

## CLASS TIMETABLING AND ALLOCATION

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### 1 PURPOSE

This policy and procedure identifies the objectives, scheduling principles and organisational provisions that define the production of the University-wide class timetable and use of central teaching space for teaching activities and ad hoc room use. The University aims to produce a timetable that is equitable, takes into account the needs of both students and Academic and Teaching Staff, is student-focussed, and maximises the efficient use of University space and resources. As such, the needs of the students will be given highest priority, reflecting the University's strategic goal to enhance the student experience and learning outcomes.

### 2 SCOPE

This policy and procedure applies to the timetabling of internal classes and residential schools at all CQUniversity campuses and sites where learning and teaching activities occur. Other activities which book centrally managed spaces such as examination and casual room bookings are covered by this policy and procedure only where specifically mentioned.

**3 EFFECTIVE DATE**                      08 December 2015

### 4 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

*Central Queensland University Act 1998 Qld*

### 5 POLICY STATEMENT

- 5.1 The University class timetable is produced ahead of class allocation using academic requirements, constraint parameters and estimated enrolment data supplied by each School. In addition, historical enrolment data is used to validate predictions of estimated enrolment numbers. All known requirements and constraints on the timetable should be applied prior to its production. This will facilitate a stable and complete timetable and minimise the needs for change in class allocation once the timetable is published.
- 5.2 The needs of Academic and Teaching staff will be considered wherever possible. The Timetabling Office aims to schedule activities in patterns that produce manageable teaching times for Academic and Teaching staff and provide appropriate time for other responsibilities such as research and administrative commitments based on the provided Staff Availability data.
- 5.3 All TAFE classes will be scheduled as per the Time/Date/Location requirements provided by the Schools where possible. Any diversion from these requirements will be discussed directly with the Schools for clarification.
- 5.4 The timetable will be optimised to ensure that Higher Education students enrolled in a standard program are able to attend classes for all core courses and have a reasonable selection of elective courses from which to choose. This will allow students to make enrolment decisions that best fit their academic interests as well as personal and work commitments. While the University attempts to accommodate student choices, the constraints around the timetable may not allow for every student to attend their preferred combination of courses if they are studying outside of a recognised program plan.

- 5.5 The Timetabling Office endeavours to treat Schools equally in the scheduling process. Scheduling priority will be given based on specialist requirements for classes as listed in 6.23.
- 5.6 Development of a centralised class timetable meets the following objectives:
- consistent process to support class allocation for all CQUniversity students,
  - standardised timetable production, preparation and publication across all campuses
  - maintenance of an accurate central record of bookings for all learning and teaching spaces including ad hoc booking requests,
  - ability to respond to variations in student enrolment numbers, and
  - ability to ensure that staff only use the authorised CQUniversity timetabling system.
- 5.7 Class timetables will be newly produced each term. Previous timetables are not rolled over due to the following constraints:
- constant program structure changes,
  - new programs being added,
  - new courses being added,
  - courses no longer being offered or being replaced,
  - changes in course deliveries,
  - day/night course rotation,
  - variations in student numbers, and
  - dissatisfied staff due to certain programs/courses retaining the same day/time/venue each year.

## 6 PROCEDURES

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### Timetabling System

- 6.1 CQUniversity operates a centralised timetabling system. The Timetabling Office is a corporate area within the Student Governance Centre, and is responsible for the production of class and examination timetables for University campuses and sites as well as managing ad hoc bookings on campuses.
- 6.2 The primary data required to create class timetables is collated by School Administrative Officers and the Student Program and Careers Team, in collaboration with Academic and Teaching Staff. This data is submitted to the Timetabling Office for processing and scheduling by the specified deadlines using the Web Data Collector application (WDC).

### Timetabling Software

- 6.3 The University class timetable is produced using Syllabus Plus Course Planner and Enterprise Timetabler along with Web Data Collector, Student Allocator and Web Room Booking applications. Class timetabling

relies on an interface software program called SPDA, which validates and transfers course data from PeopleSoft, StudentOne, Cortecs and Nexus to Syllabus Plus as part of the class allocation process.

