

Timetabling of Teaching and Learning Space Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) This document outlines University policy on the timetabling and ad hoc booking of space for teaching and learning activities. The primary objectives in implementing a University-wide timetable are to produce a timetable that is equitable, effective and complete; takes into account the needs of both students and staff; and maximises the efficient use of space and resources.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to:

- a. Melbourne (Bundoora); City (Franklin St); City Campus (Collins St); Bendigo; Shepparton; Albury/Wodonga; Mildura
- b. all courses
- c. all members of the University community

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(3) Student Administration (SA) will produce and maintain a central timetable. This timetable will take into consideration all University activities to ensure the optimal and equitable scheduling of teaching and learning spaces for delivery of the University's award programs and associated teaching and learning activities.

(4) When changes to the timetable are considered, the interests of staff and student experience and the accessibility of Core Subjects will be primary determinants. Teaching sessions will be timetabled on the basis of requirements set out in these Procedures.

(5) Student Administration is authorised to develop, publish, amend and maintain timetables independent of the University's academic governance bodies.

(6) Timetabling of space for teaching and learning activities take precedence over other uses.

(7) Teaching and learning spaces that are not required for University teaching and learning activities or assessment activities may be booked for other purposes according to the criteria and processes set out in these Procedures. These purposes must be compatible with the University's mission and goals, and the individuals, groups or organisations booking the space must comply with all relevant University policies and procedures.

(8) Adjustment to the academic timetable to accommodate non-teaching and learning activities will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Core Hours for Teaching and Learning Activities

Weekdays

(9) The University's Core Teaching Time for timetabling purposes are:

- a. Monday through Friday from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm (Day Session)
- b. Monday through Friday from 6.00 pm to 10.00 pm (Night Session)

(10) Teaching and learning activities will be scheduled first during the Day Session and then during the Night Session, except where a time slot during the Night Session is specifically requested.

(11) All teaching activities will be normally scheduled in full hour units and timetabled to commence on the hour or half hour. Classes will normally commence 5 minutes past the hour and finish 5 minutes prior to the hour.

(12) All efforts will be made to schedule teaching times so that staff and students have a one-hour lunch break and an evening meal break if required. Notwithstanding this, optimal utilisation of all teaching and learning spaces is the objective across all hours.

Weekends

(13) Teaching and learning activities may, on request, also be scheduled for weekend periods. Core operation hours on weekends are:

- a. Saturday and Sunday from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm (Day Session); and
- b. Saturday and Sunday from 6.00 pm to 10.00 pm (Night Session).

(14) University teaching and learning activities will not be scheduled during declared University Closedown periods (e.g. over the Christmas period).

Part B - Timetable Rebuild

(15) A Rebuild of the timetable will take place as determined by Student Administration to:

- a. ensure that teaching activities are not arbitrarily scheduled at the same time every semester/year
- b. realign the timetable with the University's teaching programs as they evolve
- c. provide an equitable and efficient use of space and resources
- d. take advantage of developments in teaching and learning technology and pedagogy.

Part C - Stages of Timetable Development

(16) Student Administration has the authority to develop, publish and maintain timetables; it does not require approval by the University's academic governance bodies.

(17) There are three stages of timetable development:

- a. Schools submit teaching and learning space requirements for the following academic year (Part F).
- b. The timetable is developed, and one or more drafts are released to Schools on a date or dates specified in advance by Student Administration. This allows comment, feedback, system and manual adjustments, inclusion

of recently approved Subjects (where possible) and information not known at the time of the initial submission (e.g. staff, program or other constraints).

- c. The timetable is released online to coincide with the re-enrolment period on a date specified in advance by Student Administration. This is a public document and changes to this timetable will only be made in exceptional circumstances (see Part D).

Part D - Valid Reasons for Changes to Final Timetable

(18) Changes to the final timetable may be approved by Student Administration only in exceptional circumstances and on request and justification by the Dean concerned. Valid reasons for changes to the Final Timetable include but are not limited to:

- a. unexpected staff turnover
- b. unavailability of equipment
- c. changes to estimated class size
- d. identification of a hazard in the booked room
- e. reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with special needs
- f. other unanticipated issues approved by Student Administration

Part E - Managing Changes to the Final Timetable

(19) Student Administration will action changes to the final timetable only where these changes have been endorsed by the Dean. If no agreement/endorsement can be achieved, the issue will be referred to the Deputy Director, Academic Services.

(20) Where the timetabling of a Subject is changed, it is the responsibility of the School that owns the Subject to notify the students enrolled in the Subject in a timely manner.

Part F - Submission of Teaching and Learning Space Requirements by Schools

(21) Student Administration will prescribe deadlines for the submission of School teaching and learning space requirements for the following academic year.

