Timetabling and Room Booking

Academic Registry

Policy, Procedures, and Responsibilities

Contents

1. Introduction

This document contains the policies, guidelines and procedures associated with the timetabling and room booking functions at the University of Bristol (dated information specific to the current academic year is given in Appendix B). As such it is a comprehensive document with a lot of useful information. For those requiring specific guidance or information for roles within the process, the following shortcuts may be of use:

1.1 Academic Staff - Key Activities during the Timetabling Cycle

Jan - Feb
- Receive Staff Constraints form for next academic year
- Start collating information about next year's units teaching patterns and requirements

Mar - May
- Head of School signs off Staff Constraints form and returns to Timetabling team
- Liaise with School professional services staff to ensure that all programme and unit information for next academic year is updated

June - mid July
- Liaise with School professional services staff / FTEO to ensure that dummy student sets mirror all programme unit options
- Continue to liaise with School professional services staff / FTEO where there are changes to units, programmes, staffing or expected student numbers

Mid July - Mid Aug
- Draft timetable released - check your own timetable and both unit and programme timetables to ensure that all unit teaching events are scheduled in appropriate space and that units fit the programme timetables
- Report any anomalies and/or provide feedback on the draft timetable to the FTEO for amendments to be made

Mid Aug - Mid Sept
- Provisional timetable released - check your own timetable and both unit and programme timetables to ensure that all unit teaching events are scheduled in appropriate space and that units fit the programme timetables
- Report any anomalies and/or provide feedback on the provisional timetable to the FTEO

Mid Sept - Oct
- Final timetable released
- Continue to liaise with FTEO if any queries or issues arise

1.2 Academic Staff with Education Management Responsibilities - Key Activities during the Timetabling Cycle

Jan - Feb
- Receive Staff Constraints form for next academic year and ensure distribution to colleagues
- Arrange for the collation of information about next year's units teaching patterns and requirements
- Throughout, raise any concerns and issues with the Timetabling Manager so these can be proactively addressed

Mar - May
- Sign off Staff Constraints forms and return to Timetabling team
- Liaise with School professional services staff to ensure that all programme and unit information for next academic year is updated, and follow up with colleagues missing information.

June - mid July
- Liaise with School professional services staff / FTEO to ensure that dummy student sets mirror all programme unit options
- Continue to liaise with School professional services staff / FTEO where there are changes to units, programmes, staffing or expected student numbers

Mid July - Mid Aug
- Draft timetable released - check your own timetable and ensure both unit and programme timetables checked so that all unit teaching events are scheduled in appropriate space and that units fit the programme timetables
- Report any anomalies and/or provide feedback on the draft timetable to the FTEO for amendments to be made

Mid Aug - Mid Sept
- Provisional timetable released - check your own timetable and ensure both unit and programme timetables are checked so that all unit teaching events are scheduled in appropriate space and that units fit the programme timetables
- Report any anomalies and/or provide feedback on the provisional timetable to the FTEO

Mid Sept - Oct
- Final timetable released
- Continue to liaise with FTEO if any queries or issues arise
- Review with the Timetabling Manager to ensure that lessons learnt are embedded and that the service continues to evolve.

1.3 Faculty/School Professional Services Staff - Key Activities during the Timetabling Cycle

Jan - Feb
- Distribute Staff Constraints forms to academic staff for next academic year
- Start receiving and collating information about next year's units teaching patterns and requirements

Mar - May
- WDC users nominated and undertake (refresher) training
- Staff Constraint forms returned to Timetabling team
- Enter information on WDC for next years teaching activity
- Ensure programme and unit information is updated and accurate on OAT
- Option choices for continuing students entered into SITS (for transmission to S+)

June - mid July
- Liaise with FTEO to ensure that dummy student sets mirror all programme unit options
- Continue to liaise with FTEO where there are changes to units, programmes, staffing or expected student numbers

Mid July - Mid Aug
- Draft timetable released - check both unit and programme timetables to ensure that all unit teaching events are scheduled in appropriate space and that units fit the programme timetables
- Report any anomalies and/or provide feedback on the draft timetable to the FTEO for amendments to be made

Mid Aug - Mid Sept
- Provisional timetable released - check both unit and programme timetables to ensure that all unit teaching events are scheduled in appropriate space and that units fit the programme timetables
- Report any anomalies and/or provide feedback on the provisional timetable to the FTEO
- Add optional and open units for new students to their SITS records

Mid Sept - Oct
- Final timetable released
- Make adjustments to student unit records in SITS as required
- Undertake reallocation of students (refresher) training
- Reallocate students as required

1.4 Timetabling and Room Booking - Key Activities during the Timetabling Cycle

Jan - Feb
- Distribute Staff Constraints forms for next academic year
- Rollover data from previous cycle
- Prepare and cleanse WDC data
- Set up and test WDC

Mar - May
- WDC training provided to School staff and WDC opens
- Advice and support for Schools in collecting and entering their data
- Staff Constraint forms received and entered into S+
- Dummy student sets for next academic year created in collaboration with Schools to ensure they best reflect approved programmes and expectations about student choices
- WDC closes and data imported into S+, data prepared for scheduling

June - mid July
- 50+ student lectures identified and scheduled
- FTEOs then schedule activities for less than 50 students
- Prepare for release of draft timetable

Mid July - Mid Aug
- Draft timetable released - work with Schools to check both unit and programme timetables to ensure that all unit teaching events are scheduled in appropriate space and that units fit the programme timetables
- Respond to any anomalies and provide feedback to Schools on queries raised

