Timetabling Management Policy

Section 1 - Key Information

Policy Type and Approval Body	Academic – Academic Board
Accountable Executive – Policy	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Responsible Manager – Policy	Director, Academic Services
Review Date	22 July 2029

Section 2 - Purpose

(1) This Policy sets out how the University achieves coordinated and consistent practices for the timetabling of teaching activities to ensure the timely production of a single optimised University timetable.

Section 3 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to all:

a. students and staff;
b. teaching spaces at the University on any campus for the following purposes:
    i. any teaching or learning activity that takes place within an award course or enabling program, including online or multi-modal subjects that require scheduling;
    ii. any short courses or other activities (see Part F).

(3) This Policy does not apply to:

a. teaching activities that take place on:
    i. the La Trobe Sydney campus;
    ii. offshore sites run in conjunction with third party teaching partners.
b. research-only spaces.

(4) The allocation of spaces to specific purposes, including teaching spaces, is managed under the provisions of the Space Allocation and Use Policy.

Section 4 - Key Decisions

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to La Trobe's Policy Library for the latest version.

Key Decisions	Role
Approval of changes to the published timetable prior to 4 weeks before the relevant teaching period	Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching)
Approval of changes to the published timetable less than 4 weeks prior to the relevant teaching period	Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) and the Director, Academic Services
Approval of a variation in a staff member's availability for teaching	Supervisor/Head of Department
Resolution of timetable clashes	Director, Academic Services
Resolution of room capacity issues	Director, Academic Services

Section 5 - Policy

(5) Teaching and learning are among the key activities of the University. These activities are given priority over other uses of teaching spaces designated for teaching.

(6) All spaces designated for teaching, with the exception of school-managed teaching spaces, are centrally managed in accordance with this Policy and the Space Allocation and Use Policy. Academic Services is the central area responsible for the production and maintenance of the timetable and for ad hoc bookings of any teaching spaces.

(7) The primary objective in the preparation of the timetable is to enhance the student experience through effective delivery of the curriculum. Academic Services are responsible for ensuring that the timetable:

a. provides for the fair, reasonable and inclusive treatment of both students and staff, in accordance with the Disability Policy and other relevant policies;
b. maximises the effective use of teaching spaces and facilities;
c. minimises travel time between classes for students and staff;
d. accommodates pedagogical practice and enables students to satisfy course rules;
e. undergoes minimal changes after publication.

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Development of the Timetable

(8) The Director, Academic Services is responsible for:

a. determining the methodology used to construct the timetable to make effective use of the University's available teaching resources and facilities;
b. determining, publishing and enforcing relevant deadlines to ensure timely publication of the timetable.

(9) All class requirements in the Course Management System that can be scheduled must be included in the official University timetable.

(10) Schools are responsible for ensuring that all school-managed teaching spaces are accurately recorded and kept up-to-date in Archibus to enable scheduling and inclusion in the timetable.

(11) The timetable is developed in three (3) stages:

a. Academic Services collects teaching and learning space requirements for the following academic year from schools via preference forms;

b. a draft timetable is released to schools on a date specified in advance by Academic Services. The ensuing Draft Review Period allows for feedback, and system and manual adjustments;
c. the final timetable for the following year is published in October so that students can view their teaching timetable at the point of enrolment.

Part B - Timetable Inputs

(12) Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) are responsible for supporting the collection of the following information required to construct the timetable by the designated date:

a. configuration of new and amended subjects and courses
b. campus, teaching period and delivery mode
c. type, number, duration and frequency of classes
d. maximum class size (where appropriate)
e. the type of teaching space required
f. anticipated staff availability
g. anticipated enrolments
h. resources required

Scheduling Protocols

(13) The timetable is prepared on the basis of the following protocols:

a. the University's Core Teaching Times for timetabling purposes are Monday through Friday from 8.00am to 9.00pm;
b. teaching and learning activities may, on request, also be scheduled for weekend periods in agreement with affected staff members. Core Teaching Times on weekends are Saturday and Sunday from 8.00am to 9.00pm;
c. all teaching activities are normally scheduled in full-hour units and timetabled to commence on the hour or half hour. Classes normally commence five (5) minutes past the hour and finish five (5) minutes prior to the hour;
d. teaching and learning activities are not scheduled during declared University shut-down periods and designated University holidays (e.g. over the Christmas period, see https://www.latrobe.edu.au/calendar).

