

Timetabling 2019-0 – Information Note for Teaching Directors and Module Organisers



1. Introduction

For timetable planning for academic year 2019/0 and beyond, LTC has approved the use of a revised Timetable Slotting scheme.

This document note will provide an overview of continuing timetable principles, the revised timetable slotting scheme and an understanding on how the new slotting coding structure and coding conventions operate.

It will also give details on the next steps involved in realigning current teaching patterns so that;

- a) module teaching requirements are met,
- b) allocated slots are easily identified
- c) enable identification of clash free slots for other teaching requirements

2. Underlying Timetable Principles

The Teaching Day

The Teaching day commences at 9:00am and runs into the evenings. Whilst rooms for teaching are booked by the hour, students and academic staff should note that teaching sessions should last no more than 50 minutes and are expected to commence and end at the following times:

- Modules running in the mornings (Resource slot 1 and 2 – see below) will start on the hour and finish at 50 minutes past the hour.
- Modules running in the afternoons and evenings (Resource slots 3, 4 and 5 – see below) will start at 10 minutes past the hour and finish on the hour.
- These start and end times guarantee a minimum 20 minute break in the middle of the day for staff and students.

Undergraduate teaching must not be timetabled on Wednesday afternoons, i.e. after 13:00 hours, unless it is a repeated session such as a seminar for which other options also occur outside of this restricted time.

Resource Slots

In order to make the best use of the University's teaching accommodation, UEA's use of five two-hour resource slots across the teaching day continues for room booking purposes. For similar reasons, use of three-hour teaching periods, established in four resource slots, also continues so as to allow extended three hour teaching sessions for lab teaching etc.

Modules can be scheduled within these resource slots but teaching sessions with a duration of two hours will not be permitted to span the five two hour resource slots.

3. Timetable planning – Revised University timetable slotting scheme

The new slotting matrix (Appendix 1) is predicated on the premise that it should enable the greatest number of clash free module slot combinations whilst at the same time facilitating easier post scheduling activities. The matrix is designed to be read at a top level rather than via the use of sub slots tables.

Following analysis of core student contact time per module, the revision increases the number of top level slots codes whilst reducing the number of hours per top level slot.

The revised matrix has eight top level slots, each with 5 hours of contact time. These hours are broken down into shorter segments of time spread across the week so that, if required for pedagogic purposes, activities can be separated to allow for reading/preparation time etc. Each of these splits is annotated with a numerical value to denote each part of the slot.

Wednesday afternoon and Evening slots are outside UEA core teaching periods and as such have slots that start at 13:00 and 18:00 respectively. They have been given an 'I' code and give the potential for teaching to continue into the evening by utilising this Ix slot coding. The x element refers to the week day (e.g. I3 = Wednesday after 13:00)

As an example of the revised coding structure; the top level slot of A is split into three; A1 (2hrs), A2 (2hrs) and A3 (1hr).

It is possible for a module to utilise all hours within a slot letter code or just one or two of the slot parts. If all hours are used then the slot coding would be annotated as 'A', if only two of the slot parts are utilised this would be coded, for example as A1, A3. This would leave A2 for use by another module.

Some modules may require a wider range of slots and can therefore cross over between two top level codes (e.g. SCI Lab based modules/HUM 3 hr Seminars). Where this is the case then this can be accommodated by coding appropriately (e.g. A1-F1 for hours on Mondays from 09:00 til 13:00). Further details on coding to specific hours is given below.

If all modules are coded appropriately then use of a single matrix pattern, rather than sub slot tables, will enable clashes to be resolved more quickly. Resolution will still require knowledge of which modules are compulsory and optional, but a single matrix approach is more user friendly.

Wherever possible modules should be allocated within a single top level slot code so that effective use of slots and space is maintained.

Coding Conventions

As previously, a number of slot conventions are available to cater for specific hour details within a slot and appropriate linking of slots. Conventions can be used either individually or in combination.

Convention	Symbol	Meaning	Example
Comma	','	To separate different teaching events, e.g. Lecture, Seminars etc.	A2, C2 Indicates that students must attend two different sessions that take place on Tues 11:00-13:00 and Fri 09:00 – 11:00
Backward Oblique	'\'	To denote first hour of a specific slot	A1\ Indicates that only the first hour of the A1 slot is used – Mon 09:00 – 10:00
Forwards Oblique	'/'	To denote final hour of a specific slot	A1/ Indicates that only the final hour of the A1 slot is used – Mon 10:00 – 11:00
Asterisk	'*'	To signify 'and' This is used for the same type of teaching event e.g. All Seminars.	F1*E1 Indicates that students must attend on Mon 11:00-13:00 (F1) AND Thurs 09:00 – 10:00 (E1)
Plus	'+'	To denote the use of a middle hour of a three hour slot	G2+ Indicates that the first hour and middle hour of the G2 slot are used – Weds 09:00-11:00, E2+/ Indicates that the second and final hours of the E2 slot are used, Fri 14:00 – 16:00
Hyphen	'-'	Indicates consecutive slots used	E1-H3\ Indicates that both E1 hours and the first H3 hour is used, Thurs 09:00 – 12:00
Broken Vertical	' '	Colon to signify 'or' (See Note 1)	F1 A2 Indicates that either slot is used
	'U'	To indicate slots which are not published at the planning stage. This is used when a large number of classes are available or teaching times have not yet been scheduled. Students will be allocated to group(s) which will not clash with their other classes.	F1, U Indicates that students must attend Mon - 11:00-13:00 and another class which is currently unslotted

4. Timetable planning – Next Steps

Implementation

In order to implement the revised slotting matrix for the 2019/20 Course and Module Update process, the Room Booking Office (RBO) have mapped existing codes to the new matrix on the basis of the 2018/9 timetable requirements for core activities of a module. On completion of the upload RBO will work with Team Leaders and Academic colleagues to review new slot codes to, where possible, realign so as to limit cross over between top level slots.

As indicated, and where necessary, some modules will require the use of two top-level codes due to additional core activities (labs etc.).

New codes will be uploaded to the relevant SITS field so that data feeds through to other areas in e:Vision as appropriate, and be available to students at the time of online module enrolment in the spring.

The new slot coding will come into effect for teaching in 2019/20.

Appendix 1

Timetable Slotting Scheme – 2019/0

2hr Resource Slot	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	3hr Resource Slot		
1	A1	F2	G2	E1	C2	Yellow	Orange	0900
	A1	F2	G2	E1	C2			1000
2	F1	A2	G2	H3	D3	Yellow	Orange	1100
	F1	A2	B2	H3	D3			1200
3	B1	G1	I3	C1	E2	Cyan	Purple	1310
	B1	G1	I3	C1	E2			1410
4	D1	H2	I3	B3	E2	Cyan	Purple	1510
	D1	H2	I3	B3	C3			1610
5	H1	D2	I3	F3	A3	White	White	1710
	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5			1810