Mid Aug - Mid Sept
- Provisional timetable released - work with Schools to check both unit and programme timetables to ensure that all unit teaching events are scheduled in appropriate space and that units fit the programme timetables
- Respond to any anomalies and provide feedback to Schools on queries raised
- Add optional and open units for new students to their SITS records

Mid Sept - Oct
- Final timetable released
- Reallocation training provided to School staff
- Students allocated/reallocated to open
- FTEOs continue to work with School to hone timetable and deal with ad hoc queries and issues

2   Useful Background Information

2.1   Timetabling at the University of Bristol

The Common Timetabling Platform (CTP) provides a single platform for managing the University of Bristol's teaching timetable and its teaching spaces using Scientia Enterprise Suite (previously known as Syllabus Plus). The CTP Project was approved by University Planning and Resources Committee (UPARC) with all Deans agreeing to ensure that the CTP is implemented in their area[1]. The CTP passed from Project to Operational stage in 2012 with university timetabling moving to the control of the newly established University Timetabling and Room Booking Team within the Academic Registry.

The Timetabling and Room Booking Team also took on responsibility for providing a room booking service for the Pool 2 locally-owned specialist teaching spaces. In January 2013 responsibility for room booking in the centrally-owned Pool 1 teaching spaces transferred from Learning Facilities Management to the Timetabling and Room Booking Team to create a single centralized room booking service covering all University of Bristol teaching spaces. The team operates a Web Room Booking system that allows staff to request non-teaching bookings in all of the University's teaching rooms electronically.

2.2   Aims and Aspirations of our Timetabling and Room Booking Policy

In keeping with the University of Bristol's Education Strategy[2], and to match best practice within the Higher Education sector, the Timetabling and Room Booking Team's aim is to produce a timetable that:

1. Supports the delivery of high quality learning and teaching in appropriate accommodation.
2. Takes a student-led approach to optimize, and provide consistency, in the student experience.
3. Protects time for staff who, as well as teaching, engage in research, enterprise and other activities as part of their contractual agreements.
4. Meets, wherever possible, the expressed requirements of staff and students.
5. Works within the constraints of staff, students and room availability to produce the University timetable.
6. Encompasses all of the teaching delivery requirements of the University's taught programmes.
7. Optimizes teaching room utilization.

Additionally, the Timetabling and Room Booking Team will:
- Work collaboratively with colleagues from across the University to enhance the overall effectiveness of the service provided.
- Provide a responsive service which places the needs of students and staff at the centre of the timetabling activity, and enhances the broader university use of physical resources for strategically important activities.
- Negotiate with the members of the University community where there are conflicting priorities, offering alternative creative solutions to best meet all requirements within the physical resources available.

The annual timetable process is a collaborative activity across the university and there are three key groups of staff who are vital to the successful production of the teaching timetable:
- Academic staff who determine the appropriate mode of delivery and the physical resources needed for their teaching and then check that the draft timetable meets those requirements.

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[1] http://www.bristol.ac.uk/ips/projects/projectcurrent/common-timetabling/index.html gives fuller details on the Common Timetabling Platform.

[2] http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/facultyadvice/policy/educationstrategy/

- School professional services staff who collate, interpret and submit the data required to create the teaching timetable.
- And the Timetabling and Room Booking Team who use the information provided to schedule how best to meet those needs and requirements within the confines of the limited physical resources.

To support its activities and to inform staff and students about timetabling and room booking at the University, a clear set of policies, guidelines, and procedures is required, and this document is designed to encompass and fulfil those needs.

2.3 **Glossary**

Term	Definition
Faculty Timetabling and Education Officer (FTEO)	The job title of the key timetabling staff in the central team who are involved in the liaison and development of the teaching timetable. Each Faculty has 1 fte of FTEO resource allocated to support their requirements, and the postholder(s) will work closely with colleagues in Schools to provide a good timetabling service.
Learning Facilities Management (LFM)	Learning Facilities Management is part of the University Estates' Space and Asset Management. Learning Facilities Management (LFM) manage all standard (non-specialist) teaching rooms across the University and provide audio visual support to all University rooms. Further details: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/learningfacilities/
Online Approval Tool (OAT)	University system used to record approved programmes, their structures and all units available to students. OAT is used to collect the information about which units are being made available in the next academic year.
Pool 1 Room	Centrally managed teaching spaces that are booked via the Timetabling and Room Booking team.
Pool 2 Room	Locally managed space that is used for teaching and therefore scheduled centrally as part of timetabling but the room booking is managed locally.
Scientia Enterprise Suite	Software used by the University which provides a number of scheduling tools used in the timetabling and room booking process.
Timetabling and Room Booking Team	The University's central team who have responsibility for coordinating both the teaching timetable for all taught programmes and the room booking process for central rooms. The teams contact details are available here: http://bristol.ac.uk/academicregistry/timetabling/contacts
Web Data Collection (WDC)	Web Data Collection is a web based tool within the Scientia Enterprise Suite for Schools to submit teaching delivery plans to be used for timetabling.
Web Room Booking	Web Room Booking is an online room requesting tool linked to the University's timetabling system) which enables any member of staff to be able to request LFM supported rooms electronically for any non-teaching events. Further details: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academicregistry/timetabling/web-room-booking/

3   Core Timetabling and Room Booking Policy

3.1   The Teaching Week/Day

3.1.1   The University's Teaching Block dates and formal teaching weeks are set out in the Almanac: www.bris.ac.uk/academicregistry/office/almanac/.

3.1.2   Core teaching hours at the University are Monday – Friday from 9.00 – 6.00, except for Wednesday afternoons[3] which will normally be kept free from teaching from 13.00 onwards. Staff and students are expected to be available within these hours unless approved exceptions to teaching patterns apply.[4]

3.1.3   Classes will start on the hour and run for 50 minutes. Classes must adhere to the scheduled teaching slots of 50 minutes so as to permit student travel time between lectures and for staff to prepare and set-up teaching aids.

