Management of Class Timetabling and Room Bookings Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose and Objectives

(1) This Procedure enacts the Management of Class Timetabling and Room Bookings Policy.

Section 2 - Definitions, Terms, Acronyms

Term	Definition
Academic Calendar	The official University calendar, comprising important information about the academic use of the year, including official semesters and teaching weeks.
Ad Hoc Bookings	Activities that are allocated to bookable space, usually after the finalisation of the semester timetable.
Business Process Calendar	A calendar of timetabling process activities, milestones and deadlines.
Centrally Controlled Teaching Space	Teaching space that is managed by Timetable Services and that is allocated to all Schools and Faculties on an equal basis and according to their requirements.
Clashes	Where a mandatory class is scheduled at the same time as another mandatory class within a set program.
Class Allocation System	The central database that allows students to plan, preference and allocate to available classes to produce a personalised timetable.
Class Size	The number of students enrolled in a class.
Day Classes	Nomenclature used in the timetable system for any day class scheduled within the hours between 8am and 6pm.
High Priority Class Scheduling	The first stage of timetable scheduling that focuses on the classes in each course identified by Timetabling Coordinators as most important (explained under clauses 58 to 62 – Timetabling Scheduling Practices).
Intensive Class	A timetabled class that is taught in a continuous block of time over a shorter week pattern.
Night Class	Nomenclature used in the timetable system for any night class scheduled within the hours between 6pm and 10pm.
Official Teaching Weeks	Standard semester teaching weeks as identified in the Academic Calendar.
Published Timetable	The working iteration of the timetable published to students after changes to the draft timetable from staff.
Repeat Classes	Classes of the same class type with one or more options for students to choose from.
Room Capacity	The official number of students who can be accommodated in a teaching space.
Scheduling Priorities	The criteria/principles determining the order in which classes are scheduled to ensure all classes can be appropriately accommodated.
School Controlled Teaching Space	Teaching space that is managed by the relevant School or Faculty.

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Term	Definition
Timetable Services	The central unit within the Academic Services Division (ASD) that manages the use of centrally controlled teaching and learning spaces and coordinates the production and publication of class timetables.
Timetabling Coordinators	Staff within Schools or Faculties who are responsible for the input and maintenance of information that informs production of the scheduled timetable.
Timetabling System	The central database that collects timetabling information and produces a scheduled timetable.
Weekend Class	A timetabled class scheduled on Saturday and/or Sunday.

Section 3 - Procedure Scope/Coverage

(2) This Procedure applies to all staff involved in the timetabling and room booking process at The University of Queensland. This Procedure does not apply to shorter form credentials.

Section 4 - Procedure Statement

(3) In developing an institution-wide timetable, the University seeks to ensure quality outcomes for teaching and learning activities for students whilst optimising space utilisation.

Section 5 - Timetabling Roles and Responsibilities

(4) Areas of the University which require timetabling must appoint an appropriate level of staffing to perform the tasks associated with, and to assume responsibility for, the timetabling process. Below are the relevant stakeholders and their responsibilities in relation to these tasks.

Timetable Services (Central)

(5) Configuring the timetable system each year.

(6) Determining the annual Business Process Calendar to ensure appropriate timeframes for timetabling workloads and timely publication to students.

(7) Providing support and training to Timetabling Coordinators as required.

(8) Providing Timetabling Coordinators with:

a. details of the data to be collected;
b. the format in which the data is required; and
c. the time frame in which the data is to be collected.

(9) Facilitating the collection of necessary timetabling information by Timetabling Coordinators.

(10) Advising Timetabling Coordinators of data inconsistencies and problems with data setup.

(11) Manipulating timetable data as necessary to adhere to the requirements of the timetabling system.

(12) Scheduling the draft timetable.

(13) Ensuring the timetable is published to staff and students in the prescribed timeframes.

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(14) Actioning requested timetable changes from Schools and Faculties where possible.

(15) Resolving timetabling issues with key stakeholders where necessary.

(16) Coordinating audits of central teaching spaces with the Property and Facilities Division to ensure they meet teaching requirements.

