UWS Timetabling and Room Booking Policy

Core Timetabling Policies

Further details on some terms (indicated by a number at the end of the text) can be found at the end of the policy in the Timetabling and Room Booking Policy guidelines at the end of the policy. The guideline also includes a Service Level Agreement for the timetabling process.

- During the Academic Year the core-teaching day is from 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (see http://www.swan.ac.uk/uws/diary/terms.htm for term dates), except for Wednesday afternoons, which will generally be kept free from teaching. **All centrally bookable rooms will be available first and foremost for teaching use within these dates and times, and only in exceptional circumstances will teaching bookings not have priority over all other events: events deemed to take precedence over teaching bookings must be approved by the Vice Chancellor’s Office.**

- All bookings in the centrally bookable rooms - teaching and non-teaching, internal and external - will be recorded on the University’s computerized timetabling programme (see below for booking type definitions) held within the Facilities Section, Estates Services (1).

- All teaching and teaching related bookings must be addressed to the Timetabling Officer (2). The Timetabling Officer has precedence over all the centrally bookable rooms during the academic year and within the hours of the core-teaching day.

- All non-teaching and external bookings must be addressed to UWS Conference Services (3).

- The Timetabling Officer will produce yearly a Diary of Annual Events that clearly outlines for Departmental Timetable Coordinators the relevant dates for the submission, collection, and reporting of Timetable information for the forthcoming academic year.

- Departmental Timetable Coordinators must ensure that the information distributed to staff and students matches that on the latest published version of the timetable. The Timetabling Officer will not accept responsibility for timetable problems created by staff and students being misinformed (4).

- All Academic and administrative staff have an individual responsibility to:
  
  (i) follow the annual timetabling process and submit timetabling requests and other timetable information in the format and at the times and dates requested by the Timetabling Officer (5).
  
  (ii) check thoroughly the timetable confirmations sent out by the Timetabling Officer. Inaccuracies must be reported immediately to the Timetabling Officer.
  
  (iii) adhere to the latest version of the published timetable.
  
  (iv) report immediately to the Timetabling Officer when rooms they have booked are no longer needed. Persistent non-use of space will be reported to the Teaching and Learning Committee.

- Teaching rooms will be allocated on a best-fit basis.

- Regular teaching bookings - i.e., events that take place on the same day and at the same time each week for full semesters – will take priority over irregular or one-off events. Additionally, compulsory modules (within a set program of study) will be given a higher priority than an elective module. In the event that
these priorities, including the principle of best fit, cannot help distinguish between competing room requests, the Timetabling Officer will report the problem to all involved parties, who will then negotiate an amicable solution. The Timetabling Officer will supply information on free slots or alternative rooms as requested, but will not act as arbitrator in room booking disputes.

- During scheduled examination dates Examinations will have priority usage in the centrally bookable rooms.
- Staff must not use rooms they perceive to be free of teaching without first requesting use of the room from the Timetabling Officer. Rooms may be empty for a number of reasons, and may well be timetabled for use in future weeks. Illicit occupation of rooms is the main contributor to room clashes.
- Bookings made by telephone must be supported in writing (by email or fax) by the person requesting the room. The Timetabling Officer will cancel any provisionally held booking for which written confirmation has not been received at least 14 days before the event takes place.
- The Timetabling Officer will provide written confirmation of all bookings: staff and students must consider that bookings are not confirmed until written confirmation is received.
- The Timetabling Officer cannot guarantee that a preferred room will be available for chosen timeslots. Please ensure that you have received written confirmation of your booking before confirming venues with attendees.
- Annual events must be booked and confirmed in writing every year: the Timetabling Officer will not carry over bookings from one year to the next.
- The Timetabling and Room Booking Programme will not allow more than one class to be scheduled in a room at any one time – i.e., the programme will not allow room booking clashes (6).
- The Timetabling Officer will only accept bookings from official student societies – i.e., those societies affiliated to Swansea University Student Union -, and these requests must be received in writing at least seven days before the event takes place.
- It is not permitted to consume food and/or drink in lecture rooms. Smoking is prohibited internally in college buildings.
- Please refer to http://www.swan.ac.uk/secretariat/docs/rtf/freedomspeech.rtf for the University’s Code of Practice to Ensure Freedom of Speech.
- Considering the necessary University approval has been sought, the Space Planning Manager and the Timetabling Officer reserve the right to add, remove, and amend policy terms as necessary.

