

Interim Timetabling and Teaching Space Policy

Introduction

The creation of a University timetabling and teaching space policy is part of the wider Integrated Timetabling and Space Management Project (ITSMP) approved by University Executive Board in November 2010. The project will see the University incrementally move to a Common Timetabling System (CTS) and pool of University Teaching Space (UTS) encompassing all non-specialist teaching space.

The Interim Timetabling and Teaching Space Policy will outline current policy, processes, and constraints, and is intended to facilitate shared understanding, as well as serving as the basis from which to develop policy over the course of the project.

The policy will be developed to reflect changes to current practices, such as the introduction of a CTS, providing a robust and appropriate framework upon which a more integrated approach can be built.

The owner and approval body for the policy is University Education Committee, with the policy subject to annual review.

Purpose

This document is intended to increase awareness and shared understanding of:

- Timetabling and space management policy and practices
- Constraints on timetabling and space allocation
- Changes to policy and practices arising from, or required to facilitate, the Integrated Timetabling and Space Management Project (ITSMP)
- Roles and responsibilities relating to timetabling and space management
- Terminology and vocabulary relating to timetabling and space related processes

Scope

This document outlines University policy, procedures, roles and responsibilities in relation to the following areas of activity:

- Production of the University teaching timetable
- Allocation of teaching space to teaching and non-teaching events
- Management and support of teaching space
- Provision and quality of teaching space

Principles

The guiding principles of the policy are to:

- Ensure that timetabling and teaching space at the University are managed in a way that effectively supports University learning and teaching
- Support the move to a more unified approach to timetabling and space management
- Provide guidance to all staff involved in the production of the University's teaching timetable and the management of teaching space
- Support the principles of the Learning Spaces Strategy, ensuring that learning environments are *appropriate, sustainable, innovative, and supported* by high quality management and services
- Optimise the utilisation of University teaching space
- Ensure that both students and staff are provided with a distinctive, high quality learning environment

Policy

This interim policy document will be continually reviewed during the course of the Integrated Timetabling and Space Management Project (ITSMP) to reflect changes to timetabling and space management policy or practices. This policy takes effect from October 2012 and will be reviewed during the 2012/13 academic year.

1. Teaching Calendar

1.1. Teaching Year

- 1.1.1. The University timetable is based upon a 52 week year, with weeks numbered consecutively from 1 to 52. Week 1 commences in the summer vacation.
- 1.1.2. Autumn term runs between weeks 6 -16, spring term weeks 21 – 31, and summer term weeks 36 – 43.
- 1.1.3. Online views and published timetables for staff and students will be displayed using either dates or labels in the form of Term # Week # e.g. Term 1 Week 1 / Term 2 Week 5.
- 1.1.4. A key to the week structure is published in advance of each academic year by TTAMU and is available online at:
<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/timetabling/timetablers.shtml#keytoweeks>

1.2. Teaching Day and Week

- 1.2.1. University core teaching hours are Monday-Thursday 09.00-19.00 and Friday, 09:00-18:00.
- 1.2.2. Undergraduate teaching should not take place after 13:00 on Wednesday unless an option is provided to attend at an alternative time (not Wednesday afternoon) within the core teaching hours (paragraph 1.2.1) (Appendix 1).
- 1.2.3. Teaching events must begin on the hour and end at 10 minutes to the hour to provide students and staff with sufficient time to move between teaching locations.

2. The Block Timetable

- 2.1. The University enforces a block timetable to provide a structure to scheduling undergraduate teaching and remove the potential for clashes on joint honours courses.
- 2.2. The block timetable uses a six-block system with Schools/Departments allocated one or two blocks depending on the volume of their core teaching hours.
- 2.3. Each block contains six hours of teaching time per level of study, distributed across the core teaching week.
- 2.4. Modules that are taught separately to single honours students only do not have to be placed within a block.
- 2.5. The following types of teaching for Major / Minor or Joint Honours students should be placed in a block timetable slot allocated to each School/Department:
 - 2.5.1. Compulsory modules which are taught in whole groups;
 - 2.5.2. Split group teaching for compulsory modules where one (or more) of the sessions for the groups must be contained within a block to avoid clashes;
 - 2.5.3. Whole or split group teaching for popular (or important) options as far as possible (especially in programme years with limited or no compulsory modules).

- 2.6. Events that are also available as MOMDs to students from outside the providing School, should be placed within the block(s) allocated to the School.
- 2.7. Options which are available as standard options on programmes but also available to students from outside the providing School as MOMDs should be retained in their block teaching slots as far as possible to avoid double teaching.
- 2.8. Modules which are only available to students as MOMDs or other appropriate multidisciplinary popular options should be placed within an MOMD slot.

3. Teaching Space

3.1. Teaching Space Management

- 3.1.1. All space is ultimately owned by the University.
- 3.1.2. On behalf of the University, teaching space is managed by either the Learning Spaces Division within Academic Services, or by an academic unit, at College, School or Department level.
- 3.1.3. All teaching space at the University and its usage is recorded on the CTS for analysis and reporting purposes, including generic and specialist teaching spaces

3.2. Space Types

- 3.2.1. There are two categories of teaching space at the University:
 - 3.2.1.1. Non-specialist teaching space
 - 3.2.1.2. Specialist teaching space

3.3. Non-Specialist Teaching Space

- 3.3.1. Space is classified as non-specialist where there is nothing intrinsically special about the space or the facilities provided therein which would preclude anyone from using it. This can include space containing learning materials (e.g. books, educational materials) required by a specific programme or module.
- 3.3.2. There are six recognised categories of non-specialist teaching space at the University:
 - Lecture Theatre – Fixed/raked seating
 - Lecture Room – Large flat-floored space with a capacity of 31 and above
 - Seminar Room – Medium or small flat-floored space with a capacity of between 30 and 11
 - Group Study Room – Small flat-floored space with a capacity of 10 or less
 - Computer Cluster – Computer orientated workstations
 - Active Learning Room – which facilitates group working in a non standard room
- 3.3.3. All non-specialist teaching space will be assessed on its location, quality, capacity, accessibility and utilisation as part of the ITSMP and incrementally brought into the pool of University Teaching Space (UTS) if appropriate or released back to the University for repurposing¹.

