

**DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY
TIMETABLING AND ROOM BOOKING POLICY
FOR CENTRALLY TIMETABLED SPACE**

(An Operational Guide)

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1 Introduction

1.1 The University is committed to providing high quality timetabling and room booking arrangements, which will enhance the service and experience for the entire University community. The University currently has over 35 buildings encompassing some 4,000 rooms and a useable floor area of over 150,000 sq. metres. This document primarily refers to centrally timetabled rooms and aims to promote the optimum utilisation of centrally timetabled rooms both during core business hours and outside of these hours. The document will be reviewed regularly and further developed to support the changing needs of the University

2 Overview

- 2.1 This document outlines the principles, procedures, roles and responsibilities relating to the teaching timetable and room booking facilities in the University. The document further aims to ensure that i) the University's space is used to maximum effect for both teaching and income generating purposes ii) the University community is informed of timetabling and room booking practices and principles and iii) an excellent quality of service is provided to all users
- 2.2 The document will be reviewed on an annual basis and appropriate amendments will be made where necessary
- 2.3 Co-ordination for the teaching timetable and management of room bookings resides with the Timetabling and Room Booking service in Registry
- 2.4 The teaching timetable and room bookings are administered on the timetabling system, Syllabus Plus
- 2.5 This document will be maintained on the DCU website

3 Underlying Principles

- 3.1 There is a recognition that multiple demands on space occurs within the University and therefore a level of co-operation and compromise must exist
- 3.2 The most cost-efficient use of centrally timetabled space should be promoted and maintained
- 3.3 All classrooms/seminar rooms and meeting rooms should be in the timetabling system
- 3.4 Unnecessary block booking of classrooms is not permitted
- 3.5 Any rooms designated as meeting rooms cannot be block booked
- 3.6 Booked space must be used for the stated purpose
- 3.7 Timetabled space must be used to the maximum efficiency
- 3.8 Timetabled/booked space must match as closely as possible, the size of the user group

- 3.9 Timetabling and room bookings must be carried out in such a way as to ensure that buildings are fully utilised before activities are allocated into additional buildings
- 3.10 Room bookings which are no longer required must be notified to the Timetabling and Room Booking service as soon as possible, in order that the facility is freed up for other users

4 Optimisation of Use

- 4.1 The University is committed to using all space effectively and efficiently, for both teaching and non-teaching activities

5 Categorisation of Space

- 5.1 **Centrally Timetabled Space** – includes space such as lecture rooms, seminar rooms, meeting rooms and function rooms. These rooms can be booked through the Timetabling and Room Booking service in Registry once the teaching timetable is finalised

6 Ownership of Teaching Space/Meeting Rooms

- 6.1 It is taken as a premise that no Faculty, School or individual person has absolute control over any building, room or area within the University. Responsibility for allocation of space remains with the University through advice from the University's Space Planning & Management Group (see section 8) to the President
- 6.2 Initial queries from schools, unit and faculties to change the use of centrally timetabled space should, in the first instance, be directed to the University's Lecture Timetable Co-Ordinator in Registry
- 6.3 Registry will consult with the Estates Office on all of these requests. Signed approval by the Registry/Registrar and the Estates Office will be required before the room is removed from the central timetable. If a decision cannot be reached between the Registry/Registrar, Estates Office and the school/faculty/unit requesting a change to a timetabled room, this request will then be referred to the University's Space Planning & Management Group (see section 7 below)
- 6.4 A further document on the optimum utilisation of all meeting rooms will be drafted in consultation with the University's Space Planning & Management Group

7 Roles and Responsibilities

The following are the key roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in ensuring that the timetabling and room booking service operates as effectively and efficiently as possible:

7.1 Space Planning & Management Group

- The University's Space Planning & Management Group is a sub-committee of Executive, established to deal with forward planning

