



Timetabling Policy

Document Area	Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement
Document Function/ Owner	Director of Academic Affairs and Quality
Author	Timetabling Office Team Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team
Required Approval	Academic Council

Issued Document Location

Internal Staff Portal / Hub	Yes (default repository)
Internal Student Portal / Hub	Yes
ATU Website	Yes
Issue Date	21 July 2026
Effective Date	01 September 2026

Table of Contents

1. Purpose	3
2. Scope	3
3. External Reference Documents	3
4. Policy	4
4.1 Principles	4
4.1.1 Accuracy and Fairness.....	4
4.1.2 Consistency	4
4.1.3 Appropriateness.....	4
4.2 Scheduling	5
4.2.1 Scheduling Overview.....	5
4.2.2 Scheduling Guidelines.....	5
4.2.3 Permitted changes	6
4.2.4 Room Bookings	6
4.2.5 Timetable Data.....	7
5. Responsibilities	7
5.1.1 Director of Academic Affairs and Quality	7
5.1.2 Academic Affairs Manager (Exams, Conferring and Timetabling).....	7
5.1.3 Timetabling Office.....	7
5.1.4 Head of School	8
5.1.5 Head of Department	8
5.1.6 Estates/Facilities Office.....	8
5.1.7 IT Services	8
5.1.8 Academic Staff	9
5.1.9 Events Administrator	9
6. Documents Related to this Policy.....	9
6.1 Policies.....	9
7. Revision History.....	9

1. Purpose

Atlantic Technological University (ATU / the University) is committed to providing high quality timetabling arrangements to enhance the service and experience for our staff, students and other stakeholders. This policy is intended to support the implementation of coordinated and consistent timetabling practices across all ATU campuses.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure fair, consistent, and efficient scheduling of all timetabling activities in ATU and articulates the principles, processes and responsibilities that underpin the timely and accurate production and dissemination of University wide academic timetables.

The timetable is used to inform students and staff when, where and how their programme will be delivered and to provide them with clear expectations regarding the release of timetables, changes and relevant responsibilities.

The timetable contains a repository of data, critical for ATU to meet its reporting requirements that include internal reporting on ATU room usage and Approved Programme Schedule (APS) audits; and external reporting requirements to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) Space Utilisation Survey. The policy also serves to encourage best practice in resource optimisation.

2. Scope

The policy applies to the timetabling of all Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) activities (lecture, tutorial, practical/ laboratory, workshop/seminar, placement/internship, supervision, off-site activity and online sessions), to programmes/modules on all types of programmes and to one-off room bookings across ATU. It also applies to scheduling/recording all academic activities for which there is an allowance applied.

The policy applies to all staff responsible for creating and/or delivering timetabled activities and to all students of ATU.

The Timetabling Policy should be read in conjunction with relevant documents in the Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework (AQAEF).

3. External Reference Documents

None-applicable.

4. Policy

4.1 Principles

The following principles underpin the Timetabling Policy.

4.1.1 Accuracy and Fairness

This principle articulates the aim to publish complete, accurate and coordinated timetables early as possible prior to the start of each semester during the academic year. The academic year runs from 1 September to 20 June. To ensure accuracy and fairness, the University will:

1. Provide access to timely and accurate information that are in the best academic interests of our students and staff.
2. Optimise the utilisation of TLA space, campus facilities and resources.
3. Support the delivery of high-quality teaching to our students.
4. Provide appropriate TLA spaces to staff and students.

4.1.2 Consistency

This principle recognises that consistent timetabling will benefit all stakeholders. ATU understands that multiple demands on space may occur and that a level of co-operation and compromise must exist. The University will:

1. Align programme timetables to the Approved Programme Schedule (APS).
2. Prioritise TLA activities.
3. Provide electronic timetables to all stakeholders in a timely manner in accordance with the requirements of the *EU Web Accessibility Directive (WAD) (Directive 2016/2102)*.

