Edith Cowan University
POLICY

Policy Title: **Timetabling and Room Allocation**

Policy Owner: Director, Student Administration

Keywords: Timetable; Teaching Timetable; Academic Timetable.

Policy Code: PL075 (ad052)

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1. INTENT

The purpose of this policy is to articulate the University's general principles relating to academic timetabling to ensure that ECU can produce and publish the academic timetable in a timely, equitable and efficient way.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Guidelines for Academic Timetabling which provide information and operational assistance for staff involved in timetabling activities.

2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

All ECU staff and students.

3. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Activity, Teaching activity	A class attended by the student as part of a unit's teaching requirement, such as a lecture, seminar or tutorial. Each activity is assigned a unique code.
Activity Quota	A number which defines the maximum number of students able to undertake an activity at one time.
Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning)	A member of a School Executive who reports to the Dean and is responsible for the oversight of curriculum, teaching and learning within the School.
Constraints	Information provided which restrict and may influence when activities are scheduled.
Core Activity	An activity which must be taken by a student to satisfy course requirements.
Curriculum items	Courses, units and offerings as provided by School staff in accordance with the Curriculum Approval and Curriculum Planning and Development policies.

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TERM	DEFINITION
Draft Timetable	The first iteration of the timetable, based on timetable requests provided by Schools.
Dual-use specialist rooms	Rooms that are designed and/or contain specialist equipment to run specific activities but which can be used for general teaching when they are not being utilised as specialist rooms.
Online units	Units which are not taught on an approved ECU campus but are online with virtual classes.
Finalised Timetable	The final published version of the timetable.
Published Timetable	The second iteration of the timetable, created based on School feedback about the draft timetable and which is published.
General Teaching Rooms (GT or GTR)	Classrooms and computer labs owned by the University that can be used by any school for their activities.
Scheduling	The process of assigning activities rooms and times which is carried out by the Timetable Office following receipt of timetable requests and other information from Schools.
School	An academic organisational unit of the University including WAAPA but not including the Graduate Research School.
School Timetable Officer	An individual within a School responsible for providing information to the Timetable Office required to publish and maintain the ECU academic timetable.
Specialist rooms	Rooms that are designed and/or contain specialist equipment to run specific activities, e.g. Science laboratories.
Standard enrolment and re-enrolment period	Timeframes for enrolment and re-enrolment specified in accordance with Section 3 of the University Rules: Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules.
Teaching Period	The period of time within which a unit is undertaken and formally assessed and for which assessment results are confirmed by Board of Examiners.
Timetable Office	Staff within the Student Administration Centre responsible for creating, publishing and maintaining the ECU academic timetable.
Timetable requests	A request for allocation of a general teaching room to be used at a specific time for a specific teaching activity.

Timetabling and Room Allocation – PL075/ad052
Page **2** of **7**
All printed copies are uncontrolled. For the latest version of this policy always check the Legislation and Policy Directory Search.
Issue 5
February 2019

4. POLICY CONTENT

This policy governs the production and maintenance of the ECU academic timetable.

4.1 Academic timetable principles

4.1.1 The academic timetable seeks to satisfy the following objectives:

- Provide a student experience to optimise student learning and support a broad range of contemporary pedagogical practices while providing scope for the future evolution of such practices.
- Schedule classes at appropriate times and locations and, as possible, providing clash-free timetabling of core activities;
- Ensure timetable information is available to students before the opening of standard enrolment and re-enrolment periods to enable students and staff to make informed decisions regarding study options and teaching commitments and to make necessary personal arrangements.
- Utilise University space, rooms and facilities in a manner that provides appropriate facilities for the pedagogical needs of courses and supports the most effective learning and teaching practices;
- Evenly distribute activities to ensure availability of University facilities and resources;

4.1.2 The timetabling of curricular or co-curricular activities take priority in relation to the use of University facilities (including sports halls and specialised spaces). The requirements of individuals, external groups or organisations will be considered once the scheduling needs of core academic and student success programs have been accommodated.

4.1.3 Notwithstanding 4.1.2, from time to time the University may enter into Agreements with internal or external groups (for example, Edith Cowan College) which include special arrangements or obligations in relation to space allocation.

