Timetabling and Room Booking Policy

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1   Introduction

1.1   Overview

1.1.1   The timetable and room booking system is the university's chosen software system used to capture, store, display and report on all academic timetable events and Adhoc room booking events. It is the official system for recording use of all bookable spaces, regardless of ownership or priority. This system is accessed via the web link in the staff portal, all students must be provided with timetables using the chosen university wide software across all schools.

1.1.2   The **Timetable** and **Room Bookings System** is the university's chosen software system to capture, store, display and report on all *academic timetable events* AND *ad-hoc room booking* events. This system is accessed via

> **The timetable interface** – Used exclusively by Timetabling and Room bookings staff to capture and manage *academic timetable events*.
> **The ad-hoc room booking interface** – Used by all staff on a self-service basis to request rooms for *ad-hoc room booking events*.

2   Purpose and Scope

2.1   Senate and the University's Executive Board have agreed the following values for timetabling:

2.1.1   The University is committed to delivering a student focussed timetable to support a positive student experience.

2.1.2   The University's academic model is underpinned by degree programme structures and module offerings that result in an effective and student focussed timetable.

2.1.3   The University aspires to deliver an effective timetable for staff.

2.1.4   Sustained investment in the University's teaching estate and infrastructure to ensure that it remains responsive to the evolving needs of the University

3   Principles of Timetabling

3.1   Teaching Year

3.1.1   The University operates a 52 week year, with weeks numbered consecutively from 1 to 52. Week 3 is the first week of teaching.

3.1.2   Teaching which is scheduled to take place in specific trimesters will be scheduled during the following weeks:

> Trimester A: weeks 3-14
> Trimester B: weeks 21-32
> Trimester C: weeks 37-47

The trimester weeks are entered as week spans on the timetable to allow students and staff to view weeks as teaching trimester weeks 1 to 12. E.g. Weeks 3-14 = Tri A – Wks 1-12 on Timetables.

3.1.3   The timetabling week structure is published in advance of each academic year by Registry Timetabling and is used by the university timetabling system. The University's teaching week numbers are published to students in the teaching timetable.

3.2   **Teaching Times**

3.2.1   The University's term and trimester dates are available at http://www.gcu.ac.uk/theuniversity/calendar/ . Students must attend the University from the first day, some programme start dates may be different from the standard term and where this is the case, Schools will publish and notify students of the trimester dates and any specific arrangements separately.

3.2.2   Building opening Times and Weekend Teaching

Glasgow (except Saltire)		Glasgow - Saltire centre	
Monday to Friday	0800 to 2100	Monday to Friday	0800 to 2300
Saturday	0800 to 1630	Saturday and Sunday	0800 to 1800
Sunday	0800 to 1600	24 Hours Opening Operates prior to and during Exam Diets.	

Advanced noticed is required for weekend teaching with regards to arranging facilities required.

The university maintains a 24 hour security presence on a case by case review additional charges may be incurred for additional teaching events. Non-teaching events will required additional costs for security and reception.

GCU London
Monday to Friday   0800 to 1800
Bookings outwith these times require additional arrangements which may incur additional costs.

3.2.3   University core teaching days are:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 09.00 to 18.00
Friday 09.00 to 17.00
Wednesday until 13:00 only no teaching to allow for sports, volunteering and participatory activities
Evening teaching until 21.00 and weekend teaching may occur to meet the needs of specific programme offerings, with full details provided to students.

3.2.4   Teaching for full time students should not be scheduled after 13.00 on Wednesdays to allow for sports, volunteering and participatory activities unless exemptions are agreed the Dean of School and notified to the PVC Learning & Student Experience.

3.2.5   Teaching events will be scheduled to start on the hour. Typically, classes should be scheduled in 1 hour units and comprise 50 minutes teaching starting no later than 5 minutes past the hour, and finishing 5 minutes to the hour to allow changeover time.

3.3   **Prioritisation Arrangements**

3.3.1   Prioritisation is achieved through the phased release of estate in respect of different categories of activity.

3.3.2   There are 3 main categories of activity which are defined and prioritised as follows:

  I.   *Academic Teaching Requests submitted during the module constraints collection period, Examinations and major Internal University events, such as Graduation and Registration.*

  II.   *Other core University activities*
      The other core University activities are mainly those associated with SMG & Governing Body Meetings Conference & Events, Teaching & Learning, Staff Training and Student Association and other Student activities. Also included

are those activities related to academic teaching but not associated with specific taught modules (e.g. research seminars).

