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Purpose

This procedure describes how the University’s teaching timetable is produced to support the best possible learning outcomes for students and how students can register for classes. It covers the full cycle of timetabling including:

- developing the timetable
- publication
- allocation of students to classes, and
- changes post publication.

Applicable governance instruments

Instrument	Section	Principles
Course Design and Delivery Policy	1 Course Design and Delivery	1.14

Procedure

Introduction

A timely, well organised timetable supports student learning by making it more likely that students will attend face-to-face or other scheduled learning activities. Attendance is linked to higher pass rates and in turn, retention.

This procedure supports the delivery of a student centric teaching timetable that accommodates a range of teaching arrangements across the calendar year.

The procedure ensures that:

- The data on which the timetable is based, is collected in a clear and consistent manner that captures the needs of students, while minimising administrative burden.
- Colleges provide active input into the draft timetable, supporting early planning and ongoing refinement which minimises change to the timetable post publication.

Definitions and acronyms can be found at: <https://www.utas.edu.au/policy/policy-definitions>

Related policy and procedures can be found at: <https://www.utas.edu.au/policy>

- Space allocation prioritises students and student learning and ensures sustainable and demand driven use of resources.
- The impact on students is central to requests for timetable changes pre and post publication and there are clear processes and approval pathways for making any change.
- Students can register for classes in a streamlined and seamless manner.

The University's timetable is developed and maintained by the Academic Scheduling team. Once published, the timetable, including change requests, is overseen by the Timetable and Scheduling Oversight Group. This group comprises the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Executive Director Student Services, Associate Director Academic Development and is supported by College Associate Deans Learning and Teaching Performance (or delegates of the above).

Spaces allocated by the Academic Scheduling team in the timetable for learning and teaching are then managed centrally by the Campus Services team. After the timetable is published, the Academic Scheduling team facilitate the process by which students plan for and are allocated to classes. This process enables students to create a personalised timetable and allows teaching staff to have visibility of class size and other relevant demographics.

This procedure does not apply to timetables developed for:

- School of Medicine
- School of Paramedicine
- Conservatorium of Music
- Australian Maritime College Training section
- Third parties delivering courses on behalf of the University

For further information, please contact these areas directly.

1. Developing the timetable

- 1.1. The Academic Scheduling team develop three timetables annually:
 - a) Early Phase (Summer study periods)
 - b) Phase 1 (study periods from January to June).
 - c) Phase 2 (study periods from July to December).
- 1.2. The Academic Scheduling team will begin developing the Early and Phase 1 timetables in August the year prior immediately after publication of the Course and Unit Handbook for the following year. Development of the timetable for Phase 2 will normally begin in November of the year prior. The timetable must match the teaching pattern outlined in the Course and Unit Handbook.
- 1.3. As an initial step, the Academic Scheduling team will prepare a timeline for developing the timetable. This timeline will be reviewed and approved for circulation by the Timetabling and Scheduling Oversight Group and circulated to timetabling contacts within the Colleges. This timeline will include timeframes for the following key phases in developing the timetable:
 - a) data collection
 - b) drafting
 - c) review and approval
 - d) publication.
- 1.4. The Colleges will be expected to provide data and feedback to the Academic Scheduling team by the relevant deadlines.

Data Collection

- 1.5. The Academic Scheduling team will collect data required to build the timetable from Campus Services, ITS Services, each of the Colleges and relevant Academic Units.
- 1.6. Campus Services and IT Services will provide the Academic Scheduling team with the details of the following prior to each timetable build:
 - a) Changes or updates to room usage, capacities, and available infrastructure (i.e. furniture and IT equipment).
 - b) Proposed capital works or major changes to learning and teaching spaces and surrounding areas that may impact on learning spaces.
 - c) Planned closures of any learning and teaching spaces.
 - d) Planned changes to timetabling software and other user interfaces.
- 1.7. Data collected from Colleges and relevant Academic Units, will include the following:
 - a) Teaching requirements – for example, 1 x 1hr weekly tutorial and 1 x 2hr fortnightly practical (which must match the Course and Unit Handbook information for students).
 - b) Clash avoidance - The units/activities that must be kept clash free.
 - c) Any restrictions on use – such as a teaching space which can only be allocated to a specific unit or learning activity.
 - d) Activity types – for example, practical, workshop, seminar, keynote, tutorial
 - e) Teaching staff and their availability (see section 1.10 below)
 - f) Teaching delivery pattern and mode – for example, the seminar needs to occur before the in-lab practical, or practicals are to be delivered every second week.
 - g) Special requests (see section 1.11 below).

