



Edinburgh Napier University Timetable Policy 2024/25

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy sets out the guiding principles and parameters which inform the University's planning, prioritisation and management of timetabled space. It seeks to embed core principles which support the delivery of an excellent, personalised student experience and enable a consistent approach to timetabling.
- 1.2. The purpose of the timetable is to enable the planning of teaching events and indicates when students are expected to attend. The policy therefore covers the timetabling of the University's on-campus undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and learning provision. It also indicates the times available for students to undertake independent study.

2. Guiding Principles

- 2.1. The timetable will be designed based on the following principles:
 - a) To provide timely and accurate timetabling and room booking information to students and staff.
 - b) To prioritise the teaching, learning & assessment activities of students.
 - c) To facilitate a programme-based approach that stresses the holistic coherence of the student learning experience.
 - d) To ensure that modules remain the core building block within the timetable.
 - e) To meet the pedagogic imperatives as identified by the academic staff.
 - f) To rationalise and make efficient use of space and resources.
 - g) To deliver equality of access to teaching facilities.
 - h) To ensure the timetable is:
 - always up to date and accessible to all
 - as accurate as possible throughout the year
 - produced on a trimester basis
 - underpinned by accurate data
 - i) To recognise the need for all programmes to have suitable space / facilities.
 - j) To assume teaching will start promptly on the hour and finish 10 minutes to the hour to allow 'circulation time'.
 - k) To free up Wednesday afternoon after 13.00, where possible, to encourage students to participate in student-led activities.
 - l) To optimise space utilisation whilst aligned to other core principles.
 - m) To make available all non-specialist teaching space for general use outside teaching activities.
 - n) To ensure the guiding principles are adhered to by all staff and operated consistently across Schools and campuses.

- 2.2. The timetable will be constructed on the basis of accurate and up-to-date data. While some similarity from year to year is desirable, neither time slots, nor the rooms allocated for teaching activities are automatically rolled forward from one year to the next.
- 2.3 A range of factors will be taken into account when developing the timetable to meet the needs of students and staff. These will include:
- a) Specialist resource - Where teaching activities have set requirements
 - b) Learning & teaching approaches - Where a specific teaching space is requested.
 - c) Sequencing - When the preferences is for tutorials to follow lectures
 - d) Breaks - A break time of one hour will be scheduled between 12:00-14:00
 - e) Distribution of lectures – Avoiding an undesirable distribution of lectures
- 2.4 The university is committed to producing coherent (block) timetables that help students to balance the competing priorities in their lives. To assist with this full time on-campus students in Edinburgh should - wherever possible - have a timetable that meets the following criteria:
- a) Required on campus for three days or less per week.
 - b) Have no less than three hours of activity on the days they are on campus.
 - c) Have no longer than a three-hour break between activities the same day, e.g. a teaching event on a Monday at 9:00-10:00 with no further event scheduled until Monday 16:00-17:00.
 - d) Have no more than 4 hours of consecutive classes/teaching.

These criteria may not be possible for all programmes when initially undertaken so level 7 activity will be prioritised. The criteria will be considered as future portfolio development takes place, mindful that complexity in programme design may adversely impact coherence of timetabling.

- 2.5 It is recognised that not all students registered on a module will be able to attend scheduled events. The University will therefore apply 'attendance factors' during the timetabling process that will assist with ensuring optimisation of the use of space. The factors applied will be discussed and agreed ahead of scheduling each academic year at SLT.

3. Timetable Prioritisation

- 3.1 The following are guidelines for the prioritisation of teaching and learning activities:
- a) Teaching activities will normally take precedence in the teaching weeks of each Trimester.
 - b) Centrally timetabled Examinations will take precedence during the examination weeks of each Trimester.
 - c) Larger classes will have precedence over smaller classes as part of the scheduling process.

- d) Compulsory modules will be given priority over optional modules.
- e) Combinations of compulsory modules on programmes will be scheduled so that they do not clash.
- f) Learning events which are regular and over a full-semester will have precedence over sporadic or single-week events.
- g) Activities which have a longer duration will take precedence over events of a shorter duration.
- h) For specialist resources, precedence will be given to learning activities which explicitly require access to the specialist equipment and/or accommodation.
- i) Precedence will be given to teaching and learning activities over non-teaching events (see section 10 below)
- j) Wednesday afternoons will be kept free for student-led initiatives wherever possible.

4. Teaching Space

- 4.1 Teaching space refers to rooms identified by Property & Facilities as designated space within which teaching can take place. All teaching space is managed centrally with more local autonomy permitted of use for specialist teaching spaces.
- 4.2 Schools which are based at a given campus will usually have priority for booking the teaching space at that campus.
- 4.3 The number of participants in any teaching event must not exceed the authorised capacity of the room allocated.