Staff Availability

(14) Academic staff must be available for the University's Core Teaching Times:

a. staff availability is understood to be within a reasonable spread of hours consistent with individual workload allocations;
b. staff members will not be scheduled for teaching in a manner that results in unreasonable or unsafe working hours or excessive spans on any given day;
c. allocation of teaching outside the University's Core Teaching Times must only be undertaken following discussion with the affected staff member and taking into consideration whether the staff member has been allocated unreasonable hours as per the La Trobe University Enterprise Agreement 2023 (EA).

(15) Professional staff support for activities outside 7.30am–7.30pm must comply with the relevant provisions of the EA for hours of work, overtime, and penalty provisions.

(16) A staff member may seek approval from their supervisor to be declared unavailable for teaching for a specified purpose during Core Teaching Times, in line with individual workload allocation for the teaching period. Valid reasons for unavailability include:

a. specific research or administrative obligations
b. part-time work arrangements
c. agreed leave arrangements
d. religious, medical or family reasons

(17) Timetabling must take into account EA conditions of sessional employment, including availability confirmation timelines, reasonable notice requirements and minimum engagement periods where appropriate.

(18) Teaching allocations and timetable constraints will be reviewed with supervisors as part of annual workload discussions under the EA Workload Allocation Model.

(19) Where scheduling or availability decisions are contested, staff may seek resolution under the dispute resolution provisions of the EA.

Part C - Criteria for Resolving Clashes

(20) In resolving timetable clashes, Academic Services will apply the following criteria:

a. larger classes will have precedence over smaller classes
b. longer classes will have preference over shorter classes
c. specialist activities are given preference over generic activities in the use of specialist teaching spaces

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

Part D - Changes to the Timetable

(22) During the Draft Review Period staff may request any changes to the draft timetable for the coming year.

(23) Following publication of the timetable to students changes to the date, day or time of a class will be subject to an impact assessment by Academic Services and require approval from the relevant Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching).

(24) Any changes to the day, date or time of any class any later than four (4) weeks prior to the start of the relevant teaching period will be subject to an impact assessment by Academic Services and require approval from the relevant Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) and the Director, Academic Services. Valid criteria for requesting changes during this period include unforeseen circumstances and where required under the EA, including:

a. caring responsibilities
b. flexible work arrangements
c. health needs
d. a need to accommodate students or staff with accessibility requirements, in accordance with the Disability Policy
e. unavoidable issues with sessional staff availability

(25) Any changes to the timetable must comply with mandated minimum notice periods for teaching workload.

(26) There may be instances where spaces are unavailable due to capital works, infrastructure failings. or safety issues. In these cases, the scheduling team will re-book any impacted teaching activities into the most suitable available space.

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to La Trobe's Policy Library for the latest version.

Part E - Class Allocation and Load Management

Class Allocation

(27) Except where otherwise indicated, students must register their preferences for specific classes in the subjects in which they are enrolled.

(28) In accordance with the Disability Policy and the Workplace Adjustment(Staff) Policy, the University takes into account access requirements for staff and students with physical, hearing or vision requirements, provided those staff and students have identified their needs before class registration opens for the relevant subject (see also the Accessibility Hub for students).

(29) Registration for class preferences is managed as follows:

a. for Semesters 1 and 2 registration opens at least four (4) weeks before the start of the standard teaching period so that students can create their individual timetable. Allocation adjustment may close at different times for different subjects;
b. for all other teaching periods students are advised when registration opens (see Important timetable dates). Students may be given the option to express class preferences for subjects taught in terms in some circumstances.

(30) Students must register or be allocated to classes in all enrolled subjects that include a scheduled teaching activity.

(31) The University attempts to accommodate students' choice of subjects, but the timetable might not allow every student to attend their preferred combination of subjects. Students should choose alternative electives if they are unable to resolve a clash. If students choose to accept a timetable clash (that is not on the approved clash list) they accept any conflicting requirements (including assessment) that may result between clashing subjects. This will not be considered grounds for Special Consideration.

