Timetabling & Room Booking Policy
for the 2025/6 academic year

Document control

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Contents

1. Purpose and scope

This document sets out the University's policy, procedures, roles, and responsibilities with regard to:

- The building and scheduling of the teaching and learning timetable for the Whiteknights and London Road campuses.
- The booking of School owned and centrally controlled spaces for ad hoc activities on the Whiteknights and London Road campuses.

The policy is based on the following key principles:

- That a 'right first-time' approach is central to a timetabling policy.
- That a consistent, regular weekly pattern of teaching is the desired mode of delivery for the majority of modules.
- That essential programme activities should be timetabled.
- That post-publication changes to the timetable should be kept to an absolute minimum.
- That the University must make efficient use of its resources to achieve the required growth in student numbers.

2. Objectives

The drivers for the policy are:

- To support the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning activities.
- To ensure that the teaching and learning timetable enables students to access all of the scheduled teaching and learning activities which will support them to meet the learning outcomes of their programme.
- To ensure that the timetable is as inclusive as pragmatically possible for all students and staff, including those with protected characteristics.
- To support the delivery of a timetable with a high level of week-to-week and module-to-module consistency and stability for students.
- To ensure that taught activities are delivered in the most appropriate spaces.
- To utilise the University's teaching and meeting spaces in an efficient manner.
- To provide effective management and delivery of the teaching and learning timetable and room bookings.

3. Teaching week

The academic year normally comprises of 22 teaching weeks for undergraduate students and 24 teaching weeks for postgraduate taught students.

The teaching week is Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm, normally with a 1pm finish for undergraduate teaching on Wednesdays. The full teaching week will be used for all programmes. Further information can be found in the Guidance note on teaching during the working week.

Teaching will not be timetabled on Bank Holidays.

All classroom-based teaching should commence on the hour and finish ten minutes before the scheduled finish time to allow for the necessary changeover.

Although the University strives to achieve a consistent weekly or fortnightly teaching pattern, this is not possible in all cases.

4. What is a teaching and learning timetable?

The teaching and learning timetable is the sole location for the distribution to students and staff of the timeslots in which scheduled teaching and learning activities take place. Scheduled teaching and learning activities take place predominantly on campus or online.

The teaching and learning timetable is designed to provide a pedagogically coherent programme-level experience for students, and will therefore also contain some essential programme activities.

Any assessments which require a physical space, but which are not written exams administered by the Examinations & Graduation Team, are also included on the teaching and learning timetable.

The teaching and learning timetable does not contain:

- Co-curricular activities[1]
- One to one meetings between students and staff

4.1. Scheduled teaching and learning activities

Scheduled teaching and learning activities are linked to modules. The number of planned hours of scheduled teaching and learning activities for each module can be found on the Module Description Form (MDF). Definitions of scheduled teaching and learning activities can be found in Appendix C of the University guidelines on module descriptors.

A consistent regular weekly timetable is pedagogically important as it enables students to plan their studies. It also enables students to plan part-time work, caring responsibilities, or commuting arrangements around their studies.

All Schools should therefore, where feasible, design their lecture and classroom-based teaching so that it can be delivered on the same day and in the same timeslot each week. Where a weekly pattern of classroom-based teaching is not suitable, a fortnightly pattern should be designed if possible. Schools with high volumes of practical activities should design their teaching so that the practical activities fit around the weekly or fortnightly classroom-based delivery.

4.2. Essential programme activities

Essential programme activities will be timetabled at the start of each semester at Department or School level via means of a DP code[2]. These sessions may provide students with an introduction to the semester ahead; this may, for example, include an introductory session from Programme Directors or a Head of Department.

Schools may also provide Department or School cohorts with essential programme information sessions e.g. a module selection information session.

Essential programme activities will be timetabled within the standard timetabling week; however, it is not possible to guarantee a clash-free slot for all students. Scheduled teaching and learning activities will not be

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[1] See Glossary
[2] See Glossary

moved to create a slot for programme cohort activities. Therefore, all essential programme activities must be recorded, so that students who are unable to attend are able to access the material at a later date.

4.3.   Non-exam assessments

Any assessments that require a physical space (but are not written exams administered by the Examinations & Graduation Team) will be included on the teaching and learning timetable. Schools must submit information relating to the spaces required for non-exam assessments with their timetabling data return. This enables the Timetabling & Room Booking Team to create clash-free timetables for students and to ensure that all students' non-exam assessments are timetabled in a clash-free manner.

4.4.   Placement year preparation sessions

Programmes with a placement variant should embed placement preparation in credit-bearing modules at Part 1. Where this is not appropriate, Schools may opt to use a preparatory learning module. Preparatory learning modules require a Module Description Form (MDF) and sign-off by an Associate Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education & Student Experience).

Programmes with a placement variant will run a Part 2 preparatory learning module to cover essential pre-departure content.

Timetabling for preparatory learning modules should meet the expectations laid out in 4.1. above.

