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1. Overview

1.1 Objectives
The Timetabling Policy has been developed to meet the following objectives:

- To ensure that the annual timetable (i.e. all teaching sessions within an academic year) is published 2 to 3 weeks prior to the commencement of the enrolment period for continuing students for the following year;
- To minimise the number of changes made to the timetable after it has been published;
- To schedule classes at times and in locations that will facilitate student attendance;
- To ensure that students enrolled in a standard program are able to attend classes in all core subjects and have a reasonable selection of electives from which to choose;
- To optimise the use of University teaching resources, teaching staff and facilities and;
- Respond to variations in student enrolments

1.2 Related documents
This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following documents: (Documents will be listed as new policies/documents are developed).

1.3 Publication times
The annual timetable (i.e. all teaching sessions within an academic year) will be published prior to the commencement of the enrolment period for continuing students for the following year.

1.4 Publication locations
The official University of Wollongong timetables are published on the University’s main Web site. The timetables are accessible by both staff and students from the University’s home page. All School/Department/Faculty local websites may have links to the official timetabling website for their students to view but cannot have their own versions of the timetable listed on these sites. This is to eliminate any inconsistencies in information displayed and confusion among both staff and students.

1.5 Production schedule
A program describing timetabling data preparation requirements and due dates will be issued to School/Department/Faculty timetabling staff by mid June of each year.

2. Timetable Production

2.1 Pre-requisites to timetable preparation

2.1.1 Course and Subject offerings
Courses and subjects being offered in the forthcoming academic year must be finalised before timetables can be prepared. Departments should finalise their course and subject offerings for the forthcoming academic year in accordance with Course and Unit Approval processes to coincide with the Subject Database rollover.

2.1.2 Staff leave
Leave arrangements for the forthcoming year need to be confirmed, and the Unit Timetabling Officer advised, by August.
2.2 Timetable Preparation

Yearly timetables are to be prepared by Unit Timetable Officers for both the Autumn and Spring sessions in unison (in accordance with timelines document issued in mid June of each year). Complete timetables for both Autumn and Spring sessions will be released prior to the commencement of the enrolment period for continuing students.

Yearly timetables are to be prepared using the corporate timetabling software, Syllabus Plus, and its approved peripheral timetabling tools only.

2.2.1 Roll-over timetable/strip back of schedule

A partial rollover of timetable information based on the current year’s course and subject offerings, as well as program of study information, will be prepared and distributed to all school/department/faculty timetabling staff in June/July for timetable preparation for the following year.

Day/time/room allocations will vary from year to year and no assumptions are to be made an activity will scheduled identically to the previous year/session.

School/Department staff are responsible for the review and maintenance of the timetable to ensure that:

- All offerings for the coming year are provided for;
- Teaching activities have been entered correctly;
- Teaching staff are available; and
- There are no clashes in students’ standard programs.

2.2.2 Late Submissions

Late submissions of yearly timetable data will be accepted. However if the initial room scheduling process has commenced/finished these activities will be entered in the second or subsequent rounds of scheduling. This will obviously have an impact on the scheduling of these activities as they will have to fit in with previously scheduled classes.

2.2.3 Teaching times – Full-Time courses

With regards to teaching times, the following will apply:

- Teaching spaces on each campus will be available for classes from Monday to Friday 08:30-18:30 although requests for classes outside of these times will be accommodated.
- Syllabus Plus will automatically schedule classes equally over all days of the week including Fridays;
- All classes should be conducted within the scheduled times:
- Classes will commence at 25 minutes to the hour;
- Classes will conclude at 25 minutes past the hour; This allows a 10 minute buffer for venues to be vacated and the proceeding class time for set up and students to take their seats
- Unless otherwise specified Tutorial classes will not be scheduled in week 1
• Common Lunchtimes are designated from 1230 to 1330 on Wednesdays and Thursdays of session times. As such no classes or Faculty/Committee meetings are to be scheduled during these times.

2.2.4 Part-time courses
The timetable for part-time courses should normally provide an adequate number of subject activities after 1730 for students to complete the course at a normal part-time progression rate for the course.

2.2.5 Meeting Times
An agreed 2 hour time block will be kept free for each Faculty to schedule all meetings – e.g. Faculty, School/Department, Research meetings etc. Two or more Faculty’s may not be scheduled at the same time however they may overlap by an hour. Additionally no meetings, including University committee meetings, are to take place during the common lunch periods of 1230 to 1330 on Wednesdays and Thursdays during session times.

