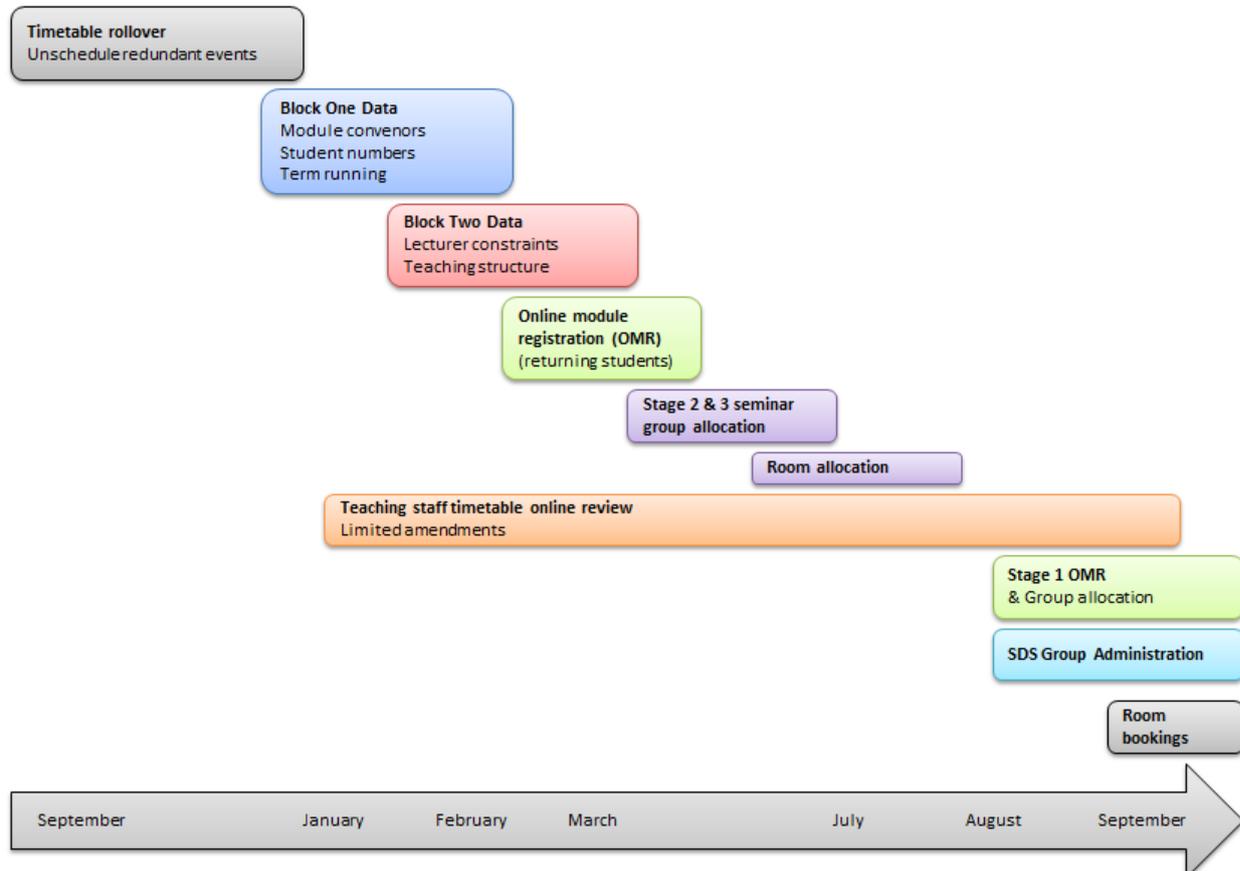


University of Kent Process for Timetable Managers

Process overview



Process step by step

Actions required by School administration highlighted 

Timetable rollover

The previous timetable dataset is copied into the new timetable to provide a basis to start work. Technical setup, data transfers and data cleaning is undertaken by the Timetabling teams to get the database ready to start work. All one-off non-modular bookings except those that are pre-planned for the year – such as UCAS / Open days, University Open lecture and concert series, Cinema operations – are removed from the timetable to make clear space for scheduling teaching. Week ranges and dates are checked, bank holidays altered and strategic changes such as rooms added or removed.