- and operational issues concerning space management
- The terms of reference for the University's Space Planning & Management Group can be found in Section 5 of the Space Management Policy Guidelines for DCU
<http://www.dcu.ie/spamg/policy.shtml>
- Requests for the allocation of space and the re-designation of type or function of existing space will be subject to the recommendation of the University's Space Planning & Management Group and approval by Executive
- Additional information regarding the ownership of teaching space and meeting rooms in the University can be found in the Space Management Policy Guidelines for DCU
<http://www.dcu.ie/spamg/policy.shtml>

7.2 Timetabling and Room Booking Service (Registry)

- Co-ordinating the teaching timetable
- Managing the room bookings service
- Providing support to faculty timetablers and all University users in relation to timetabling and room bookings
- Maintaining up to date information and data regarding locations and suitability on the University timetabling system (Syllabus Plus)
- Drafting policies and procedures in relation to timetabling and room bookings
- Providing statistical reports on room usage and any other information which supports University decision making
- Providing an annual report to the Finance Office for HEA reporting

7.3 Faculty Timetablers

- Responsible for collating all timetabling information for the relevant schools
- Responsible for entering the timetabling information on Syllabus Plus
- Resolving issues in relation to the teaching timetable, in line with the timetabling policies in section 9 below
- Drafting and finalising the teaching timetable before publication

7.4 The Estates Office

- Responsible for ensuring all classrooms and meeting rooms in use are opened and locked each day at the appropriate times
- Ensuring that all teaching rooms are maintained and refurbished as required
- Ensuring that all teaching rooms are cleaned
- Providing sufficient heating and lighting in rooms
- Advising the Timetabling and Room Booking service of any works which are expected to be carried out, as early as possible
- Setting up all teaching rooms at the start of each semester and on any other occasions as requested by users

7.5 Information Systems & Services

- Responsible for maintaining audio visual and teaching equipment in rooms
- Providing support to the users of audio visual equipment in rooms
- Providing support to the users of the teaching timetable software
- Maintaining the web information on timetabling and room bookings as requested
- Updating information on audio visual facilities available in each room
- Information on Audio Visual Facilities available in each location can be found at <http://www.dcu.ie/timetables/reference.shtml>

7.6 Academic Staff

- Responsible for providing information to faculty timetablers on the teaching allocation of the school
- Responsible for providing information to faculty timetablers on specific timetabling requirements
- Advising faculty timetablers of any timetabling problems which may occur
- Reporting any issue with the AV facilities to the ISS Helpdesk

7.7 Students

- Responsible for checking their individual timetable when published on the web
- Advising the Disability Service of special arrangements that may be required
- Checking their timetable with regard to timetabling/room changes or cancellations

8 Teaching Week Patterns

8.1 The core teaching week pattern is incorporated into two twelve-week semesters. Syllabus Plus recognises these teaching weeks as:

Weeks 1 – 12 (semester one)

Weeks 20 – 31 (semester two)

8.2 It is recognised that some teaching may not fit within this pattern and every effort is made to ensure that any variations to the core teaching patterns are accommodated in the best possible way

