TIMETABLE SYSTEM – A NOTE FOR MODULE ORGANISERS AND TIME-TABLERS

Timetable planning for the 2010/11 academic year and beyond will be undertaken in accordance with a new Basic scheme which will operate with a number of simple rules. Schools using their own timetable planning techniques should be able to apply these to fit with this Basic scheme. The University's timetable slotting scheme, which is used as a timetabling aid by a number of Schools, has been adjusted to enable it to also work with the new Basic scheme.

The Teaching Day

The Teaching day commences at 9:00am and runs into the evenings. Whilst rooms for teaching are booked by the hour, students and academic staff should note that teaching sessions should last no more than 50 minutes and are expected to commence and end at the following times:

- Modules running in the mornings (Resource slot 1 and 2 – see below) will start on the hour and finish at 50 minutes past the hour.
- Modules running in the afternoons and evenings (Resource slots 3, 4 and 5 – see below) will start at 10 minutes past the hour and finish on the hour.
- These start and end times guarantee a minimum 20 minute break in the middle of the day for staff and students.

Undergraduate teaching must not timetabled on Wednesday afternoons, i.e. after 13:00 hours, unless it is a repeated session such as a seminar which also occurs outside of this restricted time.

For simplicity the remainder of this paper will refer to room booking times.

Timetable Planning – The Basic scheme

In order to make the best use of the University's teaching accommodation, UEA's teaching day has been divided into five two-hour resource slots for room booking purposes. For similar reasons, three-hour teaching periods have been established in four resource slots. **Modules can be scheduled within these resource slots but teaching sessions with a duration of two and three hours will not be permitted to span resource slots.** The Basic scheme is illustrated in the following diagram with the two-hour slots numbered 1-5 and the three-hour slots identified by colours: yellow, orange, blue or purple, or held in the evening.

Wherever possible timetable information for students should be presented in terms of days and times of teaching rather than in terms of codes or slots.

For internal timetable planning, room bookings, and for recording purposes the following notation should be used:

- Individual hour codes (B1, D4, A3 etc) are to be used to identify one-hour teaching sessions.
- To signify combinations of teaching sessions, the hour codes should be used with
    - a comma "," to separate different events
    - an asterisk "*" to signify "and"
    - an oblique "/ " to indicate "or" when for example a laboratory session or seminar is repeated at different times and students need only attend on one occasion

        For example, if a communal lecture is followed up by one of a number of alternative groups, a comma is placed after the lecture and the alternative groups are divided by an oblique (e.g. **D5,A1/E1** indicates that a lecture for all students takes place on Tuesdays 13.00-14.00 with a follow-up group either on Fridays 9.00-10:00 or Thursdays 9.00- 10:00). Alternative group times may also be indicated at the end of the module description.

- Two-hour or three-hour teaching sessions can be presented in either of two ways:
    - With reference to the resource slot, e.g. Mon slot 1, Wed slot 3 or Thu yellow**; or**
    - With reference to the hourly sequence codes, for example **D1*D2** indicates that a two-hour teaching session will run from 9:00 through to 11:00 on Wednesdays.   A Wednesday yellow three-hour session would be noted as **D1*D2*A3.**

As this notation can sometimes become overly complex some codes have been created as a shorthand means of recording some common combinations of timetabling and room booking information - see slotting system section below.

Timetable planning – University timetable slotting scheme

In order to assist in timetable planning the University has a slotting system that fits with the above basic scheme. The teaching week is divided into five major slots of 11+ hours' duration (identified by the letters A-E) and this is reflected in the identifying codes for each hour of the teaching week. The evening slot commences at 17:10 and is left open-ended for longer evening activities.   Slotting is helpful to staff in planning the timetable to ensure that it is feasible to study particular combinations of modules in the same semester. By allocating modules to the A-E slots Schools can plan their timetable in the knowledge that there will be no timetable clashes. Generally such module combinations would be scheduled in different slots though with careful planning two modules can be timetabled within the same slot.

Teaching may be held at any time within the full 11+ hour slot. The major slot letter is assigned to that module (A-E). The different hours within each major slot are numbered (e.g. **D1** is Wednesdays 09.00 – 10:00, **D5** is Tuesdays 13:00 – 14:00, etc). Timetable slots indicate the **range** of times within which a module may be scheduled. However, modules are unlikely to be taught in every available hour within its designated slot or sub-slot; for example, a module scheduled in a full 12 hour slot (e.g. AA) is unlikely to entail 12 hours of teaching sessions for each student.

Most Schools work with sub-slot schemes, subdividing each of the five major slots into standardised patterns. The initial letter of each sub-slot specifies the parent 12-hour slot from which it is derived (e.g. the **AJL** sub-slot, containing 6 hours of classes a week, is a derivative of the basic **AA** slot). There is no timetable overlap among slots which begin with different letters. However, extensive timetable overlap is likely among sub-slots beginning with the same letter.

The *Timetable Slotting and Room booking Chart* below, gives precise hours of the week for each sub-slot, and is intended to help in timetable planning by identifying timetable overlaps. The Chart is divided into five panels, one for each of the major slots A – E. **In planning a timetable using the sub-slots care must be taken to check for incompatibilities among sub-slots within the same panel.** There are no timetable clashes among sub-slots which appear in different panels.