III.   *Meetings and ad hoc events*

These are those events that are relatively flexible and student and/ staff-attended such as team or School meetings. These are allocated only once all preceding categories of activity have been accommodated for the forthcoming academic year. Ad hoc events are allocated on a rolling basis during term and no less than 2 weeks in advance of the required date (dependent on notice).

3.4   Teaching Staff

3.4.1   The University policy is that teaching staff are available for teaching throughout the core-teaching day and times with exceptions, such as agreed part time working or flexibility for caring arrangements, approved upfront of the timetabling year and authorised by the Dean of School. These will be collected by Registry Timetabling.

3.5   Teaching Space

3.5.1   All teaching space is owned by the University. It is the responsibility of the Estates department to communicate all changes to teaching and meeting room accommodation with regards to room use, capacities, priority department use and sizes. Registry Timetabling will providing analysis and statistics to the Estates department, including an Impact analysis on the ability to produce timetables based on proposed changes to the teaching accommodation. Any proposed changes to spaces will only be accepted by Registry Timetabling officially from the Estates department.

3.5.2   Some specialist laboratories will be restricted in their use to particular teaching subjects, with Schools having priority over their bookings to meet their requirements.

3.5.3   All teaching rooms will be equipped with core IT/AV equipment.

3.5.4   Where possible, rooms with specialist equipment, such as IT equipment for students use, should be configured in such a manner that it can be used flexibly to meet various needs.

3.6   Teaching Events

3.6.1   All teaching activities are managed via the University's timetabling and room bookings database to ensure that timetables provided to students and staff are complete, and that clashes in resources are avoided.

3.6.2   Teaching should always be the defined activity type as per the criteria for the Programme and Module design and approval process. These are:

- Assessment
- Independent Learning
- Directed Study
- Lecture
- Practical
- Seminar
- Tutorial
- Placement

3.6.3   Schools are responsible for specifying the delivery mode (as described above in 3.6.2) in the module descriptors and the trimester of delivery and ensure that module descriptors updated and changes are made.

3.6.4   At programme approval schools should ensure that there are sufficient resources available such as specialist labs to support timetables across programmes and degree programmes. More information on the programme approval process can be obtained from the Department of Quality.

3.7   **Accessibility**

3.7.1   Registry Timetable Services will meet with Positive Living and disability Service and Academic Units ahead of each timetable exercise to consider the needs of prospective and continuing students with disabilities, including any actions arising from Personal Evacuation Plans. For example where student mobility issues are considerable and transfer to an evacuation chair in the case of an emergency is not possible, teaching related to a student's registered modules will be automatically allocated lower flower accommodation.

3.7.2   Registry Timetable Services will work with Academic Units and staff, to ensure teaching staff with a disability are allocated appropriate teaching spaces and timetables that positively support their work within the University including any actions arising from Personal Evacuation Plans.

3.7.3   Estates and Central Services will ensure that all teaching accommodation meets legal requirements for accessibility.

3.8   **Creation of Timetables**

3.8.1   Timetables are created using system software auto-scheduling functionality, based on data provided by Academic Unit and approved constraints.

3.8.2   An annual process for collection of any delivery changes to modules and programmes and teaching staff availability in line with the University validation process will be gathered annually in April by Registry Timetabling prior to the next academic teaching year. It is the responsibility of the module leader to communicate any changes in delivery to Registry Timetabling to ensure an accurate timetable is produced annually.

3.8.3   Timetables for the complete academic year will be created and published in one process.

3.8.4   Detailed timeframes for the creation of the teaching timetable will be incorporated into the University corporate administration calendar.

3.9   **Publication of Timetables**

3.9.1   The University's corporate timetable database system will publish individual student and staff teaching timetables, as well as composite module and programme timetables.

3.9.2   Timetables for the complete academic year will be published to staff and students in final draft format no later than 8 weeks prior to the start of teaching in Trimester A.

3.9.3   Timetables will be published in a format which will allow the downloading to a variety of personal electronic devices.

3.10   **Changes to the Timetable**

3.10.1   Once a clash free draft timetable has been created and before published to students and staff, adjustments will be allowed subject to approval by Heads of Academic Department (or nominee) to accommodate any changes in circumstances to ensure that all Hard constraints continue to be met or there is an enhancement to meeting more soft constraints where possible.