Timetabling Coordinators (Faculty/School)

(17) Checking information as requested by Timetable Services, in conjunction with other relevant Faculty/School staff if necessary.

(18) Entering necessary data into the appropriate data collection systems, within the prescribed timeframes.

(19) Advising Timetable Services after the data collection process of any changes to timetabling information, according to prescribed timeframes.

(20) Scheduling specific School activities as required in accordance with prescribed timeframes.

(21) Analysing the draft timetables, in conjunction with other relevant Faculty/School staff, for quality and appropriateness.

(22) Using the timetable system to make timely adjustments to classes allocated to School controlled teaching spaces.

(23) Providing Timetable Services with timely requests for adjustments to the timetable that are allocated to central teaching rooms and ensuring the appropriate authorisation is obtained as applicable – this will include using the timetable system to assess the appropriateness of requests prior to submission to Timetable Services.

(24) Maintaining auditable records of timetable changes and associated approval correspondence.

(25) Coordinating audits of School/Faculty controlled teaching spaces with the Property and Facilities Division to ensure they meet teaching requirements.

(26) Attending appropriate training and information sessions to keep up to date with changes to timetabling practices.

(27) Working collaboratively with other Schools and Faculties to assist with timetabling needs of the wider University community.

Executive and Managerial Staff within each Faculty/School

(28) Confirming which courses will or will not be offered for the upcoming teaching period.

(29) Providing enrolment estimations to Timetabling Coordinators.

(30) Where requested by the Timetabling Coordinator, approving change requests to the published timetable.

(31) Allocating teaching staff to all classes, including allocating casual staff to classes which are not taught by permanent staff members.

Course Coordinators

(32) Ensuring the provision of accurate data during timetable preparation.

(33) Checking the draft timetable and identifying necessary changes to the Timetabling Coordinator.

(34) Making requests to Timetabling Coordinators to modify the timetable where necessary.

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(35) Managing timetabling issues arising from student and/or staff requests.

(36) Actioning Disability Action Plans as they are received.

Teaching Staff

(37) Checking individual timetables immediately after the draft release of the semester timetable, and identifying any issues or concerns to the Course Coordinators or Timetabling Coordinators.

(38) Organising the resetting of furniture to its original layout at the conclusion of a class in time for the next class to commence, ensuring teaching rooms are kept clean as they were found.

(39) Notifying Timetabling Coordinators and/or Timetable Services of issues relating to teaching space operations including misplaced furniture or equipment faults.

Section 6 - General Class Timetabling Procedures

Allocation of Teaching Space

(40) All classes related to the delivery of a course must be timetabled through the central timetabling system. Where teaching activities are timetabled at shared sites, using a combination of UQ teaching space and space owned by other providers (such as Queensland Health), the entire timetable must be maintained within a single system; in such cases, it may not be practicable for the allocation of University teaching space to be recorded through the University's timetabling system.

(41) Classes must not be scheduled on an ad hoc basis.

(42) Estimated course enrolments must be based on realistic enrolment projections supported by relevant data.

(43) The official capacity of a teaching space must not be exceeded by the number of students who are attending a prescribed class. If class enrolments within the class allocation system exceed the official capacity of a teaching space by more than 10%, alternative options must be investigated as soon as the excess becomes evident. Alternative options include requesting a larger teaching space, video linking to another teaching space, providing repeat sessions, or investigating assignment of students to alternative classes. Additional information in relation to managing overcrowding of teaching space can be found at Use and Management of UQ Land, Buildings and Facilities Policy.

(44) Classes scheduled in teaching space where actual enrolments are lower than the official seating capacity can be required to relocate to a more appropriately sized teaching space to accommodate other required timetabling changes as determined by Timetable Services.

(45) Where School or Faculty space is available, it should be utilised before centrally controlled space of similar size/utility is requested. This also applies to rooms of a specialist nature that have the capacity to be used as general seminar rooms.

Class Times

(46) Scheduling outside official teaching hours must be approved by an Executive Dean (or where not available or otherwise not reasonably practicable, a Head of School or an Associate Dean (Academic)) except as set out in clause 47.

(47) Scheduling outside official teaching hours does not require approval when the course delivery mode is intensive or the course structure necessitates that class contact falls outside the official spread of teaching hours (i.e. field trips, classes scheduled on weekends).

