Examination Scheduling

The following provides some information about the process for timetabling the examinations in the University's main assessment period in May/June.

Statistics

Students sit multiple examinations during the main University assessment period. In 2017-8 main examination series there were:

- 18.5 days used for the exam period
- 8.315 candidates
- over 900 different examinations
- 25,242 examination sittings

The Learning and Teaching Service's Assessments and Quality Office (AQO) must timetable all examinations within the published 4-week assessment period as well as making practical arrangements for over 2,000 sittings for students who require assessment adjustments.

Timetabling Policy

There are a number of factors which limit the flexibility of the examination timetabling, such as:

- Examinations must be timetabled into suitable rooms with adequate capacities near to student facilities.
- There must be no rooming clashes
- There should be no student clashes (eg students should not be timetabled for more than one exam in a day)
- For security reasons, there are a number of examinations which must be run simultaneously.
- Most UEA students are permitted an element of choice to select modules from across the curriculum areas, which adds to the complexity of the timetable.

The University also makes a number of guarantees, as follows:

- The dates of the examination period will be available to students from the beginning of the academic year (in the LTS handbook and website) to enable students to plan their time and ensure they are available throughout the examination period.
- The examination timetable will be published prior to the Easter vacation to give students a reasonable period of time in which to prepare for the examinations.
- Students will not be timetabled for examinations in the evening.
- Students will not be timetabled for examinations at weekends.

Given the above constraints, and in the interests of fairness to all examination candidates, it is important that the process remains random after taking account of the factors outlined above.

AQO use a computerised scheduling package which means that the individual spread of examinations will vary from student to student and from year to year. Students may receive a timetable that they are pleased with one year and a timetable that they find less favourable another year.   For instance, students may find that the majority of their examinations are

towards the beginning or the end of the assessment period, both of which may have different appeal for different students. Students may find that their examinations are spread out or they could be scheduled within a shorter time period. Also, a small minority of students may be timetabled for more than one examination in one day.

What Can Students Expect From Their Examination Timetable

This year your timetable for the Main series will be released by no later than 5pm on 4 March 2019.

In previous recent years, AQO have been able to schedule students for only one exam per day in the main series, but due to the volume of examinations and the constraints of the 4-week assessment period, there is a risk that a small minority of students may be timetabled for two exams in one day. We anticipate that this will affect very few students.

With regard to a preferred spread of exams, this differs from person to person and, with over 8,000 candidates, it is impossible to deliver a timetable that provides a preferred spread of examinations to everyone. Even if it was possible to collect that information, it is likely that a consensus would not be reached on an ideal spread.

Therefore, The University appreciates the importance examinations and will do what it reasonably can to ensure that the examination schedule is as fair as possible within finite time and physical resources. It is equally important that students have a realistic expectation of what demands their individual examination timetable may make and plan for this in advance.

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