3.4. Specialist Teaching Space

¹ The process and criteria for reviewing all generic teaching space to inform its move into central management or reallocation by Estates is still to be determined as part of the ITSMP

- 3.4.1. Space is classified as specialist only where it cannot be used to accommodate teaching, other than the activity it was specifically designed for.
- 3.4.2. There are five recognised criteria for defining space as specialist at the University:
 - 3.4.2.1. the space or the building within which the room is located is covered by a license or legal restriction;
 - 3.4.2.2. the space includes in-situ 'specialist equipment' which requires specialist training to operate or that would impinge upon the use of the space for generic teaching;
 - 3.4.2.3. the space is a laboratory or workshop used for teaching, including language laboratories;
 - 3.4.2.4. the space represents exclusively theatre / performance / rehearsal accommodation;
 - 3.4.2.5. the space is a computer cluster with specialist or bespoke software/hardware not available via IT Services.
- 3.4.3. All specialist teaching space and its usage will be recorded on the CTS for analysis and reporting purposes.

3.5. Student Study Space

- 3.5.1. All University student study spaces and their usage is recorded on the CTS for analysis and reporting purposes.

3.6. Space Utilisation

- 3.6.1. The utilisation rate of a room or group of rooms provides a recognised measure of usage, as a function of frequency rate and occupancy rate. The frequency rate measures the proportion of time that space is used compared to its availability, whilst the occupancy rate measures how full the space is when in use as a proportion of its full:

$$\text{Utilisation} = \text{Frequency Rate} \times \text{Occupancy Rate}$$

- 3.6.2. The division or academic unit responsible for the management of each University teaching space is responsible for the efficient utilisation of that space.
- 3.6.3. The utilisation of all teaching spaces managed by the Learning Spaces Division and a proportion of the space managed by academic units is formally surveyed biannually, for one week during February and October.
- 3.6.4. During the utilisation survey each room is surveyed hourly between the hours of 0900 and 1800.
- 3.6.5. The biannual utilisation survey is managed by the Learning Spaces Division, following a process (Appendix two) agreed and overseen by the Learning Environment Group (LEG).
- 3.6.6. TTAMU will email College timetabling contacts one week prior to each survey to remind them that it will take place and to give them the opportunity to cancel any room bookings that are no longer required for that week.

4. Teaching Space Managed by the Learning Spaces Division

4.1. Space Management

- 4.1.1. University teaching space is managed by the Learning Spaces Division based within Academic Services.

4.2. Room Bookings

- 4.2.1. All members of staff are able to book rooms for teaching and non-teaching University events (subject to availability) via the Timetabling and Teaching Accommodation Management Unit (TTAMU)².
- 4.2.2. Rooms are booked on the hour..
- 4.2.3. Rooms are booked for a variety of purposes including the following non exhaustive list:
 - Teaching
 - Teaching Support
 - Academic Events/Conferences
 - University committees
 - Meetings
 - Conference bookings
 - Student Society
 - Student private study booked via school staff

4.3. Support

- 4.3.1. Remote and in-person support is available to all room users, Monday – Friday between the hours of 0745 and 1830, and Saturday 08.30-14.30 via the TTAMU helpline.

4.4. Accessibility

- 4.4.1. It is the responsibility of the School timetabler³ to provide details of any events that will be attended by students and/or staff with disabilities when known.
- 4.4.2. Teaching events where students and/or staff with disabilities are expected to attend take precedence when allocating space.
- 4.4.3. All teaching rooms are graded in relation to their capacity to accommodate hearing, visual, and mobility impairments. The accessibility grading scheme is provided within (Appendix three).

4.5. University Teaching Space Terms of Use⁴

- 4.5.1. Room capacity is informed by fire regulations. The number of people within a room should never exceed the maximum stated capacity.
- 4.5.2. Eating or drinking (with the exception of bottled water) is not allowed within non-specialist teaching rooms.
 - 4.5.2.1. In exceptional circumstances, subject to TAMU's discretion, refreshments provided by University approved caterers may be authorised.
 - 4.5.2.2. It is the responsibility of the person booking the room to ensure that the space is tidied after the event, with crockery stacked in the crates provided and all rubbish bagged and tied.
- 4.5.3. It is the responsibility of the room user to ensure that all handouts and teaching materials are removed from the room at the end of each session. Recycling facilities are offered in most teaching spaces.
- 4.5.4. Activities should not cause disruption to other building users.

² Definitions of teaching and non-teaching events are subject to review during the 2012/2013 academic year

³ References to School timetablers should be read as School / Department / Programme timetablers

⁴ Each specialist teaching space will have its own individual terms and conditions

- 4.5.5. If furniture is rearranged by room occupants it should be returned to its original state after use (room layouts are provided within the room). Failure to do so may incur portering charges.
- 4.5.6. Furniture must not be moved out of or between rooms.
- 4.5.7. No additional furniture should be introduced into rooms. Any additional furniture left in teaching rooms will be disposed of, with the disposal fee recharged to the relevant division/department.

4.6. **Space Development**

- 4.6.1. An annual rolling programme exists for the development of University Teaching Space.
- 4.6.2. Development priorities are determined by the Learning Spaces Division determined and informed by: the Learning Spaces Strategy; helpline data; condition survey of rooms; feedback from Schools / Colleges; University's Capital Programme.
- 4.6.3. Development priorities for the rolling programme are first considered by the Learning Environment Group (LEG) and subsequently approved by the University's Infrastructure Coordination Group (ICG).