3.1.4   The Timetabling and Room Booking Team will make every effort to ensure that one hour is left free for lunch between 12.00 and 14.00.

3.1.5   The full teaching week will be utilised, and student services (such as catering in halls of residence) will be organized in the context of students being required to be available for teaching at all hours of the teaching day/week. The policy of assigning teaching activities is a student-led one, and in that context it is vital that the full teaching week can be utilised.

3.1.6   Full-time teaching staff will be assumed to be available to teach during core hours unless formal flexible working arrangements are in place or the staff member must attend regular University or external meetings. These exceptions are to be approved annually by the Head of School (see 2.3 Staff Constraints).

3.2   Timetable Scheduling Priorities

3.2.1   As is best practice within the HEI sector and to optimise room usage, regular teaching activities - i.e., events that take place on the same day and at the same time each week for full teaching blocks– will take priority in the scheduling process over irregular or one-off events.

3.2.2   Every effort will be made to match exactly both preferred timetable slots and preferred teaching rooms. However, because of limited room availability, the FTEO cannot guarantee that a unit can be taught at, or that a room is available for, preferred timeslots. Similarly, as teaching rooms will be allocated on a best-fit basis, FTEOs cannot guarantee that preferred rooms will be available.

3.2.3   Every effort will be made to 'zone' teaching – i.e., to place requests in rooms close to the lecturer's faculty/school base. Staff must be aware, however, that the weight of requests received for certain time slots may make this impossible and, so teaching may be housed in any of the University's various teaching buildings.

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[3] Wednesday 13.00 onwards is normally reserved for sport and other enrichment activities and teaching should not be scheduled on Wednesday afternoons in term-time, with the exception of students on professional programmes, and some taught masters programmes, and then only following appropriate consultation with the students concerned.

[4] **Exceptions**: The principles in this policy should be considered as best practice and should be followed wherever possible. However, it is acknowledged that there may need to be exceptions because of the precise nature of the subject. Departures from the best practice will need to be approved by the relevant Faculty Education Director and be in accordance with faculty policy.

3.2.4   When scheduling, mandatory units (within a set programme of study) will be given a higher priority than optional units. Optional units (within a set programme of study) will be given a higher priority than open units.

3.2.5   Scheduling of large group lectures will take priority over small group classes because of the more limited availability of suitable large spaces.

3.2.6   In the event that these priorities cannot help distinguish between competing room requests, the FTEO will discuss the issue with all parties and will supply information on alternative clash free slots and/or alternative rooms in an effort to reach a resolution. In the event that a solution cannot be agreed, the matter will be referred to the Timetabling Manager for a decision.

3.2.7   Joint honours programmes will be timetabled in a way that enables students to attend all the constituent mandatory units.

3.2.8   The Timetabling and Room Booking Team will make every effort to avoid clashes in the production of the timetable, and clashes between mandatory units will be avoided. However, optional units cannot be guaranteed to be clash free particularly for programmes with large numbers of optional units. The FTEO will work with Schools to identify the priorities when a clash free timetable cannot be produced.

3.3   Room Booking Priorities

3.3.1   The University operates a policy for certain key institutional priority bookings to be made in advance of all other bookings and scheduling for the following academic year. These are identified in the table below, along with indicative timescales of when those bookings are be made and the precise dates will be determined each year in the Diary of Annual Timetabling Events:

Priority Booking Description	Indicative Request Dates
Welcome Week (centrally managed)	Mid to late March
Court and Council	Mid to late March
Degree Ceremonies	Mid to late March
Exams Office	Mid to late March
Main University Open Days	Mid to late March
Conference Office	Late March to mid-April
Public Lectures (PACEO)	Late March to mid-April
Admissions	Late March to mid-April
Campaigns and Alumni	Late March to mid-April
Careers	Late March to mid-April
Welcome Week (Faculty and School requests)	By Early June
Other: Out of term-time	From mid-May onwards
Other: Evening (Mon-Fri 18:00 onwards)	From mid-May onwards
Other: Wednesday PM (13:00 onwards)	From mid-May onwards

Priority Booking Description	Indicative Request Dates
Other: Weekend	From mid-May onwards
Other: Term-time	On release of timetable (first week of term)

3.3.2   All regular scheduled teaching and associated activities will be scheduled to take account of student choice, staff and room availability in the first instance.

3.3.3   Regular research seminars will be prioritised alongside teaching timetabling, and will be scheduled as part of the draft timetable production. Where these may conflict with regular scheduled teaching activities, Deans or Heads of school will be advised of possible solutions with impacts and asked to prioritise, and teaching activities will remain on the timetable until a decision has been taken.

3.3.4   Following timetabled teaching and regular research seminars, the following room booking priorities will be allocated to other activities in order (see 3.3.6 for exceptions):

    i.   All examinations taking place during the University designated examination period
    ii.   All examinations taking place outside of the University designated examination period
    iii.   Formal student recruitment events (e.g. Applicant Visit Days)
    iv.   Ad hoc education events in support of the curriculum (e.g. invited speakers)
    v.   Co-curricular studies and student led activities which are outside of the core curriculum and which are supported and sanctioned by Deans of Faculty or Heads of School (discipline specific student societies, careers advice)
    vi.   Ad hoc research events and conferences
    vii.   Administrative and management activities (meetings, staff training etc.)
    viii.   Commercial activities
    ix.   Social activities

3.3.5   Where an event in categories i to vi cannot be accommodated in an appropriate space without an impact on the teaching timetable, the Timetabling team will provide details of all possible solutions and their impact. Deans of Faculty or Heads of School may request that teaching activities within their area of responsibility are varied to accommodate the request if the event is deemed to be strategically important.