5. Teaching Week Parameters

- 5.1. The standard timetabling parameters for the teaching week are set out below.
 - a) The first day of the teaching week is a Monday.
 - b) The standard teaching week extends from Monday to Friday.
 - c) Standard teaching hours are from 09:00 to 18:00 except for Wednesday.
 - d) Teaching activity can be scheduled outside the standard hours where this has been considered as part of a School's quality assurance processes and is clearly set out in promotional materials, for example to meet student/employer demands for either evening or weekend provision. This is most likely to apply to part-time and postgraduate provision.
 - e) On Wednesdays, teaching events will normally be scheduled to take place from 09:00 to 13:00 in order to facilitate participation in student-led activity in the afternoon.
 - f) Teaching starts promptly on the hour and ends at 10 minutes to the hour, allowing students and staff 'circulation time' to move on to their next teaching event.

- 5.2 The Vice-Principal (L&T) and Academic Registrar, may jointly authorise the following exceptional timetabling parameters to be applied to enhance the student experience and the effective delivery of activities. Permission to apply these exceptional parameters must be approved annually, with evidence of due consideration on the impact on students & staff.
- a) Approved specialist teaching may take place in 30-minute slots rather than the standard 60 minute slots.
 - b) The teaching day may start 08:00 and finish at 21:00.
- 5.3 These timetabling parameters will be kept under review by the University's Leadership Team, with any recommendations for amendments being made by the Vice-Principal (L&T) and Academic Registrar.

6. Teaching Blocks

6.1 Where possible, activities for each module will take place within a compact block of time. Activities such as tutorials and practical modules requiring specialist space/equipment will be timetabled (where possible) into the slots that are likely to meet student needs.

6.2 Taken together, the teaching blocks are expected to deliver a holistic, programme-based, student experience. The timetable will be scheduled using standard teaching blocks wherever possible, examples of which are provided in Table A.

Table A: Indicative University Teaching Blocks

Single	Double	Half-days	Full-day
09:00 – 10:00	09:00 – 11:00 11:00 – 13:00	09:00 -13:00	09:00 – 13:00
10:00 – 11:00			
11:00 – 12:00			
12:00 – 13:00*			
13:00 – 14:00*		13:00-17:00	
14:00 – 15:00	14:00 – 16:00		14:00 – 17:00
15:00 – 16:00			
16:00 – 17:00	16:00 – 18:00		
17:00 – 18:00			

*a lunch break would normally be scheduled between 12:00 and 14:00

7. Teaching Events

- 7.1 Teaching events are associated with an approved module. Modules are designed and delivered by programme teams. Each School will determine the format of the modules and programmes they deliver, including:-
- a) The start date of the module and number of weeks over which it will run
 - b) The number of teaching events per week

- c) The format and duration of each teaching event
- d) The teaching staff who will deliver the event.

8. Timetable Publication

- 8.1. The teaching timetable will be published individually for each trimester at the earliest opportunity to allow students and staff to plan ahead. Individual student timetables will be made available on myNapier and /or other online services as deemed appropriate to deliver an individualised student experience.
- 8.2. Changes to the teaching timetable after publication should be kept to a minimum and mindful of the impact on student experience, changes requests from staff will only be accepted and undertaken on an exceptional basis and will be reviewed by relevant school leadership to ensure appropriateness.
- 8.3. In the event that a teaching space booking is no longer required, the person who has booked the room must delete the booking from Resource Booker or inform the Timetabling team as soon as is practicable so that it can be released for other purposes.

9. Students

- 9.1. This policy supports the responsibilities and expectations contained in the current student charter and student professional standards. The University expects students to attend and check in to all scheduled events and to engage positively with academic studies, the broader curriculum, and fellow students.
- 9.2. The University will keep to the schedule of teaching and give reasonable notice of any unplanned changes to classes and seminars (for example if a member of academic staff is ill). Students and staff will be notified of changes following the agreed 'notification process'.
- 9.3. In accordance with the University's policy on equality and diversity, the University will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with individual requirements relating to disabilities.

10. Non-teaching Events

- 10.1 Centrally-managed teaching space may be used for a wide range of both internal and external non-teaching events, however to maintain an excellent student experience bookings for internal teaching events and examinations will usually take precedence over bookings for non-teaching events. Internal non-teaching events include, but are not limited to :
 - a) Applicant Visit Day(s)
 - b) Post Graduate Open Day(s)
 - c) University Open Day(s)

- d) SHSC Occupational Health Clinics
- e) Summer Schools

10.2 A separate process is in place to encourage the use of university spaces for external non-teaching events that grow the university's academic reputation or commercial income: this includes external conferences/lectures/ meetings, research symposiums, weddings and professional body networking events. Requests for conferences or any event which involves external parties or the charging of any fee must be made via Conferencing & Lettings.

10.3 In the case of disagreement over the prioritization of the use of teaching space for internal or external events, the joint decision of the Vice-Principal (Learning & teaching) and the Academic Registrar is final.

Approved by: ESEC
Date: 15 May 2024