

# ROOM BOOKING<sup>1</sup>

## PURPOSE

This document describes the College policy and norms for efficiently finding and booking College shared spaces.

## GOALS

The specific goals of this policy are to:

- Provide high visibility of rooms and other shared spaces that are bookable, and transparency of usage and utilisation of those rooms and spaces
- Provide mechanisms by which Shared Spaces can be booked, in accordance with the relative priority set out in the College Space Sharing policy
- Establish booking windows that allow for the scheduling of Academic Mission aligned activities like well in advance; and without unduly constraining the ability to generate income from Shared Spaces otherwise not being used
- Provide operational clarity about how principles of space sharing apply to bookings
- Establish clear expectations, standards and norms to guide booking of rooms and other shared spaces
- Provide mechanisms to reinforce the surety of bookings (ie that they will not be “bumped”), including where a booked room becomes unavailable because of unforeseen events
- Reduce the administrative effort of finding and booking shared spaces for acceptable uses

## SCOPE

This policy applies to bookings of College shared spaces:

- All College shared spaces including Teaching rooms, Events spaces and Meeting rooms<sup>2</sup>; as defined in the College Shared Space policy
- Requests and bookings for activities that are acceptable uses of Shared Spaces<sup>3</sup> as follows:
  - Requesting of rooms designated as primarily for “Teaching”
  - Requesting and booking of rooms designated as primarily for “Events”
  - Requesting and booking of rooms designated as primarily for “Meeting”
- Student bookable spaces

Agreed exclusions to this policy are:

- Scheduling and room booking of Teaching events and Examination events<sup>4</sup>
- Research laboratories, whether used for teaching or not
- Communal areas that can be reserved for special events<sup>5</sup>
- Events that do not meet with the acceptable uses of College space as described in the College Space Sharing policy
- Open plan offices and open plan ad-hoc meeting spaces
- Individual’s offices, and individuals’ desks
- Spaces whose main purpose is sport
- Car parking spaces
- Student accommodation
- ICU spaces granted via the partnership agreement

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<sup>1</sup> Includes non-enclosed spaces where these have been identified as bookable, eg foyers and circulation spaces not otherwise excluded from the scope of the policy

<sup>2</sup> The definitive list of shared spaces is maintained in the Imperial College Location Inventory System ([ICLIS](#))

<sup>3</sup> As defined in the Space Sharing policy

<sup>4</sup> Refer to College Academic Timetabling policy and Examination Timetabling policy for events of this type

<sup>5</sup> For example, Dalby Court and Queens Lawn during Imperial Festival

- Charging policy for shared spaces
- Access to shared rooms (including opening hours and access control mechanisms)
- Room setup, room operation, room services (e.g., catering, AV)

## DEFINITIONS

Bookable Shared Spaces any space that is available to be booked by a member of College for any acceptable use as described in the College Space Sharing policy.

Non-bookable Shared Space any room or common area designated as shared but not bookable, and with the express purpose of providing ad-hoc working space.

Restricted Use Shared Space<sup>6</sup> any room or other shared space that, due to its purpose or scarcity, is only available for booking through a designated Booking Moderator. Examples include but are not limited to Teaching Spaces<sup>7</sup>, flat floor spaces suitable for Examinations<sup>8</sup>, and the Faculty Building Board Room.

Room Booking System (RBS) the system used for requesting and authorising use of all College Shared Spaces in the scope of this policy.

Booking Requestor a member of College requesting use of a shared space.

Booking Moderator an individual, group of individuals or system based business rules that mediate, prioritise and confirm bookings into shared spaces that: are in high demand, are subject to temporal booking windows, or are designated a Restricted Use Shared Space.