Module Session Running

November – December

Schools must determine during November and December which module deliveries they plan to run for the next academic session.

This data should be checked and amended on the Student Data System using Module Maintenance > Module Session Running, selecting modules by School, or by module stem or full code e.g. EN%

University of Kent

Student Data System

Main Menu | Module Maintenance | Module Session Running

Please note: if you use multiple browser windows or tabs, the navigation buttons above may not work correctly. If you are not using multiple windows or tabs then you can ignore this message.

Module Session Running
Currently working on page 1 of 11

Module	Module Version	Module Title	Week	Delivery	Delivery	Session				Last Saved: Not yet
			Beginning	Institution	Campus	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	
AC300	1	Financial Accounting I	1	0122	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
AC502	1	Business Finance	1	0122	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
AC504	1	Auditing	1	0122	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
AC506	1	Financial Accounting II	1	0122	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
AC507	1	Management Accounting II	1	0122	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
AC508	1	Principles of Finance	1	0122	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
AC520	1	Management Accounting 1	1	0122	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
AC521	1	Management Accounting I	1	0122	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
AC522	1	Advanced Financial Accounting	1	0122	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
AC523	1	Principles of Finance	1	0122	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
AC524	1	Financial Accounting II	1	0122	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
CB302	1	Managers and Organisations	1	0122	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
CB311	2	Business Skills & Employability	1	0122	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
CB312	1	Introduction to Management	13	0122	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

Note: Module Session Running also informs:

- Student Data System which modules should receive module registrations,
- [Online module catalogue](#) which modules to advertise
- Moodle, the virtual learning environment, which modules to synchronise

The Timetable Officers will automatically see which modules need new events setting up and which ones need removing from this data which is transferred every hour from the student data system to the timetable database.

What do I if there will be new modules which do not yet have a code on the Student Data System?

Inform the Timetable Officer of these along with the expected teaching structure and forecast student numbers (see below). If the new module is replacing an existing module, then the Timetable Officer may choose to leave the old module in place temporarily on the draft timetable so that the data can be held and module code swapped in later once the new module is approved.

What do I do if my school has not yet planned next year's modules?

Complain! It is important for the strategic planning of the teaching space, the timetable and all downstream teaching planning such as module registration, library resources, budgets, that the teaching programme is developed between November and February before the start of the next academic year.

There is always an expectation that some of the teaching will change, but in general 90+% of the teaching timetable should be known during this initial planning.



Lecturer Constraints

January

Lecturer constraints allow the Timetable Officers to see when staff are available to teach. Your school will have a policy on how constraints are to be administered.

A spreadsheet of teaching constraints will be sent to each School for completion and return to the Timetable Officer. Teaching availability should generally allow four days per FT teaching staff, with one day set aside for research (subject to the School's research strategy policy) for research-active staff not on study leave. Pro-rata adjustments apply to PT staff. Other arrangements required for childcare etc. should also be specified. The teaching constraints should be agreed by the Head of School before submission to the Timetable Officer.

What do I do if I will have new staff not in this list?

Add the new staff (named or not as the case may be) to the spreadsheet and the Timetable Officer will add them to the database, using a surrogate id until they have a contract with the University.

What do I do if we use lots of sessional teachers?

Try to specify how many distinct sessional teachers you will use, naming them if you can, and supplying constraints. Ask your sessional teachers to supply their constraints to you where you know them. The draft timetable will be available by June, and there can be modifications at this point. Any information upfront is better than none.