Drafting

- 1.8. Based on the data collected, the Academic Scheduling team will determine whether to fully rebuild the timetable (with new class days, times, locations), or roll-over the previous timetable or components of it as appropriate.
- 1.9. In developing a timetable, the following general principles apply:
 - a) Student learning is the primary consideration in developing a timetable. This means that:
 - i. Learning spaces must support, as far as reasonably possible, participation by all students enrolled in the 'on campus' availability of a unit.
 - ii. For as many students as possible, clashes between learning activities will be avoided and teaching activities concentrated into certain periods.
 - iii. The timetable will incorporate travel time between classes for students and staff and allow for sufficient time for inter-campus travel where required.
 - iv. Plans are in place to manage the cancellation of any timetabled teaching (see section 4.4).
 - b) Spaces will be allocated considering the following:
 - i. Use of the University's highest quality spaces must be maximised, based on the outcome of routine infrastructure audits.

- ii. Spaces must be fit for purpose and of an appropriate size for the learning activities allocated to them.
 - iii. Specialised learning spaces will only be used for the activities for which they are designed. The use of these spaces may be further restricted by specific academic units.
 - iv. All non-specialised centrally allocated learning spaces will be available for use by all colleges and academic units.
 - v. Learning spaces with Zoom functionality will be allocated in the following order of priority:
 - Classes involving interaction between on-campus enrolled students across more than one location.
 - Classes that will be live-streamed.
 - Classes that will be recorded.
- c) Teaching activities will be scheduled as follows:
- i. Normally scheduled to commence on the hour.
 - ii. Face-to-face and synchronous online content will commence at the scheduled time and end 10 minutes prior to the start of the next class.
- 1.10. The Academic Scheduling team will also consider teaching staff and their availability when drafting the timetable as follows:
- a) Full-time staff members should not be scheduled to teach more than eight hours per day.
 - b) Teaching activities should be scheduled during 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday. Subject to approval from the relevant Head of Academic Unit, teaching outside of these hours can be scheduled where:
 - i. Requested by the staff member, in order to meet the needs and availability of the student cohort.
 - ii. With the agreement of the staff member.
 - c) A late finish for a staff member one day followed by an early start the next day should be avoided.
 - d) Part-time or casual academic staff must discuss their availability to teach with their Associate Head (Learning and Teaching) and ensure the Academic Scheduling team is advised.
- 1.11. Special requests, such as requests to limit scheduling to specific days or times within core teaching hours, or requests to withhold publishing scheduled activities due to commercial or third-party teaching agreements, must be endorsed by the Associate Head (Learning and Teaching) or equivalent and will only be considered during the drafting phase.

Review and Feedback

- 1.12. Once the timetable has been drafted, the Academic Scheduling team will provide the draft timetable to the colleges for review and feedback. The review period is normally 1-2 weeks.
- 1.13. Heads of Academic Units, or their representatives, are responsible for ensuring feedback and any specific change requests are provided to the Academic Scheduling team by the required deadline.
- 1.14. Where changes to the draft timetable are requested that will have a significant impact on the wider timetable (for example, a change to the teaching delivery for one unit which will cause clashes for other units), the Academic Scheduling team will consult as necessary with the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching Performance), Head of Academic Unit, Associate Head (Learning and Teaching) or Discipline Head to achieve a resolution.