5. **TTAMU Annual Space Allocation Process**⁵

5.1. **Space Allocation Deadlines**

- 5.1.1. TTAMU allocate UTS to teaching events based on information received from School timetabling contacts via the CTS.
- 5.1.2. Deadlines for the room allocation process will be set on an annual basis and Schools/Colleges informed by memo.
- 5.1.3. Requests for space (excluding ad hoc requests) must be submitted in the CTS. Requests not submitted in the correct format in the CTS will not be accepted.
- 5.1.4. Requests must be submitted to TTAMU by the specified deadline. Late submissions will not be included in the initial process and are therefore likely to receive a sub-optimal room allocation.
- 5.1.5. If a School/Department is unable to meet the specified deadline, TTAMU must be contacted to discuss the possibility of alternate arrangements.

5.2. **Information Requirements**

- 5.2.1. To ensure the efficiency of the space allocation process and the appropriateness of allocated space, timetabling contacts within Schools/Departments must provide the following information in the CTS against each teaching event:
 - Module
 - Module/Banner code
 - Activity Type (See Appendix Four for definitions of the types to be used here)
 - Weeks the event will run
 - Duration
 - Number of students expected to attend
 - Module leader
 - Lecturer who will deliver the event
 - Any staff or student accessibility requirements
 - Equipment requirements

⁵ The TTAMU annual space allocation process is subject to change during the 2011/2012 academic year, with the migration to the CTS

- Preferred location (Optional)
- Preferred Room Type
- Block / level

5.2.2. If no specific information regarding accessibility, space or equipment requirements is provided, TTAMU will allocate a room based on capacity and School/Department location.

5.2.3. Timetabling contacts should notify TTAMU of any changes to the timetable throughout the year.

5.3. Space Allocation Priorities⁶

5.3.1. Due to significant constraints on the space allocation process, prioritisation is used to inform the timetabling process (Appendix five), with teaching events roomed in the following order:

- Teaching events attended by disabled students or staff
- Postgraduate teaching / CPD Courses
- Undergraduate teaching in block timetable slots
- All other undergraduate teaching

5.3.2. Bookings for teaching events take precedence over bookings for non-teaching events, with the exception of examinations and graduation ceremonies.

5.4. Considerations

5.4.1. When allocating space to teaching events, TTAMU will attempt to take into consideration the following criteria, subject to other constraints and sufficient information being provided by timetabling contacts:

- the match of class size to room capacity
- equipment requirements or room type
- the location of the teaching space in relation to the host School/Department building
- the frequency of the event, with activities that follow a regular pattern scheduled in a single location where possible
- the location of the previous event attended by students and/or staff (where specifically requested)

5.5. Unfulfilled Space Allocation Requests

5.5.1. Where a suitable room cannot be found to accommodate a space allocation request TTAMU will work with timetabling contacts to identify an appropriate room at an alternative time or facilitate swaps with other departments where possible. It is the responsibility of the School/Department to identify an alternative time or find alternative accommodation within College managed space.

5.6. Requests for Changes to Space Allocations

5.6.1. Requests for changes to space allocations will only be accepted where there is a reasonable reason for the change. Accepted reasons for change are:

- Staff timetable clash
- Student timetable clash
- Confirmation of student numbers exceeds the scheduled group size and the maximum room capacity
- The room is inaccessible by an attending student or member of staff
- The space is unsuitable for the intended teaching activity
- The space is no longer required

⁶ The Birmingham Foundation Academy will be added to this list during 2012-13, once guidance has been provided by the University on the relative priority of the Academy's space requests.

5.7. Overbooking and Cancellations

- 5.7.1. Rooms must only be booked for the exact day(s), time(s) and week(s) required.
- 5.7.2. Any room booking which is no longer required must be cancelled as soon as possible with TTAMU.

5.8. Room Capacity

- 5.8.1. Events will be timetabled in the room which is of the most appropriate size for the number of students scheduled to attend, subject to other requirements and space availability.
- 5.8.2. Events will not be timetabled in a room if the maximum capacity of the room is exceeded by the number of students scheduled to attend.
- 5.8.3. If, at any time, the number of participants scheduled to attend a teaching event exceeds the maximum capacity of the allocated room School timetablers must contact TTAMU to relocate the event.

5.9. Timetable Distribution

- 5.9.1. It is the responsibility of School timetablers to distribute timetables via the CTS to staff and students.

5.10. Ad-hoc Bookings

- 5.10.1. Requests for ad hoc events should be submitted 24 hours before the event is scheduled to take place. Requests submitted with less than 24 hours notice will be considered at TTAMU's discretion.
- 5.10.2. Bookings must be made via the online Web Room Booking system in the first instance. TTAMU staff can be contacted directly for more complex bookings..
- 5.10.3. The following information will be required when making the request:
 - Start time
 - Duration
 - Capacity
 - Event title
 - Programme/module detail (if applicable)
 - Activity type
 - Contact details
 - School/Department
- 5.10.4. A reference number will be provided on booking and should be quoted in any future correspondence.
- 5.10.5. TTAMU will advise Security of any bookings that fall outside of a building's normal opening hours. Where an out of hours booking is made at short notice it is the responsibility of the event organiser to contact Security to ensure arrangements are in place to access the required building.

6. TTAMU Allocation of Space to Non-Teaching Events / Other Academic Related Activity

6.1. Non-Teaching/Teaching Support Events⁷

- 6.1.1. Non-Teaching events include the following:

⁷ Definitions of teaching and non-teaching events are subject to review during the 2012/2013 academic year

- Teaching Support events
- University Committee Meetings
- Conferences
- Student Society bookings
- Induction events during term time

6.1.2. Teaching space may be used for internal non-teaching events, such as meetings, recruitment events and conferences, if not required to accommodate teaching activity.