3.10.2   Changes to the final timetable will only be made for the following reasons and where critical to the successful delivered of teaching or where the student and/or staff experience is negatively affected:

- Staff clash
- Student clash (in the case of compulsory modules)
- Room not large enough
- Room unsuitable for purpose (fault or lacking essential teaching equipment)
- Additional classes added (e.g. for revision sessions)
- Time slot or session no longer required
- Accessibility

3.10.3   Once published, Schools will monitor the level and reasons for changes to their timetables on a regular basis.

4   Timetable Constraints

4.1   Introduction

4.1.1   In order to create a timetable a set of constraints are required as "rules" to be applied. Hard Constraints are those that cannot be broken, while Soft Constraints are those that should not be broken but may be to meet hard constraints and delivery a timetable. Soft Constraints are listed in order of preference to be maintained.

4.2   Hard Constraints

4.2.1   Never Allow Student Clashes

Students must be able to attend all required teaching events for core and allowed optional modules for their course and level. Where events are repeated for smaller subgroups, the timetable must allow for at least one such repeated event to be attended

4.2.2   Never allow Staff Clashes

No two events taught by the same person may be scheduled in overlapping slots.

4.2.3   Never allow room clashes

No two events using the same room may be scheduled in overlapping slots.

4.2.4   Always satisfy room capacity requirements

Assigned rooms must be able to accommodate all students who must attend the event.

4.2.5   Always satisfy specialist equipment requirements

Events that require specialist equipment must be scheduled in rooms that provide this.

4.3   Soft Constraints

4.3.1   All students and teaching staff to have a 1 hour lunch break normally between 12noon and 2pm.

4.3.2   Full time teaching staff will have a minimum of one full day per week clear of classes.

Unless a specific day is authorised by the Dean of School, the day will not be prescribed.

4.3.3   No student should normally be timetabled to undertake more than 3 hours of teaching without a break.

4.3.4   Teaching staff should normally not be timetabled to teach for more than 3 consecutive hours.

4.3.5   Lectures should be timetabled to be undertaken before other directly related teaching activities on a module.

4.3.6   In any one day, the maximum break between classes for full time students will normally be 1 x 3 hours.

4.3.7   Where possible full time students should have at least 1 day free of teaching per week.

5   Timetabling Roles and Responsibilities

5.1   **University's Timetabling Service**

- Overall responsibility for the creation and publication of teaching timetables, based on data via student systems integration and information provided by academic units.

5.2   **Schools**

- Ensuring that appropriate local arrangements are in place and adhered to and for ensuring that the necessary data is provided in order for a teaching timetable to be created within the agreed timeframes.

5.3   **Deans' of Schools**

- Overall responsibility within their School to ensure that School processes for the creation of timetables are completed within the agreed timescales.

5.4   **Heads of Academic Departments**

- Responsibility for ensuring that programme and module timetable requirements are submitted on time as per the published schedule.
- Approve Staff teaching availability constraints
- Responsible for an overview of pre-publication timetable change requests.

5.5   **Programme and Module Leaders**

- Responsibility for ensuring that Module and Programme timetabling requirements and other relevant information are provided within the published timeframe.
- To ensure that any unavoidable changes are made in good time and communicated to students.

5.6   **Students**

- Should read and check the accuracy of their timetable as instructed by their school or academic service and advise Registry Timetabling of clashes and errors in module and teaching data within a timeframe of 1 week from their commencement of teaching.
- It is the student's responsibility to select optional modules using the relevant module enrolment process in a timely manner. Optional modules are confirmed on a first come first serve basis.
- It is the student's responsibility to notify the University of any Individual Requirements relating to disabilities, in order that they can be taken into account during the timetabling process.

- It is the students responsibility to subscribe to their own timetable ICAL feed, instructions on how to do this are provided on the Registry Timetabling website or check the on-line timetables and their University email account regularly for changes that may affect their University programme (locations, times etc).
- Abide by the University's General Regulations, T&Cs.
- Changes to choice modules and seminar groups should be communicated directly to the School office and cannot be guaranteed.

6   Room Bookings

6.1   Definitions

6 . 1 . 1   Academic timetable event

Any event that GCU students have to attend as part of teaching & learning for a validated academic course, such as lectures and seminars, or any event that will be of some benefit or convenience to GCU students if it is included on individual student timetables.

6.1.2   Ad-hoc room booking event

Any event that requires space to be reserved for temporary exclusive use, with no need for the event to appear on student, module or course timetables, or to be included in attendance monitoring or reporting on contact time and other factors that impact on the student experience. Examples include staff meetings, training sessions, internal and external conferences and interviews.