New module specifications / Changes to module specifications / Delivery changes

November –February

This part of the process involves Schools going through their module offering module by module to check the following for each module:

- **Forecast module size** – how many students are we expecting to teach?
Note: did you know that it is possible to cap modules in the Student Data System? Some schools get surprise last minute changes to their teaching because they don't cap their modules and this changes the teaching load for staff, the teaching room requirement and organisation at the last minute.

- **Correct number of whole group events** e.g. Lectures, seminar, classes
- **Correct number of seminar groups**
- **Correct week pattern**

Note: Please make your week patterns as regular as possible. e.g. Weeks 1-12 or 13-24, odd weeks or even weeks. One-off events or irregular teaching weeks result in inefficient use of the space and more erratic timetables for the students (which are unpopular). If you know there will be a 'reading week' please indicate which week it will be for each module.

- **Teaching equipment requirements** – without teaching equipment specified, rooms without equipment may be assigned – this is especially important for small group events where the IT provision in teaching rooms is more variable.
- **Teaching room layout requirements** – e.g. classroom format (rows), seminar room format (around a table), café style (small group tables), terminal (computer on each desk) etc.
- **Teaching staff teaching convening the module, teaching the whole group and seminar group events where possible** – it is recognised that some of this detail will be known later in the planning cycle, but as much as possible early on makes all the difference to planning the timetable. If the teacher is not known this can be left blank. Events and modules with no teacher attached can be readily reviewed in OTIS.

The Timetabling Officers will send a spreadsheet to each school to record this information in a way which makes it clear for both the School and the Timetable Officer to read. (This is called 'Block 2')

Make amendments on this spreadsheet in conjunction with your Director of Learning and Teaching / Head of School as appropriate, then send to the Timetable Officer.

If a module structure is being changed, you should check here on the [CMSDS support site](#) about the correct administrative and quality assurance procedures to do this.

Data Accuracy

Many of the computer systems across the university are inter-dependent and the timetable database makes a significant contribution to this process. Information held on the timetable database drives Moodle, the Module Catalogue, Module Handbooks, the Work Allocation Model (WAM), Key Information Set (KIS) data and several university webpages, among other sources of information. Any inaccuracy in the timetable information has consequences in a host of other areas key to university business.

On-line module registration –returning students

March – May

In March each year, online module registration opens to returning students allowing them to choose their optional modules through the student data system. These choices are governed by:

- Student Data System module session running – which module deliveries are available
- Student Data System v_pos_module, the system that manages the programme-modules structures. The details of this administration are not covered here, but it is essential that this data is checked and amended against the Programme Specifications in the period before

online module registration opens. See relevant instructions on this on the CMSDS user support site [here](#).

- Module clashes determined from the draft timetable are not allowed
- Once students have registered on their modules, the data automatically transfers to the timetabling database

Stage 2 & 3 seminar group allocation

May onwards

After stage 2 & 3 module registration, the Timetable Officer can begin allocating the students to seminar groups. This process involves:

- Reviewing any students who have been assessed as having special requirements by Student Services, and allocating them to sub-groups manually, then fixing them in place
- Allocating all modules where the allocation has been requested by the school using the Scheduling software which provides clash-free allocation of students to subgroups

Note: If a special allocation is required e.g. all students on a particular programme into specific subgroups; students on particular module combinations to be in the same subgroups, please specify this to the Timetable Officer who can incorporate this into the allocations

Please ensure the TT Office has been notified of all modules requiring central seminar allocation. Only modules with this field updated in OTIS will be processed in this way, as indicated in the modules list.

The process of allocating students to seminar groups will identify module structures where there is insufficient or excess subgroup capacity and the Timetable Officer will contact Schools to resolve these issues.

Once the students are allocated to seminar groups in the timetable database, the data is automatically transferred into holding tables ready for module group administration on the Student Data System in August – see below.