4.5.   Dissertation preparation sessions

Dissertation preparation sessions happening in the previous year must be timetabled either by embedding preparation into a credit bearing module or by using a School or Department level DP code. Schools are encouraged to embed any teaching and learning relating to preparation for dissertations into a Part 2 credit bearing module wherever this is possible.

4.6.   Peer-assisted learning (PAL) sessions

Peer-assisted learning (PAL) sessions are timetabled via means of timetabling modules for the PAL deliverers and PAL recipients, on which students are manually enrolled. As PAL sessions cut across multiple programmes and Parts, it may not be possible to find a clash-free slot for all participants.

4.7.   Academic Tutor meetings

Academic Tutor meetings are not timetabled. Academic Tutors will arrange individual and group tutor meetings with their students via MS Outlook or MS Bookings.

5. Non-teaching and learning activities

In order to provide students with a consistent weekly or fortnightly timetable, scheduled teaching and learning activities will typically take precedence over non-teaching and learning activities for room allocation.

It is important to recognise that there may be occasions where there is competing demand for rooms from essential non-teaching and learning activities. These may include:

- Careers fair
- Degree ceremonies
- In-person examinations during the assessment periods
- Offer Holder days
- Open days
- Unavoidable maintenance in term time
- University Calendared Meetings (when not able to be accommodated in Whiteknights House)

Where one of the activities listed above displaces teaching and learning activities from their originally allocated room, the Timetabling & Room Booking Team will seek to move the teaching and learning activity to another room using the same timeslot. If this is not possible, the Timetabling & Room Booking team will consult the relevant School about moving the activity to a different timeslot. In some cases, it may not be possible to find an alternative clash-free slot where a suitable room is available. In these instances, the Timetabling & Room Booking Team will consult the affected School and discuss suitable alternatives.

Authorisation from UBTLSE (via CILT) will be required before any teaching can be moved online to accommodate other activities.

Ad hoc room bookings are covered in Room Bookings.

6. Timetabling

All scheduled teaching and learning activities, including those delivered live online, must be timetabled. All assessments which require a physical space on campus (with the exception of written exams taking place during the assessment periods, which are organised by the Examinations & Graduation Team) must also be timetabled.

As far as is possible, all clashes will be resolved in advance of publication of the final timetable. Where a clash for students cannot be resolved for an optional module, students will be asked to select an alternative module via their Support Centre.

Schools will indicate to the Timetabling & Room Booking Team in their data return when a scheduled teaching and learning activity will need to take place in a specific School-owned space. Where there is more demand for a School-owned space than can be accommodated, the Timetabling & Room Booking Team will work with the School to accommodate the activity in another School-owned space, or in a centrally controlled space.

Centrally controlled spaces will be allocated to scheduled teaching and learning activities on a 'best fit' basis. Rooms will be allocated based on: the type required as specified by the deliverer; accessibility for participants; size of cohort; and, where possible, to minimise travel time between sessions. Requests for specific centrally controlled rooms will not generally be accepted, unless there is a specific feature within a room required for the session e.g., where large whiteboards are necessary for the delivery of essential content in disciplines such as the mathematical and physical sciences.

All rooms will be allocated to classes so that there is a seat for every student who is eligible to attend. For the 2025/6 academic year, the University, subject to approval by the appropriate committees, has agreed

that a pilot be implemented to timetable the two largest lecture theatres (Palmer G10 and HBS G11) for an additional capacity (<10%), using additional paired rooms, reflecting that attendance is very rarely 100%.[3]

Activities which are labelled as 'optional', or 'drop-in' will be allocated a smaller space based on predicted attendance. Module convenors are responsible for predicting attendance at optional and drop-in activities and submitting this with their data at the data gathering stage.

Where class sizes outgrow the originally allocated centrally controlled space, the Timetabling & Room Booking Team will allocate an alternative location. If an alternative location cannot be provided in the same timeslot, a new timeslot may need to be provided. If this change occurs after the final timetable has been published, the module deliverer will be notified of this change and must make their students aware by posting a message on Blackboard.

The Timetabling & Room Booking Team will attempt to accommodate lecturer availability restrictions as notified to them by Heads of School (see the process in Appendix 1: Staff availability). It may not be possible to successfully accommodate all restrictions while maintaining a clash-free timetable for students. The Timetabling & Room Booking Team will liaise with Heads of School when lecturer availability restrictions and module delivery design are incompatible.

The key stages of timetabling are outlined in the chart below. More detailed information for each stage can be found in Appendix 2: Key stages of timetabling. The numbering on the chart refers to the numbering in Appendix 2. Exact dates for each academic year are published in the annual calendar recommended by CILT to UBTLSE.

Timetables are published to staff and returning students in advance of each semester. New students are able to access their timetables on completion of enrolment and, where required, module selection.

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[3] A pilot for paired rooms was originally approved for 2024/5, but was not utilised due to lack of demand. It is anticipated that the pilot for paired rooms will operate in 2025/6 and be subject to review.