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(48) The hours for scheduling undergraduate teaching are from 8am to 8pm Monday to Thursday and 8am to 5pm Friday.

(49) To accommodate the needs of the wider University community, specific days and times cannot be configured in centrally controlled teaching spaces without the prior approval of Timetable Services.

(50) The minimum unit of time for classes is one (1) hour which comprises of fifty (50) minutes of class time followed by ten (10) minutes to facilitate change-over between classes. Classes must commence on the hour except when two (2) one and a half (1.5) hour classes are scheduled back-to-back in the same location.

(51) Where students are required to attend compulsory teaching sessions across more than one campus or site, appropriate travel time must be incorporated in the production of the draft timetable.

Academic Staff Unavailability and School Meetings

(52) Staff unavailability can only be considered when creating the class timetable where a staff member is part time or has compelling reasons as approved by the Head of School.

(53) In general, the timetabling system will assign a day of the week free of teaching for research active staff if there is no specific requirement for a particular teaching free day. Where research active staff have negotiated and agreed on a particular teaching free day with the Head of School, this must be configured in the timetabling system taking into consideration other scheduling constraints.

(54) School meetings required during teaching weeks can be identified by Timetabling Coordinators prior to the creation of the draft timetable as follows:

a. One (1) general School meeting of up to two (2) hours duration per week;
b. Up to two (2) other School meetings (such as HDR Milestones, Seminar Series) of up to two (2) hours duration each per week.

(55) Timetabling Coordinators may not request additional meetings during official teaching weeks until after the publication of the class timetable.

(56) Scheduled meetings are to commence on the even hour to allow flexibility for student centred changes to the class timetable.

(57) School meetings allocated to a centrally controlled teaching space can be required to investigate alternative options if an allocated space is required for teaching purposes.

Timetabling Scheduling Practices

(58) The production of the draft timetable must occur in two (2) stages:

a. High Priority Classes (determined by Timetabling Coordinators as most important to be scheduled first);
b. All Other Remaining Classes (those that would be scheduled around the most important classes).

(59) Separating the scheduling process into two (2) stages allows greater flexibility when considering priority class timetable changes. Once all requests have been actioned by Timetable Services all other remaining classes are then scheduled.

(60) Timetabling Coordinators must indicate high priority classes within each course, ensuring that the main or most important classes are considered first in the timetabling process.

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(61) The priority draft timetable must be released to staff only, to allow for feedback and adjustment prior to advancing to the scheduling of all other remaining classes.

(62) Where Schools or Faculties have general teaching spaces categorised as shared spaces with other Schools, available times can be allocated on a needs basis only after priority has been given to the controlling School or Faculty. Additional information on shared School/Faculty locations can be found at Use and Management of UQ Land, Buildings and Facilities Policy.

Modifications to the Draft Timetable

(63) Timetabling Coordinators must analyse the draft timetable and, depending on the type of change, either make direct changes to the University timetabling system or to make timely change requests to Timetable Services.

(64) Relevant professional staff and academic staff must also review the draft timetable and request changes to the relevant Timetabling Coordinator.

(65) Preferences for alternative days, times or locations must be indicated during the draft timetable stage to minimise disruption for students once the timetable is published.

(66) Prior to requesting a timetabling change, the following factors must be considered:

a. mandatory courses that students may be enrolled in;
b. the number of student enrolments within the relevant class;
c. the associated capacity, features and availability of the requested location;
d. the availability of academic staff; and
e. adequate breaks for staff and students.

Publication of the Timetable

(67) The timetable must be published at a time and in a manner that enables students to make informed decisions regarding course selection for the upcoming teaching period.

Modifications to the Published Timetable

(68) Modifications to the timetable after publication must be kept to a minimum to enable students to make informed decisions that best fit their academic interests as well as their work and family commitments.

(69) Timetabling Coordinators must ensure that intensive or irregular timetabled activities do not fall on public holidays during the draft phase of the timetable.

(70) Makeup classes for weekly activities can only be considered after the class timetable has been published and as determined by Timetable Services.