3.3.6   For any events where there would be a cross-Faculty impact on teaching, or for events in categories vii to ix that cannot be accommodated without an impact on teaching, the request (along with all possible solutions) will be referred in the first instance to the Academic Registrar who will liaise with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) if adjudication becomes necessary [See Appendix process detailed in Timetabling and Room Booking - Policy, Procedures Responsibilities].

3.3.7   No teaching should be scheduled to clash with the Student Annual members' Meeting (AMM) in accordance with Ordinance 24. Teaching that clashes with the AMM will be rearranged once the date is confirmed.

3.4   Timetable Construction and Data

3.4.1   To allow adequate time to complete the timetabling process and negotiate any clashes, it is vital that all staff groups involved in producing the timetable meet the deadlines outlined in the Diary of Annual Timetabling Events.

3.4.2   Faculties/Schools should submit timetabling data and other timetable information in the format, and at the times and dates determined in advance by the Timetabling and Room Booking Team (Please see Diary of Annual Timetabling Events).

3.4.3   To ensure that timetables accurately reflect programmes and units being offered in any particular year, Faculties/Schools are asked to ensure that the programme and unit information held on the Central Online Approval Tool (which feeds into Student Information System (SITS) and Syllabus +) is up-to-date and accurate.

3.4.4   The Timetabling and Room Booking Team should be consulted at the earliest possible point about the teaching schedule requirements of any planned new programmes so that they can advise about the impact on existing timetable patterns and to assess space availability.

3.5   Staff, Student, and Room Timetables

3.5.1   Staff are asked to use the latest version of the published timetable at all times so that students and staff are working from the same published information.

3.5.2   The most accurate and up-to-date timetables for staff and students are available on-line at http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academicregistry/timetabling/ or via the MyBristol Portal.

3.5.3   Staff should refrain from printing timetables as these may become out of date and will not reflect any subsequent amendments, changes or cancellations. All staff who choose distribute information about the timetable to colleagues and students should ensure that the material distributed matches that held on the definitive timetable record in Syllabus Plus and state that it is only valid at the date of publication from S+.

3.6   Review of the Timetabling and Room Booking Policies

3.6.1   The Academic Registry Timetabling and Room Booking team will review the operation of the timetabling and room booking policies annually in collaboration with Faculties and Schools and make recommendations to the Academic Registrar for changes if appropriate.

3.6.2   The Timetabling Steering Group will review the Timetabling and Room Booking Policies and make recommendations to the Academic Registrar for changes if appropriate.

3.6.3   The Timetabling Manager will annually update the Key Timetabling Process Documents.

4   The Timetabling Process

The Timetabling policy allows all staff and students to view the rational used by the University to construct the teaching timetable, and where priority is given to certain activities, these are explicit in this policy. Student-led activities, including unit choices, are an important aspect of the policy and are identified throughout.

4.1   The General Timetabling Process

4.1.1   The Timetabling and Room Booking Team's aim is to produce a timetable that best benefits the student experience, that includes all necessary teaching programmes, that avoids clashing mandatory units, that works within the constraints of staff, students, and room availability, and that meets, where possible, the expressed preferences of teaching and administrative staff.

4.1.2   The Timetabling and Room Booking Team will produce an annual Diary of Annual Timetabling Events which will give details of the timeline and key dates for actions to be undertaken in order to construct the teaching timetable.

4.1.3   The Timetabling and Room Booking Team will annually review a number of key timetabling process information which give details of the processes used to construct the teaching timetable and the roles and responsibilities staff in various roles play in the success of the activity:

   i.   Timetabling Process Chart: gives a detailed chronological schematic of the annual timetabling process, with the roles and responsibilities of both the Timetabling and Room Booking Team and Academic and Administrative staff detailed in swim lanes.

   ii.   Academic Staff - Key Activities During the Timetabling Cycle: provides further detail on the key activities to be undertaken by academic staff in the timetabling process.

   iii.   Academic Staff with Education Management Responsibilitie - Key Activities During the Timetabling Cycle: builds on the information for all academic staff and provides further detail on the key additional activities to be undertaken by academic staff with education management responsibilities in the timetabling process.

   iv.   Faculty/School Professional Services Staff - Key Activities during the Timetabling Cycle: provides further detail of the key activities to be undertaken by Faculty/School professional services staff in the timetabling process.

   v.   Timetabling and Room Booking Team - Key Activities during the Timetabling Cycle: provides further detail of the key activities undertaken by the Timetabling and Room Booking team in the timetabling process.

4.1.4   In order to deliver the university's timetable, Faculties/Schools should plan to meet the Diary of Annual Timetabling Events and submit timetabling requests and other timetable information in the format and at the times and dates published in advance by the Timetabling and Room Booking Team.

4.2   Changes to Timetables

4.2.1   Provided reasonable notice is given, the FTEO may change the allocated room for any event where this is required to meet an institutional objective.

4.2.2   Staff should not consider that slots or rooms allocated in previous years will automatically carry over year on year as this may not be possible as the needs of programmes and the university

space evolves. Every effort will be made to meet scheduling requests where these are a fit with the principles of best space utilisation.

4.2.3   Staff should not consider that days and times allocated in previous years will automatically carry over year on year as this may not be possible as the needs of programmes and the university space evolves.   Every effort will be made to meet scheduling requests where these are a fit with the principles of best space utilisation.

