

Timetable Production

This document draws on the *SMC Departmental Update: Parameters for Planning Your Teaching* document dated Thursday 28 May 2020

As it is only possible to build a single timetable, it must be built in a way that supports both face-to-face and online teaching delivery to enable this hybrid approach. This hybrid model assumes that, even with some element of online teaching activity, students will need to access some live, synchronous, interactive, online teaching events. That's why we still need a timetable to schedule that online and face-to-face activity.

Timetables and Estates are currently working to produce an initial version of the new timetable based on the information sent to them by departments.

1. Online delivery and time zones

- 1.1 A sizeable number of students may be unable to come to London for the start of Michaelmas Term and will remain located in their home countries. For synchronous online interactive teaching to take place, the timetable will therefore need to take into account time zones. The proposal is to divide the normal teaching day (09:00-18:00) into two blocks as shown in the table below:

On Campus or online delivery	Scheduled Time	Online delivery Seminars and classes synchronous Lectures asynchronous
AM block	09:00-14:00	AM block for students from Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Australia/New Zealand
PM block	14:00-18:00	PM block for students from the Americas

- 1.2 To support this approach courses should have classes/seminars available in both time zones. The timetabling system uses 'activity type' to enable downstream processes such as student allocation to groups. Hence, if departments want to run alternative forms of live/synchronous online teaching activities, such as Oxbridge style tutorials, guided reading courses etc, that's fine. But to ensure that they are built into the timetable, they will be referred to as classes/seminars here. Likewise, Harvard style sessions are counted as seminars. The following constraints will apply:

- a) Courses with multiple live, synchronous, interactive seminar/class groups will need to have groups in both the AM and PM block.
- b) Courses which usually have a single seminar/class group for interactive delivery will need to have a second group added or need to be suspended.
- c) All lecture-based content irrespective of class size, i.e. not only those above size 100 as previously advised will need to be delivered only online (synchronously or asynchronously) for the Michaelmas term.
- d) If a course leader plans for *one element* of their course, typically a lecture, to be taught online but synchronously for the duration of Michaelmas Term, it can be scheduled as a synchronous slot but not roomed. The whole course, however, cannot be taught fully online (see 1.3).

- e) For larger courses, Timetables may be able to schedule some UG students into 'on-campus only' groups for all students present in London. Departments may be able to do the same for PGTs. However, 'on-campus only' courses still need to provide for additional 'online only' or hybrid (i.e. both 'on-campus and online) groups in both the AM and PM block since we cannot know at this stage how many of our students will be unable to come to London, at least initially.
- f) Hybrid delivery with simultaneous online and on-campus in-person teaching is likely to be feasible in many teaching rooms, and DTS are looking into providing the necessary IT equipment.
- g) Following these constraints will help to produce a timetable for the unique set of circumstances facing the School at the start of the new academic year. However, if local departmental knowledge suggests alternative approaches, then please get in touch with timetables@lse.ac.uk to discuss them. But please be mindful that synchronous delivery needs to work both on campus and online across time zones, and to stay within the timetable slots.

1.3 Please refer to the attached diagram for further information on scheduling across time zones.

1.4 For the purposes of planning at this stage, we are assuming normal group sizes of 15 students for classes. This does not apply to Harvard style seminars, which take place with larger group sizes. Once we are clearer about the physical distancing measures we might need to apply, we will factor these things into the next stage of the timetable build.

1.5 Please note that on campus, face-to-face, interactive teaching delivery might need to take place over a longer than normal teaching day and possibly also on Saturdays and Sundays if social distancing rules on public transport and on-campus remain in place in the new academic year. The Estates Division is currently modelling possibilities for a physically distanced campus. This modelling will inform the timetable build.

1.6 Staff who live further away from campus may prefer to teach outside normal teaching hours and/or over the weekend to avoid public transport during busier times. Timetables will provide a spreadsheet on which this information can be submitted.

2. Further considerations to support teaching delivery 2020/21

2.1 Time zones require that students are scheduled into classes and seminars according to their location in the world. Europe-based students can be scheduled across both sessions. Europeans, Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Australia/New Zealand based students will share one block of classes (AM block), Europeans and America based students will share another (PM block).

2.2 PGT students will need to be encouraged to sign up to the correct seminar according to their time zone (even if we start on-campus, because students may return home later in the year and still require teaching). Departments will need to monitor PGT students are in the correct groups for their time zone and move students accordingly. Further guidance on this process will be provided.

2.3 Timetables will monitor UG students, ensuring they are in the correct groups for their time zone, and will move students accordingly.