Room Allocation

June

The allocation of rooms to teaching events is done using the timetabling software as follows:

- Pre-booked non-modular events such as UCAS / Open days and concerts have the rooms fixed
- Any special teaching events where a specific room is required are also fixed
- All events with central teaching space have the rooms removed
- Rooms are allocated to events using the allocation software which takes into account:
 - Equipment, layout and room-type requirements
 - Capacity

Capacity fills are applied incrementally – overfill factors are applied to larger events to take account of no-show students – e.g. 5% is used for lecture theatres. This is based on room audits that demonstrate poor room utilisation as attendance is rarely 100% of the forecast module size.

Note: Module sizes and room capacities are re-checked later in the process once students re-register since there are significant changes to module sizes during the August-September period before the start of the new academic year. However, if you know that there will be a significant change in numbers, e.g. due to unprecedented first year intake, please inform the Timetabling Office so that the additional work can be undertaken.



Teaching staff online timetable review

In July the draft timetable is published to lecturers. Each lecturer can view his/her personal timetable using the draft timetable review system (OTIS). If the lecturer requires any changes he/she should contact the school's timetable administrator or manager.

This feedback route is important so that:

- School administration has an overview and agrees with any changes requested by the teaching staff
- The replies from multiple staff are collated to provide more efficient data updates by the Timetable Officer

The personal timetable view shows what the lecturer is recorded to teach and can be viewed in a list or grid format, and also identifies any constraint violations or clashes from the system.

View of personal timetable in OTIS

2016-17 Timetable
Lecturer Timetabled Events and Constraints
 Specification for [redacted] Login: fjg
 Timetabled Events [Grid View](#) [School staff list](#) [School module list](#) [QAII Staff Convening and Teaching Summary Data](#)

Day	Start Time	Finish Time	EventId	Weeks	Module	Group	Class Size	Event Type	Equipment required	Room
Mon	13.00	16.00	92493	13-24	FB15-2-0122-1-13			SCREENING		Lupino SR (62)
Mon	15.00	18.00	70096	13-24	FB94-1-0122-1-13			LECSER		MarLT2(S2)
Tue	09.00	10.00	74820	1-4,6-8,10-12	FB82-1-0122-1-1			LECTURE		Lupino SR (62)
Tue	10.00	12.00	74821	1-12	FB82-1-0122-1-1			SCREENING		Lupino SR (62)
Tue	11.00	13.00	70098	13-24	FB94-1-0122-1-13	01	15	SEMINAR	DVD player, Data projector, Computer	E.Chilver(16)
Tue	12.00	14.00	94537	1-4,6-8,10-12	FB06-1-0122-1-1	02	16	SEMINAR		Jarman Stud 6
Tue	13.00	15.00	75353	13-24	FB94-1-0122-1-13	02	16	SEMINAR	DVD player, Data projector, Computer	E.Chilver(16)
Tue	15.00	18.00	92494	13-24	FB15-2-0122-1-13			SEMINAR		KS13(45)
Tue	16.00	18.00	92483	1-4,6-8,10-12	FB06-1-0122-1-1	01	17	SEMINAR	Infra red hearing system	Jarman Stud 6
Wed	10.00	11.00	92479	1-4,6-8,10-12	FB06-1-0122-1-1			CLASS	Infra red hearing system	Lupino SR (62)
Wed	11.00	13.00	92482	1-4,6-8,10-12	FB06-1-0122-1-1			SCREENING	Infra red hearing system	Lupino SR (62)
Thu	09.00	11.00	74822	1-4,6-8,10-12	FB82-1-0122-1-1	01	17	SEMINAR		Jarman Stud 7
Thu	11.00	13.00	74823	1-4,6-8,10-12	FB82-1-0122-1-1	02	19	SEMINAR		Jarman Stud 7
Thu	12.00	14.00	102094	14-18,20-24	FB21-2-0122-106-13			SEMINAR		UKP room