Key Stages of Timetabling

Phase

December

Timetabling timeline is published

Heads of School submit annual space return to Estates [1]

January

Schools submit MDFs to CQSD [1]

February

Support Centres build programme diets [1]

Schools submit S1 & S2 timetabling data [1]

March

Disability Advisory Service provide information on returning students' adjustments [1]

S1 & S2 module data input manually by Timetabling Team [2]

Heads of School submit staff availability information [1]

Admissions & PSO provide predicted student numbers for Parts 0, 1 and PGT [1]

Estates submit list of teaching spaces to Timetabling & Room Booking Team [1]

April

Returning students complete module selection

Timetable is scheduled (days, times, locations are added to activities) [3]

May

Clash checking is undertaken (students, staff, rooms) [4]

June

Schools review draft S1 & S2 timetable [5]

July

Edits to the timetable are made based on feedback from Schools [6]

Admissions & PSO provide updated numbers based on Clearing predictions [7]

August

Timetable optimised to cater for growing cohorts [7]

September

New PGT & Part 0 students complete S1 module selection

Disability Advisory Service provide information on new students' adjustments [1]

Final S1 timetable published [8]

New students allocated to S1 modules and timetables adjusted accordingly [9]

Admissions & PSO provide updated numbers based on Clearing results [7]

October

New students complete S2 module selection

New students allocated to S2 modules and timetables adjusted accordingly [9]

November

Schools review draft S2 timetable [5]

Edits to the S2 timetable are made based on feedback from Schools [6]

December

Final S2 timetable published [8]

Legend

- Actions undertaken by **Schools**
- Actions undertaken by **Timetabling & Room Booking Team**
- Actions undertaken by **Disability Advisory Service**
- Actions undertaken by **Support Centres**
- Actions undertaken by **PSO & Admissions**
- Actions undertaken by **Estates**

A numbered circle indicates that further information can be found about this step of the process under the relevant number in Appendix 2

6.1. Post-publication changes

Schools may only request essential changes to the timetable once it has been published. Essential changes include:

- Sickness absence
- Access requirements as a result of a disability (for either staff or students)
- Adjustments as a result of a Tailored Adjustment Plan
- Family leave
- Changes to contractual working patterns
- External meetings of national or University strategic importance e.g. TEF, REF, PSRB or Government panels

All other changes are detrimental to students' ability to plan their studies and other commitments; they will therefore not be accommodated.

Where Schools feel that there is a compelling reason to make a change to the published timetable not captured by the above list, staff are invited to seek authorisation following the process set out on the Timetabling & Room Booking [website](#).

6.1.1. Essential post-publication changes requested by Schools

Module deliverers are responsible for liaising with the module convenor and making alternative arrangements for their modules and any modules on which they deliver content if they are not able to deliver the content in the timetabled slot. Further information on timetable changes for planned and unplanned absences can be found on the Timetabling & Room Booking [website](#).

Where teaching and learning sessions are delivered in large lecture theatres, it is often not possible to find a new clash-free slot for delivery of the session and, in these cases, Heads of School are responsible for ensuring that delivery of the session is arranged in the extant slot, or that materials are provided to the cohort in an alternative manner. These measures are in place so as to cause minimal impact to students' timetables.

6.1.2. Essential post-publication changes initiated by the Timetabling & Room Booking Team

The Timetabling & Room Booking Team may, on occasion, identify that a post-publication change to the timetable is required in order to:

- Resolve student clashes for new students who are enrolling on modules
- Provide an appropriately sized room for activities
- Resolve unavailability of rooms due to unforeseen events e.g., equipment failure, flooding etc.
- Rectify an error made by the Timetabling & Room Booking Team

When the Timetabling & Room Booking Team makes a post-publication change, the module deliverer will be notified and should make their students aware by posting a message on Blackboard. The Timetabling & Room Booking Team will work collaboratively with Schools where the proposed changes are deemed unworkable.

6.2. Students changing groups

Where students have been allocated to groups on modules, they may request to change to a clash-free group which better suits their personal circumstances. The change request must be made during the first two weeks of the semester by using 'Ask a question' on RISIS.

Change requests will be actioned by the Timetabling & Room Booking Team; however, changes will not be able to be made if the requested change would cause a clash for the student, put the room over capacity, or lead to unbalanced groups i.e. 15 students in one group, and 25 in another. Changes to groups will not be automatically made if the original group allocation had been undertaken by the School; in these instances, the request for a change will be forwarded to the relevant DAT.

After the second week of each semester, students must seek permission from the relevant DAT to change group as, by this point, students may have been allocated to assessment groups etc. Students may use 'Ask a question' on RISIS to request this, and any request will be forwarded to the relevant DAT for authorisation.

Students who are registered with the Disability Advisory Service may at any point contact their Advisor to ask about a group change where this would constitute a reasonable adjustment. The exceptions for changes above do not apply where a reasonable adjustment would necessitate such changes.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1. Schools

7.1.1. Heads of School

- Ensure that all staff are committed to providing timetabling data accurately and on time.
- Ensure that teaching allocations are completed in a timely manner, so that academic staff have sufficient time to be able to plan the delivery of their modules.
- Submit annually lecturer availability data to the Timetabling & Room Booking Team. This process is described in Appendix 1.
- Ensure the maintenance of fixtures and fittings, and digital technology within School owned spaces which are used for scheduled teaching and learning activities.
- Ensure that complete lists of School owned spaces to be used for teaching are returned to Estates by the agreed the deadline.

