## The LJaLJeNJΩă ăűNJdzcűdzNJe

This paper is split into two sections:

1. Summary of recommendations

All recommendations gathered together for easy reading.

2. Consultation response

Each set of consultation questions is followed by the feedback provided by the Schools, and some recommendations as to what should happen next.

2.1. Publication approach
  2.1.1. Whole year or by term?
  2.1.2. Draft timetable publication date
2.2. Timeline
2.3. Co G4g9lstent teaching pattern
2.4. Other suggestions for 2022/ G3
2.5. Other suggestions for 2023/ G4 onwards

3. Appendices

The appendices include the overview of the end-to-end process required to build the timetable, and the associated timeline. These were shared in the original consultation document.

Note that, throughout the paper, 'Timetabling Team' is used to refer to the sub-group of the Timetabling & Room Booking Team who most frequently work on timetabling activities.

Elizabeth Evans, Head of Timetabling & Room Booking

22nd February 2022

[redacted]

# 2. Consultation response

## 2.1. Publication approach

### 2.1.1. Whole year or by term?

Feedback

The majority of consulted groups agreed that the timetable should be published in September for the whole academic year. The benefits of this, listed in order of frequency of mention, are:

Staff can plan childcare

and then, when the School wants to start work on their timetable, they submit a raft of changes knowing that the Timetabling Team will have to undertake the work.
Planning across Schools for teaching is better coordinated in some Schools and Departments than others. This has been particularly noticeable where:

- Individual academic staff have not understood the Teaching & Learning Framework and have not received support to guide them in how to structure their teaching to meet the Framework.
- Individual academic staff contact the Timetabling Team directly asking for a session to be moved without having consulted other colleagues teaching on the same programme, resulting in complaints about timetable changes from the colleagues who receive knock-on changes.

Recommendations

4. Schools to commence work on their workload allocation planning in February so that individual module convenors can consider and submit their timetabling requirements in March. Where modules are offered across multiple Departments, Schools should ensure that all Departments are involved in the planning of these modules. This will contribute significantly to the enhanced accuracy of the timetable, reduce checking requirements, and create a better student and staff experience.
5. The draft timetable is published in June for a period of three weeks.

## 2.2. Timeline

A timeline was presented to Schools for comment (see Appendix 2), and to aid discussion on the consultation questions in section 2.1. Some additional consultation was carried out with CQSD and the Support Centres who have confirmed that they can work to this timeline. No alternative suggestions were made by Schools and,

### 2.4.2. Data accuracy

The timetabling process is wholly reliant on the quality of data submitted by the Schools and inputted by the Timetabling Team. Both Schools and the Timetabling Team have a responsibility to ensure that the data that they produce is accurate and unambiguous. This will improve trust between all parties involved in the process.

As recommended in section 2.1.2., if Schools are able to commence work on their workload allocation planning in February, individual module convenors would be able to consider and submit their timetabling requests in March. Where modules are offered across multiple Departments, Schools should ensure that all Departments are involved in the planning of these modules. This will

See also recommendation 2 in section 2.1.1.

### 2.4.4. Staff availability

Staff availability information is provided to the Timetabling Team by Heads of School. This information is collected in April so that it can be incorporated into the draft timetable, meaning that timetables are right first time for staff with part-time and flexible working arrangements.

When new staff join the University, or when existing staff have a formal flexible working arrangement agreed, the timetable is altered to accommodate these changes. There is no deadline for submitting these changes, but they can become more difficult to accommodate after the final timetable has been published.

Often staffing arrangements and gaps in staffing are passed to the Timetabling Team to 'solve' via timetable changes; timetable changes are rarely in isolation and will often have a significant impact on other modules, academic colleagues, and students. Adequately resourcing teaching and learning activity is the responsibility of the Head of School and decisions to agree to formal flexible working arrangements and/or smart working must be seen in this context, rather than expecting the timetable to be adapted to accommodate.

With respect to formal flexible working agreements, individuals within Schools noted that their flexible working arrangement had not been signed off before the timetable was scheduled, and therefore their needs had not been considered. During the BoSSEs, the Timetabling & Room Booking Team reiterated the fact that notifications of part-

*6.6. You agree to attend the workplace or other reasonable location to undertake teaching or research activities as required and for meetings, training courses or other events*

# 3. Appendix

## 1. How the timetable is built

This summary of the end-to-end timetabling process shows at each stage which stakeholders are involved, how their data is utilised, and how their requirements are met within the process.

### 1.1. Data collection and input

Data is collected from various sources:

| Data | Source |
|---|---|
| Room capacities | Estates |
| Staff availability | Heads of School |
| Programmes and modules in use | CQSD and RISIS |
| Programme diets | CQSD, RISIS, Support Centres |
| Activities to be timetabled | Schools |
| Estimated intake numbers | Admissions, PSO, ISLI (for NUIST) |
| Returning students' module selection choices | RISIS, Support Centres |
| Accessibility requirements for disabled students | Disability Advisory Service |

All data is input at the same time. Scheduling cannot commence until all elements of data input have been completed as all elements interact.

### 1.2. Scheduling

Scheduling is an iterative process.

Some activities must be placed into the timetable as there is no option for them to take place on a different day or time or in a different location, for example a field trip to Cadbury World which has been booked and paid for in advance. Currently all practical lab classes in SBS and SCFP are manually placed into the timetable. This also applies to field trips in APD and SAGES, and some practical activities in HBS and SPCLS.

Staff
Students at group and individual level

Where these cannot be resolved within given parameters, the Timetabling Team consult Schools to see whether any restrictions on timetabling which are causing the clashes can be relaxed. This most often applies to activities which have been blocked into the timetable on a specific day or time, or in

Timetabling & Room Booking, Student Services

## 2. Timeline

Below is the timeline that was shared with Schools during the consultation process. It is the existing timeline for all of the items mentioned in the end-to-end process. It shows dates for publication being split into autumn and spring/summer terms.

| Month | Activity | Owner |
|---|---|---|
| November 2021 | Schools asked via Estates Space Audit process to provide information on which teaching spaces will be used in the following academic year. | Space Management (Estates) and Schools |
| December 2021 | | |
| January 2022 | Schools submit the following year's programme and module list to CQSD | Schools and CQSD |
| | Last date for sign-off of new programmes to be taught from September | Schools and CQSD |
| February 2022 | Complete list of teaching spaces and capacities provided to Timetabling Team | Space Management (Estates) |
| | Module diets reviewed and built for all Parts | Support Centres and Schools |
| March 2022 | | |
| | Timetabling data collection commences (relies on Schools having considered workload allocation, or doing this simultaneously while planning timetabling) | Timetabling Team and Schools |
| | Academic staff availability submitted by Heads of School | Schools |
| April 2022 | Module selection runs over Easter | Support Centres |
| | Timetable build (autumn) | Timetabling Team |
| May 2022 | Timetable build (autumn) | Timetabling Team |
| June 2022 | Draft timetable published to staff for review (autumn) | Timetabling Team and Schools |
| July 2022 | Timetable changes made (autumn) | Timetabling Team |
| August 2022 | Student clashes resolved (autumn) | Timetabling Team and Support Centres |
| | Room usage optimised (autumn) | Timetabling Team |
| September 2022 | Timetable published to staff and returning students (autumn) | Timetabling Team |