6.1.3. Teaching events will always take precedence over non-teaching events.

6.1.4. Non-teaching events that fall within term time will not be considered until the annual space allocation process is completed in mid August. Dependent on the volume of requests this process may take until the start of September to complete.

6.1.5. Non-teaching events must not cause disruption to other building users.

6.1.6. All non-teaching events must adhere to the University's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech (http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/legislation/docs/COP_Freedom_of_Speech.pdf).

6.2. **Examinations and Congregations**

6.2.1. Room bookings for the Examinations and Congregations Office are rolled forward each year.

6.3. **Conferences and Events**

6.3.1. Events which will be attended by external delegates or where a fee of any kind will be charged must be booked via the Conference Office. If an event is booked directly with TTAMU and is then subsequently found to be a chargeable booking, a fee will be charged.

6.4. **Student Society Room Bookings**

6.4.1. Current students of the University are able to request teaching space for events conducted by Guild recognised societies.

6.4.2. All requests for space must be made to the Student Group Coordinator via the Guild of Students.

6.4.3. Students are discouraged from booking space during core teaching hours. Bookings made during core teaching hours will be cancelled if the space is subsequently required for teaching.

6.4.4. Student Society room bookings are bound by Terms and Conditions of Use (Appendix six).

6.4.5. The number of requests by individual student societies that will be accommodated is at the discretion of TTAMU to ensure fairness across all societies and other University users.

6.4.6. Where an external speaker is expected to attend a Freedom of Speech Form should be completed. Freedom of Speech Forms require 20 working days for authorisation as follows:

- Guild threat assessment – 5 working days
- Conference Office approval – 15 working days

(http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/legislation/docs/COP_Freedom_of_Speech.pdf)

6.4.7. Student societies who repeatedly cause disruption to teaching and other events will be prevented from booking teaching space as per the terms and conditions of Student Society Bookings.

7. **Common Timetabling System (CTS)**

7.1. Timetabling within the CTS

- 7.1.1. The Common Timetabling System (CTS) is the University's exclusive timetabling system for managing the academic timetable and University Teaching Space (UTS) and is to be used by all Schools and Departments.
- 7.1.2. All rooms used for teaching, whether University or School-owned (including specialist space), must be reflected on the CTS.
- 7.1.3. Timetables and room bookings in all Teaching Space will be viewable via the web.

7.2. Management and support of the CTS

- 7.2.1. The CTS software will be managed by TTAMU who will be responsible for its ongoing maintenance and for training of new users on the system. IT Services will be responsible for the management of the associated hardware.
- 7.2.2. School / Department users of the CTS will be supported by TTAMU and IT Services in their use of the CTS. School Timetablers should contact TTAMU for all required support in the first instance.

8. School / Department Timetabling Process

- 8.1.1. School / Department Timetablers must input all timetabling information required using agreed naming conventions onto the CTS in line with University deadlines.
- 8.1.2. Where possible Schools / Departments should utilise School-owned space (including Specialist Space) to accommodate teaching activities and reflect them in the CTS.
- 8.1.3. School / Departments should notify TTAMU once the required information and local space allocation has been completed prior to the University's deadline.
- 8.1.4. Once the deadline has passed School / Departments must make no further amendments within the CTS until after the timetables are released via TTAMU.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

9.1. University Education Committee

- 9.1.1. The role of the Education Committee is to annually review and to approve any changes to the University's Timetabling and Teaching Space Policy.

9.2. Integrated Timetabling and Space Management Project Board

The role of the ITSMP Project Board is:

- 9.2.1. to review and approve proposed changes to the University's Timetabling and Teaching Space Policy and processes as part of the ITSMP;
- 9.2.2. to oversee the planning and implementation of the project and monitoring progress.

9.3. Learning Spaces Division

The role of LSD is:

- 9.3.1. to develop and maintain the University's Timetabling and Teaching Space Policy in consultation with key stakeholders;
- 9.3.2. to maintain and develop the University's common timetabling system (CTS), including providing training and support for users;

9.3.3. to implement the recommendations of the ITSMP.

9.4. Timetabling and Teaching Accommodation Management Unit

The role of TTAMU is:

9.4.1. to manage the allocation of University Teaching Space (UTS), in accordance with the University's Timetabling and Teaching Space Policy;

9.4.2. to support and maintain the data within the CTS;

9.4.3. to provide training and user management on the CTS;

9.4.4. to manage a helpline providing an immediate response to problems or issues within UTS, and offer advice and support in the use of the equipment within the rooms;

9.4.5. to inform School timetablers of any notified Estates work that might affect the usage of UTS.

9.5. LRAT

The role of LRAT is:

9.5.1. to maintain and install Audio Visual equipment in University Teaching Spaces;

9.5.2. to respond to helpline calls relating to Audio Visual issues in University Teaching Spaces within agreed service level agreements;

9.5.3. to run a portable equipment delivery service for items not permanently based in teaching rooms.

9.6. School/Department/Programme Timetablers

The role of School/Department/Programme Timetablers is:

9.6.1. to provide required information to TTAMU through the CTS by agreed deadlines;

9.6.2. to report any issues with the functionality of the CTS to TTAMU;

9.6.3. to inform TTAMU of any personnel changes that will affect access to the CTS;

9.6.4. to act as a liaison between academic staff and TTAMU to ensure that all of the School/Departmental/Programme requirements are communicated.

9.7. Timetabler Forum

The purpose of the Timetabler Forum is:

9.7.1. to provide a forum for TTAMU and School Timetablers;

9.7.2. to share good practice among Timetablers across the University.

9.8. Academic Staff

The role of Academic Staff is:

9.8.1. to ensure that all required room requests are submitted to School Timetablers in time for University deadlines to be met;

9.8.2. to inform School Timetablers of any changes to teaching times throughout the year including notification of any cancellations;

9.8.3. to report any issues relating to University Teaching Spaces via the TTAMU helpline.