4.1.4 The timetable is produced using:

- information relating to University curriculum items (including courses, units and activities and associated offerings) which has been provided by Schools to the Timetable Office in accordance with the Curriculum Approval and Curriculum Planning and Development policies and the Guidelines for Academic Timetabling.
- historical enrolment data used to validate predictions of enrolment and activity quotas.

4.1.5 The Timetable Office will determine dates relating to timetable data collection, review and publication in accordance with the timelines set out in this policy.

4.2 Scheduling principles

4.2.1 Teaching activities are scheduled at times and in places that are:

- consistent with University policies and procedures relating to:
  - o work health and safety, and

Timetabling and Room Allocation – PL075/ad052
Page **3** of **7**
All printed copies are uncontrolled. For the latest version of this policy always check the Legislation and Policy Directory Search.
Issue 5
February 2019

      ○   space planning

- takes into account, where practicable, ECU's commitment to equity and diversity
- consistent with best pedagogic practice
- sensitive to the needs of new curriculum and curriculum renewal
- consistent with facilitating student attendance and maximising student choice
- responsive to student feedback
- consistent with utilising teaching space and resources efficiently and sustainably
- consistent with the requirements of the Edith Cowan University Enterprise Agreement (or other industrial instrument in effect for teaching staff)

4.2.2 The timetable will be produced by scheduling activities taking into account constraints provided by the Schools in accordance with 4.1, above. Other constraints may also be considered, including requirements for spanned, collaborative or video conferencing equipped rooms, the impact on other resources and facilities such as parking and availability of equipment (e.g. multimedia or audio visual equipment) and any obligations in relation to Agreements as noted in 4.1.3, above.

4.2.3 Constraints may be modified or relaxed during scheduling to facilitate provision of a timetable which is in accordance with academic timetable principles set out in 4.1; where this has occurred it will be noted for Schools on the draft timetable.

4.2.4 The University has core teaching hours within which formal teaching activities are normally scheduled. These are from 8:30 each weekday (Monday – Friday) with scheduled activities to finish by 21:30, with the exception of Friday where the latest scheduled activity will finish at 17:30.

4.2.5. First year unit activities have an additional constraint for finish times based on the quota as specified below:

Quota	Latest Finish Time (Mon-Thurs)	Latest Finish Time (Friday)
Up to 160 Students	18:30	17:30
161 Students or more	20:30	17:30

4.2.6 All activities in general teaching spaces at all campuses will commence on the half hour.

4.2.7 Teaching activities may be scheduled on the weekends on request.

4.2.8 Allocation of specialist and dual-specialist rooms will be managed by the Timetable Office in accordance with the principles in 4.1, above and as set out in the Guidelines for Academic Timetabling.

4.2.9 Timetabling online units does not form part of the core timetable activity described in this policy. Timetabling of online units may be carried out in accordance with the information set out in the Guidelines for Academic Timetabling.

4.3 Data collection for production of the academic timetable

4.3.1 Data related to the academic timetable will be collected during defined periods which are determined by the Timetable Office, taking into account the University's academic planning and teaching cycles.

4.3.2 Each School and Service Centre must nominate a primary point of contact to act as a Timetable Officer who will, under delegated authority of the Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) be responsible for providing information necessary to create and publish the ECU academic timetable.

4.3.3 The dates for the timetable data collection period will be advertised by the Timetable Office at least four (4) weeks before the period opens.

4.3.4 During the collection period, requests may be made for specialist rooms (for example, science labs or laboratory space).

4.3.5 Requests for specific general teaching spaces will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, such as for reasons of accessibility, and must be accompanied by appropriate supporting detail from the Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning).

4.3.6 To facilitate consideration of key non-teaching activities (for example, staff meetings) during scheduling, Schools may provide information regarding these activities as a supplement to formal timetable requests during the data collection period.

4.3.7 Activity quotas will normally be assigned based on previous years' actual enrolment in that activity, as at census date. Activity quotas may be increased by no more than 20% from the previous years' actual enrolments. Activity quotas may also be decreased upon request.

4.3.8 Requests to increase quota more than 20% must be accompanied by appropriate supporting detail, as set out in the Guidelines for Academic Timetabling and are subject to approval by the Director, Student Administration or nominee.