4.1.3 Appropriateness

This principle recognises that TLA activities are scheduled in appropriate spaces and times that to:

1. Ensure that students are taught in the most appropriate teaching rooms.
2. Facilitate student attendance.
3. Utilise TLA space for their designed purpose.
4. Utilise teaching space and resources effectively and efficiently.
5. Provide balanced blocks and patterns for students and staff.

4.2 Scheduling

4.2.1 Scheduling Overview

The Timetabling Office operates a standardised operational calendar (linked to the Academic calendar). Timetables are published on the Staff and Student Hubs.

The *AQAE004 Programme Design Policy* defines that programmes are organised into one or more stages, with stages being divided into semesters. A semester has a total of 15 weeks to include module delivery, revision and assessment. Modules may be semesterised or year long. The structure of each programme, its division into stages and the duration of modules is outlined in the Approved Programme Schedule (APS). Programmes can be validated with approved shorter/longer module delivery or alternative start dates according to ATU's commitment to accessibility.

In terms of timetabling:

- Classes are scheduled in units of one hour (or multiples thereof).
- Classes for full-time students are normally scheduled between 9am and 6pm on weekdays. Currently, there are campus-specific variations (9.30am-5.30pm) which will remain until agreed otherwise.
- Classes for part-time students may be scheduled outside of these times. Scheduling outside of these hours requires approval from the relevant Head of Department *and* the Timetable Office.

ATU recognises that some TLA activities may not fit within this pattern. Therefore, individual week patterns can be used to accommodate courses with work placement, non-standard duration periods, block delivery, and online delivery.

4.2.2 Scheduling Guidelines

The following guidelines apply to scheduling:

1. One hour is allocated to students and academic staff for lunch break usually between 12 midday and 3pm.
2. Normally no student or staff member will be timetabled for more than four consecutive hours. If an occasional class needs longer, the Head of Department and Lecturer can discuss the options available.
3. Generally, 30-60 minutes is allocated for the preparation of laboratory and workshop space between TLA sessions.
4. Non-classroom activities are captured in the Timetabling system.
5. Block booking of classrooms requires approval from the Head of Department and the Timetabling Office.
6. Booked space must be used for the stated purpose.

7. The size (number of students expected) of a teaching event/activity should not exceed the seating capacity of the room.
8. Where practicable, student and staff timetables should avoid fragmented scheduling.
9. Allocated TLA rooms should have the required IT, space, chairs and tables.
10. Room bookings that are no longer required must be notified to the Timetabling Office as soon as possible by the person using the room.
11. When designing TLA schedules cognisance must be taken of the impact on the availability and utilisation of TLA spaces for all students.
12. Approved non-teaching activity for academic staff is scheduled on the timetable. This may include amongst other activities: research supervision, placement activities, and project work.
13. Online activities must be clearly identified and scheduled to avoid overlap with on-campus sessions unless designed as asynchronous.
14. Conflicts must be reported immediately to the Faculty Office and will be investigated and resolved as soon as reasonably practicable.

4.2.3 Permitted changes

After publication of the timetable, agreement to make changes can only occur in exceptional circumstances. Changes to the scheduled Timetable may occur due to the following:

- Room availability issues
- Late changes to accessibility requirements for either staff or students
- Approved changes in staffing availability
- Accommodation of different student numbers
- Replacement of staff who have left
- Health and safety requirements
- Unforeseen operational issues.

All requests for timetable changes must be made by the Head of Department to the Timetabling Office. Staff and students will be notified of any changes by the Timetabling Office.

4.2.4 Room Bookings

TLA activities take priority. Ad-hoc room bookings in TLA spaces will only be accommodated when the final timetable is published. Additional room bookings for TLA activities (for example, assessment, extra classes) during the academic year can only be made via the ATU Timetable Helpdesk and the *Timetabling EXCEL Template* updated accordingly.

Room bookings by external stakeholders are dealt with by the Estates/Facilities Office. A minimum notice period of three working days is required for all room bookings.

