.00 Monday to Friday, unless an approved formal [Flexible Working](#) agreement is in place with HR and recorded in the Timetabling system. Informal agreements made locally will not be considered when scheduling teaching activities.
- 10.2 Part-time staff will be available on the basis of their contractual arrangements.
- 10.3 Personal preferences will not be accommodated as staff members who overly constrain their own availability to teach will have a negative impact on the timetable of their peers and the wider student body.
- 10.4 The timetable will aim to provide one day each week free of teaching commitments to allow full time staff on Teaching and Research contracts a period of clear time for undertaking research as part of their overall research activities, in accordance with the University's workload allocation model. The exact day may vary year-by-year or term-by-term, will not be a guaranteed day of the week and may be disaggregated across multiple days.
- 10.5 Where possible the timetable will also aim to take into account the scholarship time requirements of Teaching-focused staff in accordance with the University's workload allocation model.

## 11. Room bookings

- 11.1 University staff are able to book University space for non-teaching University activities (i.e. internal meetings and events). Where events are booked on behalf of external organisations, these must be made via [Leicester Conferencing](#).
- 11.2 No teaching activities are permitted to be made via the room booking process. Changes to teaching activities must follow the agreed [Timetable Process Schedule](#) or the post publication change control process.
- 11.3 Non-teaching room bookings may be reviewed by Estates and Campus Services and/or Security for safety purposes. In some instances, more information around the event may be requested from the booking party.
- 11.4 Booking requests should be made with the appropriate lead time for the event and should include sufficient information regarding the event type (e.g. total number of delegates and the number of external attendees).
- 11.5 Bookings will be confirmed as per the agreed [business process service level agreement](#), and will be dependent on the type of event, the point in the Timetable Process Schedule the request is being made, and subject to full information being provided in the initial request.
- 11.6 In the event of unexpected circumstances requiring emergency maintenance to the fabric of a room or its audio visual equipment, bookings may need to be rearranged. The affected booking party will be notified as soon as practically possible to discuss suitable alternative accommodation.
- 11.7 Student Society bookings may only be made by nominated society presidents. All other student bookings will follow the agreed [SU booking process](#).
- 11.8 A minimum of two weeks' notice must be given for all student society bookings.



- 11.9 Where an external visitor/guest speaker is attending a Student Society event, a [Visitor/Guest Speaker form](#) must be submitted to the Students' Union at least 4 weeks prior to the event. Bookings will not be confirmed until authorisation from the Students' Union is received.
- 11.10 Where conferencing, portering or catering is required for the room booking, the requests must be made to the relevant team.
- 11.11 Rooms must be returned to their original layout and left in an appropriate condition for subsequent users. Many rooms are used back to back throughout the day and there should be no assumption that Estates and Campus Services will service rooms in between bookings. All rubbish and catering must be disposed of accordingly.
- 11.12 All room users must familiarise themselves with the Safety Services ["Fire Action Notice"](#).
- 11.13 Bookings must not be made for the purpose of 'reserving rooms'. Such overbooking prevents available resources from being utilised fairly and equally for other staff.
- 11.14 The Timetabling Exams and Room Bookings Team reserves the right to withdraw room booking privileges from staff who fail to adhere to the guidance set out above.
- 11.15 Room bookers must familiarise themselves with the University's Prevent guidelines: <https://www2.le.ac.uk/staff/working/safeguarding/prevent/about>

**To come into effect from 2019/20:**

- 11.16 Reoccurring and multi day bookings should be made as individual room booking requests to support self-service management of changes and/or cancellations.
- 11.17 Bookings can be made on a rolling 12 month basis for dedicated meeting rooms.

