Edinburgh Napier University
Timetabling Process
2025/26

Background and Purpose

1. The purpose of the Timetabling Process document is to ensure that the University has defined and established processes in place for the delivery of the university's Timetabling Policy.

Amendments and Approval Changes

2. The timetabling process will be kept under review by the Academic Registrar and University Timetabling Manager in liaison with the Vice Principal (L&T). Amendments to this process do not require committee approval, however as good practice will be subject to appropriate consultation with school leadership.

Timetabling Process Guiding Principles

3. The university aims to ensure the timetable is:
    a. always up to date and accessible to all
    b. as accurate as possible throughout the year
    c. produced on a trimester basis
    d. underpinned by accurate data

What is a timetabled activity?

4. Teaching activities 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

Principles, Preparation and Planning

5. Key timetabling dates, including deadlines, will be shared with academic colleagues in advance of each trimester data collection period.

6. Academic staff will be instructed by the Timetabling team to do the following before submitting modules information via Module Picker:
    a) Make any requested changes to module delivery via the curriculum management environment before data collection so that the timetabling system is up-to-date.
    b) Work with other module leaders in the same year and programme so that together the timetable for all the modules is coherent.
    c) Make sure the availability of the module team is known. Heads of Subject should advise on any planned staffing change.

d) Coordinate scheduling of specialist spaces (e.g. labs) at module and programme level together with the appropriate technician before data entry to check that the ask is feasible and we make best use of space and equipment.

e) Enter data for modules as soon as possible in the data collection period.

7. Programme Leaders are requested to brief students selecting options in advance to explain programme and timetabling constraints to them and manage their expectations.

Timetabling Data Collection

8. In advance of each trimester, the university timetabling team will collect timetabling teaching requests from module leaders and staff availability information about academic staff. The Data Collection process is undertaken using an online form (Module Picker), which is pre-populated with module information from SITS.

9. The timetabling data collection period typically lasts for four weeks and takes place in April for Trimester 1 and in September for Trimesters 2 and 3. 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.

Staff Availability

10. The staff availability process is a mechanism for academic staff to request not to be timetabled to teach on certain days and/or times. The staff availability process is specific to the scheduling of teaching.

11. Unlike a flexible working arrangement, the staff availability request does not change any aspect of your contract of employment; instead it is a request for some exceptional circumstance to be taken into account where it is practicable. All full-time staff are expected to be available between 9am and 6pm (Mon-Fri) for timetabled teaching.

12. All staff availability forms will be processed via the agreed approval process and any forms approved will be sent to the relevant timetabling administrator for action. Staff availability requests requested out with the agreed process with not be accepted or processed by the Timetabling team.

Building the Timetable

13. 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
f. Staff Availability – where a staff member has an approved staff availability form for the relevant trimester

Applying an Attendance Factor

14. 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 with the Academic Registrar and Vice Principal (L&T).

Scheduling the Timetable

15. The following are guidelines for the prioritisation of teaching and learning activities:
    a. Where possible, activities for each module will take place within a compact block of time.
    b. 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.
    c. Taken together, the teaching blocks are expected to deliver a holistic, programme based, student experience.
    d. 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	09:00 -13:00	09:00 – 13:00
10:00 – 11:00			
11:00 – 12:00	11:00 – 13:00		
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

Timetabling Change Requests (pre and post publication)

16.   All timetabling change requests must be submitted via the Teaching Change Request form. This ensures that all the correct information is supplied to the timetabling administrator to process the request. It is expected that post publication changes are kept to a minimum to ensure that the published timetable to students is not changed unnecessarily.

17.   There is an agreed list of changes which may be requested:

Reason for Change	Example
Activity swap	I want to swap the day/time of tutorial group two with tutorial group three.
Adjust activity duration	The activity has been scheduled for 3 hours and I requested the activity be 2 hours.
Adjust teaching week pattern	The activity is scheduled for all weeks of the Trimester. I'm no longer going to teach this activity in week 6 of the trimester.
Cancel teaching activity/condense teaching activities	This activity can be cancelled as it is no longer required/ I want to condense my teaching into fewer activities.
Change of teaching staff	The staff member teaching the activity has been changed.
Fewer students	There are fewer students enrolled on the module therefore the activity needs to be changed.
More students	There are more students enrolled on the module therefore the activity needs to be changed.
New/additional teaching activity required	A new or additional teaching activity is required for my module.
Room capacity too small	The activity is too big for the allocated room and needs to be moved to a larger room.
Room capacity too large	The activity can be moved to a smaller room.
Room unsuitable	The room allocated for the activity is unsuitable and I am unable to deliver my teaching in the room.

Non-teaching Events

18. An advanced booking process is in place to encourage the use of university space for external non-teaching events that grow the university's academic reputation or commercial income.

19. The advanced booking process is jointly managed by the Head of Hospitality and Timetabling Manager, with approval required from the relevant Head of Campus Board for each proposed advanced booking. Requests for conferences or any event which involves external parties or the charging of any fee must be made via Conferencing & Lettings.

Approved by:

Dr Steven Logie
Director of Student Services
& Academic Registrar

Miss Alli Coyle
Timetabling Manager

Date: 12/02/2025

Useful links for ENU Staff:

Staff Intranet (Timetabling)	https://intranet.napier.ac.uk/academic-and-student-resources/student-lifecycle/timetabling
Principles, preparation and planning	https://intranet.napier.ac.uk/academic-and-student-resources/student-lifecycle/timetabling/principles,-preparation-and-planning
Data Collection	https://intranet.napier.ac.uk/academic-and-student-resources/student-lifecycle/timetabling/data-collection
Staff Availability	https://intranet.napier.ac.uk/academic-and-student-resources/student-lifecycle/timetabling/staff-availability
Reviewing the module timetable	https://intranet.napier.ac.uk/academic-and-student-resources/student-lifecycle/timetabling/review-module-timetable
Teaching Change Requests	https://intranet.napier.ac.uk/academic-and-student-resources/student-lifecycle/timetabling/teaching-change-requests