9.9. Students

The role of Students is:

9.9.1. to adhere to the terms and conditions of room usage for Student Society bookings.

9.10. Estates Office

The role of the Estates Office is:

9.10.1. to provide TTAMU details of any maintenance work that might affect the usage of UTS;

9.10.2. to include TTAMU in discussions on any major building refurbishment projects that will affect UTS;

9.10.3. to undertake refurbishment works as requested by Learning Spaces to improve UTS.

9.11. Disability and Learning Support Service

The role of the Disability and Learning Support Service is:

9.11.1. to provide TTAMU with details of any students who have declared a disability as soon as possible to ensure that they are roomed in accessible / appropriate rooms.

9.12. Hospitality and Accommodation Services

The constituent Divisions of Hospitality and Accommodation Services undertake a number of key functions in support of UTS as follows:

9.12.1. Security

The role of Security is:

9.12.1.1. to open booked teaching rooms at evenings and weekends as appropriate;

9.12.1.2. to contact the on call Estates team should any serious room issues arise in UTS at evenings and weekends.

9.12.2. Conferences and Events

The role of Conferences and Events is:

9.12.2.1. to support Student Society bookings, ensuring Freedom of Speech forms and recharges to Security and Cleaning Services are managed in a timely manner;

9.12.2.2. to book rooms and manage events for external or chargeable conferences, ensuring that the relevant support services are involved and paid as required.

9.12.3. Cleaning Services

The role of Cleaning Services is:

9.12.3.1. to ensure all UTS is cleaned before 09.00 Monday to Friday during term time;

9.12.3.2. to ensure all UTS is open by 09.00 Monday to Friday during term time;

9.12.3.3. to open rooms outside of term Monday to Friday as notified by TTAMU.

9.12.4. Telecommunications

The role of Telecommunications is:

9.12.4.1. to manage and maintain the helpline system to ensure that room users can contact TTAMU as required directly from the UTS.

9.13. IT Services

The role of IT Services is:

9.13.1. to provide technical infrastructure support for the CTS and related systems;

9.13.2. to manage and maintain computing facilities within UTS computer clusters.

9.14. Guild of Students

- 9.14.1. The Guild of Students is responsible for approving the booking of UTS via TTAMU on behalf of registered student societies.

Appendix One: Wednesday Afternoon Timetabled Teaching: Guidance for Schools

These guidelines have been approved by Academic Board.

The University recognises the value of student participation in sport and other extra-curricular activities. It also wishes to attract high achieving athletes and students with talents in other areas, and make it possible for them to pursue their sport/interests while studying. The opportunities for such participation are limited if required teaching is timetabled for Wednesday afternoons.

Schools should therefore adhere to the following guidelines when timetabling classes:

Undergraduate Teaching

1. Undergraduate teaching should not be timetabled on Wednesday afternoons, with the exception of classes with an identical alternative. For the purposes of timetabling, Wednesday afternoons start at 1.00pm.
2. If an identical seminar is planned for a Wednesday afternoon, the Timetabling Office should be made aware that alternatives are available so that this can be noted in the booking details.
3. It should be made clear that there should be no exception for slightly less orthodox learning experiences, e.g. visits to engineering sites.
4. If informal seminars are arranged for Wednesday afternoons, students must unanimously agree to this timing.
5. Particular circumstances apply in the case of the College of Medical and Dental Sciences, due to clinical years and placements. The following best practice should therefore be followed:
 - Wednesday afternoon teaching in pre-clinical years should not be timetabled, and Schools should adhere to points 1-4 above.
 - In clinical years, every effort should be made to keep Wednesday afternoons free.
 - Students who have Wednesday afternoon sporting or other extra-curricular activities should be given as much flexibility as possible, and should be able to rearrange Wednesday afternoon academic commitments where possible. The arrangements for flexibility during clinical years should be well advertised to students.
6. The Timetabling Office should liaise with Schools throughout the summer vacation to resolve timetabling difficulties and to prevent infringements to the Wednesday afternoon teaching guidelines. The Timetabling Office should inform the Guild of unresolved difficulties at its earliest convenience. It is recognised that timetabling decisions are also made at the start of each session (e.g. to resolve clashes in students' timetables and for small group teaching). In the event of timetabled hours not being satisfactorily allocated by the end of the first fortnight into session, the School concerned should liaise with the Timetabling Office and the Guild to resolve the problem. All parties should attempt to exercise the utmost goodwill and flexibility in finding a solution.

Postgraduate Teaching

7. There is value in giving taught postgraduates the same extra curricular opportunities as undergraduates. Schools should make every effort to keep Wednesday afternoons free for taught postgraduates, and should not schedule compulsory or core modules on Wednesday afternoons.
8. Flexibility should be exercised for individual students where the School is unable to keep Wednesday afternoon free.
9. It is legitimate to prioritise the timetabling of Undergraduate courses over Postgraduate courses in terms of avoidance of Wednesday afternoons.

10. If late bookings need to be made because of a greater than expected demand for a particular course, every effort should be made to find out which students require Wednesday afternoons to be kept free, and the extra rooms booked with this in mind.
11. It is recognised that the nature of certain programmes may necessitate classes being scheduled on Wednesday afternoons. The following are therefore exempt from these guidelines:
 - Highly intensive and vocational programmes (e.g. MBA programmes).
 - Part time Postgraduate Programmes.
 - Programmes on which the majority of students are employed and their employer sponsors their studies.
 - Block teaching.

By following the above guidelines, Schools will be able to facilitate students' participation in sport and other recreational activities. Schools are also encouraged to emphasise to students the positive role that extra-curricular activities play in building up a CV and in acquiring skills which will be valued by future employers.