4.2.4   Fluctuations in student numbers are expected. FTEOs should be informed at the earliest possible time of increasing or decreasing student numbers so that appropriate action can be taken to schedule activities to appropriately sized space.

4.2.5   Requests for timetable amendments should be made to the relevant FTEO, and must come via Student Administration Managers or other agreed staff to ensure a coherent and consistent communication channel.

4.2.6   Following publication of the Final Timetable, and in order to minimise the impact of any changes, timetable amendments will normally only be made under the following conditions:

  i.   Staff clash with other teaching.
  ii.   Student clash with another core teaching activity.
  iii.   A change in the member of staff teaching on the activity.
  iv.   Staff sickness.
  v.   The required facilities are not available in the allocated room: for example, the allocated room does not provide the requested audio/visual facilities or other necessary teaching aids.
  vi.   The number of students enrolled on a course/unit exceeds the capacity of the allocated teaching room. Staff must be aware that the availability of an alternative room at the scheduled timeslot cannot be guaranteed.

  vii.   For reasons approved by the Head of School or Head of Teaching.

4.2.7   Staff should contact the FTEO as soon as possible in the event of:
  i.   Allocated room not large enough.
  ii.   Time slot no longer required.
  iii.   Student clash.
  iv.   Staff Clash.
  v.   Allocated room too large.
  vi.   Allocated room unsuitable for purpose.

4.3   Staff constraints

4.3.1   The University recognises that although teaching staff will be expected to be available to teach during core hours, some staff will have constraints on their availability to teach. It is the responsibility of teaching staff to identify in advance constraints to their teaching availability, and these constraints must receive the approval of the relevant Head of School.

4.3.2   Staff Constraint Forms will be distributed at the start of the annual timetabling process to collect information about those agreed constraints.

4.3.3   Only staff constraints signed off by Heads of School will be actioned by the FTEOs. Individual teaching staff should therefore not approach FTEOs to meet individual preferences that are not covered by an agreement with the Head of School.

4.3.4   Staff on teaching and research contracts may be scheduled to teach at any time during the teaching week but may be allocated one (or more according to contractual or other agreement) non-teaching day per week. Non-teaching days will be allocated randomly as part of the scheduling process unless otherwise determined by the Head of School for an individual member of staff and where there are legitimate reasons to allocate a specific day, e.g. relating to external research commitments which take place regularly on the same weekday.

4.3.5   Part-time hourly paid teaching staff appointed after the annual staff constraints process has been completed should not, except under exceptional circumstances, be offered the opportunity to complete a Staff Constraints Form.

4.4   Equality and Diversity

4.4.1   The University of Bristol is committed to creating and sustaining a positive and supportive working environment for our staff and an excellent teaching and learning experience for our students.

4.4.2   The University's commitment to equality and diversity states that no individual will be unjustifiably discriminated against. This includes, but not exclusively, discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. The University will take steps to schedule teaching in line with this commitment to equality and diversity.

4.4.3   The University's Disability Services provides a confidential advice and support service to disabled students and Disability Advisors work with individual students (in consultation with Schools) to produce a Disability Support Summary. This will outline the individual support needs for the student including any timetabling needs.

4.4.4   When timetabling, the needs of disabled staff and students will be taken into account and, where appropriate, the timetable will be adjusted to meet those needs.

4.4.5   Students may also request a timetable modification due to religious observance or caring responsibilities. Such requests will be dealt with on an individual basis and, where it is practicable, reasonable and fair to all students, the timetable will be amended to accommodate the needs of students.

5   Room Booking Process

5.1   Timetabled Teaching Activities

5.1.1   Only members of the central Timetabling and Room Booking Team are able to book teaching rooms for timetabled teaching delivered in core university hours. This is to ensure that any potential clashes are identified and resolved, as well as ensuring that all information is available on individual staff and student timetables.

5.1.2   All timetabled teaching room bookings – whether teaching or non-teaching, internal or external - will be recorded on the University's computerized timetabling programme, Scientia Enterprise Suite, to ensure that there are no clashes and that information is available on individual staff and student timetables.

5.1.3   Staff should not use the Web Room Booking Tool to book timetabled teaching activities as these will not then appear in either student or staff timetables. All room bookings for timetabled teaching must be made via the relevant FTEO.

5.1.4   The Timetabling and Room Booking Team will timetable teaching which is delivered outside core hours. Teaching and teaching related events that take place outside recognised teaching hours will be concentrated in a limited number of buildings to both ensure the security of certain types of facilities, ensure the safety of participants and reduce the cost to the University of opening buildings unnecessarily. There may be additional charges for portering/security if activities are scheduled out-of-hours in areas not normally open at these times.

5.2   Non-teaching Activities

5.2.1   The Timetabling and Room Booking Team will provide an early booking process for priority stakeholders to secure rooms outside of teaching time. This process, which enables certain groups to reserve space ahead of the opening of the general booking process each year, recognises that there is a business imperative for certain University groups to be given priority access to bookable rooms.

5.2.2   All non-teaching room bookings in centrally and locally controlled teaching spaces must be booked on Syllabus Plus via the Timetabling and Room Booking Team's Room Booking Officer, using either the main Web Room Booking Tool for centrally controlled spaces, or the relevant Local Web Room Booking Tool provided to book locally school/faculty controlled spaces.

5.2.3   The dates when rooms become available to book are listed (and updated annually) on the website: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academicregistry/timetabling/web-room-booking/

5.2.4   Annual events must be booked and confirmed every year to ensure that bookings that are no longer required or need to be updated are not inadvertently blocking other bookings.