2.2.6 Travel between campuses
Same day attendance at more than one campus should be kept to a minimum in order for students to undertake core subjects in standard programs.

Staff who travel between campuses’ need to advise their Unit Timetabling Officer so the relevant information can be factored into the timetabling process. This will ensure that the relevant staff members teaching load is not compromised.

Where travel to attend core classes is required a minimum travel time should be provided:

(A policy regarding travel between campuses for students to undertake core units needs to be developed. The sets of campuses that it is reasonable to require students to travel between to undertake core units needs to be identified.)

To minimise the need for students to travel between campuses and school/department staff should consider:

• Scheduling classes on the students’ campus, i.e. taking the class to the students rather than bringing students to the class; and
• Applying flexible delivery alternatives to their teaching.

2.2.7 Summer Session
Summer session is a 7 week intensive session conducted in December and January each year. Subjects that are to be offered in this session will be visible to students on the web following the rollover each year of the Subject Database with the full timetable listing of scheduled activities appearing on the web no later than 4 weeks after the rollover.

Rooms in building 67 are not used for Summer session classes as these are reserved for conference bookings which take place during the months of December, January and February

2.2.8 Resolving timetabling disputes
All timetabling disputes and issues are to be directed to the relevant Unit Timetabling Officer within the respective Unit. The Unit Timetabling Officer will then liaise directly with the ARD Timetabling Coordinator in order to achieve a satisfactory outcome. When resolving timetable disputes and issues, the following factors will be considered:
• Justification for requiring a specific location;
• Justification for requiring a specific time;
• The availability of alternative teaching space/time;
• The extent to which the alteration of existing arrangements will impact on other staff and students;
• That a degree of sharing/turn-taking is considered;
• Specialist teaching spaces shall only be used for designated purposes (e.g. science and computer laboratories);
• Activities requiring specialised teaching facilities (e.g. media equipped lecture theatres) have priority over those requiring standard facilities;
• Requests made prior to the publication of the timetable will be given priority over those made after publication;
• Larger classes have priority over smaller classes except for specialist teaching classes;
• Activities which occupy large blocks of time have priority over those which occupy small blocks of time; and
• Access for students with disabilities takes precedence over other considerations, unless this causes unjustifiable hardship.

The ARD Timetable Coordinator is responsible for resolving timetable disputes and ensuring that clashes are avoided.

Conflicts that cannot be resolved will be mediated/arbitrated by the ARD Timetable Coordinator. Any issues that cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the ARD Timetabling Coordinator can be referred to the Academic Registrar, the Timetabling Advisory Group, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations) for their adjudication on the unresolved issue/s.

3. Timetable changes

The University community plan lifestyle around knowledge of their timetable, i.e. campus, day, time and location of teaching activities in their subjects. Consequently, changes to the published (Web) timetable will be kept to a minimum. It is the responsibility of the schools/departments to ensure that information used to prepare the university timetable is accurate and subsequent changes are only made for valid reasons. Valid reasons for changes include:

• Unexpected surge/decline in student numbers enrolled;
• Unexpected staff turnover;
• A location is/becomes a health or safety hazard;
• A subject is no longer deemed viable;
• Reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with special needs;
• Data errors and omissions

3.1 Change procedure

After publication of the timetable, requests for changes will fall into two categories and must follow one of the procedures below. Requests can only be initiated by Subject or Course Coordinators and must be accompanied by a valid reason to the Unit Timetable Officer.

For changes that affect scheduled days, time or campus and that most directly affect student’ planning and subject/course choices the following protocols are to be observe red:
University Of Wollongong  
Timetabling Guidelines 2006

- Before affecting any change the Unit Timetabling Officer must seek approval from each Course Coordinator for courses that utilise the subject as a core subject for clash avoidance on the Syllabus Plus system;
- An email request for timetable changes needs to be submitted to the ARD Timetable Coordinator by the Unit Timetabling Officer;
- The ARD Timetable Coordinator should check availability and potential for change on Syllabus Plus system;
- If a change is carried out, the ARD Timetable Coordinator must keep a copy for their own documentation. All changes made to the timetable will be conveyed back to the Unit Timetabling Officer who will in turn advise the relevant staff member/s and/or students;
- The Timetabling Services Unit will collect statistics on changes made to identify problem areas; and
- Where there is doubt in regard to whether a request for a change is justified the ARD Timetable Coordinator should be consulted.