7.1.2. SDTLs and DDTLs

- Ensure that programme, module, and module diet information is submitted to CQSD and Support Centres accurately and by the agreed deadlines.
- Guide academic colleagues through the timetabling process and support them to submit accurate data on time.

7.1.3. Programme Directors

- Maintain programme-level oversight of the timetable to ensure consistency and pedagogic coherency. This includes ensuring that:
  - Popular optional modules are clash-free,
  - There are adequate gaps between sessions, particularly for compulsory and popular optional modules,
  - Non-exam assessments are suitably arranged.
- The draft timetable must be checked thoroughly and errors reported to the Timetabling & Room Booking Team (this may be via a single point of contact within the Department or School).

7.1.4. School or Department Timetabling Lead

Each School or Department is expected to have a member of academic staff with overall responsibility for supporting and promoting effective timetabling of programmes. This may be part of an existing role (for example, Director of Teaching & Learning) or as a role in itself, according to the needs of the School or Department. Responsibilities associated with this activity include:

- Promoting the Timetabling & Room Booking Policy and guidance notes within the School and ensuring that all colleagues understand the benefits of consistent regular timetabling for student engagement and experience.
- Supporting colleagues in submitting their complete module delivery information on time and providing provisional information where it is otherwise missing.
- In collaboration with relevant Programme Directors and Module Convenors, taking an overview of timetabling requests (before and after publication of the draft timetable) for each Programme and Part, identifying and helping to resolve issues.
- Being the central point of contact between the School or Department and the Timetabling & Room Booking Team for matters relating to the teaching and learning timetable, working collaboratively with them to identify and resolve timetabling challenges that cannot be resolved at a module level.

7.1.5. Module Convenors

- Plan and submit accurate timetabling requirements for modules by the published deadline. All timetabled activities must be linked to a module code.
- Check the draft timetable when published (see Section 6 for the indicative timeline) and report errors to the Timetabling & Room Booking Team (this may be via a single point of contact within the Department or School).

7.1.6. Module deliverers

- Check personalised timetables on a daily basis during teaching weeks in case there are any last-minute changes of location.
- Plan and submit accurate timetabling requirements for modules by the published deadline. All timetabled activities must be linked to a module code.
- Review module and personal draft timetables by the agreed deadline and provide feedback to the Timetabling & Room Booking Team (this may be via a single point of contact within the Department or School) on:
    - o Accuracy of timetabled sessions,
    - o Whether the days and times of sessions match their working hours as agreed by the Head of School,
    - o Whether a lunchbreak has been allocated.
- Ensure that sessions finish at 10 minutes to the hour and that teaching spaces are left in a tidy state on completion of the session. If furniture has been moved during the session, it must be returned to the layout as shown in the room information chart (near the door) before the end of the session. The board must be wiped and ready for the next room user to use.
- Report any defects in rooms or faults with technology to the relevant team, usually Estates or DTS.

7.2.   Students

- Check personalised timetables on a daily basis during teaching weeks in case there are any last minute changes of location.

- Students are expected to be available to attend scheduled teaching and learning activities in all teaching weeks and at any time within the [teaching week](#).
- Use 'Ask a question' on RISIS to report timetabling clashes. Clashes will be resolved by the Timetabling & Room Booking Team or the HBS and ICMA Programme Administration teams.
- Use 'Ask a question' on RISIS to request to change groups. Requests will be processed in line with the process outlined in [6.2](#).

7.3. Estates

- Provide the Timetabling & Room Booking Team with up to date information about spaces used for scheduled teaching and learning activities. This includes maximum capacities for teaching spaces, and information about the physical accessibility of rooms.
- Ensure that rooms are heated and cooled in line with the Space Heating and Cooling Policy which is available on the [Estates policies and procedures webpage](#). The Timetabling & Room Booking Team provide Estates with a list of all activities taking place on campus with sufficient notice to set up heating and cooling systems.
- Maintain all centrally controlled spaces which are used for scheduled teaching and learning activities. Any defects should be reported to the [Estates Helpdesk](#).

7.4. Health and Safety Services

- Provide the Timetabling & Room Booking Team with updates on evacuation routes and procedures.
- On request, provide guidance about evacuation procedures for individual students and staff.

7.5. Digital Technology Services (DTS)

- Maintain all digital technology within centrally controlled spaces which are used for scheduled teaching and learning activities. DTS aim to undertake a check of all equipment in centrally controlled teaching spaces each day.
- If room users find defects, they should be reported to the [DTS Service Desk](#).