5.2.5   All non-teaching bookings in centrally bookable teaching rooms should be submitted to the Room Booking Officer via the Web Room Booking Tool and advice on the suitability of rooms is available from the team. Room bookings in centrally controlled spaces are accessed using the link: https://www.bris.ac.uk/syllabus-plus/WRB13/Login.aspx

5.2.6   Room bookings in locally controlled spaces are accessed using the link: https://www.bris.ac.uk/syllabus-plus/portal/

5.2.7   Teaching space booking details (particularly specific room availability) will not normally be confirmed for non-priority bookings within core teaching times until after teaching has commenced. This is to ensure that the greatest flexibility is available to the FTEOs when

finalising arrangements for the year, including changes to student unit choices and staff availability. For key dates, please refer to the [Diary of Annual Timetabling Events](#).

5.2.8   Extraordinarily, where a one off event is high profile or of strategic importance and the room booking needs to be confirmed well in advance of the normal pattern of activity, Deans or Divisional heads may submit a request including the rationale to the Academic Registrar for exceptional consideration. The Academic Registrar will consult with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) to make a decision in respect of such requests.

5.2.9   Requests for non-teaching bookings and bookings for which an admission is charged must be addressed to the Room Booking Officer.

5.2.10 Event organizers who wish to use rooms out-of-hours in buildings that are not open out-of-hours will normally incur a charge for porter/security provision. Additional costs that may be generated by evening or weekend teaching (i.e. additional portering requirements) will be flagged by the Room Booking Officer at the point of scheduling.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure the production of the best possible timetable, we work together collaboratively, endeavouring to provide complete and accurate information (updating if necessary) by the required deadlines.

Earlier in this document, a summary of activities is provided for different key groups of staff who are critical to the delivery of the University timetable, and this section seeks to provide more detailed guidance on the roles and responsibilities for each group. The Timetabling Process Chart gives a chronological schematic of the whole timetabling process, with the roles staff groups detailed in swim lanes which illustrates the dependencies between groups of staff in delivering the timetable.

6.1 Academic and Faculty/School professional services staff

Academic and professional services staff in Faculty and Schools provide the core information from which the timetable is built. Faculties and Schools are asked to:

i. Identify staff with responsibility for coordinating and submitting timetabling information. This is to avoid multiple submissions of information which may lead to confusion, the repetition of requests, potential for conflicting requests and a duplication of effort.

ii. Provide details of teaching constraints when requested to the appropriate member of their faculty/school.

iii. Provide complete and accurate information on the learning and teaching delivery requirements via the identified routes and in the format agreed with the Timetabling and Room Booking Team.

iv. Amend and/or correct any timetable information that is inaccurate, incomplete, ambiguous or which changes, and liaise with the Timetabling and Room Booking Team for action to be taken.

v. To make as accurate a forecast as possible when submitting timetable information as overbidding, exaggerated estimation of class sizes and requesting block-booking for more hours than are actually required places an additional strain on the University's limited physical resources, and is likely to result in all faculties/schools being adversely affected.

vi. Ensure that programme and unit information held on the Central Online Approval Tool (which feeds into Student Information System (SITS) and Syllabus +) is up-to-date and accurate.

vii. Ensure all new programmes and units have been approved and are included in the Online Approval Tool, liaising directly with the FTEO when changes are made late in the timetabling process

viii. Identify staff with responsibility for checking and verifying draft, provisional, and final timetables for accuracy and consistency and reporting anomalies and queries to the FTEO for resolution

ix. Review draft, provisional and final timetables from both a unit and programme perspective, and report to their FTEO any queries or issues identified.

x. Ensure that if any timetable information is distributed to staff and students that this is the latest published version of the timetable and identifies the date that the information was extracted. We advise against distribution of timetable information to ensure that any subsequent changes are not missed.

xi. Inform their FTEO of any changes/amendments that affect previously submitted timetable information – for example, a change in expected number of enrolled students – as soon as possible so that action can be taken.

xii. Inform their FTEO immediately of any course cancellations, or when rooms are no longer needed.

xiii.   Not use alternative rooms that may appear to be free of teaching without first requesting use of the room from their FTEO. Such rooms may be empty for a number of reasons, but could be timetabled for use in future weeks so formalising a booking is important to avoid possible clashes.

xiv.   Address requests for additional space or a change of location to FTEOs to ensure that the published timetable remains accurate.

xv.   Contact their FTEO as soon as possible should they discover a room scheduled on their timetable is occupied by another user. The FTEO will endeavour to resolve the clash and meet the requirements of all participants.

xvi.   Cancel immediately any unneeded scheduled teaching rooms or room bookings. The overbooking and non-use of booked facilities places an unnecessary strain on the university's limited physical resources and precludes the use of those teaching rooms to satisfy other requests.

xvii.   Ensure that stated room capacities are not exceeded, and to liaise with the FTEO if the teaching group size grows to exceed the room capacity. This ensures that there is no breach of Health and Safety requirements.