9 Key Timetabling Dates, Principles and Process

- 9.1 **April** - The previous academic year's file is rolled over in Syllabus Plus in mid April each year and activities are made 'automatic' (includes lectures, seminars and tutorials but not laboratories)
- 9.2 **July** – By mid July, faculty timetablers create 'manual' activities which must remain. Information on type of location, size etc. is amended, where necessary. The timetable co-ordinator un-schedules automatic activities. The draft scheduling of the timetable commences by relevant faculty office staff
- 9.3 **August** – The requirements of each module are placed in the timetabling system. An automatic schedule of activities takes place centrally in mid-August by the timetable co-ordinator. The only activities which should be scheduled in advance of this, are activities outside the norm (i.e. over one hour in duration and modules which are offered across multiple programmes)
- 9.4 **September** – In mid September, the timetable (subject to change) is finalised and displayed on the web
- 9.5 A full-time undergraduate timetable runs a) 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday b) 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. Friday c) 9.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. Wednesday d) undergraduates will not normally have lectures outside of these times
- 9.6 No activities should be scheduled for first year undergraduate students from 2.00pm onwards on a Wednesday afternoon. This should also apply to all other undergraduate years, where feasible. Wednesday afternoons are to be free of academic activities to encourage participation in DCU Clubs and Societies' activities. (This matter will be considered again by relevant university committees in the autumn of 2010.)
- 9.7 If students are in on a Friday afternoon, attempts are made to give them a late Monday start
- 9.8 Part-time programmes may be timetabled between 8.00 a.m. and 10.00 p.m. Monday to Friday and up to 6 p.m. Saturday
- 9.9 Normally lectures will not be timetabled for Sunday
- 9.10 Activities should be spread throughout the week in order to make effective use of the rooms and other resources
- 9.11 When drafting the timetable it is important to provide a one hour break for lunch between 12 noon and 3.00 p.m. Service in the restaurant will be arranged to ensure that full lunch is served up to 2.15 p.m. Overall there should be an attempt to schedule some activities at 1.00 p.m. to prevent pressure on the catering facilities
- 9.12 Lectures are timetabled to start on the hour and are normally one hour in duration. It is recognised that there may be some exceptions to the duration of lectures. Lectures should end 10 minutes before the end of the time block
- 9.13 Where possible student teaching and activities will be scheduled into the building primarily associated with the programme of study

- 9.14 Where all activities are not scheduled in the same building, timetabling should take into account the travel time between buildings
- 9.15 Optimisation should reflect a pattern that encourages maximum engagement by students, very large gaps should be avoided
- 9.16 Every effort will be made to ensure students have a clash free timetable. Where a potential clash may exist schools are required to liaise to avoid the clash
- 9.17 The Disability and Learning Support Service will liaise with the relevant Faculty Office in relation to new students with accessibility requirements
- 9.18 Classes involving students who are wheelchair users should, where possible, be timetabled in ground floor classrooms
- 9.19 Activities should be allocated into the following buildings in the order below. This is particularly important after 6.00 pm Monday to Friday and at weekends:

DCUBS
Henry Grattan
School of Nursing
Postgraduate VB
Science Block
Larkin Lecture Theatre

10 Allocation of Teaching Rooms

- 10.1 In general, all teaching programmes approved by the University will have priority use of teaching facilities during term times
- 10.2 It is recognised that University events such as Open Days, Graduation or one-off events etc, will require temporary use of teaching rooms during term times and these events will be suitably accommodated
- 10.3 Rooms required for examinations will have priority room bookings at appropriate times of the year
- 10.4 It is recognised that outside of term times, e.g. May – September the allocation of teaching rooms will service the events which can maximise conference bookings and other events which generate revenue or are considered other University business

11 Accessing Timetabling Information

- 11.1 The timetable can be accessed by both staff and students at <http://www.dcu.ie/timetables/search.shtml>
- 11.2 The timetable can be searched by i) Class Timetable ii) Staff Timetable and iii) Location

12 Requests for Changes to the Teaching Timetable

- 12.1 Requests for changes to the teaching timetable should be kept to a minimum

- 12.2 Any requests for changes to the teaching timetable should be made to the relevant faculty timetabler

13 Timetable Publication Times

- 13.1 The timetable (subject to amendment) is published on the DCU website each year in early September at <http://www.dcu.ie/timetables/index.shtml>