## Teaching Times

- 6.4 CQUniversity's core teaching hours are set out in the Enterprise Agreement and Workload Allocations Procedure for Higher Education courses, and in the Copied State Agreements for TAFE units. These times may vary at particular campuses when taking into consideration the availability of public transport, student safety and access to commercial locations.
- 6.5 Where a course is offered internally, classes may be scheduled at any time during the designated hours. However, provided sufficient resources are available, classes may be confined to a core period of 8.00 am to 6.00 pm (Higher Education classes) or 8.00 am to 6.00 pm (TAFE classes).
- 6.6 The following conditions also apply:
- Lectures for first year higher education courses will normally be scheduled between 9:00 am and 5.00 pm to provide an effective experience for first year higher education students, except where the School requests an alternative time.
  - Where necessary and as required, classes may be held on Saturday or Sunday.
  - Class durations will be in multiples of 30 minutes.
  - Classes must vacate the teaching space 10 minutes prior to the end of the allocated time for that class. The class to follow should use the 10 minutes as set up time. This allows students to move to their next scheduled activity as required.
  - Classes should be spread evenly over a full week including Mondays and Fridays.
  - The order in which classes are scheduled within the week will only be prioritised for sequencing if the relevant School requests such during the data collection period. For example, lecture then tutorial then workshop.
  - A minimum of 15% of all classes must be scheduled on Fridays.
- 6.7 CQUniversity provides two approved non-teaching times during each designated teaching week:
- Monday, 12.00 pm to 1.00 pm, and
  - Wednesday, 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.
- 6.8 These times are approved by the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee. Teaching activities are not able to be scheduled during this time unless approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) or Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Industry, Vocational Training and Access Education). An exemption applies to teaching activities allocated to casual teaching staff.

## Staff Availability

- 6.9 It will be assumed that full time academic and teaching staff are available to teach during the core teaching period, Monday to Friday between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm. Exemptions to this rule are:
- part time or concessional staff,
  - health issues,
  - religious beliefs,
  - approved School commitments, and
  - approved allocated research days.
- 6.10 Staff availability data must be entered into the Web Data Collector by the nominated School Administrative Officers by the given deadlines.

## Class Naming Conventions

- 6.11 The following naming conventions are recognised as valid course components:
- Field Trip – Field,
  - Laboratory – Lab,

- Lecture – Lec,
- Practical or Practicum – Prac,
- Presentation – Pres,
- Res School – Res,
- Seminar – Sem,
- Tour – Tour,
- Tutorial – Tut,
- Workshop – Wks, and
- Blocks – Blk.

6.12 It is expected that course timetabled activities will only fall within the above recognised components.

## Timetabling Data Requirements

- 6.13 Each School must have at least one nominated School Administration Officer to specify constraints and requirements for the upcoming term. The data must be entered into Web Data Collector by the deadline advised by the Timetabling Office.
- 6.14 Course teaching requirements for all internal classes and residential schools are to be entered into the Web Data Collector.
- 6.15 School Administration Officers must maintain the accuracy of school-managed venue data and inform the Timetabling Office of any problems with the general suitabilities allocated to each location.
- 6.16 School Administrative Officers must provide accurate data in regard to room requirements for each class. If no requirements are provided, a standard tutorial room will be allocated to the activity.
- 6.17 Any requested changes to teaching data after the deadline will only be made after considering the current availability of staff, students and locations. No class will be removed from a location in favour of another without the approval from each affected School.
- 6.18 Program of Study data for each term is provided by the Program and Careers Team.
- 6.19 The Timetabling Office manages and supports for the Web Data Collector System.
- 6.20 Scheduling is prioritised to ensure that the needs of large teaching activities or intensive teaching activities are met. The following scheduling constraints will normally be taken into consideration when developing each class timetable:
- clash rules derived from the program of study data,
  - staff availability,
  - inter-campus travel constraints,
  - childcare commitments,
  - designated School/committee meeting times,
  - course delivery (type and number of classes required, required facilities),
  - mode of teaching,
  - teaching requirements (same day classes, sequenced classes, early in the week teaching only, etc),
  - estimated class size,
  - travel time between campuses if cross-campus teaching is required, and
  - class allocation constraints.
- 6.21 Academic and Teaching Staff may request jointly taught teaching (combined classes) in a common location for related courses.
- 6.22 Scheduling constraints falling outside of the above regulations will be mediated by the Timetabling Office, or the Manager, Student Governance if resolution is not achieved.