Appendix Two: Space Utilisation Survey Process (as agreed by the Learning Environment Group)

This appendix describes the agreed procedures and protocols for undertaking the University's biannual utilisation survey of teaching space. It is based upon the HEFCE guidance for conducting and returning space utilisation within the HE Sector.

1. Prior to the Survey

1.1 Survey Routes

Both the Edgbaston and Selly Oak Campuses are divided up into a series of routes to ensure that all centrally managed and most generic school owned teaching rooms are included in the survey. Additional rooms are included in the survey as and when TTAMU are advised of their existence. Routes are reviewed each year to ensure that they are still run in the most efficient order and that the rooms being surveyed are still used for teaching.

The timings of the route are checked to ensure that they take no longer than 45 minutes to complete to keep them below the 'standard teaching hour' of 50 minutes. In practice most routes take between 35-40 minutes to complete when the rooms are in use which keeps them well within acceptable time constraints.

TTAMU staff prepare folders and recording documents for routes (Example route Appendix 1)

1.2 Surveyors

Students are employed to act as surveyors and are recruited via the Job Zone at the Guild and the student portal. Prior to being accepted for the role students have to attend a briefing session where they are given information on what the survey entails and how to collect the data. Where possible students are given routes that include their home buildings and students are paid to walk their main route on the Friday before the start of the survey to ensure that they know where all of the rooms are that they need to survey to minimise any delays on their first shift.

A rota is created to cover all routes from 09.00 - 18.00, Monday to Friday, with students working 3 hour blocks. There is also a standby shift for each three hour block in case of no show to minimise the risk of missing any data collection. TTAMU staff are also on standby where possible to start a route if there is more than one no show.

1.3 Publicity

A memo informing staff of the survey taking place is sent one week before the survey (Appendix 2). It is sent to Heads of Colleges and Schools, Directors of Operations, Operational Managers, Security and Estates. It is also sent to all of the timetabling contacts along with a reminder to them to cancel any bookings that they may have but no longer require to avoid showing any missed bookings. Posters are displayed on all room doors that are being surveyed informing users that the survey is taking place.

2. During the survey

2.1 Data Collection

Students report to the TTAMU office in Aston Webb 15 minutes before their shift is due to start. This allows time for them to collect their folder and get to the start of whichever route they are completing. It also allows time for any additional information to be given about their route as required (for example if we have been informed of a sensitive class taking place and have been provided class numbers in advance by the School to avoid disturbing it).

The students work a three hour block and visit all of the rooms on their allocated route each hour, always waiting for the start of the hour to start their next time. They record the time that they enter the room so any questions on when the data was collected can be answered.

In small seminar or group study rooms they count and record the exact number of people in the room. If it is a larger room they record a percentage of how full the room is, e.g. 50%, 75%, 90% etc. Estimations are required for larger rooms as it would be impossible for students to do a head count within the required time and it would also prove to be much more disruptive to the room users if they were to do so. If they are

questioned by staff in the rooms on what they are doing they have copies of the memo that was sent out to give to staff and are advised to refer the staff member back to TTAMU if they have any concerns.

The students return their folders back to the office and report any issues they encountered on the route, as well as writing notes on the paperwork if there were any problems.

2.2 Data Entry and Quality Control

There is always a student on a 'standby' shift to cover any route if there is a last minute no show. If they do not have to cover a route they input the data from the previous shift onto the database. When they have completed each route they sign the sheet for data quality checking purposes. Staff from TTAMU will check a selection of random routes from each student doing the data entry and if they find any errors they will check all of their inputting for accuracy.

If there are any circumstances throughout the survey week that might affect the use of the teaching rooms, for example inclement weather (especially in February) more reminders are sent to School timetablers to see if they want to cancel any further bookings so that these do not show as missed bookings on the final report.

3. After the Survey

3.1 Data Comparison and Quality Control

During the week following the survey any outstanding survey data is input onto the database and all of the booking data from the central system, Facility CMIS is entered onto the database as well (any cancellations that TTAMU had been informed of have already been taken off the system prior to running the report for this data). More random checks will be made of this data with the same checking criteria in place as on the survey data.

3.2 Data Analysis and Reporting

Utilisation data on missed bookings is produced and disseminated to Schools and Colleges. Responses are reviewed and clarification provided or changes to the process considered as required. When the analysis of these missed bookings is carried out it is often found that the main timetabling contact is either unaware of the bookings concerned as they were requested after the main timetabling period by other staff within the School or College or had not been informed that the modules associated with the bookings had been withdrawn and were therefore no longer required.

A report on the outcome of the survey with analysis of the data is produced for consideration by the Learning Environment Group. The summary results (frequency and occupancy figures) are returned as part of the Estates Management Statistics Exercise.

Appendix Three: Accessibility Grading Schema

Disability	Description	General Requirements	Grade	Building/room Requirements
Hearing Impaired – group study/teaching	Students who require hearing loops within teaching rooms, working with hearing colleagues	Selected students and staff colleagues of student should be made aware of impairment in case of fire evacuation	H1	Hearing Loop
Hearing Impaired – Working alone	Student/staff who have poor to no hearing who will be working alone	Visual alarms or paging system in teaching areas and escape routes throughout the building	H2	Visual alarms or paging vibrating devices to alert student to fire or other danger.
Visually Impaired	Students who suffer from medium to complete loss of sight	Orientation Training for room/building	V1	None
Mobility Impairment – No disability	Student/staff who have no mobility impairment	n/a	MX	Comply with standard Health and Safety specifications
Mobility Impaired – Ambulant Disabled Persons	Student/staff who have a mobility impairment but are not a wheelchair user	As a general rule, timetable the students courses within a fixed zone to reduce transit distances /times	M1	None
Mobility Impaired – Wheelchair user able to self transfer	Student/staff who are wheelchair users but are able to transfer to an evac chair in an emergency evacuation	Evac chairs available for emergency evacuation, plus the availability and willingness of trained staff in the use of such chairs	M2	No stairs into or out of building/room. Lift or ramp access only. Minimum requirement of an Evac Chair at the head of each stairwell, please trained personnel available, their locations known etc. Full maintenance procedures established for the chairs.
Mobility Impaired – Wheelchair user with poor dexterity/strength	Student/staff who are wheelchair users but are unable to self transfer to evac chair in an emergency evacuation	Fire safe lift or ground floor rooms with automatic doors and ramped exits. In all instances where a wheelchair user is part of the group, (whether staff or student, it is preferable to conduct the specific activity - lecture or seminar) on the ground floor	M3	No stairs into or out of building/room. Lift or ramp access only. Minimum requirements as above plus refuge areas to be incorporated into the fire protected stairway areas with separate alarms and means of communication for Wheelchair users to alert Security of their presence / trapped within a building on a certain floor.