Academic Registrar

Student and Academic Services

7 February 2017 / Rev. 3 March 2017 / Rev. 9 May 2017 / Rev. 9 June 2017 / Rev. 24 May 2018



## TIMETABLING POLICY

### SCHEDULE A: CHANGE REQUEST LISTING

The following will normally be acceptable reasons for requesting a change to the published teaching timetable:

- Clash of staff availability due to appointment of new staff
- Clash of staff availability due to resignation of staff members
- Staff illness
- Unexpected and unavoidable staff absence due to caring for dependents (usually illness)
- Scheduled room is unsuitable for purpose due to the required equipment not being present/working
- Insufficient room capacity as a result of course and module changes made within the first two weeks of the academic year
- Compassionate leave agreed through the normal HR procedure
- Accessibility reasons
- Staff unavailability due to other work commitments which could not have been avoided by planning ahead e.g. late acceptance of a paper at conference, short notice research project/partnership events

The following will not normally be acceptable reasons for requesting a change to the published teaching timetable:

- Failure to engage with the timetabling process schedule and associated activity deadlines
- Annual leave
- Staff unavailability due to other work commitments which could otherwise have been avoided by planning ahead prior to timetable publication e.g. department committees, conferences
- Scheduled room is disliked by staff member
- Commuting to work arrangements
- School holidays
- Regular school drop-off/pick-up

## Appendix 1

### Timetabling, Examinations and Room Booking Team Roles & Responsibilities

#### Timetabling, Examinations and Room Bookings Process Owner

- Operational responsibility for the end-to-end process
- Responsible for those carrying out the process steps across the institution
- Prime source of knowledge and/or expertise for the process
- Responsible for ensuring the process is delivered efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of all students and staff
- Authority to manage, recommend and oversee process changes
- Responsible for embedding a culture of continuous improvement and measurable process performance
- Responsible for developing the academic administration networks across the University through a matrix management structure for process delivery

#### Timetabling Coordinator

- Operates within the end-to-end process
- Provides local knowledge for particular School/Department/Teaching Area
- Uses understanding of curriculum structure to create teaching delivery
- Schedules activities at relevant dates/times to avoid clashes
- Monitors student numbers and creates relevant pathways
- Allocates students to sub-groups
- Facilitates review of the timetable prior to publication
- Reviews activities post-Clearing and manages post-publication changes

#### Timetabling Expert

- Oversees the end-to-end process
- Timetabling point of contact for institution/overall teaching timetable
- Ensures new data set is requested with relevant activity templates rolled over
- Monitors the scheduling of activities and manages the allocation of locations throughout the timetabling building process
- Management of scheduling problems and their resolution
- Removes planning student sets at appropriate time to facilitate allocation of students to sub-group events
- Rooms activities based on requirements following timetable building process ensuring a clash free timetable that adheres to student/staff/module/course constraints and the timetabling policy
- Review change requests throughout the scheduling process
- Publication of the timetable to students and staff
- Monitors data integrity of information feeding into downstream systems
- Provides holistic timetabling training and support
- Responsible for providing management information data regarding timetabling as required



### **Exams & Room Booking Coordinator**

- Oversees the end-to-end process
- Exams point of contact for the institution
- Publishes important exam information and produces process schedule for exam timetable production
- Ensures student and module assessment data is accurate
- Engages with Schools/Departments/Teaching Area to check assessments and departmental constraints/sequencing requests
- Reviews constraints/sequencing requests with module assessment data and updates the University's exam application
- Creates exam profile and schedules exams including room and seat allocation
- Produces draft exam timetables for Schools/Departments/Teaching Areas for review prior to publication
- Organises exam support by collaborating with internal/external stakeholders
- Collates examination materials and produces exam packs for invigilators and exam room signage
- Provides frontline exam support as first point of contact for all staff/students
- Assist with and process unfair means cases, record, securely store and sign out exam scripts
- Provide holistic exams support
- Responsible for providing management information data regarding exams as required

### **Room Bookings Administrator**

- Room Bookings point of contact for the institution
- Manages ongoing booking requests and responsible for maintaining Resource Booker
- Updates location constraints, room information and ensures fixed/recurring bookings are made prior to the scheduling of the teaching timetable, holding future year bookings until the teaching timetable has been roomed
- Monitors booking changes and stakeholder communications
- Responds to major incidents/campus redevelopments to take locations offline post-timetable publication
- Responsible for providing management information data regarding room bookings as required
- Assists with space audits and documentation