(32) The University will directly allocate students to classes in certain circumstances, including but not limited to where:

a. there is a scheduled single iteration of an activity
b. there are physical access or other requirements
c. students have failed to register for a class

(33) In order to ensure adequate room capacity and continuity for any given subject, students are only permitted to attend the classes for which they have registered or been allocated. A Subject Coordinator may grant an exception where extenuating circumstances apply and there is sufficient space in the class.

(34) Where no students are allocated to the relevant class by the deadline specified by Academic Services, the rooms are released for other bookings.

Managing Load

(35) Schools are responsible for monitoring enrolments on the basis of reports distributed by Academic Services in the period prior to Semesters 1 and 2. In order to maximise room utilisation and resource efficiency Academic Services will suggest alternative options to schools where there are capacity issues such as not enough seats for enrolled students, or for the release of rooms no longer required.

(36) In such circumstances Subject Coordinators must advise Academic Services of their preferred option within five

(5) business days. Where a school does not respond in a timely manner, or enrolment exceeds 100% of room capacity, Academic Services will enact a decision on the school's behalf.

Part F - Ad Hoc Room Bookings

(37) Teaching and learning spaces that are not required for University teaching and learning activities may be booked for other purposes. 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.

(38) Staff may submit requests for ad hoc bookings for teaching and learning spaces via TimeEdit Reserve. Requests for ad-hoc bookings for teaching rooms during Semester One or Semester Two are not confirmed until two weeks prior to the start of the semester to ensure that Academic Services retains the necessary degree of flexibility for the timetable.

Section 7 - Definitions

(39) For the purposes of this Policy and Procedure:

a. ad hoc booking: a casual booking of University space that is not booked for regular teaching activities.
b. allocate: the process whereby the University allocates students to specific classes where the student cannot, or has not, registered for a class for a subject in which they are enrolled.
c. Archibus: a suite of facility and infrastructure management software applications used for storage, analysis, and reporting of data relevant to University Spaces.
d. 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.
e. clash: an occurrence when students, staff or rooms have two (2) or more teaching activities that run at the same time or which overlap.
f. class: a specific iteration of a teaching and learning activity, held at a specific time during a teaching period.
g. class allocation: the process by which students are allocated to a designated class following closure of class registration.
h. class registration: the process by which students express preferences for designated classes in subjects in which they are enrolled.
i. core subject: a mandatory subject that must be completed to satisfy award course rules.
j. course: a course of study leading to the award of a degree, diploma, or other award.
k. Course Management System: the University's official database for all course and subject information (currently CourseLoop.
l. Draft Review Period: the designated period each year within which changes may be requested to the draft timetable for the coming year (see Draft Timetable Review - Intranet).
m. elective subject: an optional subject, of which a certain number must be completed to satisfy the award course rules.
n. registration: the process by which students express a preference for specific classes for subjects in which they are enrolled (where the option is available, such as multiple tutorial times).
o. resource: equipment, materials and other assets owned by the University, or a service that can be drawn on.
p. school-managed teaching spaces: teaching spaces comprising facilities for specialist teaching purposes and managed by the relevant school.
q. student:
    i. a person enrolled at the University in a course leading to a degree or other award; or
    ii. a person who is designated as a student or is of a class of persons designated as students by the Council.

r. subject: a unit of study involving students in a series of learning activities, the outcomes of which are assessed.
s. teaching and learning space: any location used to conduct teaching and learning activities.
t. 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.
u. TimeEdit Reserve: the software used by the University for the establishment and maintenance of the timetable.
v. timetable: a schedule of times set for teaching and learning classes to occur.
w. University shutdown periods and University holidays: individual days or periods of time in which the University does not open (see https://www.latrobe.edu.au/calendar).

Section 8 - Authority and Associated Information

(40) This Policy is made under the La Trobe University Act 2009.

(41) Associated information includes:

a. Space Allocation and Use Policy
b. Disability Policy
c. Workplace Adjustment (Staff) Policy
d. Timetable – Guide to Allocation Ajustment Mode

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	3rd August 2026
Review Date	22nd July 2029
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	3rd August 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Manager - Policy	Lisa Constantine Director, Academic Services
Enquiries Contact	Student Administration

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to La Trobe's Policy Library for the latest version.