Where an event or activity is to be scheduled outside of normal operational hours, the Estates/Facilities Office is the decision maker in relation to the availability of facilities and the cost of same where appropriate.

4.2.5 Timetable Data

Timetabling data is provided by the Heads of Department / Head of Centre to the Timetabling Office on the *Timetabling EXCEL Template*. The information provided by the Head of Department includes:

- Programme codes and module codes
- Details of how modules are shared between programmes
- The initial allocation for the programmes based on the projected numbers
- Details of the resources required to deliver the module
- Breakdown of the delivery for each module.

Normally, the existing timetable is rolled over in advance of the new academic year. Any changes to staff allocations are approved by the Heads of Department and must be communicated to the Timetable Office.

5. Responsibilities

5.1.1 Director of Academic Affairs and Quality

The Director of Academic Affairs and Quality has overall responsibility for this policy to ensure its consistent implementation across ATU.

5.1.2 Academic Affairs Manager (Exams, Conferring and Timetabling)

The Academic Affairs Manager (Exams, Conferring and Timetabling) has responsibility for managing the operation of the Timetabling across ATU. Additional responsibilities include:

- Monitor the operation of Timetabling Policy
- Address issues that may arise during the academic year
- Manage Exams and Conferring and related timetabling requirements
- Liaise with Estates/Facilities on auditing reporting requirements.

5.1.3 Timetabling Office

- Implement the operational calendar for timetabling
- Provide training and support to Heads of Department
- Coordinate the creation, updating and review of the Timetabling Database
- Implement requests for timetable changes made by the Head of Department
- Maintain up to date information on the availability of TLA space

- Manage room booking requests from ATU staff (requested via the ATU Timetable Helpdesk)
- Conduct an audit of a sample of APSs and published timetables annually
- Assist in the production of reports based on the Timetabling database.

5.1.4 Head of School

- Liaise with Heads of Department to ensure effective utilisation of academic staff, TLA spaces and University resources
- Liaise with Heads of Department and Deans of Faculty to respond to queries arising from audits

5.1.5 Head of Department

- Assign allocations based on staff contracts, the APS and student numbers
- Undertake periodic reconciliation of APSs, timetables and staff contracts
- Submit draft allocations and relevant timetabling data to the Timetabling Office using the *Timetabling EXCEL Template* in a timely manner in Semester 1 and Semester 2.
- Ensure changes to programmes/modules are accurately reflected in the data provided to the Timetabling Office
- Notify the Timetabling Office of modifications to modules/programmes approved in Academic Module Manager (AMM).
- Liaise with the Academic Affairs Manager (Exams, Conferring and Timetabling) on any issues that may arise during the academic year.

5.1.6 Estates/Facilities Office

- Ensure that all teaching rooms are heated, powered, maintained and refurbished as required
- In consultation with IT Services, ensure appropriate AV facilities are available
- Manage the HEA Space Utilisation Survey
- Advise the Timetabling Office of planned works and any changes to equipment and/or room layouts
- Manage bookings made by external stakeholders
- Manage health and safety and insurance issues related to bookings outside of normal operational hours.

5.1.7 IT Services

- Budget holder for all software procured by the Timetabling Office
- Provide technical support and information to the Timetabling Office.

5.1.8 Academic Staff

- Review timetables and advise the Head of Department of any errors or omissions
- Report any issues to the Head of Department with assigned teaching space, equipment or access
- Adhere to the latest version of the published timetable.

5.1.9 Events Administrator

- Liaise with Timetabling Office and Estates/Facilities as appropriate
- Provide guidance on the planning of events at ATU.

6. Documents Related to this Policy

6.1 Policies

- *AQAE004 Programme Design Policy*
- *AQAE005 Marks and Standards*
- *AQAE011 Research Degree Policy*
- *AQAE017 Programme and Module Revision Policy*

7. Revision History

Revision No	Description of Change	Approval Date
000	New Policy	12 June 2026 Academic Council