Rooms are booked on a first-come-first-served basis. Rooms are not held pending receipt of confirmation.

Changes that DO NOT affect scheduled days, time or campus can be carried out by the ARD Timetable Coordinator, where appropriate. Examples of changes that fall within this category include:

- A change of staff allocated to an activity;
- A change of location providing it is the same campus;
- The deletion of booked space no longer required; and
- The addition of a repeated activity, justified by enrolment numbers.

The School/Department/Faculty staff are responsible for ensuring that the relevant students are notified of such changes (e.g. change of location) where necessary.

When making timetable changes, it is important to consider the effect on students. The practice of booking extra-space ‘just in case’ is not acceptable – enrolments must justify the activities scheduled.

Where changes occur with little notice, Schools/Departments/Faculties must advise all students. If rooms are changed, the Schools/Departments/Faculties must arrange to put appropriate signs on the old location to direct students to the new location.

A record of all changes will be kept and reported periodically to the Academic Registrar.

4. Casual room bookings

Casual room bookings are defined as ad-hoc bookings made by staff, students or external organisations for meetings, seminars, teaching activities for non-award courses, conferences, orientation activities and any other activities that are not incorporated in the University timetable.

Staff or students intending to make a casual room booking should contact the Timetabling Services Unit via email (room_bookings@uow.edu.au).

As the teaching timetable is not finalised until the end of week two each session, a casual room booking may not be confirmed until:
• The beginning of week three of each session, irrespective of how far in advance the casual booking was made; or
• The day before the booking, if the booking falls within the first two weeks of any session, irrespective of how far in advance the booking was made.

Casual room bookings can be confirmed at the time the booking is made if the space is required either on the weekend or outside of standard teaching sessions/times.

Staff or others may not use a room unless it is properly timetabled for a class, or there is an authorised casual booking. If staff, students or external organisations are found to be in a room without authorisation they will be requested to leave immediately. No adjustments to the teaching timetable will be made to accommodate casual room bookings.

4.1 External Organisations
External organisations wishing to make casual room/venue bookings should contact the ARD Timetable Coordinator via email to request their booking preferences.

The University’s requirements for rooms and facilities take precedence over their use by external persons, groups or bodies. The proposed use of University facilities by external organisations must be compatible with the University’s mission and goals and must comply with all relevant University policies and procedures. External organisations will be charged a fee for room bookings in accordance with the University Facility Bookings schedule of rates.

4.2 Information Technology Lab Bookings
Information Technology Lab bookings are made directly with relevant staff in charge of those areas

The following conditions apply:

• The use of specific information technology equipment and applications must be arranged directly with the Information Technology Department by the person requesting the booking.

5. Categories of booked space
The Timetabling Services Unit will record all areas owned and used by the University for teaching, meetings and conferences for inclusion on the Syllabus Plus database.

The database will include and define appropriately the following categories:

5.1 Common teaching locations
‘Common teaching locations’ are defined as general, non-specialised areas used for teaching and other related activities by the academic community at large. Any changes to the designation of these venues can only be by the authorisation of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

5.2 Discipline dedicated teaching locations
‘Discipline dedicated teaching locations’ are designated as teaching areas, which are dedicated to specialised use by the academic community at large. Such areas are to be supervised by specified schools/departments but allocated centrally on Syllabus Plus by the appropriate staff. Any changes to the designation of these venues can only be by the authorisation of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).
5.3 School dedicated teaching locations

‘School dedicated teaching locations’ are areas dedicated for specialised use by specific schools. Such areas will still be timetabled centrally and may be available to the academic community at large at the discretion of the responsible school/department.

5.4 Meeting/conference location

‘Meeting/conference locations’ are areas dedicated to the conduct of non-teaching activities.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The teaching timetable is prepared using Syllabus Plus, the corporate timetabling system. Timetabling functions are carried out within various areas of the University. The roles and responsibilities of these areas are outlined below.

6.1 Timetabling Services Unit

The Timetabling Services Unit (within the Academic Registrar’s Division) is responsible for managing and coordinating the production of the annual timetable within the University. This unit is also responsible for the use of teaching or other booked space including casual room bookings as well overseeing the use of the timetabling software, Syllabus Plus.