14 Ad Hoc/Casual Room Bookings (Internal Users)

- 14.1 Internal ad hoc/casual room bookings should be made by email or telephone, at least 24 hours in advance, to the Timetabling and Room Booking service in Registry. The availability of rooms for internal requests can be checked before a request is submitted at [*http://www.dcu.ie/timetables/search.shtml*](http://www.dcu.ie/timetables/search.shtml)
- 14.2 Internal requesters should not assume that the room is booked until room booking confirmation has been received from the Timetabling and Room Booking service
- 14.3 Ad hoc/casual room bookings for teaching classrooms for the following academic year cannot be confirmed until the University's teaching timetable is complete
- 14.4 Events which require room hire and catering facilities should be booked through the Conference Office directly <http://www.dcu.ie/conference/>
- 14.5 Where an event is booked through the Timetabling and Room Booking service rather than the Conference Office, an Event Form will be completed and forwarded to the relevant University units to notify of specific requirements e.g. Estates Office, Health and Safety Office etc.

15 Student Bookings

- 15.1 Room requests from Student Clubs and Societies should be made to the Timetabling and Room Booking service in Registry, only when the Hub facilities are fully booked and at least 24 hours in advance, by completing the room request form <http://www.dcu.ie/registry/booking.shtml>
- 15.2 Student room booking requests for teaching classrooms for the following academic year cannot be confirmed until the University's teaching timetable is complete
- 15.3 The Student Club/Society is responsible for ensuring that persons attending their meeting/function are made aware of the procedure to be followed in the event of an emergency

16 External Users

- 16.1 External room booking requests can be made by email to bookings@dcu.ie or by telephone to the Timetabling and Room

Booking service in Registry. Requests should be made at least 24 hours in advance

- 16.2 External requesters should not assume that the room is booked until room booking confirmation has been received from the Timetabling and Room Booking service
- 16.3 Ad hoc/casual external room bookings for teaching classrooms for the following academic year cannot be confirmed until the University's teaching timetable is complete
- 16.4 Events which require room hire and catering facilities should be booked through the Conference Office directly
<http://www.dcu.ie/conference>
- 16.5 Where an event is booked through the Timetabling and Room Booking Service rather than the Conference Office, an Event Form will be forwarded to the relevant University units to advise of specific requirements e.g. Estates Office, Health and Safety Office etc.
- 16.6 External users are responsible for ensuring that persons attending their meeting/function are made aware of the procedure to be followed in the event of an emergency

17 Room Hire Charge

- 17.1 All ad-hoc room bookings for centrally timetabled space for core University business are free of charge
- 17.2 Room hire charges apply to external events organised by staff and students and external customers
- 17.3 Room hire charges may be found in the document 'Room Hire Charges' This document is available from the Timetabling and Room Booking service in Registry
- 17.4 Room hire charges will be reviewed by the University on a regular basis

18 Evening/Weekend Booking Requests

- 18.1 Building restrictions will apply (please refer to section 9.20 of this document) and evening/weekend booking requests will be considered on an individual basis

19 Issue and Conflict Resolution

- 19.1 It is recognised that conflicts arise over room bookings from time to time
- 19.2 Initially, users may check the relevant room booking information in advance at <http://www.dcu.ie/timetables/search.shtml>
- 19.3 Where a conflict arises in relation to a particular booking, the query should be referred as soon as possible to staff in the Timetabling and Room Booking service in Registry for ad hoc/casual bookings, or to the faculty timetablers for teaching activities
- 19.4 Where a conflict arises in relation to a particular evening/weekend booking, the query should be referred to Security at 700 8990

20 User Groups

- 20.1 The Timetabling Group is comprised of the timetable co-ordinator, the room booking co-ordinator, faculty timetablers and support staff from ISS
- 20.2 The group meets four times a year and is responsible for setting timetabling plans and objectives, in addition to resolving timetabling issues

21 Conference Events

- 21.1 All services relating to Conferences should be directed to the Conference Office at <http://www.dcu.ie/conference>

22 Data Protection

- 22.1 Timetabling and room bookings are conducted with consideration of the University's responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation. The University's Data Protection Policy can be found at [:http://www.dcu.ie/ICTsecurity/index.shtml](http://www.dcu.ie/ICTsecurity/index.shtml)

24th August 2010