Summary

Slotting rules:
1. All 2-hour events must conform to the resource slots 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5.
2. All 3-hour events must conform to the resource slots in yellow, orange, blue or purple, or be held in the evening (resource slot 5).
3. Modules running in resource slots 1 and 2 will start on the hour and finish at 50 minutes past the hour.
4. Modules running in resource slots 3 and 4 and in the evenings will start at 10 minutes past the hour and finish on the hour.

Timetable Working Group
Learning and Teaching Quality Committee
October 2009

TIMETABLE SLOTTING SYSTEM : BASIC SCHEME

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday		
1		B1	C1	D1	E1	A1		0900
		B2	C2	D2	E2	A2		1000
2		B3	C3	A3	E3	D3		1100
		E4	D4	B4	A4	C4		1200
3		C5	D5	E5	A5	B5		1310
		C6	D6	E6	A6	B6		1410
4		C7	D7	E7	A7	B7		1510
		C8	D8	E8	A8	B8		1610
5		A9	B9	C9	D9	E9		1710
		A10	B10	C10	D10	E10		1810
		EY	AY	BY	CY	DY		1910

Timetable Slotting and Room Booking Chart

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Total Hours
SLOT AA AND ITS DERIVATIVES						
AA	1700-1900	1900-2100	1100-1200	1200-1300, 1300-1400, 1400-1700	0900-1100	12
AG	1800-1900			1200-1300, 1300-1400, 1600-1700		4
AJ			1100-1200	1300-1500		3
AK			1100-1200	1500-1700		3
AL	1700-1800				0900-1100	3
AQQ				1400-1700		3
AP	1700-1900		1100-1200	1200-1300, 1300-1400		5
AQ				1400-1700	0900-1100	5
AJL	1700-1800		1100-1200	1300-1500	0900-1100	6
AKL	1700-1800		1100-1200	1500-1700	0900-1100	6
AGL	1700-1900			1200-1300, 1300-1400, 1600-1700	0900-1100	7
AGJ	1800-1900		1100-1200	1200-1300, 1300-1400, 1400-1700		7
AR	1800-1900			1200-1300, 1400-1500	0900-1100	5
AS	1700-1800		1100-1200	1300-1400, 1500-1700		5

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Total Hours
SLOT BB AND ITS DERIVATIVES						
BB	0900-1200	1700-1900	1200-1300, 1900-2100		1300-1400, 1400-1700	12
BG		1700-1800			1300-1500	3
BH		1700-1800			1500-1700	3
BJ	1100-1200		1200-1300		1600-1700	3
BL	0900-1100	1800-1900			1300-1400	4
BQQ					1400-1700	3
BP	0900-1000	1700-1900	1200-1300		1300-1400	5
BQ	0900-1100				1400-1700	5
BJL	0900-1200	1800-1900	1200-1300		1300-1400, 1600-1700	7
BGL	0900-1100	1700-1900			1300-1400, 1500-1700	7
BGJ	1100-1200	1700-1800	1200-1300		1400-1700	6
BR	0900-1100	1800-1900	1200-1300		1400-1500	5
BS	1100-1200	1700-1800			1300-1400, 1500-1700	5

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Total Hours
SLOT CC AND ITS DERIVATIVES						
CC	1300-1400, 1400-1700	0900-1200	1700-1900	1900-2100	1200-1300	12
CG	1300-1500		1700-1800			3
CH	1500-1700		1700-1800			3
CJ	1600-1700	1100-1200			1200-1300	3
CL	1300-1400	0900-1100	1800-1900			4
CQQ	1400-1700					3
CP	1300-1400	0900-1000	1700-1900		1200-1300	5
CQ	1400-1700	0900-1100				5
CJL	1300-1400, 1600-1700	0900-1200	1800-1900		1200-1300	7
CGL	1300-1400, 1500-1700	0900-1100	1700-1900			7
CGJ	1400-1700	1100-1200	1700-1800		1200-1300	6
CR	1400-1500	0900-1100	1800-1900		1200-1300	5
CS	1300-1400, 1500-1700	1100-1200	1700-1800			5

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Total Hours
SLOT DD AND ITS DERIVATIVES							
DD			1200-1300, 1300-1400, 1400-1700	0900-1100	1700-1900	0900-1000, 1900-2100	12
DG			1200-1300, 1300-1400, 1600-1700		1800-1900		4
DJ			1300-1500			0900-1000	3
DK			1500-1700			0900-1000	3
DL				0900-1100	1700-1800		3
DQQ			1400-1700				3
DP			1200-1300, 1300-1400		1700-1900	0900-1000	5
DQ			1400-1700	0900-1100			5
DJL			1300-1500	0900-1100	1700-1800	0900-1000	6
DKL			1500-1700	0900-1100	1700-1800	0900-1000	6
DGL			1200-1300, 1300-1400, 1600-1700	0900-1100	1700-1900		7
DGJ			1200-1300, 1300-1400, 1400-1700		1800-1900	0900-1000	7
DR			1200-1300, 1400-1500	0900-1100	1800-1900		5
DS			1300-1400, 1500-1700		1700-1800	0900-1000	5

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Total Hours
SLOT EE AND ITS DERIVATIVES							
EE		1200-1300, 1900-2100		1300-1400, 1400-1700	0900-1200	1700-1900	12
EUG		1200-1300.			0900-1100, 1100-1200		4