Under the supervision /direction of the ARD Timetable Coordinator, this unit is responsible for:

- Preparing, promulgating and monitoring the production schedule for the annual timetable;
- Production and publishing of the timetable;
- Developing and evaluating procedures and policies relating to timetabling and room usage;
- Resolution of disputes regarding common teaching locations;
- Arranging initial and upgrade installation of Syllabus Plus and other timetabling related software to all relevant users;
- Providing technical expertise and user training in regard to Syllabus Plus and other timetabling related software;
- Troubleshooting and support for system users;
- Developing and maintaining an efficient collection process of the required data for timetabling;

6.1.1 Examinations Unit

The Examinations Unit (within the Academic Registrars Division) is responsible for managing and coordinating the production of the annual examinations timetable throughout the University. This unit is also responsible for overseeing the use of the examination scheduling software, Syllabus Plus.

Under the supervision /direction of the Examinations Officer, this unit is responsible for:

- Preparing, promulgating and monitoring the production schedule for the examinations timetables;
- Production and publishing of the examination timetables;
- Developing and evaluating procedures and policies relating to examination scheduling;
- Troubleshooting and support for system users;
• Developing and maintaining an efficient collection process of the required data for examination scheduling.

6.1.2 Timetable Advisory Group
The timetable advisory group was formed initially to develop a best practice guide to timetabling. The focus of the group has expanded to include other aspects of timetabling including:

• Creation of timelines of events for the production of yearly timetables;
• Provide advice on policy and procedural matters relevant to timetabling;
• Make recommendations on the future direction of timetabling and the timetabling software, Syllabus Plus;
• Ensure any impending changes to timetabling are communicated to all staff;
• Act as an intermediary between Unit timetabling staff and the executive.

The Timetable Advisory Group is also a working party of UEC

6.2 School/Department/Faculty
Staff within the school/department/faculty will provide information and carry out certain duties to ensure that the timetable is prepared in a timely and efficient manner, in accordance with the timetable production schedule. The provision and checking of information for the teaching timetable is the responsibility of each school/department/faculty.

The roles and responsibilities of staff within the school are outlined below.

6.2.1 Faculty Dean
Faculty Deans are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate resources are committed to the production of the timetable and that all staff abide by the Timetabling Policy.

6.2.2 Head of School/Department
It is expected that the Head of School/Department will:

• Allocate teaching loads for the coming year in accordance with the timetable production schedule to allow utilisation of staff information in timetable construction and maintenance;
• Ensure that all types of leave arrangements are considered in teaching load allocations; and
• Minimise the changes in teaching allocations that occur after the publication of the timetable.

6.2.3 Course Coordinator
Course coordinators are responsible for:

• Ensuring the development and checking of a workable course timetable for students and staff affected by the timetable;
• Providing the ARD Timetable Coordinator with nominations for clash avoidance and any other timetabling information for their course in accordance with the timetable production schedule;
• Receiving information from Subject Coordinators in regards to any special requirements;
• Ensuring that data provided to the ARD Timetable Coordinator is accurate and updated if necessary;
• Providing approval for timetable changes after publication to any activity included within the course (if a activity is utilised by more than one course, all Course Coordinators will be required to give approval before the change is affected); and
• Providing to the ARD Timetable Coordinator details of any availability constraints relating to the course, or subjects within the course.

6.2.4 Subject Coordinator
The Subject Coordinator, in consultation with the Course Coordinator, will provide to the ARD Timetable Coordinator:

• Details of the structure of subject delivery, eg. 1 hour lecture, 2 hour tutorial, size of tutorial groups etc; and
• Specific location and suitability requirements for unit delivery.

NB: If necessary, information provided by Subject Coordinators may be modified by the Course Coordinator to ensure overall viability of the course timetable.

When the timetable is first published, the Subject Coordinator will confirm the booked teaching space for the subject teaching activities is appropriate and adequate.

6.2.5 Unit Administrative Staff
Each School/Department/Faculty will identify one person to act as the single point of contact for certain timetabling matters that arise within that unit. This person will:

• Liaise with Course and Subject Coordinators to obtain relevant data to be used in the production of yearly timetables
• Provide the point of liaison between the ARD Timetabling Coordinator and other school staff;
• Assist the ARD Timetable Coordinator in the coordination of the data collection process for timetable production;
• Assist the ARD Timetable Coordinator in facilitating the checking of timetable information; and
• Administer the tutorial allocation system for the Unit.