Rooms: TBC - Room information not yet released Pending & Not Found - Timetabling Office actively seeking room
 Room not allocated - Event does not meet the [Timetabling Office's criteria](#) To be arranged - School to inform Timetabling Office of room

Constraints - this member of staff is not available for teaching during the following times

Weeks	Day	Start Time	End Time

Constraint violations - the following events break the above rules

Module	Event	Day	Start Time	Finish Time	Weeks

Clashes - the following items clash for this lecturer

Day	Event1	Module1	Start Time1	Finish Time1	Weeks1	Event2	Module2	Start Time2	Finish Time2	Weeks2
Mon	70096	FB94-1-0122-1-13	15:00	18:00	13-24	92493	FB15-2-0122-1-13	13:00	16:00	13-24

New Student On-line module registration

September

This process is similar to the returning student administration – see above – but for new students. Compulsory modules are automatically added to new student records when they transfer into the Student Data System. Optional and wild modules can be selected by the students using the same rules previously described.

Standard deadlines for module choice apply are communicated to the students by the Schools – usually end week 0 for humanities and end of week 1 for Social Science students so that group allocation and module group administration can occur for start of week 1.

Changes to student module registrations after online module registration has closed have to occur manually by Faculty or School administration as appropriate.

New Student seminar group allocation

September (short deadlines)

Timetable Officers allocate students to subgroups using the scheduling software as per returning students (described above).

Student Data System group administration

September (specific timings depending on stage and faculty)

Once the Student Data System annual roll-over has occurred – (around 1st August) – then the Student Data System group administration can begin.

The Timetabling Office is solely responsible for Master Group Create, Sub-Group Create and Sub-Group Visibility. Dates will be advertised by the Timetabling Office. The data from the timetabling system including the allocation of students to sub-groups will be built into the student data system group structure and displayed to students.

Note: Manual group administration through SDS on the web can be used for changing students between subgroups manually. **If master groups are built through the web interface, timetabling and group allocation data will not be automatically built into the group structure. This feature should not generally be used and is only there for modules which require a manual set-up separate from timetable data – e.g. placement modules.**

Instructions on this process are [here](#).

Room bookings

It is really important for the efficient and workable use of teaching space that room booking requests during the standard teaching day weeks 1-12 and 13-24 are held until the timetable planning process has been completed. Otherwise one-off bookings block whole strings of events. Therefore there is a process for handling room bookings in a structured way.

Exceptions to this process are only events which are strategically important to the University such as Open days, University concert and open lecture series.

Room bookings are prioritised by week required. Week 0 bookings can be entered onto the timetable at any point in the process, but all other room bookings during regular teaching time must be held until September so that they do not block space for the room allocation and checking processes.

Week 1 bookings can be confirmed the week before week 0. Other bookings for Autumn Term can be confirmed in week 1 onwards after all the seminar allocation has been completed. Bookings for Spring Term can be processed from week 4 onwards.

Non-modular events can be broadcast to students via their personal timetables using the Student Data System (web) > Group Administration > Non-modular event administration. Instructions for this functionality are [here](#).

Postscript: Student texting service

Did you know that you can text students about changes to their teaching or other important things they should know? The function lies in SDS.

Useful Information Points

Timetabling Office webpage - www.kent.ac.uk/timetabling/

This has, amongst other things, information on teaching rooms such as size and location and a link to reporting room problems for staff.

Online – Timetable Information System (OTIS) - www.kent.ac.uk/timetabling/otis/otis.html

This is where you and members of teaching can view the current timetable and the draft timetable for the coming academic year. It is also the starting point for submitting bulk information changes.

Module Catalogue - www.kent.ac.uk/courses/modules

This is the students' view of all information about modules. It gathers data from a number of locations including timetable information. Between January and until the schools release groups around the start of the academic year students can only view the lecture timetable.

SDS handbook - www.kent.ac.uk/cmsds/secure/

This is a comprehensive guide to SDS and its administrative functions.