6.2   Availability of rooms

6.2.1   Subject to the prioritisation of certain events (see 3.2), time slots in teaching spaces not required for teaching may be booked for ad-hoc purposes following the publication of the timetable.

6.2.2   Room bookings in non-teaching space before the teaching timetable has been finalised can be requested/made but not normally for dates 18 months or more in the future.

6.3   Process to request a booking

6.3.1   The University Web Room Bookings system "Room Booker" should be used for all general requests for space up to 30 days in advance www.gcu.ac.uk/roombooker

6.3.2   Availability is real time and identical to the availability accessed by the Registry Timetabling team, dates not available to book in advance of the 30 days using the web system should be requested by email to Roombookings@gcu.ac.uk.

6.4 **External Events**

6.4.1 The conference and events office are responsible for external room bookings and all internal events attracting a fee and/or public attendance, and will liaise with stakeholders including Estates, room bookings, AV and any other services departments with regards to event delivery.

6.4.2 It is acknowledged that when hiring out University facilities for outside use, such hiring must not impact adversely on key focused activities, functions and operations of the University. The booking of facilities will be managed and coordinated to ensure that teaching and University core events will have first priority and venue space will only be provided for commercial use when this does not impact on the Universities core business and teaching. Enquiries should be made directly to email events@gcu.ac.uk

6.4.3 All events looking for a room hire fee waiver are subject to an event approval process and event toolkits for managing your event are available on request from events@gcu.ac.uk

6.4.4 External Speakers

The recruitment of external speakers for internal and external teaching and events must adhere to the Government PREVENT duty guidelines and the internal policy.

6.5 **Booking Requests by Students, Student Societies/Club and Faith and Believe Centre**

6.5.1 Room Booking Services cannot accept room-booking requests from individual students; such requests should be made to your lecturer. There are three spaces available for students to book directly within the Students Association for group study, available 24 hours. http://www.gcustudents.co.uk/groupstudyrooms

6.5.2 Ratified Glasgow Caledonian University Students' Association society and clubs may use the room booking service in accordance with the policy in section (student society and club room bookings).

6.5.3 Affiliated clubs, societies and groups can book rooms or stalls within GCU for their meetings and events. At least 5 working days' notice must be provided for all bookings. Bake Sales are only allowed in the Students' Association Building. If you event is a complex event involving additional services, including inviting public and opening hours please email the students association for further support and to initially find out if your event can be approved Email: mailto:societies@GCUstudents.co.uk or sports@GCUstudents.co.uk. The earlier an event is arranged, the greater likelihood of securing any additional services.

6.5.4 Students requiring Spaces for clubs and societies must complete the student event booking form http://www.gcustudents.co.uk/quick-links/volunteer-resources/book-a-gcu-room-or-stall

Any requests for use of space within 30 days will be submitted via the students association welcome desk reception team, in advance of 30 days, the Students Association can book the space on your behalf on the room booker web software.

6.5.5 It is the responsibility of the Students Association to communicate set ups, security and opening hours arrangements directly with the Estates department. Any events that have public in attendance or are chargeable lets, should be notified to the Conference and Events department by emailing Events@gcu.ac.uk

6.5.6 Students can book the Faith and Believe Centre for events by emailing faith@gcu.ac.uk.

6.6   **Additional Service Requirements, including AV**

6.6.1   The event organiser arranges related services for room bookings direct with the service provider. Where an event or activity is scheduled outside of a buildings normal operational hours, Estates Service must be notified[8] to ensure the building is open, accessible and suitable for use, 7 days' notice is required to process additional opening hours.

6.6.2   The event organiser must submit a separate request for any additional AV requirements not provided as standard within the location. Please view [insert link] for further details and guidance.

6.7   **Responsible Room Usage**

6.7.1   Only space specified in the room booking confirmation can be used and for the purpose for which it has been booked and for the specified dates and times.

6.7.2   The principle organiser must ensure that the persons permitted to attend will not exceed the stated capacity of a space as detailed in Roombooker.

6.7.3   If furniture is moved in any room it MUST be put back to its original layout after the event, furniture must not be removed from rooms or block fire escapes.

6.7.4   Noise levels must be kept to a minimum at all times and events in neighbouring rooms and offices must be considered at all times.

6.7.5   Rooms must be left free of rubbish and personal belongings and in a condition suitable for its primary use.