Appendix Four: Activity Type Definitions

The following Activity Types should be used within the information requirements for all teaching events. These definitions, as defined by the QAA, have also been applied to the Key Information Sets, ensuring consistency between datasets.

- **Lecture** - A presentation or talk on a particular topic.

KIS Category - Scheduled

The term 'lecture' covers everything from the traditional model, where a single member of the institution's staff or an affiliate¹ introduces ideas or delivers facts to a group of students, to approaches that might be much more interactive, involve a variety of contributors, make use of a range of media and technologies, and take place virtually as well as in person. Lectures are assumed, in general, to involve larger groups of students than do seminars and tutorials but size will vary depending upon the nature of what is being taught, the size of the overall student cohort, and practical concerns

- **Seminar** - A discussion or classroom session focusing on a particular topic or project.

KIS Category - Scheduled

Seminars are defined as sessions that provide the opportunity for students to engage in discussion of a particular topic and/or to explore it in more detail than might be covered in a lecture - the extent of interaction will depend on the delivery method. A typical model would involve a guided, tutor-led discussion in a small group. However, the term also encompasses student or peer-led classes with a staff member or affiliate present. As with lectures, use of technology means seminars may take place virtually. Seminars are assumed in general to involve smaller groups of students than lectures, but size will vary depending upon the nature of what is being taught, the size of the overall student cohort, and practical concerns.

- **Tutorial** - A meeting involving one-to-one or small group supervision, feedback or detailed discussion on a particular topic or project.

KIS Category - Scheduled

Tutorials may be distinguished from seminars for the stronger emphasis that they place on the role of the tutor in giving direction or feedback. Tutorials can happen virtually as well as face-to-face.

- **Projects** - Activity related to project work.

KIS Category - Scheduled

This activity definition, modified from the QAA definition refers to scheduled time related to project work. This may include project supervision classes or tutorials.

- **Practical Classes / Workshops** - A session involving the development and practical application of a particular skill or technique.

KIS Category - Scheduled

Examples are wide ranging and could include a laboratory class, recital, artefact handling/identification, language conversation, sports match and so on. Practical classes and workshops might incorporate elements of teaching or guided learning, and they are at least likely to be supervised or observed. These sessions are more likely to take place in person but, depending on the nature of the subject, may also be conducted remotely.

The size of a practical class or workshop will depend upon the nature of the activity. Workshops are likely to involve at least a small group of students but practical classes could take place on a one-to-one basis.

- **Fieldwork** - Practical work conducted at an external site.

KIS Category - Scheduled

Examples of fieldwork might include survey work and other forms of data collection, excavations and explorations. The work might be unsupervised or supervised, and supervision could be provided by staff or appointed representatives. Some fieldwork may be conducted virtually. Fieldwork might be conducted in groups of various sizes, or by individuals, depending on the nature of the work involved.

- **External Visits** - A visit to a location outside of the usual learning spaces, to experience a particular environment, event, or exhibition relevant to the course of study.
KIS Category - Scheduled

Examples are wide ranging and could include a visit to a business or industrial site, built environment site, museum or collection, to attendance at a performance or exhibition. These visits might be unsupervised or supervised, and supervisors could include staff or appointed representatives. Site visits may be carried out in groups of varying sizes, or by individuals, depending on the nature of the visit and the location

- **Guided Independent Study**
KIS Category - Independent

Higher education is distinguished from general and secondary education by its focus on independent learning. Scheduled learning and teaching activities typically feature alongside time in which students are expected to study independently, which may itself be 'guided'.

Guided independent study might include preparation for scheduled sessions, follow-up work, wider reading or practice, completion of assessment tasks, revision, etc. The relative amounts of time that students are expected to spend engaged in scheduled activities and guided independent study varies between courses.

In all cases, students are expected to be responsible for their own learning, with appropriate support being provided by the institution.

Such support can be via a variety of means, including, for example, through the provision of study skills training, feedback on assessed work, access to libraries and learning spaces, language skills training, etc.

Appendix Five: Prioritisation during the Allocation of University Teaching Space (UTS) to Teaching Events



1. Mobility Access

Students with specific access needs will be roomed first and take priority over all other bookings due to the limited number of accessible teaching rooms available. Appropriate rooms are chosen based on guidance provided by Disability Services regarding the student's needs, and taking into account access to rooms/buildings as well as the distance between venues.

2. Postgraduate Timetabling

Postgraduate teaching is roomed next due to the inherent difficulties of rooming these predominantly all day bookings after other teaching. While Postgraduate bookings are given priority, if TTAMU receive excessive requests for certain courses that would effectively block undergraduate teaching there will be negotiation with Schools about the timing and location of these events.

3. Block Timetabling

The first undergraduate events to be roomed are those linked to the block timetable since these are the least flexible due to the constraints on when they can take place.

