Operational Principles for delivery of the 2021-22 Timetable

The UMT has set out a process for timetabling and room allocation for 2021/22 which includes plans to deal with any subsequent change of levels in the Health Guidance Framework (living with Covid strategy). It is intended that the University will deliver an as normal as possible on-campus experience to students in 2021-22. UMT has indicated that schools should plan now to deliver classroom-based teaching on-campus for the next academic year, national public health guidance allowing, and the purpose of this document is to provide guidance on how to do so.

Operational Principles

1. The University will commence at full on-campus delivery unless restrictions are still in place nationally.
2. Teaching arrangement categories will be captured on the extract.
3. The University will expect students to return to campus from the start of 2021-22 and the majority of core teaching will take place face to face (f2f).
4. As a range of core content, not just enrichment activity, will be delivered f2f, students will be unable to meet all of their learning outcomes if they are not able to attend f2f sessions on campus. Normal practice around reasonable accommodation will be used to support students who are unable to attend for unforeseen circumstances.
5. The University will not expect or encourage a general use of hyflex module delivery. Hyflex refers to delivering f2f and streaming online at the same time, which would require faculty to support students accessing learning both f2f and at distance. Where possible and appropriate, lecture capture will be used to record teaching which will be made available via Brightspace to support students in revision and study.
6. All programmes will be blended by design for the whole academic year: offering both f2f and on-line learning activities as appropriate. A small number of programmes and modules may be offered fully online (where the pedagogy and student cohort support this) or through dual delivery and where appropriate quality assurance processes have been met.

Objectives for teaching, learning and assessment for 2021-22:

1. Ensuring compliance with public health rules/guidance in place at any particular time.
2. Ensuring the health, safety and well-being of employees and students.
3. Prioritising the experience of classroom and campus life for students where possible.
4. Ensuring the best possible teaching and learning experiences for students, whether online, blended or face to face.

5. Meeting the objectives articulated in module descriptors with respect to teaching, learning and assessment modes.
6. Ensuring the best use of the scarce classroom resources.
7. Ensuring the viability of teaching and learning objectives from a timetabling perspective.

Teaching Arrangement Categories

The feature developed in InfoHub to define teaching arrangement categories will be an important point of reference in supporting the 2021-22 timetable. Please note that Module Coordinators will not be required to update the "Review My Module Teaching Arrangements" feature in InfoHub as this will be done by Room Allocations as part of the timetabling process.

The categories are:
A. teaching that must be delivered on campus e.g. labs and practicals (listed on the system as 'essential on-campus')
B. teaching that will be delivered on-campus if allowed under national public health guidelines (listed on the system as 'temporary online')
C. teaching that will be delivered online only (listed on the system as 'online only')

The categories allow a central change to information that will be visible on student timetables, showing 'online' when 'on-campus' delivery is not possible under public health guidelines. Please note this only applies to category 'B' above and other specific arrangements for category 'A' are set out below. These categories will be captured on the extract for 2021-22 and Room Allocations will update changes in designation onto the InfoHub system during timetabling.

CATEGORY 'A' - ESSENTIAL ON-CAMPUS DELIVERY

- This category applies to teaching that requires f2f/on-campus delivery to meet the learning objectives set out in the module descriptor and that cannot be delivered online.
- The objective for category 'A' is full on-campus delivery.
- CRNs for essential face-to-face teaching including laboratories, clinical, practical and practice-based teaching will be scheduled for the normal workload/frequency. Therefore, labs, practicals and clinical teaching will initially be timetabled for delivery at 1m physical distancing (with PPE) to provide the number of CRNs that may be required if physical distancing restrictions are put in place nationally.
- A new 'room' will be added to CMIS ('HOLD') the purpose of which is to hold the student's time on their timetable. The objective of this is that, if Public health guidelines allow, activity recorded as 'HOLD' will be put back into its room.
- The above can be done by scheduling labs and practicals for delivery at the same time, split over a number of weeks e.g. class split into 2 with CRNs for delivery to each cohort of students every 2nd week in a room and the other week designated as 'HOLD'. In the event of no physical distancing, 'HOLD' can be changed to the actual room. This approach would maximise the potential to merge groups, where possible, however, it could result in reduced student f2f contact hours in the event of physical distancing being required.

