Timetabling of Learning and Teaching Activities Policy

Section 1 - Policy Statement

(1) This Policy ensures a coordinated and consistent approach to the management of the timetabling of all learning and teaching activities at ACU.

Section 2 - Policy Scope

(2) This Policy applies to the management of the timetabling of all learning and teaching activities at ACU, all students enrolled in those activities and the staff who teach those activities.

(3) This Policy also applies to the management of designated learning and teaching space for co-curricular and non-teaching activities.

Section 3 - Definitions

(4) In this Policy and associated Timetabling of Learning and Teaching Activities Procedure, the general terms used are consistent with the Glossary of Student and Course Terms. The following specific definitions also apply:

Term	Definition
Facilities Management	The administrative unit of the University responsible for managing, refurbishing, maintaining and developing all ACU space.
Draft Timetable	A working document produced by the Timetabling and Room Bookings (TRB) and provided to enable School academic and administrative staff to: • identify and resolve timetable problems before the Published Timetable is uploaded; and • ensure that it is free of clashes in core/mandatory units in the standard study period of the relevant course(s) according to advice provided by the Timetabling Liaison Officer (TLO).
Head of School	For the purpose of this Policy this includes National Head of School, State Head or Deputy Head.
Non-teaching activities	means ad hoc activities and or bookings made by staff, students and external organisations that are not part of course requirements and are not incorporated into the ACU Timetable.
Non-teaching spaces	Areas and rooms which are the responsibility of Facilities Management.
Offering	A unit offered in a teaching period, available for enrolment and timetabling and assigned a 'Term' in the Student System.
Program of Study	A Program of Study (POS) is the approved selection of units available within a given study period in a course. The units are identified as either Core/Mandatory or Elective/Optional.
Published Timetable	The version of the timetable: • uploaded to the 'My Timetable' webpage for access by students; and • providing data feed to the Allocate+ class selection system
Specialised teaching space	Teaching locations designed for specific purposes, eg scientific laboratories, dance studios, editing rooms, drawing rooms. Formal learning and teaching activities using the space are normally timetabled centrally. Other usage is considered ad hoc.

Term	Definition
Special requirements	Requirements warranting consideration of variation of standard timetabling arrangements for students in the light of matters such as disabilities, medical conditions, religious obligations or, in exceptional circumstances, family responsibilities.
A Synchronous Learning Activity	Is an interactive learning activity in which all students are participating simultaneously e.g tutorials as opposed to Asynchronous learning activities where educational activities, discussions, and assignments engage students in learning at their own pace.
Teaching Space	General, non-specialised areas used by the University community for teaching and other related activities. Any changes to the designation of these venues can only be made with the authorisation of the Director, Properties and Facilities.
Timetabling Liaison Officer (TLO)	A member of staff nominated by the Head of School or equivalent, or the Manager of a section responsible for teaching activities, who acts as the interface between the School and TRB and undertakes the role and responsibilities of TLO as described in the Timetabling of Learning and Teaching Activities Procedure.
Embargo period	The period during which the Class Timetable for Semester 1 and Semester 2 is being scheduled as well as the first three teaching weeks of each semester are known as embargo periods. References to the embargo period, unless otherwise specified, encompass both periods.

Section 4 - Policy Principles and Standards

(5) Timetables will be developed with regard to the ACU Service Excellence Framework and within the overriding principles of support for student learning. Every effort will be made to provide facilities appropriate to the pedagogical needs of classes. The development of timetables will be guided by the following principles:

a. the equitable treatment of students;
b. the efficient, effective and equitable use of ACU's academic workforce;
c. the efficient and effective use of physical resources; and
d. availability of resources.

(6) The development of timetables will provide for reasonable accommodations for students and staff with equity considerations and special requirements.

(7) The timetable for each academic period will be published at a time and in a manner which permits all students to be informed of the timetable prior to the period available for enrolment adjustments.

(8) All units which have a mode specified as on-campus or multi-mode attendance will be included in the Published Timetable.

(9) Where a class that is held online requires synchronous activity this will be included in the Published Timetable.

(10) Each year the timetable will be rolled from the previous year. A draft timetable will be released to Schools to allow for changes to be made to accommodate for course and unit changes.