4.4 Publication of the academic timetable

4.4.1 A first draft timetable will be available for review by Schools no less than six (6) weeks before the publication of the final timetable.

4.4.2 The final date for review of the draft timetable will be determined by the Timetable Office and will be no less than three (3) weeks before the publication of the final timetable.

4.4.3 The published timetable will be made available for review by Schools three (3) weeks after the final date for review of the first draft timetable.

4.4.4 The timetable will be finalised at least two (2) weeks prior to the start of the standard re-enrolment period.

4.5 Review and amendment of the academic timetable

4.5.1 The Timetable Office will communicate the dates relating to timetable review and amendment to relevant University staff.

4.5.2 Changes may be made to the draft academic timetable by authorised School staff within the approved time frame as published by the Timetabling Office.

4.5.3 Changes to the published timetable before finalisation may be accepted upon provision of compelling reasons, as documented in the Guidelines for Academic Timetabling.

Timetabling and Room Allocation – PL075/ad052
Page **5** of **7**
All printed copies are uncontrolled. For the latest version of this policy always check the Legislation and Policy Directory Search.
Issue 5
February 2019

4.5.4 Changes to the finalised timetable will not normally be accepted. Requests for change in exceptional circumstances, as documented in the Guidelines for Academic Timetabling must be endorsed by the relevant Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) and made in writing to the Timetable Office.

4.5.5 If a change is made to the published or finalised timetable, the School must notify affected staff and students of any approved change and initiate and coordinate any administrative action which may be required to adjust student enrolments.

4.5.6 The Timetable Office may amend room bookings during semester where changes to activities or enrolment numbers will release a teaching space for other use.

4.6 Approvals in relation to the academic timetabling decisions

4.6.1 Final authority for decisions in relation to academic timetabling rests with the Director, Student Administration.

4.6.2 Operational decision making in relation to timetabling requests is the responsibility of the Timetable Office, and will be made based on Scheduling Principles outlined above and in support of production of an academic timetable which meets the objectives in 4.1.1, above.

4.6.3 Requests for amendments to the timetable at any point must be accompanied by a justification, as documented in Guidelines for Academic Timetabling and are subject to approval.

4.6.4 In cases where Timetabling decisions require further discussion or negotiation, procedures as outlined in the Guidelines for Academic Timetabling will apply.

4.7 Use of teaching spaces

4.7.1 In general, use of teaching spaces, including configuration of desks and chairs, maintenance and equipment are the responsibility of the Facilities and Services Centre and the relevant policies shall apply.

4.7.2 Notwithstanding 4.7.1 above, staff using teaching spaces must comply with any additional provisions relating to use of rooms as set out in the Guidelines for Academic Timetabling.

4.7.3 Staff and students using rooms for scheduled teaching activities must vacate rooms at least 15 minutes prior to the end of classes' scheduled times.

5. ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In relation to this policy:

The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for the content of this policy and its operation; and

Timetabling and Room Allocation – PL075/ad052
All printed copies are uncontrolled. For the latest version of this policy always check the Legislation and Policy Directory Search.
Page **6** of **7**
Issue 5
February 2019

The Director, Student Administration is responsible for the proper application of the requirements set down in this policy.

All members of the University community are expected to comply with University Policy.

6.   RELATED DOCUMENTS:

6.1   The policy is supported by the following Guidelines:

- Guidelines for Academic Timetabling.

6.2   Other documents which are relevant to the operation of this policy are as follows:

- Miscellaneous Room Bookings policy
- Facilities Hire policy
- Curriculum Approval policy
- Curriculum Planning and Development policy
- University Rules: Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress

7.   CONTACT INFORMATION

For queries relating to this document please contact:

Policy Owner	Director, Student Administration
All Enquiries Contact:	Timetable Coordinator
Telephone:	(61 8) 6304 3913
Email address:	timetable@ecu.edu.au

8.   APPROVAL HISTORY

Policy Approved by:	Vice-Chancellor
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Timetabling and Room Allocation – PL075/ad052
Page **7** of **7**
All printed copies are uncontrolled. For the latest version of this policy always check the Legislation and Policy Directory Search.
Issue 5
February 2019