**Timetabling Priorities and Processes**

- Every effort will be made to match exactly both preferred timetable slots, and preferred teaching rooms. However, the Timetabling Officer cannot guarantee that a course can be taught at, or that a room is available for, preferred timeslots.
- All Schools/Departments, and the University community in general have equal and shared access to centrally timetabled teaching space. The only priorities on centrally timetabled teaching spaces are those outlined in the core policies above.
- Every effort will be made to 'zone' bookings – i.e., to place requests in rooms close to the lecturer’s departmental base. Staff must be aware, however, that the weight of requests received for certain time slots may make this
impossible and, thus, no distinction will be made between the University’s various teaching buildings.

- Provided reasonable notice is given, the Timetabling Officer reserves the right to change the allocated room for any and all room bookings.
- Consistent with University policy on equal opportunity and diversity, and various anti-discrimination laws, the Timetabling Officer will make every reasonable effort to accommodate the family responsibilities, religious beliefs, and disabilities/medical conditions of all staff and students. Events involving staff or students with a disability will be appropriately roomed.
- Most of the University’s teaching rooms have permanent AV and/or data facilities, which typically includes: Overhead Projector, 35mm Slide Projector, LCD projection from both video and data sources. In conjunction with a laptop, Internet access is possible. Please see http://www.swan.ac.uk/media/audiovis.htm for additional AV information and to arrange any specialized AV facilities.
- Along with undertaking random spot check on teaching room occupancy, in order to monitor the usage of rooms, the Timetabling Officer will carry out a twice-yearly utilization survey of centrally bookable rooms and other teaching areas. The results of these surveys will be submitted to SMT. Heads of Schools/Departmental Heads will be advised when rooms booked by their department are found to be unoccupied. Persistent and/or excessive non-use will be reported to the Teaching and Learning Committee (7).

**Timetable Amendments**

Following the publication of the Final Timetable, timetable amendments will only be considered under the following conditions:

- The number of students enrolled on a course/module exceeds the capacity of the allocated teaching room. Staff must be aware that the availability of an alternative room at the chosen timeslot is not guaranteed. Before approaching the Timetabling Officer staff must make every effort to trade for a more suitable room within their department/school’s other room allocations.
- The allocated room is unsuitable for students and staff with disability.
- The allocated room does not provide the requested audio/visual facilities.

**Staff must contact the Timetabling Officer as soon as possible in the event of:**

- Allocated room not large enough – see guidelines 8 and 9 below.
- Time slot no longer required.
- Staff Clash.
- Student Clash (between compulsory courses students are expected to take).
- Allocated room too large.
- Allocated room unsuitable for purpose.

**Health & Safety**

- Regular checks will be conducted on centrally managed space with regards to health & safety issues.
- Discrepancies will be reported to the relevant /section department to action.
Nevertheless, the Health and Safety of students in teaching rooms is the responsibility of the lecturer. Staff should be vigilant of potential risks, and any problems real or potential must be reported immediately to the Timetabling Officer.
Timetable and Room Booking Guidelines and Processes

1. All room bookings will now be held on the Timetabling and Room Booking Programme. Conference staff must ensure that room availability is checked with the Timetabling Officer before confirming bookings with external clients. Conference staff must also ensure that the event is entered onto the Timetabling and Room Booking Programme.

2. A teaching/teaching related booking is any booking that relates to teaching programmes offered by the University of Wales Swansea; for example, UWS timetabled teaching, University/School/Departmental seminars and other events that allow student attendance (unless an attendance fee is charged), University/School/Departmental meetings, Examination and Registry events, Swansea University Student Union events. Similarly, internal bookings may be defined as those made by staff and students of the University community – i.e., those who would generally have a UWS email address. Such events generally fall under the ‘teaching and teaching related’ heading and would be addressed to the Timetabling Officer.

3. External bookings are those originating from without the college community or at which delegates/attendees are charged a fee for attendance and must be submitted to the UWS Conference Office. Until academic timetables have been finalized, Conference Services must not book non-teaching and external events into centrally bookable rooms (see http://www.swan.ac.uk/uws/diary/terms.htm for term dates). It is recommended that 'Out of hours' use – i.e., events taking place outside recognized teaching hours - should be concentrated on a limited range of buildings to reduce the cost of evening opening, utilities, staff etc.

4. Departmental Timetable Coordinators may reorganize internally timetabled events that they have booked within the centrally bookable rooms provided that these internal swaps are reported to the Timetabling Officer as soon as possible. Failure to report these internal exchanges will mean that the information displayed on the Timetabling Web Browser will become obsolete, proving extremely confusing and misleading to staff and students who refer to the browser for timetable information.

5. Submitting Timetable Requests:

- Departmental Timetable Coordinators must adhere to annual deadlines and procedures determined in advance by the Timetabling Officer for the submission and exchange of timetable information (see Diary of Annual Events/Timetabling Procedures and Service Level Agreement below). Coordinators will be advised in good time of revisions to these deadlines and procedures.