7.6. Centre for Quality Support and Development (CQSD), Student Information Systems (SIS), and Support Centres

- Submit programme, module, and module diet information (as gathered from Schools) to the Timetabling & Room Booking Team for use in the timetabling process.

7.7. Disability Advisory Service (DAS)

- Provide access requirements for students who are registered with DAS to the Timetabling & Room Booking Team.
- Ensure that complex specific adjustments are discussed with the Timetabling & Room Booking Team and Schools before students are informed of the relevant adjustments that they will receive.

7.8. Timetabling & Room Booking Team

- Work with CQSD, Support Centres, and CILT to produce an annual calendar indicating deadlines for timetabling processes. The annual calendar will be submitted to UBTLSE for approval prior to circulation by the Timetabling & Room Booking Team.
- Produce the teaching and learning timetable in accordance with the agreed annual calendar.
- Publish the final timetable to students and staff, and provide information about system updates or downtime to all stakeholders.
- Maintain the timetable and respond to queries about the timetable within timeframes as published in the Service Level Agreement.
- Provide metrics and timetabling management information to UBTLSE via CILT.

7.9. University Board for Teaching, Learning & Student Experience (UBTLSE) via the Committee for the Infrastructure of Learning & Teaching (CILT)

- Agree and circulate the annual calendar for production of the teaching and learning timetable.
- Agree and publish annually the metrics that the teaching and learning timetable is to be measured against.

8. Room Bookings

Staff and students are able to make room bookings to support their work or studies. All room users must adhere to the rules of conduct which can be found in Appendix 2 and on the Estates webpages.

The University's bookable spaces are divided into two types:

- Centrally controlled spaces
- School owned spaces

Each of these space types can be booked by staff for ad hoc activities as detailed below.

8.1. Centrally controlled spaces

All bookings for external activities[4] must be booked via Venue Reading. Centrally controlled spaces can be booked by University staff for internal activities[5]. Staff must refer to the Events Guide before planning any activity.

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[4] The definition of internal and external activities is owned by Estates and will shortly be published on their webpages. In the meantime, the definitions are included here as a footnote to aid understanding:
External activities are any events for pay, hosted by a School or similar, or entirely for external hire.
[5] Internal activities are any bookings made by a University member of staff or student, for which the majority of attendees will be University staff or students.

The times at which centrally controlled spaces can be booked are available on the Estates webpages[6]. Information on arrangements and charges for out of hours bookings is also available on Estates webpages.

8.1.1.   How to book centrally controlled spaces

Once the teaching and learning timetable has been published, staff can book centrally controlled spaces for up to four hours via CMISGo. CMISGo can be accessed via the Room Bookings webpage. Rooms booked via CMISGo are provisional and will be approved or declined within 48 hours of the booking being requested (except over weekends, public holidays, and closure periods, where this will take longer). Where a booking is declined, the Timetabling & Room Booking Team will contact the requestor to explain why the booking has been declined and seek an alternative solution with the requestor.

If the booking is more complex, covers a longer time period, or requires multiple spaces, requestors should follow instructions on the Room Bookings webpage.

All bookings must include the time required for set up and take down. On completion of the activity, the room should be immediately usable by the next person to have booked it.

8.1.2.   Cancelling a booking of a centrally controlled space

Any bookings in centrally controlled spaces which are no longer required must be cancelled. This can be done either via CMISGo or by emailing rooms@reading.ac.uk.

8.2.   School owned spaces

School owned spaces are managed by the owning School. Each School must appoint a CMISGo Administrator who is responsible for maintaining booking permissions for School owned rooms within CMISGo.

School owned spaces can be booked by any School staff who have been granted permission by the School's CMISGo Administrator.

CMISGo support is provided by the Timetabling & Room Booking Team; all queries should be directed to rooms@reading.ac.uk.

8.3.   Room bookings for students

The University provides distributed study spaces for students. A complete list of study spaces can be found on Essentials.

8.3.1.   Booking a room for individual and small group study

Students may book centrally controlled spaces for individual and group study on weekdays between 09:00 and 18:00.

To make a booking, students must email rooms@reading.ac.uk from their University email address with the following information:

- Desired date and time of booking
- Number of participants

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[6] These have not yet been published on the Estates webpages, so are included here for reference: All centrally controlled spaces are available for booking Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm. Centrally controlled spaces can be booked in the evening for the following buildings: Edith Morley, Palmer, Brian Hoskins, Henley Business School, and all buildings on the London Road campus. All centrally controlled spaces are available for bookings at weekends, but these are chargeable.

- Proposed activity

If a booked space is subsequently required for a scheduled teaching and learning session, the booking may be amended or cancelled. Students will be notified if this occurs.

8.4. Room bookings for Reading Students' Union Student Societies

Student Societies who are registered with Reading Students' Union may book rooms for their activities.

New non-registered societies are permitted two bookings, but proof must be provided that an application to Reading Students' Union has been submitted, or that an application is being prepared.

Society bookings are permitted 18:00 to 21:45 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, and 13:00 to 21:45 on Wednesdays.

