Academic Timetabling Policy – 2023/24

This document should be read in conjunction with the Academic Timetabling Roles and Responsibilities document.

1. Teaching Day and Week

   a. The standard teaching day runs from 9:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday. All full-time academic staff should be available to teach within these hours unless alternative patterns of working are agreed with HR in accordance with the ‘Flexible Working and Time-Off for Training Policy’ or other recognised College procedures.

   b. Where possible teaching for undergraduate students should not be scheduled after 13:00 on Wednesdays to allow for sports, volunteering and participatory activities unless exemptions are agreed.

   c. Teaching activities will only be scheduled in multiples of 30 minute units (all units of an hour should be scheduled to start on the hour unless consecutive activities are being run).

   d. Teaching should commence at the scheduled start time (which is usually on the hour) and should finish promptly 10 minutes prior to the scheduled end time to allow for the changeover of activities.

   f. The academic year begins with week 1 being Welcome Week, then the numbered weeks following consecutively. The Academic Timetabling calendar and specific term dates will be made available on the College website.

2. Teaching Delivery

   a. All practical and interactive teaching activities of small to medium group-sizes are expected to be taught on campus unless exemptions are agreed or are specifically designed to be taught online (see c.)

   b. Large lectures can be delivered online but may be taught on campus where pedagogically appropriate. It is expected that the teaching for the module should encompass some activity which is in-person and taught on campus.

   c. Modules designed to be taught online, or include online or hybrid elements may be run where formally agreed. Noting that these should be limited to optional modules and will be limited within a degree course due to UKVI legislation requiring students to study the significant part of their course via in-person teaching.

3. Constraints on Teaching Availability

   a. All full-time research active academic staff are guaranteed the equivalent of at least one day a week free from timetabled teaching activities over the teaching terms.

   b. Any members of staff with formally agreed arrangements under the ‘Flexible Working and Time-Off for Training Policy’ (see 1a) should be notified to the Timetabling Team during the data collection process.

   c. Availability of part-time staff should be notified to the Timetabling Team during the data collection process.
4. Priority of Space

a. During standard teaching weeks regular teaching by Academic Departments, the International Study Centre (Study Group) and ULaw takes priority in all teaching rooms during teaching times as listed above (1a);
b. Priority will then be given to activities relating to essential College events and functions, encompassing the following:
   - Applicant Visitor Days (AVDs)
   - Careers Events
   - Orchestra/Music Events
   - College Events (such as those advertised in the ‘What’s On’ guide)
   - Enrolment & Induction Sessions
   - Other regular teaching – including CEDAS/Educational Development

c. Resource Booker will be opened once the academic timetable has settled for Schools to make other bookings.

5. Timetable Construction

Prior to Publication

a. To ensure the efficiency of the space allocation process and the appropriateness of allocated space, School Timetablers must check and/or provide as appropriate the following information for each teaching activity:
   - Module code
   - Description
   - Activity type
   - Weeks the event will run in (see 1.f)
   - Duration
   - Preferred Day/Time
   - Number of students expected to attend
   - Teaching staff who will deliver the activity
   - Any staff or student accessibility requirements
   - Equipment or room specific requirements

b. Priority with be given to full-term teaching (10 or more weeks).
c. Wherever possible, if School Timetablers need to request block mode teaching or odd week teaching they should make the least demand on overall room availability within the agreed week pattern numbering system (see 1.f). Requests for these activities must be given at the earliest opportunity and by the advertised deadline to ensure the requests can be incorporated into the timetabling process.
d. All scheduled teaching activities, including those online and in School space, must be notified to the Timetabling Team, so they can be included on student timetables.
e. Large and mandatory module activities will be given first priority when allocating rooms. Optional module activities and other teaching should be timetabled around these activities.
f. Once activities have been scheduled they must not be changed (even within the department’s timetable footprint) without reference to other departments affected because of joint students.
After Draft Publication

g. Department Timetabling Leads and Schools Timetablers should check the Academic Timetable and report any issues to the Timetabling Team and provide sign off by the required deadline.

h. Academic Staff should check the Academic Timetable and report any issues to their School Administration by the required deadline.

After Final Publication

i. Changes after the publication of the final timetable to Schools should be kept to a minimum and must be requested via the change request process. Timetabling can only accept changes for the following reasons:
   - Changes in staffing that are unavoidable (and could not have been notified earlier)
   - Significant student teaching clashes
   - Number of students exceeds safe capacity of room
   - Venue unsuitable due to Health & Safety or maintenance issues (these teams should be contacted by the School in the first instance to try to resolve the issue)
   - Staff long term sickness/exceptional circumstance

Any amendments have implications pertaining to student experience and the availability of suitable rooms. The Timetabling Team reserve the right to refuse a request.

6. Cancellation or Postponement of classes*

   a. The cancellation of classes should always be a last resort. In the event that a class has to be cancelled the member of teaching staff should first consider if alternative arrangements can be put in place – for example whether the class can be delivered online, covered by a colleague, learning activities set for students, sessions swapped around, or similar.

   b. If a session is missed teaching staff should make arrangements to ensure that the material that was to be covered in the class is made available to the students subsequently, either at the next class, through an additional meeting, or electronically, via Moodle or another means. In the event that an additional session needs to be run this should be discussed with the Department Timetabling Lead, School Administration Timetabler and Timetabling. Requests of this nature should be kept to a minimum and follow the change request process.

   c. In the event that the illness or other unforeseen situation extends beyond one session the School will put in place contingency arrangements to cover subsequent classes.

   *
   *This section does not apply to cancellations due to industrial action where separate guidance to staff will be communicated.

7. Teaching rooms

   a. All teaching rooms and their use will be recorded on the timetabling system

   b. All general purpose teaching space will be pooled.

   c. Highly specialist space, including science laboratories, drama and dance studios and rooms with specialist equipment, will be owned by Schools. This will be reviewed periodically to ensure that criteria of good utilisation is being met.

   d. PC laboratories used for general purpose teaching will be managed by the Timetabling Team.
d. School space which does not have a specialist function or contain specialist equipment and could be used for general teaching without detriment to the space should be made available for central timetabling during periods that it is not being used for School teaching. Timeslots when it is not in use should be given over to the Timetabling Team by the deadline given in the calendar of key dates and future bookings would need to fit around any activities scheduled by the Timetabling Team.

e. Teaching rooms are allocated on a best fit basis according to size, constraints and resources.

f. Food and drinks (other than water) should not be consumed in the teaching rooms.

g. The activity size should not exceed the size of the room allocated. The School is responsible for adhering to the published room capacities. If the activity size exceeds the room capacity, the School and Timetabling Team will work together to find a solution. This could involve double teaching, moving the activity online or changing the day and/or time of an activity.

8. Sources of Data

a. The authority on the right of occupancy of a teaching room shall be the Timetabling System (Scientia).

b. Banner will be the source data for departments, programmes of study, modules and student information appearing in the Timetabling System.

c. CAFM (Facilities Management System) will be the source data for room locations appearing in the Timetabling System.

d. CAFM/Estates and the Audio Visual Department will be the source data for room information.

e. Academic Departments/Schools will provide information on activities and staff availability.

f. Up to date timetabling information will be made available to staff and students via the Web Timetables.