(11) Timetabling requirements and requests will be consistent with the relevant published Course Rules and Course Enrolment Guides. Academic staff will undertake all transactions with TRB through their TLO using the designated medium of communication.

(12) Where a unit from one Faculty/School forms part of the core requirements for a course offered by another Faculty/School, the inter-relationship must be identified on the Timetable Request.

(13) Courses and/or units having periods of professional experience will be timetabled only for those weeks when on-campus resources are required.

(14) Class sizes will not exceed the capacity of allocated rooms. Multiple classes will be created if student numbers exceed available room capacity.

(15) Classes will be scheduled so that students who pass all units can complete the standard program in the minimum time as set out in the relevant course rules.

(16) Students should be able to attend all specified core units in accordance with standard course progression and to have a reasonable selection of electives from which to choose, if offered within the course rules. Elective units will not be guaranteed to be clash-free.

Section 5 - Timetable Construction

Timetabling Priorities

(17) In developing the timetable, wherever possible, priority will be given to the following:

a. a single unit offered across multiple locations simultaneously;
b. large, planned class sizes in descending order of planned class size;
c. units offered in multiple courses;
d. core/mandatory units before elective units;
e. units offered across campuses for double degrees;
f. activities with more teaching weeks before activities with fewer teaching weeks;
g. activities of longer duration before those of shorter duration;
h. cohorts with needs for specific space (eg postgraduate classes) and/or activities in specialised teaching space; and
i. regular teaching activities before ad hoc activities and non-teaching activities.

Standard Teaching Times

(18) Standard teaching hours are Monday to Friday, between 8am and 9pm, except where:

a. specific requests are made by Schools to extend these times; and
b. where Local Authority regulations specify maximum hours of operation which would reduce these times.

(19) Where it is not possible to accommodate standard study period classes during the spread of hours specified in clause (18), classes may be scheduled between 9am and 5pm on Saturdays, with approval from the Academic Registrar after consultation with the Executive Dean or nominee, and if necessary, the Director, Properties and Facilities and the relevant Campus Dean.

(20) Intensive classes may be conducted between 8am and 6pm on weekends and public holidays as well as during standard teaching hours, in non-standard study periods.

(21) Intensive classes will not be scheduled between the hours of 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday during standard study period teaching weeks.

(22) When classes are scheduled on evenings, weekends or public holidays, rooms will normally be consolidated into appropriate, designated space rather than spread across teaching facilities on the relevant campus.

Commencement and Duration of Classes

(23) Classes will normally start on the hour, but in some circumstances, may start on the half hour.

(24) Staff and students are required to vacate the teaching venue 10 minutes prior to the scheduled finish time of the teaching activity to allow students time to get to the next class at the scheduled time.

(25) Staff should, except where agreed to by the staff member, and approved by the Head of School or equivalent:

a. have no more than four hours of consecutive classes, without at least a one hour break;
b. not be scheduled for classes commencing:
    i. at 8am more than twice in a single week; and
    ii. after 6pm more than twice in a single week;
c. have no more than six hours class contact on any day;
d. not have class contact spread across more than 10 hours from the commencement of the first class to the conclusion of the last class of the day.

(26) Students should:

a. have no more than four hours of consecutive classes with mandatory attendance, without at least a one-hour break;
b. have no more than six hours of class contact, with mandatory attendance, on any day;
c. not have class contact, with mandatory attendance, spread across more than 10 hours from the commencement of the first class to the conclusion of the last class of the day.

Teaching-free Time

(27) Except for the purposes of professional experience requirements, neither staff nor students can be guaranteed that any day will be free of classes; in particular no day can be designated as a 'rostered day off'.

(28) Staff commitments to teaching will take precedence over other activities to which greater scheduling flexibility applies. Staff are not able to designate any specific time for other academic activities until the timetable is finalised.

(29) If a specific time commitment necessitated by external factors beyond the control of the staff member can be demonstrated and the request for recognition of such commitments is endorsed by the Head of School, every endeavour will be made to accommodate the request.

Travel Between Campuses

(30) Students and staff may be required to attend more than one campus on the same day.

(31) Classes will be appropriately scheduled to take account of travel times.

(32) Where it is identified that a staff member is scheduled to teach at more than one campus on one day adequate time will be allowed between teaching commitments for travel and necessary preparations at both locations.