To make a booking, a Society representative must email rooms@reading.ac.uk from their University email address with the following information:

- Desired date and time of booking
- Number of participants
- Proposed activity

Society booking requests must be received at least one week prior to the event taking place. The latest a booking request can be accepted for the following week is 12:00 on Friday.

Reading Students' Union oversee Student Society bookings. If reports are received of a group acting inappropriately, these will be passed to Reading Students' Union, and booking privileges may be revoked.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Staff availability

Heads of School are required to submit availability information for all staff on part-time contracts and any staff who have a flexible working arrangement, require a research day, or any other specific adjustment.

The Timetabling & Room Booking Team will provide Heads of School with a download of all staff in their School who have had their unavailability marked in the timetabling software in the last year. For each person listed, please:

1. Check that existing requirements will continue in the following academic year and mark these as having been checked and confirmed. If any changes are required, they must be marked on the spreadsheet.
2. Note whether the individual requires a research day. Please indicate how many days they require and whether a specific day is required. If no specific day is required, the timetabling software will allocate the best fit based on the individual's teaching data and students' module choices.
3. Add any specific information about other adjustments or restrictions in the Notes field. This may be particular weeks when staff are unavailable, or adjustment information to ensure that staff are timetabled into suitable teaching spaces e.g. *cannot teach for longer than two hours in one stretch*, or *requires teaching to be a short distance from their office location*.

A new row must be added to the spreadsheet for any member of staff who was not listed but who now has a part-time contract, a flexible working arrangement, requires a research day, or any other specific adjustment as described above.

Heads of School must not include personal information when submitting this data; the Timetabling & Room Booking Team only requires the output of any discussions.

Where Heads of School have queries about what type of flexible working arrangements to put in place for different requirements, they should seek advice from their HR Partner.

1. Deadline for data return

Heads of School will need to return their completed list by the agreed date. The list submitted to the Timetabling & Room Booking Team by Heads of School will be seen as the definitive list of staff with formal flexible working arrangements and part-time working patterns. The timetable will be built using the information submitted by the Head of School, and all slots allocated to staff will be slots that they are able to work.

Heads of School will be able to submit further information for new starters (particularly Associate Lecturers), or staff with new arrangements, as they receive it. The sooner the Timetabling & Room Booking Team receives new information, the more chance there is of a suitable timetable being produced.

2. Draft timetable review

When individual academic staff review their draft timetables, they will need to review the accuracy of the build to check that all timetabled activities have been built as they were expecting. Academic staff will also need to check their timetable to ensure that they have been allocated a lunch break.

If colleagues discover that they are allocated a slot which they cannot attend because their personal circumstances have changed, they will need to agree a revised flexible working arrangement with their Head of School, which can then be communicated to the Timetabling & Room Booking Team. Changes to the timetable will not be made until confirmation has been received from the Head of School that a new flexible working arrangement is in place.

3. Final timetable publication

Once the final timetable has been published, Schools must make only essential changes. This will ensure that both students and staff, particularly those with caring responsibilities, are able to plan their other activities.

Appendix 2: Key stages of timetabling

The key stages of timetabling are described below. They are listed in broadly chronological order, but steps such as checking the draft timetable, student group allocation, and publication of the final timetable will occur more than once per academic year.

The numbering of the stages below refers to the numbering in the chart in section 6.

1. Data gathering

Data are gathered by the Timetabling & Room Booking Team from:

- Schools: modular, sub-modular, and essential programme activities, and staff availability data
- Estates: space data
- Centre for Quality Support and Development (CQSD): programme and module data
- Project Support Office (PSO): predicted intake numbers
- Disability Advisory Service (DAS): accessibility requirements for students

All teams and Schools must adopt a 'right first time' approach and ensure that their data are accurate and submitted on time. Where information is not accurate or not submitted on time, this has a knock on impact on all teams involved in the process and may lead to a delay in the publication of the timetable.

Schools are requested to submit their timetabling data using a form supplied by the Timetabling & Room Booking Team. The form will be accompanied by a guidance document outlining the data that need to be submitted. It is critical that the running order of sessions is noted at this stage; for example, if a lecture needs to take place before a seminar, or if two days are required between practical sessions to allow something to grow, this information must be included so that it can be built into the timetabling software.

Some information on sub-modular groups will need to be submitted during the data gathering phase. Further information on the process of allocating students to groups can be found in section 9 below.

2. Building timetabled activities

Each activity requested by Schools is built manually within the timetabling software by the Timetabling & Room Booking Team. Where an activity is designed to be repeated in the same day and timeslot each week for the whole semester, this is considered to be one item for building. Activities which are designed to be delivered in a different day and timeslot each week must each be built individually; there is therefore a higher time cost to building one-off or irregular activities.

At this stage each activity is built with its module deliverer and any critical information about the space required, particularly practical activities which must be delivered in a specific space. Time and day restrictions are only placed on activities where there are significant restrictions e.g. a field trip which has been booked with an external provider on a specific date.