6.2.6 Academic Teaching Staff
All academic teaching staff should:

• Advise the subject coordinators of any specific requirements arising from their family responsibilities, religious beliefs, disabilities or requirement to perform other approved activities prior to publication of the timetable;
• Read and check the timetable when first published and advise Subject Coordinators of any concerns; and
• Ensure that the location being used for their teaching is returned to the standard configuration diagram, as identified by Buildings and Grounds, at the conclusion of the scheduled teaching activity.

6.3 Buildings and Grounds
Buildings and Grounds are responsible for:

• The provision of copies of updated floor plans showing room/building alterations;
• Providing advance notice of planned maintenance work and negotiating the appropriate timing of this work with the ARD Timetable Coordinator;
Room setups prior to the commencement of classes in each session in accordance with the standard configuration;

Unlocking of Common Teaching rooms. The Cleaners leave Common Teaching Area's unlocked after morning cleaning during session, if however, a room is locked, Buildings and Grounds Service Centre X3217 can arrange for Cleaning or Security to unlock.

6.4 Information Technology Division

The Information Technology Division is responsible for:

- Liaising with academic staff regarding the Information Technology (hardware and software) requirements for academic activities timetabled within Information Technology Labs;
- Providing details of Information Technology facilities (hardware and capacity) of the Information Technology Labs to the Timetabling Services Unit for inclusion on Syllabus Plus;
- Monitoring appropriate allocation of academic activities to Information Technology Labs; and
- Providing a consolidated listing of teaching activities scheduled into the Information Technology Labs to the ARD Timetable Coordinator for inclusion within the consolidated University timetable.

6.5 Students

Students should:

- Be familiar with University rules; and
- Read the published timetable and advise their Subject or Course Coordinators of concerns relating to issues, including:
  - Clashes between core subjects, and
  - Unreasonable multi-campus travel to attend core classes

7. Social Justice

Consistent with University policy on equal opportunity and anti-discrimination laws, UOW will provide in the timetabling procedures reasonable accommodation for:

- staff and students with disabilities
- staff and students related to their religious beliefs; and
- staff with carer’s responsibility.

Students and staff must provide information and requirements in advance of the timetable being developed to enable reasonable accommodation to be made.

Requests from students,

- with disabilities are made to the Disability Officers; and
- related to religious beliefs are made to the Student Services area.

Requests from staff,

- with disabilities
- related to religious beliefs; and
- with carer’s responsibilities
  should be directed to the relevant Course Coordinators/ Unit Timetable Officers.

Staff and students may seek advice from Officers at the Student Services Unit with regards to the provision of reasonable accommodation on these grounds.
Glossary

Activity
An activity of study is of one session’s duration unless otherwise specified. Formerly known as a subject.

ARD Timetable Coordinator
The ARD Timetable Coordinator is responsible for managing and coordinating the production of the annual timetable throughout the University and is located within the Academic Registrars Division. The Coordinator is also responsible for the use of teaching or other booked space including casual room bookings as well overseeing the use of the timetabling software, Syllabus Plus.

Casual room bookings
Ad-hoc bookings made by staff, students or external organisations for meetings, seminars, teaching activities for non-award courses, conferences, orientation activities and any other activities that are not incorporated in the University timetable.

Core Subject
A subject which must be completed by a student in order to qualify for the award in which s/he is enrolled.

Course
A degree, diploma or certificate undertaken at the University.

Course Coordinator
An academic staff member who has overall responsibility and is the major authority for the management of a course, including any cross-faculty components within that course.

Dean
Head of a faculty

Elective
A non-core unit which may be chosen by a student towards qualification for an award in which s/he is enrolled.

Faculty
The academic unit responsible for teaching and research in the University. A faculty can comprise several Schools or Departments

Session
A period of time when the content of a subject is delivered and the assessment is completed.

Student
A person enrolled at the University.

Subject Coordinator
A member of the academic staff who is responsible for academic administration of the subject and students enrolled in that activity.

Syllabus Plus
The corporate timetabling system used to prepare the UOW teaching timetable.
University Of Wollongong
Timetabling Guidelines 2006

Unit
School, Department or Faculty

Unit Timetabling Officer
A staff member within an academic unit who is the point of contact for timetabling matters for both the Units staff and the Timetabling Services Unit.

University
The University of Wollongong