- Schools could consider other ways of delivering a full student load, for example, planning for smaller classes scheduled at different days/times that would not require splitting/merging. Groups that are split across days and times cannot be merged.

<u>Category 'A' Worked Example</u>

In the worked example below, 100 students are taking Lab-based module 101. Without physical distancing the lab can seat 50 students and under 1m physical distancing the capacity reduces to 25 students. Each student has 3 hours of labs for 12-weeks. Normally, there would be 2 CRNs of 50 capacity each – one on Monday, 14.00-17.00 and one on Wednesday, 14.00-17.00. If physical distancing is required, a reduced workload may be in effect and there would be 4 CRNs of 25 capacity each.

The original 50 capacity CRN would be split into 2 x 25 capacity CRNs and scheduled for delivery on campus in alternate weeks. In order to structure the timetable to maximise on-campus delivery when physical distancing is not in place, each cohort will be allocated the 'HOLD' room for the weeks they are not physically on-campus. This is to ensure that when physical distancing is not required groups can be merged to maximise in-person activity and scheduling can be easily updated by Room Allocations to the correct lab location.

In the case of no physical distancing, all of the bookings recorded as 'HOLD' in the above example will be changed by Room Allocations. Related CRNs should be clearly indicated on extracts e.g. Monday CRN 1 and CRN 2 are related CRNs in the example above.

Initial CRNs allocation during timetabling

	Monday CRN 1	Monday CRN 2	Wed CRN 1	Wed CRN 2
Week 1	Lab Room 101	HOLD	Lab Room 101	HOLD
Week 2	HOLD	Lab Room 101	HOLD	Lab Room 101
Week 3	Lab Room 101	HOLD	Lab Room 101	HOLD
Week 4 etc	HOLD	Lab Room 101	HOLD	Lab Room 101

Start-of-term CRN allocation (no physical distancing)

	Monday CRN 1	Monday CRN 2	Wed CRN 1	Wed CRN 2
Week 1	Lab Room 101	Lab Room 101	Lab Room 101	Lab Room 101
Week 2	Lab Room 101	Lab Room 101	Lab Room 101	Lab Room 101
Week 3	Lab Room 101	Lab Room 101	Lab Room 101	Lab Room 101
Week 4 etc	Lab Room 101	Lab Room 101	Lab Room 101	Lab Room 101

CATEGORY 'B' - TEMPORARY ONLINE DELIVERY

- This category applies to all teaching (lectures, classes, tutorials, seminars etc) for all disciplines, including those that also deliver labs and practicals, that ideally would be delivered f2f. However, the learning objectives set out in the module descriptors can be met through online delivery if on-campus delivery is not possible.
- As the default teaching category will be Category 'B' (temporarily online), it is important that the correct designation is recorded on the extract. Timetabling for modules or schools that has been completed can be reviewed on the module timetable report on InfoHub.
- Large classes should be scheduled for on-campus delivery and classified as 'B', even if pedagogically they are to be delivered synchronously online, in order to ensure that a room

is allocated, which can be used for teaching or as a study space for the relevant cohort of students.

- Student timetables will normally reflect the physical room booked for the CRN. If national restrictions are in place, then the room allocated for a CRN will remain attached to the piece of scheduling even when the room that displays on the student calendar is 'online'.
- If, as in 2020-21, a national limit to the number of students who can be in a teaching space is introduced, all CRNs where the number of students registered is greater than that limit will be scheduled for delivery online. No provision will be made for on-campus activity under any scenario other than the essential on-campus teaching listed above.
- If it is necessary to move some or all elements of category 'B' to fully online, due to national health guidelines etc, no action will be required by schools and/or Module Coordinators.

CATEGORY 'C' - ONLINE ONLY DELIVERY

- This category applies to teaching that is designed to only be delivered online.
- Use of Category 'C' (Online Only) should be minimised and ideally only be used for teaching that is typically delivered online e.g. distance modules.