Activities are labelled up with their sequencing information for scheduling. Note that where a lecture needs to occur before a seminar, the lecture may take place at the end of one week and the seminars may occur early in the following week. This pattern must be used to make efficient use of lecture theatre spaces.

The Timetabling & Room Booking Team requires input from Schools during this phase to ensure that, where decisions about module delivery need to be made, they are made in collaboration with Schools.

3. Scheduling the timetable

Scheduling is the allocation of days, times, and locations to activities.

Some activities are scheduled manually, as they can only occur on specific days or at specific times e.g., a field trip which has been booked with an external provider on a specific date. The more activities which are placed on a specific day and time, or in a specific location, the less flexible the timetable becomes. Where possible, requests for specific days, times and locations should be avoided.

Once activities which require specific days, times and locations have been blocked into the timetable, all other activities are run through the scheduling software to allocate days, times and locations. This process commences with activities which require use of the largest lecture theatres. Schools should assume that their teaching and learning timetable will be evenly distributed over the week (except Wednesday afternoon) and, in particular, that all large cohorts could be timetabled at any time during the teaching week. Given the constraints on large teaching spaces, staff availability should normally not restrict the scheduling of teaching in large spaces.

Scheduling is an iterative process whereby various attempts are made until the Timetabling & Room Booking Team are satisfied that the software has produced the best possible outcome for the majority of activities.

Following this, the Timetabling & Room Booking Team manually schedule all remaining activities to allocate them a date, time and location.

4. Clash checking

Prior to publication of the draft timetable, a number of checks are carried out to eliminate clashes from the timetable. The following levels of clash checking are undertaken:

- Programmes
- Staff
- Students at group and individual level
- Rooms

Where clashes cannot be resolved within given parameters, the Timetabling & Room Booking Team will consult Schools to see whether any restrictions on timetabling which are causing the clashes can be relaxed. This most often applies to activities which have been blocked into the timetable on a specific day or time, or in a specific location. In some instances, students are contacted via Support Centres to ask them to change optional module if their clash is not resolvable.

5. Moving teaching impacted by Bank Holidays

The Timetabling & Room Booking Team will re-arrange as much teaching impacted by Bank Holidays as possible before consulting with Schools. The Timetabling & Room Booking Team work within the following parameters:

- Teaching will not be re-arranged after 6pm on any day.
- Teaching will not be re-arranged into Wednesday afternoons (with the exception of PGT modules).
- Teaching will not be re-arranged into the mid-semester week.
- An attempt will be made to reschedule teaching impacted by Bank Holidays into the week it would originally have been delivered.

- o If this is not possible, an attempt will be made to reschedule the teaching into the week before, or the week after, the week in which the session would have originally been delivered
- o If this is not possible, the Timetabling & Room Booking Team will liaise with the relevant School/Department to investigate the option to re-arrange teaching into teaching week 12 of the Semester in which the teaching would originally have been delivered.
- Where teaching is not able to be rescheduled in the same week, the week before, the week after or into teaching week 12, the Timetabling & Room Booking Team will work with the activity deliverer to find an alternative solution.

6. Publication of the draft timetable

The draft timetable is the opportunity for Schools to comment on the timetable and make any amendments to ensure that modular, sub-modular, and essential programme activities have been timetabled in a way that meets the School's expectations. Schools must ensure that the timetable is checked thoroughly in the draft timetable checking period and report any errors to the Timetabling & Room Booking Team.

Once the draft timetable has been published, making significant changes to a module or programme's delivery not only creates changes locally, but more broadly across any areas of the timetable which are interlinked. While circulating the draft timetable gives Schools the opportunity to review and comment (particularly where build errors may have occurred), it should not be considered appropriate to make significant and substantial changes.

The deadline for submission of comments on the draft timetable is the final point at which changes can be requested. From this point onwards, the timetable is refined so that a consistent and reliable timetable can be published for students and staff.

7. Changes made

The Timetabling & Room Booking Team make amendments to the timetable based on feedback provided by Schools on the draft timetable. Some changes are not possible and will require Schools to re-think delivery of that module within the time slots and locations allocated. Changes will not be made when they:

- have a detrimental impact on other colleagues' timetables; or
- create clashes for students which require students to change modules.

8. Review of numbers following Clearing

Once the number of students being recruited through Clearing has stabilised, the Timetabling & Room Booking Team check that the locations allocated have sufficient seats. It is possible that further seminar groups need to be added, or large lectures divided in two if there is significant growth in some areas; Schools are contacted to advise on the best solution.

9. Final publication of the timetable

The Timetabling & Room Booking Team publish the final timetable to staff and students. At this point, the timetable is considered final and students will use their timetable to plan their studies and other commitments.

10. Allocating students to timetabled sessions

The Timetabling & Room Booking Team allocate students to sub-modular groups on a best fit basis, in order to ensure that students' timetables are clash-free for the modules that they have selected. Where it is essential that students are allocated to a specific group e.g., for particular dissertation topics, Schools will provide the Timetabling & Room Booking Team with a list of students to be allocated to each group, within an agreed timeframe. The timeframe will be a mutual agreement between the School to whom the module belongs and the Timetabling & Room Booking Team; the timeframe should be agreed during the data gathering period.

