

Academic Timetable - Academic Policy

1. Purpose of policy

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the University's objectives and operation principles in coordinating the production of the academic timetable for learning and teaching.

1.2 The primary objective is to produce a coordinated timetable that is equitable, effective and student focused and that will maximise the efficient use of the University's learning and teaching resources.

2. Policy scope and application

2.1 This policy applies to the timetabling of all learning and teaching activities at all campuses of the University, all students enrolled in those activities and the staff who teach those activities, excluding examinations, either central or otherwise.

2.2 Where courses are delivered by a third-party provider, the principles of this policy apply, however the timetable for that location is developed and managed by the third-party provider, to meet contractual obligations with the University. Note: The associated Academic Timetable – Procedures focus on the operationalisation of these principles for the University's managed facilities only.

2.3 The academic timetable does not schedule individual learning activities related to research projects such as higher degree by research students meeting with their thesis supervisors.

3. Definitions

Please refer to the University's Glossary of Terms for policies and procedures. Terms and definitions identified below are specific to this policy and are critical to its effectiveness.

Class means a lecture, tutorial, workshop, computer laboratory, laboratory session, field trip, practicum and other context in which teaching occurs, including any interactive sessions required for an online course.

Curricular and co-curricular activities refer to formal teaching activities (lectures, tutorial, laboratory sessions, etc.) and those additional activities that support student learning (enabling courses, Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS), academic skills classes).

4. Principles

4.1 The University's timetable supports the delivery of high-quality teaching, enabling students to learn effectively and complete the requirements of a course within the normal duration in accordance with the program outline.

4.2 All teaching and learning spaces will be scheduled in the timetable system.

4.3 The Timetable will enable students to: attend required courses; have a reasonable choice of electives; and, fulfil the requirement of an award within the expected timeframe.

4.4 The Timetable will be consistent with University policies and procedures relating to:

- (a) equity and diversity;
- (b) health, safety and wellbeing; and
- (c) space management.

4.5 Changes to the Published Timetable will be restricted to minimise disruption to students and staff.

4.6 Where possible, and pedagogically appropriate, Lectures will be scheduled into Teaching Spaces that contain lecture recording technology.

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Academic Board

RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE MEMBER

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

DESIGNATED OFFICER

Academic Registrar and Director, Student Services

FIRST APPROVED

4 February 2020

LAST AMENDED

27 June 2024

REVIEW DATE

6 February 2025

STATUS

Active

4.7 Whilst every effort is made to accommodate student choice, the Timetable may not allow for every student to attend their preferred combination of elective courses.

4.8 The timetable is structured to make use of available resources in a manner that provides appropriate facilities for the pedagogical needs of courses and supports the most effective learning and teaching practices.

4.9 Curricular and co-curricular activities take precedence over the activities of external organisations in regard to the use of University teaching spaces and resources.

4.10. Teaching hours and times

4.10.1 The timetable will be constructed within the official teaching hours of 8am to 9pm Monday to Friday and between the hours of 9am and 4pm Saturdays for all University teaching spaces at all campuses, with exception only where Local Authority regulations specify maximum hours of operation which would reduce these times. Classes may be requested to be scheduled outside these times however will require the appropriate approvals from Heads of Schools, Security (SafeUSC), or other relevant parties.

4.10.2 These teaching times do not apply to classes taught in intensive mode. Intensive classes may be scheduled between 9am and 4pm on weekends as well as during sessions. Intensive classes will not normally be scheduled between the hours of 8am to 9pm Monday to Friday during standard semester teaching weeks unless space is available after all other teaching activities have been scheduled.

4.10.3 All classes will normally be scheduled in full hour periods, or multiples thereof, and timetabled to commence on the hour. Scheduled activities will cease 10 minutes prior to the scheduled end time to enable subsequent classes to commence on time. The scheduling of classes will, as far as practicable, take account of the time necessary for travel across and between campuses.

4.11. Student focused timetabling principles

4.11.1 The development of timetables will incorporate support to learning for students by achieving reasonable and efficient utilisation of the University's physical and human resources for optimal schedules with full effort to provide the pedagogical requirements for courses.

4.11.2 The key principles that guide the construction of timetables include consistent and equitable treatment of students; effective and efficient use of the University's physical and academic resources; resource availability.

4.11.3 Classes will be scheduled into spaces of appropriate size and appropriate to the requirements.

4.11.4 Courses will be timetabled so that students who pass can complete the program in the duration set out in the program outline, provided that they follow the recommended study sequence advertised for their year of commencement or as per any approved transition arrangements in place for their program.

4.11.5 Students should be able to attend all specified required courses in accordance with standard course progression. Elective units will not be guaranteed to be clash-free unless limited in quantity / availability (such as for smaller campuses).

4.11.6 The timetable will be constructed in the consideration that staff commitments to teaching will take precedence over other activities to ensure greater scheduling flexibility to the creation of the timetable.

4.11.7 If external factors require a specific time commitment beyond the control of the staff member, every endeavour will be made to accommodate the request to the best of Timetabling ability as long as such requests do not compromise the university's commitment to clash free schedules.

4.11.8 Teaching staff may be required to attend more than one campus on the same day and classes will be appropriately scheduled to accommodate this travel.

4.11.9 In constructing the timetable it is assumed that all staff who teach or directly support teaching are available in accordance with the University teaching times as specified in section 4.10 above, except where a member of staff is employed on a part-time basis, or where a variation to these hours of availability has been approved by the Head of School.

4.11.10 The timetable will be available to teaching and support staff in 'draft' form, prior to publication, for feedback and resolution of identified scheduling issues.

END

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Academic Timetable - Procedures
- Enrolments and Graduation - Procedures
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion - Operational Policy
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing - Governing Policy
- Resources - Room Bookings - Operational Policy
- Space Management - Operational Policy
- Space Management - Procedures
- Students with a Disability - Academic Policy

LINKED DOCUMENTS

- Academic Timetable - Procedures

SUPERSEDED DOCUMENTS

- Academic Timetable - Managerial Policy