(22) The specifications Student Administration requires for developing the central timetable include:

- a. campus, teaching period and delivery mode;
- b. type, number, duration and frequency of classes;
- c. maximum class size (where appropriate);
- d. the type of teaching space required;
- e. anticipated enrolments (where they differ from forecast data provided by Market Research Unit) resources required.

Part G - Criteria for Resolving Clashes

(23) In resolving timetable clashes, Student Administration will apply the following criteria:

- a. Larger classes will have precedence over smaller classes
- b. First-year classes will have precedence over later-year classes

- c. Longer classes will have preference over shorter classes
- d. Specialist teaching space is to be used as far as possible for its designated purpose
- e. Specialist activities have preference over generic activities for specialist space

(24) Access for students and staff with disabilities takes precedence over all other considerations unless it causes unjustifiable hardship to the other affected parties. Where a resolution cannot be achieved, the issue will be escalated to the Deputy Director, Academic Services for a formal determination.

Part H - When Enrolments Exceed Room Capacity

(25) Enrolments will be actively monitored by Student Administration. When enrolments reach 90% of the capacity of the venue booked, Student Administration will engage with the School in question and suggest possible options to mitigate the effect of over-booking.

(26) The School must select one of those options in a timely manner and advise Student Administration of its preference so it can take appropriate action. If the School does not respond in a timely manner or enrolment exceeds 100% of room capacity, Student Administration has the authority to enact a decision on the School's behalf.

Part I - Ad Hoc Room Bookings

(27) Ad Hoc Booking requests will not be actioned until the second stage of development for the upcoming year has been released.

(28) Ad Hoc Bookings for time slots during Semester One or Semester Two will not be confirmed until two weeks prior to the start of the semester to ensure that Student Administration retains the necessary degree of flexibility.

Section 5 - Definitions

(29) For the purpose of this Policy and Procedure:

- a. Ad Hoc Booking: a casual booking of University space that is not booked for regular teaching activities.
- b. Assessment activity: a scheduled activity held during a teaching period contributing to the assessment of student capabilities against subject learning outcomes, such as examinations or presentations.
- c. Clash: an occurrence when students, staff or rooms have two or more teaching activities that run at the same time or which overlap.
- d. Class: a specific iteration of a teaching and learning activity, held at a specific time during a teaching period.
- e. Core subject: a mandatory subject that must be completed to satisfy the Course rules and regulations of an award program.
- f. Course: a combination of core subjects or core and elective subjects prescribed under an award program. Also refers to Program, Course or Study Package.
- g. Elective subject: an optional Subject, of which a certain number must be completed to satisfy the Course rules and regulations of an award program.
- h. Exceptional circumstances: for example, in the case of a directive by the Vice-Chancellor, a Deputy Vice-Chancellor or their delegate. Other circumstances deemed exceptional will be determined on a case-by-case basis and approved by the Chief Operating Officer or delegate, with precedents built up over time.
- i. Learning space: space is a generic term used for a particular, closed or contained area (interior or exterior); in which University activities are undertaken and which is managed as a physical asset. It is also considered and referred to as a resource.
- j. Non-standard teaching period: any teaching period that falls outside the University's six standard teaching

- periods; see Standard Teaching Period.
- k. Resource: Equipment, materials and other assets owned by the University, or a service that can be drawn on when needed for use or support by a person or organisation in order to function effectively, or to help with the achieving of an objective.
 - l. Standard Teaching Period: for any given academic year, any of the six main scheduled teaching periods approved by Academic Board
 - i. Semester 1 and 2
 - ii. Summers 1, 2 and 3
 - iii. Winter 1
 - m. Student: in the context of this Procedure means a student who has been offered and has accepted a place in a Course, incoming exchange program or single subject at the University.
 - n. Subject: a unit of study within a course.
 - o. Teaching and learning space: any location used to conduct teaching and learning activities.
 - p. Teaching and learning activity: a scheduled teaching and learning activity held during a teaching period, which may be a lecture, tutorial, seminar, laboratory, practical class, etc.
 - q. Timetable: a schedule of times set for teaching and learning classes to occur using the accessible resources and criterion, i.e. rooms, staff, teaching and learning criteria and constraints.
 - r. Timetable rebuild: complete re-creation of the timetable.
 - s. Timetable rollover: the current year's timetable data forms the basis of the timetable for the following academic period, updated as required to accommodate known changes in teaching, staffing, availability, building availability or other requirements, or in response to issues identified after the release of a draft timetable.
 - t. University closedown periods and University holidays: individual days or periods of time in which the University does not open. These include Victorian public holidays, a period at Easter and a period at Christmas/New Year. The specific dates of shutdown are published annually by the University in its Principal Dates Calendar.

Status and Details

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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University holiday" - Those days listed as University holidays under clause 41 of the Enterprise Agreement 2023.