6.2   The Timetabling and Room Booking Team

There are a large number of behind the scenes activities that the Timetabling and Room Booking team undertake in order to deliver the timetable. The Team will:

i.   Work collaboratively with staff in Faculties and Schools to learn about the teaching priorities and ensure that the discipline specific needs and requirements are an integral part of the timetabling process.

ii.   Provide a room booking service to the University that best matches requirements with available space, providing advice and guidance on alternatives where this is required.

iii.   Ensure that each FTEO will spend a minimum average of one day per week located within the Faculty to provide a focus for all timetabling activity.

iv.   Produce the annual academic teaching timetable based on the information provided by Schools, and provide a professional, specialist service to the university.

v.   Schedule available teaching slots that best match expressed preferences, within the constraints of student choice and availability, staff workload, staff constraints and availability, and room availability.

vi.   Allocate a room from the available room stock that best meets the requested criteria for room bookings.

vii.   Provide advice on alternative teaching slots and room availability where all preferences cannot be accommodated.

viii.   Produce in good time an initial Draft timetable for academic/professional services staff to review.

ix.   Act upon issues or queries generated from the publication of the Draft timetable, and liaise with Schools to ensure that agreed amendments are made.

x.   In accordance with the Diary of Annual Timetabling Events, produce in good time a revised Provisional timetable for academic/ professional services staff to review.

xi.   Act upon issues or queries generated from the publication of the Provisional timetable, and liaise with Schools to ensure that agreed amendments are made.

xii.   Produce and distribute a Final timetable at least two weeks before the beginning of each academic year.

xiii.   Provide a responsive service to the University in respect of any queries raised throughout the timetabling activity, including at the start of each teaching block, to ensure minimal disruption to the teaching experience.

xiv.   Maintain and develop the system used to support the timetabling and room booking activities, provide training and support to users and ensure that the system remains fit for purpose and is developed to meet the University's evolving needs.

xv.   Liaise closely with Learning Facilities Management, particularly at the start of each teaching block, to identify any issues related to the readiness of rooms and communicate updates regularly to affected staff.
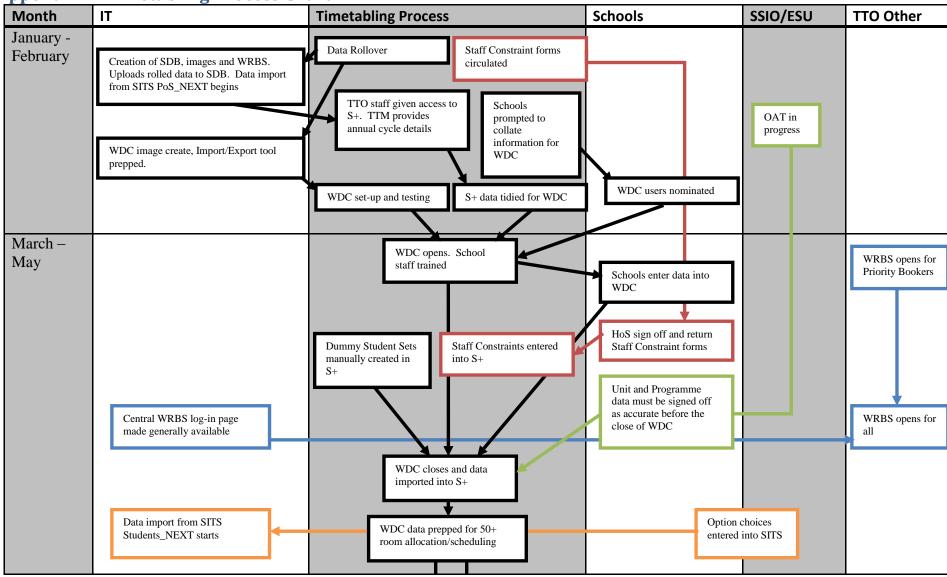

6.3   Guidance for Students

Students are important partners in the timetabling process and all staff are asked to utilise opportunities to provide students with the following information about their role in the timetabling activity. Students will be advised to:

i.   Refer all timetabling matters to their home School in the first instance.

ii.   Be aware that full-time students are expected to be available to be taught during the core teaching hours.[5]

iii.   Be aware that part time students should check that they can attend teaching commitments in line with the published timetable.

iv.   Submit unit choices by the deadlines set by their home School. Where students do not submit unit choices by the published deadline, this may result in some optional combinations not being available.

v.   Update their student records using the Student Information on-line application as required.

vi.   Check their personal timetable and report any inaccuracies to their School.

vii.   Report any unreasonable clustering of activities without sufficient breaks and/or timetable clashes to their school.

viii.   Regularly check their timetable for changes including additional activities and room changes.

ix.   Contact their school and/or Disability Services (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services) as soon as possible if they have timetabling requirements related to a disability, caring responsibility or religious observance so these can be considered during the planning of the timetable.

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[5] Although students studying full-time are expected to be available at any time during the core teaching week, where a student is allocated a specific teaching event but is genuinely unable to attend on a regular basis this should be reported immediately to their faculty/school. If a teaching activity is offered on more than one occasion, for example several seminar or tutorial groups, students will where possible be allocated to an alternative class. This does not apply to lectures. Acceptable reasons for requesting a change of class include: childcare and/or caring commitments; medical reasons, including regular medical or dental appointments; participation in sporting events at a regional, national or international level.

Appendix A: Timetabling Process Chart

Month	IT	Timetabling Process	Schools	SSIO/ESU	TTO Other
January - February	Creation of SDB, images and WRBS. Uploads rolled data to SDB. Data import from SITS PoS_NEXT begins WDC image create, Import/Export tool prepped.	Data Rollover TTO staff given access to S+. TTM provides annual cycle details WDC set-up and testing S+ data tidied for WDC	Staff Constraint forms circulated Schools prompted to collate information for WDC WDC users nominated	OAT in progress	
March – May	Central WRBS log-in page made generally available Data import from SITS Students_NEXT starts	WDC opens. School staff trained Dummy Student Sets manually created in S+ Staff Constraints entered into S+ WDC closes and data imported into S+ WDC data prepped for 50+ room allocation/scheduling	Schools enter data into WDC HoS sign off and return Staff Constraint forms Unit and Programme data must be signed off as accurate before the close of WDC Option choices entered into SITS		WRBS opens for Priority Bookers WRBS opens for all