## Scheduling Priorities

- 6.23 Scheduling of activities in the calendar is prioritised in the following order:
- apprenticeship Blocks and Residential Schools,
  - laboratory classes that require allocation of specialist teaching space,
  - video conferenced classes,
  - priority classes – for example off-campus classes or classes with a duration of more than three hours,
  - other teaching activities over three hours in duration, then
  - remaining classes requiring scheduling.
- 6.24 General ad hoc bookings requiring use of central teaching space will only be scheduled term by term after the release of the Official Class Timetable for that term.
- 6.25 For teaching activities to be scheduled in accordance with the above order, requests must be received prior to the Web Data Collector data submission closing date.

## Auto-Scheduling of Room Allocations

- 6.26 The timetable will be optimised to ensure the effective use of teaching space and facilities across the week.
- 6.27 Room allocations will be determined based on the specific room type, equipment requirements and estimated class size data imported from the Web Data Collector.
- 6.28 Specific rooms that are classified as common use space may be requested but cannot be guaranteed. When producing the term timetable, teaching activities will be scheduled before ad hoc activities.
- 6.29 It is the responsibility of each School and Academic and Teaching Staff to notify room cancellations to the Timetabling Office as soon as possible.
- 6.30 Room allocation conflicts that cannot be resolved will be mediated by the Manager, Student Governance. If a resolution is not achieved, a decision will be made by the Director, Governance.

## Timetable Publication

- 6.31 The Web Data Collector application will be open for no less than three weeks per scheduling term and all relevant staff will be clearly notified by email.
- 6.32 The following points apply to Higher Education staff and classes only.
- a) A staff only draft view of the class timetable will be released six weeks prior to the commencement of each term.
  - b) A draft class timetable will be released to staff and students four weeks prior to the commencement of each term on the CQUniversity website.
  - c) The class allocation system (Student Allocator) will be opened for staff once the draft class timetable is released to allow for pre-allocation of students by the School where required.
  - d) During the draft period Schools can request a spreadsheet report from the Timetabling Office.
  - e) The final class timetable will be released to staff and students two weeks prior to the commencement of term on the CQUniversity website.
  - f) The class timetable is published on the CQUniversity website and available via the Staff and Student Portals.
  - g) The class allocation system (Student Allocator) will be opened for students once the final class timetable is released.
  - h) Once the final timetable is published the timetable will be considered firm. The Timetabling Office will notify staff and students as soon as the final timetable is available.
  - i) The Class Timetable is constructed for students. When considering changes to the timetable, the interests of students and core courses will be of paramount importance over academic preferences for venues or teaching times. Students enrolled in a standard program should expect to be able to attend classes for all of their core courses.

- 6.33 For both Higher Education and TAFE, any change requests submitted after the term has commenced must be approved by the Dean of School.

## **Timetable Changes and Clashes**

- 6.34 Students use the timetable to make enrolment decisions that best fit their academic interests as well as their family and work commitments. All changes to the class timetable after it is finalised should therefore be kept to a minimum and will need to be approved by the Dean of School.
- 6.35 The appointment of academic staff to classes after the release of the final timetable must not impact on the scheduled timetable unless extenuating circumstances apply.
- 6.36 All requests for timetable changes must be submitted to the nominated School Administrative Officer. Academic staff may not submit a request directly to the Timetabling Office. This is to ensure that change requests are monitored by the School, authorised and do not adversely affect other courses offered within a program.
- 6.37 All change requests should be submitted by the School Administration Officer by email to [timetabling-admin@cqu.edu.au](mailto:timetabling-admin@cqu.edu.au). Once a change request has been actioned by the Timetabling Office after the final release of the Class Timetable, it is the responsibility of the School to communicate that change to any enrolled students in the affected class.
- 6.38 The nominated School Administrative Officer must ensure that any change requests received after the timetable has been finalised are only made under valid conditions.
- 6.39 Timetable changes will only be considered under the following conditions:
- enrolment numbers have increased beyond the capacity of the previously allocated venue,
  - unexpected staff turnover,
  - unexpected surge/decline in student enrolment numbers,
  - a location is no longer viable due to a safety hazard, broken equipment or maintenance work,
  - a course is no longer deemed viable,
  - reasonable adjustment to accommodate students with special needs/disabilities, or
  - a request has been made to the School for amendment and approval has been granted by the Dean of School.
- 6.40 Change requests that adversely affect the operation of Student Allocator (My Timetable) may be refused. Requests for such changes will be mediated by the Timetabling Office. If resolution is not achieved, a decision will be made in consultation with the Manager, Student Governance Centre.