4. Non-Block Undergraduate Teaching

All other non block teaching events are then roomed, beginning with larger capacities events.

5. Negotiations with Schools

Timetablers in Schools are contacted throughout the space allocation process as any issues arise. However, the last few weeks of the process involve the most intense negotiations in an attempt to get as many bookings as possible roomed appropriately. The biggest constraint at this stage is that the number of booking requests for the same day and time often exceeds the number of rooms available. As a result some bookings will have to move to alternative times and days and the School may have to prioritise those bookings that cannot be moved e.g. those with external constraints over those that can be more flexible.

Appendix Six: Student Society Room Bookings Terms and Considerations
UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM **Student Room Booking Request Form 2011-12**
Centrally managed Teaching Space

Please complete and return this form to the Guild at least 3 working days before date requested.

Contact Details

Full Name: _____

UID/Registration Number: _____

Degree Programme and Year of study: _____

Contact Telephone Number: _____

Contact Email address: _____

Booking Details

Date(s): _____

Time: _____

Preferred Building: _____

Room size (capacity): _____

Usage of Room: _____

Society: _____

If the activity involves an outside speaker or showing a film you will need to complete a 'Speaker Request' form, copies of which are available from Student Development in the Guild (studentgroups@guild.bham.ac.uk) ; **this must be submitted at least 20 working days (4 weeks) prior to the event.** If showing a film, you must not charge admission.

Speaker Request form submitted ☐

Name of speaker/film (if known): _____

If you are planning to use any equipment in the Lecture/Seminar Rooms, you must contact Learning Resources Team (Tel 0121-415-8041) to arrange for a demonstration.

Learning Resources and Accommodation Team Contact ☐

NB: The University reserves the right to refuse the use of University facilities to students or student groups who breach the conditions of use.

By signing this I have disclosed all of the required information and I agree to abide to the Terms and Conditions of use.

Society Signature: _____ **Date** _____

Guild Approval: _____ **Date** _____

Please return completed form to: **The Student Development Department, Guild of Students (Ground Floor)**

Name of Student Group: _____

Terms & Conditions of Use:

1. Please note that teaching will always be given priority, and 3 working days notice is required.
2. If you are organising an outside speaker or showing a film/video clip you will need to complete a "Speaker Request" form, copies of which are available from Conference Office, (Tel 0121-415-8400) or the Guild of Students, **this must be submitted at least 20 working days (4 weeks) prior to booking.**
3. If you are planning to use any equipment in the Lecture/Seminar Rooms, you must contact learning Resources Team (Tel 0121-415-8041) to arrange for a demonstration.
4. In some circumstances, there may be a charge for the use of a room. For example
 - You have external people attending
 - A building has to be opened just for your booking/use
 - There is any damage to the room or equipment
 - The room requires cleaning after use
5. Eating, drinking and smoking are **strictly** prohibited in all Teaching Rooms at all times.
6. The furniture in the room you are using must be returned to the illustrated layout on the notice board in the room regardless of how you found the room. Failure to return the furniture to this layout will result in all of your bookings being cancelled for the rest of the semester. If this occurs during the last three weeks of a semester it will result in bookings being cancelled for the rest of that semester and the first 4 weeks of the following semester (regardless of the Academic year). Please inform Timetabling and TAMU, when you arrive in the room, on 0121 414 6617 if you find the room not laid out as illustrated. It will be greatly appreciated if you could return the furniture after your event.
7. It is your responsibility to respect other users within the building with regards to noise and behaviour. If you feel you may disrupt other building users, it is your responsibility to inform Room Bookings.
8. **There is a security charge** for use of the following buildings outside teaching hours, **Haworth, University Centre, Aston Webb, BioScience, Gisbert Kapp, Law, ChemEng, Arts Building, the Muirhead Tower and the Nuffield Building (at the weekend).**
10. Only room requests made by email by University or Guild email accounts will be accepted.

NB: The University reserves the right to refuse the use of University facilities to students or student societies who breach the conditions of use.

I have read the notes above and agree to abide by them

Signature _____ Date _____

Please return completed form to: **Student Development Department, Guild of Students**

Appendix Seven: Terminology

The following terminology and abbreviations are used throughout this document:

CTS – Common Timetabling System

As part of the ITSMP, a suitable common timetabling system will be procured and implemented across the institution, allowing timetablers across the University to access, input and manipulate timetable data within a single timetabling dataset.

UTS – University Teaching Space

The pool of teaching space that is managed and maintained by the Learning Spaces Division within Academic Services. UTS is accessible to all members of the University.

ITSMP - Integrated Timetabling and Space Management Project

The ITSMP, approved by University Executive Board in November 2010, aims to enable the University to achieve an effective and efficient timetable, provide measurable improvements in space management and, through both, provide key means to improve the student experience at Birmingham. Changes will be undertaken incrementally between 2010 and 2014. Further information is provided in Appendix 1.

LRAT – Learning Resources Accommodation Team

Part of Academic Services' Learning Spaces Division, LRAT maintain and develop the AV and IT facilities located within the University's University Teaching Space.

Specialist Teaching Space

Space is categorised as specialist only where it could not realistically be used to accommodate teaching, other than the activity it was specifically designed for.

There are five recognised categories of specialist space at the University:

- 1) the space or the building within which the room is located is covered by a particular license or legal restriction;
- 2) the space includes in situ 'specialist equipment' which requires specialist training to use;
- 3) the space is a laboratory or workshop area used for teaching;
- 4) the space represents theatre / performance / rehearsal accommodation;
- 5) the space is a computer cluster with specialist or bespoke software not available via IT Services.

TTAMU – Timetabling and Teaching Accommodation Management Unit

Part of Academic Services' Learning Spaces Division, TTAMU is responsible for the booking of all University learning spaces and provide a helpline offering advice and support to users of these spaces.