- During the annual timetable construction period, only Departmental Timetable Coordinators must submit departmental timetable requests; submission by manifold staff members may lead to confusion and repetition of requests.

- In the event of a Departmental Timetable Coordinator being absent during the annual timetable construction period, the Timetabling Officer must be provided with the details of a substitute contact.

- Departmental Timetable Coordinators must ensure that all new courses have the necessary University approval before they are submitted to the Timetabling Officer. Courses submitted without University approval will be returned without accommodation.
• Departmental Timetable Coordinators are encouraged to spread their teaching load across the full teaching week to limit the strain on the centrally bookable rooms during ‘historically’ busy periods.

• Departmental Timetable Coordinators are advised to make as accurate a forecast as possible when submitting their timetable requests. Vacant slots in pooled rooms are not limitless and overbidding and exaggerated estimation of class sizes is likely to result in all departments/schools being adversely affected. Under no circumstances should Departmental Timetable Coordinators request rooms as ‘cover’ – i.e., for the just in case scenario. Similarly, rooms must not be block-booked for more hours than is actually used.

• ‘One Hour’ classes are 50 minutes long – i.e., teaching will begin on the hour and end at 10 minutes to the hour to assist the safe flow of staff and students between rooms. The Timetable Officer will not schedule classes to start or finish at irregular times – i.e., requests to start and/or finish courses on the half hour will be returned without accommodation.

• Classes of five and fewer students will make use of School/Departmental teaching space. Only in extreme cases will classes of five and fewer students be assigned a centrally bookable room.

• The largest centrally timetabled lecture theatre at UWS - the Grove Lecture Theatre, Grove Building – has a maximum capacity of 319. When more than 319 students are enrolled on an individual module/course, teaching staff must make their own teaching arrangements to ensure that the module is delivered adequately.

6. In the event you find a room you are sure you have booked is occupied please check the timetable displayed outside the door for confirmation of your booking. If your event is not shown on the timetable please contact the Timetabling Officer immediately. If your event is shown please ask the occupants to leave and advise them to contact the Timetabling Officer.

7. The utilization surveys will also help to identify unoccupied rooms so that the Timetabling Officer can meet unfulfilled teaching requests; to accumulate statistics relating to the occupation of rooms; and, to meet requests for information on room utilization from relevant funding bodies.

8. Teaching staff must be aware that the Health and Safety of students in teaching rooms is their responsibility. Health and safety legislation requires the University to ensure that the stated capacity of a room is not exceeded. In rooms with ‘fixed’ seating, additional seating must not be used under any circumstances. Aisles, stairways, etc., must be kept clear at all times. Rooms with loose furniture may be adjusted to suit teaching requirements. However, a room’s maximum stated capacity must not be exceeded, and it is the responsibility of academic staff to ensure that these capacities are not exceeded.

9. If an allocated room does not contain furniture adequate to meet the room’s capacity staff must contact the timetabling officer immediately. Under no circumstances must staff/students remove furniture from adjacent rooms.

Service Level Agreement

It is the responsibility of Departmental Timetabling Coordinators to:
• Adhere to annual deadlines determined in advance by the Timetabling Officer in the Diary of Annual Events for the submission and exchange of timetable information.
• Submit timetable information in the format requested by the Timetabling Officer
• Amend/correct any timetable information deemed illegible, inaccurate, or incomplete and returned by the Timetabling Officer.
• Ensure all new courses have the relevant University approval before they are submitted to the Timetabling Officer.
• Ensure that the information distributed to staff and students matches that on the latest published version of the timetable.
• Inform the Timetabling Officer immediately of any changes/amendments that affect previously submitted timetable information – for example, a change in expected number of enrolled students.
• Inform the Timetabling Officer immediately of any course cancellations, or when centrally timetabled rooms are not longer needed.

In response to the above criteria being met the Timetabling Officer will:

• Produce annually a University Timetable for all centrally timetabled space.
• Allocate from rooms available within the central pool the room best matching the requested criteria.
• Provide advice when requested on room capacities, layouts and suitability.
• Produce in good time an initial draft timetable for academic/administrative staff to examine.
• Accept and act upon queries generated by said draft timetable.
• Produce in good time a revised provisional timetable for academic/administrative staff to examine.
• Accept and act upon queries generated by said provisional timetable.
• Produce and distribute a final timetable at least two weeks before the beginning of each academic year.

The Timetabling Officer is not responsible for individual School/Department deadlines being missed when:

• Timetabling coordinators fail to submit timetable information by previously set deadlines.
• Timetabling coordinators fail to submit timetable information in a legible format.
• Timetabling coordinators fail to notify the Timetabling Officer of changes to courses/modules that affect the timetable: for example if student numbers have increased dramatically and extra rooms are required or the teaching pattern has altered.