(71) Ad hoc bookings for additional rooms for in class examinations during semester and within standard teaching days and times can only be considered by Timetable Services after the class timetable has been published.

(72) When a proposed timetabling change request might be considered contentious, Timetable Services must consult with the relevant executive staff within the School or Faculty when considering the viability of the request.

(73) Requests by Timetabling Coordinators to modify the published timetable can only be considered by Timetable Services under the following circumstances:

a. deleting a class that is no longer required due to fewer than expected course enrolments;

b. adding a class because course enrolments have exceeded expectations;
c. changing a location where course enrolment numbers exceed expectation and the allocated location cannot accommodate the numbers enrolled. This may mean that the day and time of the class may also change; and
d. changing a location where course enrolment numbers are below expectation and a smaller location will suffice.

(74) The following types of timetable changes after publication require approval by a senior staff member within the Faculty as appointed by the Executive Dean:

a. late course offering;
b. changes to course delivery (i.e. mode of delivery, duration of class, lecture/tutorial changed to lecture/tutorial/practical); and
c. changing teaching staff or class day/time necessitated by the sudden unavailability of a scheduled staff member with consideration to clause 52.

(75) Main classes such as lectures must take priority over repeat classes such as tutorials when changes are made in response to fluctuating enrolments.

(76) Where the modification of a class involves more than one Faculty or School, the relevant Timetabling Coordinators must negotiate the change so that all parties are satisfied prior to submitting the request.

(77) All stakeholders impacted by the class changes after publication of the timetable, such as enrolled students, academic staff, professional staff and any other potential users, must be notified of the change by staff within the School or Faculty.

(78) When a late change has been requested and actioned within forty-eight (48) hours prior to the class taking place, appropriate signage must be displayed by Timetabling Coordinators (or appointed/assigned staff) at the relevant location/s to notify students of the revised class timetable. Signage must be removed at the end of the class.

Unused Timetabled Classes

(79) At the end of week two (2) of the teaching semester, any unused timetabled classes must be identified for deletion from the timetable system by Timetabling Coordinators so that the allocated teaching spaces may be used elsewhere.

Timetable Issues Resolution

(80) In the instance where there are conflicting requirements between, or contention for the same resource by, two or more Schools, the following steps must be taken:

a. the affected parties must negotiate a solution amongst themselves that is acceptable to all;
b. if a solution cannot be agreed upon, Timetable Services is to intervene to determine the most favourable outcome to the majority of students affected; and
c. where a solution still cannot be reached, the issue must be raised with the relevant executive staff member.

Section 7 - General Room Booking Procedures

Use of Central Teaching and Learning Space

(81) Under normal circumstances due to timetabling changes, ad hoc booking requests for teaching spaces are not considered during teaching weeks until closer to semester commencement.

(82) Ad hoc booking requests for weekends and nights within teaching weeks can be considered at the time of publication of the relevant semester timetable.

(83) Where an important University-run event requires early confirmation of available rooms during teaching weeks prior to the official release of rooms as determined by Timetable Services, written approval must be submitted to the Senior Manager, Examinations and Timetable Services by a member of the Senior Executive or Senior Management within the Faculty.

(84) In the event that the location of a timetabled class needs to be changed, the relocation of the timetabled class will take priority over any ad hoc room booking previously confirmed.

(85) Should set up or pack down time be required as part of a booking, this must be incorporated in the requested booking times.

(86) Ad hoc bookings must conclude ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled end time.

(87) Staff will not request use of teaching and learning space on behalf of parties external to the University looking to run events on UQ campuses or sites.

(88) A schedule of hire charges applies for use of centrally controlled teaching spaces and is available from the Public Room Booking Request form.

(89) Terms of hire apply for use of centrally managed teaching and learning space and are available from the Public Room Booking Request form. All external hirers must provide evidence of current public liability insurance.

(90) Registered student groups and external clients wishing to hire teaching and learning space are required to agree to set terms and conditions as specified by the University.

(91) The University reserves the right to refuse any application to use its facilities.

Use of School, Faculty and Institute Bookable Space

(92) Teaching and learning space not controlled centrally may be made available for room bookings at the discretion of the organisational unit.

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