June – mid July		50+/100+ lectures tagged and scheduled by TTM, TTSO and TA / FTEOs schedule activities of <50 / Preparation for release of the Draft timetable / Previous year's WRBS closes. SDB kept for TTO reference only		SITS rollover begins. Diets are run when rollover is complete / New S+ year begins
Mid July – Mid August	SITS data load switches from NEXT to CURRENT once diets are run / Online timetables made available. Staff timetables made available on Portal.	Draft Timetable released / Changes to Draft are processed	Academics and School Admin provide feedback on the Draft	
Mid August – Mid September		Provisional Timetable released / Changes to Provisional are processed	Academics and School Admin provide feedback on the Provisional	

Mid September-October					

Final Timetable released

Student Portal Timetables made available

Reallocation training offered to Schools

WK 0 / Open Unit Choices

Students allocated/reallocated as necessary

Schools take over reallocation of students

Wk 1

TTO continue to add students to new units

Appendix B: Diary of Annual Timetabling Events 2014/15

To allow the Timetabling and Room Booking Team adequate time to construct a timetable that best benefits the student experience, that includes all necessary teaching programmes, that works within the constraints of staff, students, and room availability, and that meets **where possible** the expressed preferences of teaching and administrative staff, it is vital that staff meet the deadlines outlined in the Diary of Annual Timetabling Events.

Date	Action/Activity	Responsibility
Monday 6 January 2014	**Staff constraints form circulated. Completed forms to be approved by Head of Schools and returned to Faculty Education Officer by Monday 3 March.**	Timetabling and Room Booking Team/Heads of Schools
Monday 27 January	**Timetable roll-forward and begin data clean-up. Creation of new database.**	Timetabling and Room Booking Team.
Monday 17 March	**Request for Timetabling Information**: **Web Data Collection Tool opens**. Collection of timetabling information for 2014/15, to include all teaching activities and staff constraints.	Timetabling and Room Booking Team; School/Faculty administrative staff with timetabling responsibilities; School/Faculty academic staff with teaching responsibilities.
Friday 25 April	**Web Data Collection Tool closes:** Deadline for receipt of information about staff constraints and teaching activities.	Timetabling and Room Booking Team; School/Faculty administrative staff with timetabling responsibilities.
Friday 4 July	**Draft teaching timetable released to academic teaching staff and support staff with timetabling responsibilities for checking.**	Timetabling and Room Booking Team; School/Faculty academic staff and administrative staff with timetabling responsibilities.
Friday 18 July	**Final date for school/faculty requests for changes to the Draft teaching timetable.**	Timetabling and Room Booking Team; School/Faculty administrative staff with timetabling responsibilities
Friday 8 August	**Provisional teaching timetable released to academic staff for checking.**	Timetabling and Room Booking Team; School/Faculty academic staff with responsibility for checking timetables.

Monday 1 September	**Deadline for requests for amendments to Provisional timetable from academic staff.**	Timetabling and Room Booking Team; School/Faculty academic staff with responsibility for checking timetables.
Friday 12 September	**Teaching Timetable released to teaching staff via the Portal.**	Timetabling and Room Booking Team.
Friday 19 September	**Release of personalised timetables to students via the Portal.**	Timetabling and Room Booking Team
Monday 22 September	**Week 0**	
Monday 29 September	**Start of TB1 (Week 1)**	
Friday 19 December	**Last day of Teaching Block 1 (Week 12)**	
Monday 26 January 2015	**Start of Teaching Block 2 (Week 13)**	
Friday 9 May	**End of Teaching Block 2 (Week 24)**	

Appendix C: Process for Booking Rooms in Line with 3.3 of the TTRB Policy

Initial Request
- Staff member requests room booking

Initial TTRB Action
- TTRB staff will identify if the required room is available, and book if this is possible
- If the room is not available, the TTRB team will propose alternatives that might be available to the room booker.

2nd Stage TTRB Action
- If a room request cannot be accommodated without an amendment to the teaching timetable being made, the TTRB will provide information on the changes required within that Faculty or School for the Dean of Faulty or Head of School to consider (in accordance with 3.3.5 of the TTRB policy).

Dean / HOS Approval
- Deans of Faculty or Heads of School approve the changes within their area, booking confirmed and timetable amendments actioned.
- If Deans of Faculty or Heads of School do not approve the change, TTRB will liaise with room booker with options (including alternative times / rooms / dates).

3rd Stage TTRB Action
- When a booking can only be accommodated by making amendments to teaching timetables across faculties, or for events identified in 3.3.4 of the TTRB policy which would have an impact on the teaching timetable, the TTRB will ask the room booker to complete Section A of the 'Room Booking Request Additional Information Form' (see next page) and provide further details on the importance or significance of the event.

Final Stage
- When the 'Room Booking Request Additional Information Form' is received, the TTRB Manager will complete section B detailing the impact of accommodating the booking as well as the alternatives (times / rooms / dates) that were offered but not suitable.
- The TTRB will refer this information to the Academic Registrar for initial advice and, if adjudication becomes necessary, he/she will liaise with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education).

Room Booking Request Additional Information Form

Section A

To be completed by the member of staff requesting use of a teaching space/spaces.

Name (of the staff member requesting the room/rooms):

Event lead contact (if different from above):

Type of event (seminar/conference/performance, etc):

Expected number of attendees:

Date/dates: **Start and finish time:**

Room/rooms requested:

Further details: Staff should give full details of the event and the strategic importance of the event. Staff should also give details of the consequences and any impact should the event not be housed in suitable accommodation.

Section B

To be completed by the Timetabling Manager.

Section B should give a full explanation of why the activity cannot be housed and include the impact of accommodating the activity. Section B must include details of solutions offered, and the reason why the solutions were considered unsuitable.