(33) In the case of teaching activities scheduled on one day at Melbourne/Ballarat or Sydney/Canberra, TRB will consult with the Head of School or equivalent before putting such an arrangement in place.

Resolving Timetable Clashes

(34) Timetable clashes will be resolved in accordance with the Timetabling of Learning and Teaching Activities Procedure.

Section 6 - Publication of Timetables

(35) Schools, or other organisational units responsible for teaching activities, are responsible for providing timely and accurate information for the construction of the timetable by the due dates as set out in the Timetabling of Learning and Teaching Activities Procedure.

(36) The Draft Timetable will be provided for review prior to release of the Published Timetable in accordance with the Timetabling of Learning and Teaching Activities Procedure. This is provided as a full year timetable to staff. The Published Timetable will be released at least four weeks prior to the commencement of the relevant Semester.

(37) Changes to the Published Timetable will only be considered if required due to exceptional and unforeseeable circumstances. Such changes must be approved in accordance with the Timetabling of Learning and Teaching Activities Procedure.

Section 7 - Appeals

(38) An avenue of appeal in relation to timetabling is available for students by means of written appeal to the Academic Registrar.

(39) An appeal may only be made on the grounds that the provisions of this Policy and Timetabling of Learning and Teaching Activities Procedure have not been followed.

(40) Any such appeal must be submitted no later than five working days after release of the Published Timetable.

(41) The Academic Registrar will deal with any appeal using the principles of the Student Appeals Policy. The outcome of the appeal will normally be determined within five working days of its receipt and the student will be informed in writing of the:

a. outcome of the appeal;
b. processes undertaken during the appeal; and
c. reasons for the decision.

(42) A copy of the advice will be provided to the relevant Head of School and the Course Coordinator, TRB.

Section 8 - Reporting

(43) TRB will report on change requests, deletions and changes of day and time made during the Draft and Published timetable phases. These statistics will be incorporated into the timetable reports provided to the Provost, Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Registrar, Executive Deans, Heads of School or equivalent and tabled at the Student Administrative Lifecycle and Policy Committee for noting by Academic Board.

Section 9 - Roles and Responsibilities

(44) The roles and responsibilities of TRB , TLOs, Heads of School or equivalent, Properties and Facilities and Information Technology will be as defined in Schedule 1 of the Timetabling of Learning and Teaching Activities Procedure.

Section 10 - Saving Clause

(45) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this Policy, the Academic Registrar may, in any case deemed appropriate, vary, dispense with or suspend any requirements of this Policy, associated procedures, appendices or schedules. Any action taken under this clause will be reported to the Student Administrative Lifecycle and Policy Committee.

Section 11 - Revisions to this Policy

(46) The revision table includes revisions up until this document was migrated into the current policy platform. Any later changes will show in the Status and Details tab.

Date	Major, Minor or Editorial	Description of Revision(s)
15 September 2021	Minor	Amendments as part of scheduled review

Section 12 - Associated Information

(47) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources please refer to the Associated Information tab.

Section 13 - Schedules

Schedule 1 Study/Delivery Modes

Study Modes for units will be offered as set out in the following table:

Number	BANNER code name	Definition
1	C – Campus attendance	Most learning activities or classes are delivered at a scheduled time, on campus, or approved ACU delivery site, to enable in-person interactions. Activities will appear in a student's timetable.
2	M – Multimode	Activities are delivered through a planned mix of online and in-person classes, which may include full-day sessions and/or placements, to enable interaction. Activities that require attendance will appear in a student's timetable.
3	OU – Online unscheduled	Learning activities are accessible anytime, anywhere. These units are normally delivered fully online and will not appear in a student's timetable.
4	OS – Online scheduled	All class activities are held online, at scheduled times, and will require some attendance to enable online interaction. Activities will appear in a student timetable.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	19th December 2023
Review Date	16th September 2026
Approval Authority	
Approval Date	19th December 2023
Expiry Date	31st July 2024
Responsible Executive	Helen Murnane Academic Registrar
Responsible Manager	Adin Beresford Coordinator, Timetabling and Room Bookings
Enquiries Contact	Catherine McKiver Policy and Projects Officer Student Administration