- 1.15. Where no changes are required, the Head of Academic Unit or representative must confirm that they have reviewed the scheduling for their units and that they accept the scheduling as per the draft timetable. Once feedback has been resolved, the timetable is ready to be published.

2. Timetable Publication

- 2.1. In accordance with the timeline, the final indicative timetable is published to students and staff via the Student View Timetable and via MyTimetable.
- 2.2. Students will be notified that the timetable is published by announcement via the Student Portal.
- 2.3. Non-compulsory engagement activities (for example, Peer Assisted Study Sessions) are scheduled after the publication of the timetable.
- 2.4. Non-teaching bookings for all teaching spaces for the following calendar year (including exam room bookings) cannot be made until the timetable is published. Preference is given to Venue Hire to make bookings prior to Web Room Bookings being opened to all staff.

3. Class Allocation

- 3.1. After publication of the timetable, students can self-allocate or register to classes via MyTimetable (Allocate Plus), the University class allocation system.
- 3.2. The opening and closing of class allocation will be coordinated centrally by the Academic Scheduling Team. Class allocation will normally open for students no later than 14 days prior to the start of the study period (unless a preference period is put in place) and close within three days of the last date to enrol. As part of the class allocation process, colleges are responsible for managing:
 - a) creation of class streams i.e., groupings of designated sets of classes for a particular unit or area of study. For example, the early childhood stream within the Bachelor of Education.
 - b) reserved places i.e., buffers that protect places for students who might otherwise be unable to allocate into classes due to Learning Access Plans or other extenuating circumstances.
 - c) manual allocation of students (after a late timetable change causes deallocation, or where a clash is to be overridden or the allocation mode has been switched to read only).
 - d) monitoring enrolment and allocation numbers to ensure appropriate spaces are made available in classes.
- 3.3. Students will be notified by email and/or an announcement on the Student Portal when class allocations open, and if any changes occur after they have allocated.

4. Changes to the timetable post publication

- 4.1. After the timetable has been published, staff seeking to change the timetable **must** submit a request to the Academic Scheduling team (using the Online Change Request Form), specifying the reason for the change. Changes are permitted for the following reasons, as outlined in the Rules of Allowable Change guide:
 - a) Accessibility requirements
 - b) Significant student clashes
 - c) Unrealistic travel times between classes
 - d) New scheduling for a late approved unit
 - e) Teaching venue assigned becomes unusable post publication

- f) Change due to enrolment increase/decrease (excluding cancellation of classes after last date to enrol)
 - g) Continuous classes without breaks.
 - h) Unforeseen circumstances
- 4.2. Changes requested for reasons listed in section 4.1 above will be assessed and approved by the Academic Scheduling team where they can be accommodated.
- 4.3. If the requested change has a significant impact on the wider timetable, the Academic Scheduling team will consult as necessary with the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching Performance), Head of Academic Unit, Associate Head (Learning and Teaching) or Discipline Head to achieve a resolution.
- 4.4. If a change is requested for a reason other than those listed in section 4.1 above, the Academic Scheduling team will conduct an impact assessment to determine the impact of the change on students (for example, the number of students effected by the change, when the change is occurring and how many parts to the change are required). The request and impact assessment will then be considered by the Timetable and Scheduling Oversight Group and the relevant Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching Performance), normally within 1-3 working days. The staff member requesting the change will be advised of the outcome by the Academic Scheduling team.
- 4.5. Teaching staff dissatisfied with the outcome of a change request may ask for their request to be reconsidered. Requests for review must be submitted to the Timetable and Scheduling Oversight Group via the Academic Scheduling team and must clearly outline the reasons for reconsideration, including any impacts on students.

Related procedures

None

Versions

Version	Action	Approved By	Responsible Officer/s	Approval Date
Version 1	Approved	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)	Director Student Systems and Administration Manager Student Administration	14 September 2022
Version 2	Approved	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)	Executive Director Student Services Manager Student Administration	21 September 2023
Version 2	Reconfirmed	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)	Executive Director Student Services Manager Student Administration	24 September 2024