Where students are registered with the Disability Advisory Service (DAS), the Timetabling & Room Booking Team work with DAS Advisors to ensure that students are allocated to groups which best suit their access needs.

Students may request to change the group to which they are allocated; see section 6.2 above.

Appendix 3: Conduct in centrally controlled rooms[7]

- Rooms must be left tidy, with any rubbish removed and disposed of responsibly. Failure to do so may incur a charge from Campus Services.

- Furniture in rooms must be left in the published layout; this can be found on the information board in every centrally controlled room. Failure to do so may incur a charge from Campus Services.

- No items may be bought or sold on campus unless the correct permissions and licences have been granted.

- No amplified live music is permitted in centrally controlled rooms.

- The maximum capacity of spaces (as indicated on the published layout sign in each centrally controlled room) is not to be exceeded.

- Technology and equipment is not to be altered in any way unless the relevant permission has been granted by DTS or Estates & Facilities.

- Permanent markers must not be used on any mounted writing surface e.g. whiteboards, smartboards etc.

- Good conduct is expected from all users of University rooms and facilities, and all University rules and procedures must be adhered to by both staff and students at all times.

- In the unlikely event of any double booking, in the first instance please check the booking sheet on the door. If this does not resolve the issue, please contact Room Bookings directly on x.6506 or rooms@reading.ac.uk

- If any issue arises during an event taking place outside of office hours e.g. evenings or weekends, please speak with the Porter of the building, or Security Services.

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[7] This document is owned by Estates. In the future, this information will be published on Estates' webpages.

Appendix 4: Glossary of terms

This glossary contains terms included within the policy, alongside others that are commonly used by the Timetabling & Room Booking Team.

Term	Definition
Ad hoc room bookings	The booking of a room that is not related to modular teaching and therefore will not appear on the teaching and learning timetable.
Centrally controlled spaces	Rooms which are owned and managed by Estates. Where Schools do not specify a particular location for their timetabled activities, a centrally controlled space will be allocated.
Clash	When a student, member of staff, or room has more than one activity occurring at the same time.
Clash list	A list of students that have clashing modules. Clash lists are usually presented by Department. Clashes appearing on clash lists generally cannot be resolved and require Support Centre staff to contact students to ask them to choose an alternative module.
Co-curricular	Activities which students do not need to attend to meet the programme learning outcomes of their programme, but which may support their understanding of a particular topic, or overall development. Talks by guest speakers which are advertised to whole Departments are generally co-curricular activities.
Consistent/Regularised timetable	A consistent or regularised timetable has activities occurring within the same day and time slot each week for the duration of the semester e.g., Tuesday at 10am.
Core teaching	A series or selection of modules that a student is required to complete.
Core University business	The broad mix of teaching, learning and research activities undertaken at the University.
DP Codes	Module codes created and managed by the Timetabling & Room Booking Team, to aid with timetabling (see DP Events below). These do not exist on student records, but are instead populated on the timetabling system. This is usually based on the Department that the students' programmes belong to, but is consolidated at School level in the case of APD, HBS, and SBS.
DP Events	Events organised at School or Department level e.g., all students on Part 1 English-owned programmes.
Essential programme activities	Essential programme activities are those activities which are not included within a module, but which students need to attend in order to meet the programme learning outcomes e.g., start of year programme information sessions, module selection information sessions etc.
Fixed timetable	A timetable in which the days and times of timetabled sessions are rolled over from year to year.
Groups	Modular cohorts can be divided into groups. Each module may only have one set of groups associated with it. In all instances, groups use alphabetical signifiers.
Instance	Occurrences as defined within SITS are converted to instances within CMIS (the timetabling software).
Module deliverer	Anyone who delivers content on a module. This could be a member of academic or professional services staff, or an external partner.

Occurrence	Occurrences are recorded within SITS and help to identify when a module is being delivered and which assessment patterns are applicable to the students enrolled on each occurrence of a module. SITS occurrences are transferred to CMIS instances (see above).
Room pools	Groupings of centrally controlled and School owned spaces that are used to aid the scheduling process.
School controlled spaces/School-owned spaces	Room owned by a School or Department. Use of the rooms is typically restricted to only the owning School or Department.
Timetabling weeks	The Timetabling & Room Booking Team works across the calendar year and therefore uses a numbering system of 1 to 52 for the weeks of the academic year. The timetabling week numbers are published on the academic year calendar, which can be accessed on the Timetabling & Room Booking webpages.
Travel time	Time allocated to travel between zones or campuses.
Unallocated students	Students who have been enrolled onto a module after the main cohort. Unallocated students must be allocated to their groups before they will see a complete timetable.
XXX Codes	XXX Codes replace module codes where more than one set of sub-groups is required for a module. XXX Codes are used sparingly.
Zones	The Whiteknights campus has been split into zones for timetabling in order to reduce the amount of travel time required between timetabled sessions.