## **Class Allocation using Student Allocator (Higher Education only)**

- 6.41 Students must allocate to their classes for each term using Student Allocator. Students can access the My Timetable link via the CQUcentral Student Centre (<http://cqucentral.cqu.edu.au> > Continue to Student Centre). Student Allocator will be available to students two weeks prior to the commencement of term.
- 6.42 All internal classes and residential schools must participate in Student Allocator as part of the approved class registration process.
- 6.43 Full instructions to assist students with class selection are available on the Student Allocator application and on the CQUiversity website.
- 6.44 The Timetabling Office is responsible for the management and monitoring of the Student Allocation system and assisting students with any issues.

## Class Naming Conventions

6.45 All classes scheduled using the timetabling system follow a specific naming convention:

- Higher Education:

<Course Code>~<Term>~<Campus>~<Activity Type>~<Alpha Indicator>/<Numerical Indicator>:

- ACCT11057~T1~ROK~Lec~A/01
- ACCT11057~T1~ROK~Lec~B/01
- ACCT11057~T1~ROK~Tut~A/01
- ACCT11057~T1~ROK~Tut~A/02

- TAFE:

<Study Package Code>~<Study Period Code>~<Location>~<Availability No>~<Activity Type>~<Alpha Indicator>/<Numerical Indicator>:

- 10361NAT~VT1~ROC~1~Wks~B/01
- HLTHIR403C~VT2~MKC~2~Wks~A/01

6.46 The alpha indicator shows the number of requested classes for a particular activity type (class). The above higher education example means that there are two different lectures scheduled for the course and students will need to select and attend both options (A and B) as they are two different lecture components.

6.47 The numerical indicator shows the number of times a class is repeated. The above higher education example shows that the same tutorial is repeated twice. Students will need to select one of the two options to attend (01 or 02).

6.48 The same naming conventions apply to all classes regardless of the delivery mode.

## Ad hoc and External Bookings

6.49 Rooms that are not in use in any teaching period may be booked for ad hoc purposes (eg meetings, presentations, etc). Staff may not randomly use rooms for ad hoc purposes unless that use has been scheduled. Ad hoc bookings will not be confirmed in the timetable system until after the publication of the final class timetable for each term.

6.50 Ad hoc bookings will not appear on the class timetable published on the CQUniversity website. Ad hoc bookings are not to be used for teaching activities as this removes transparency to students.

6.51 The University's requirements for rooms and facilities take precedence over their use by external persons, groups or bodies. No adjustments to the academic timetable will be made to accommodate external use apart from exceptional circumstances specifically approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President or nominee.

6.52 The proposed use of University facilities by individuals, groups or organisations external to the University must be compatible with the University's mission and values and must comply with the [Hire and Use of University Facilities and Equipment by External Parties Procedures](#).

6.53 Any ad hoc or external booking conflicts that cannot be resolved will be mediated by the Manager, Student Governance. If a resolution is not achieved, a decision will be made by the Director, Governance.

## 7 RESPONSIBILITIES

### Compliance, Monitoring and Review

7.1 The Timetabling Office and Coordinator, Timetabling and Records will monitor compliance with this policy and procedure.

7.2 The Manager, Student Governance Centre is oversees the overall implementation, operation and management of timetable publication.

- 7.3 The Director, Governance is responsible for ensuring appropriate implementation and operation of this policy and procedure and the University's timetabling system.

## Reporting

- 7.4 There are no reporting requirements.

## Records Management

- 7.5 All records relevant to this document are maintained in the Syllabus Plus/Enterprise Timetabler course planner software and related systems.

## 8 DEFINITIONS

**Common teaching space:** those rooms or group of rooms which are used for lectures, seminars, tutorials or computer assisted training or learning as part of the normal teaching conducted by the University and which are only available to all elements of the University through the central room booking system managed by the Timetabling Office. Common teaching space includes lecture, tutorial and computer laboratory facilities. Rooms or facilities which are not generally available to all elements of the University for this purpose are not considered as common teaching space.

Refer to the University [glossary](#) for the definition of terms used in this policy and procedure.

## 9 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

### Related Legislation and Supporting Documents

[Central Queensland University Educational Employees Copied State Employment Agreement 2014](#)

[Central Queensland University Enterprise Agreement 2012](#)

[Disability Policy](#)

[Disability Support Procedures](#)

[Hire and Use of University Facilities and Equipment by External Parties Procedures](#)

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