## POLICY

1. The approach, methods, tools and management of Room Booking will be specified and overseen by the Assistant Provost (Space), on behalf of the Provost; and who is accountable for the integrity and effectiveness of arrangements described in this policy.
2. Members of College can request the use of Bookable Shared Spaces via the College Room Booking System.
3. For complex events<sup>9</sup> with implications for wider campus and/or room operation<sup>10</sup>, expert advice should be sought from the appropriate team responsible for supporting that type of event, before requesting any shared spaces.
4. Surety of bookings will be facilitated by a lifecycle approach. This means each Bookable Shared Space will be in one of 4 states for any given bookable time and duration:
  - a. Available: space is available to be requested by members of College for acceptable uses, in accordance with the order of precedence defined in the Space Sharing policy

<sup>6</sup> For a full list of these spaces see Imperial College Location Inventory System ([ICLIS](#))

<sup>7</sup> During Core Teaching Year as specified in College [Academic Timetabling policy](#)

<sup>8</sup> During designated examinations periods as specified in College Examinations Timetabling policy

<sup>9</sup> Includes: Graduation Ceremonies, Open Days, Freshers Fair, Imperial Festival, state visits, multi-day conferences

<sup>10</sup> Impacts to be considered include: noise, access, demand on catering outlets, building operation, security, waste, cleaning, room preparation and reset time for differing seating layouts and/or wall configurations

- b. Pending-moderation: demands for the space are being actively prioritised by a Booking Moderator and a decision will be provided based on the service standards and timelines described in Appendix 1
  - c. Held: space has been temporarily held pending final confirmation of the booking, and will be automatically released after an assigned period that is specified at the time of the booking request
  - d. Confirmed: space is booked and guaranteed to the Booking Requestor. Once Confirmed, the booking can only be altered with the express agreement of the person for whom the room is booked; or as authorised by the Assistant Provost, Space or their designee
- 5. All shared spaces suitable for a given request will be findable and visible to all members of the College via the Room Booking System in line with the prioritisation timeline described in Appendix 1, including availability information about any Confirmed bookings in those spaces.
- 6. Restricted Use Shared Spaces will have, in all cases, a Booking Moderator identified who is responsible for mediating and prioritising demands for that space; and for providing answers to requests for the space in reasonable timescales. These timescales vary dependent on time of year<sup>11</sup>, and are published on the College Space Sharing intranet. Refer to Appendix 1 for an explanation of the moderation mechanism.
- 7. Determination of what rooms are designated Restricted Use Shared Space will be made by the Assistant Provost (Space) on behalf of the Provost, informed by lessons from previous and ongoing initiatives<sup>12</sup>. Relevant considerations include:
  - a. Spaces access via a restricted area (e.g., containing sensitive experiments)
  - b. Rooms that are demand scarce – no other shared rooms could fulfil the normal activities conducted in that room (e.g., Rooms containing specialist equipment)
  - c. As a mechanism to smooth the transition<sup>13</sup> from no sharing of space
- 8. In the event that the room allocated to a confirmed booking becomes unavailable for operational reasons<sup>14</sup> unforeseen at the time the booking was made, the Office of Assistant Provost, Space will seek to allocate a suitable room with the relative priority that the event had at the time of originally being booked. This means that, under exceptional circumstances, an existing lower priority booking may be displaced.
- 9. Responsibilities in respect of booking College shared spaces<sup>15</sup> are:
  - a. End user of the booking: plan to complete use of the room in sufficient time to allow for change over to the next use including clearing and resetting of the room, and in all cases at least 5 minutes
  - b. Booking Requestor: ensure that all bookings are compliant with College space policies, and in particular that booked events are properly categorised<sup>16</sup> in accord with acceptable use definitions<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> to reflect peaks during academic timetable build, and forward planning for academic conference season

<sup>12</sup> Including SEQ teaching space sharing across multiple academic years; and Sherfield behavioural study

<sup>13</sup> For example, forcing the distribution of demand amongst multiple departments, not just those with most recently refurbished rooms

<sup>14</sup> For example, damage or impairment of the room, failure of equipment, etc

<sup>15</sup> Refer also to College Space Sharing policy about the responsibilities of members of College when using spaces

<sup>16</sup> As detailed in the College Space Sharing policy sections on - acceptable uses of shared spaces

<sup>17</sup> As published on College Space policy [website](#)

- c. Booking Moderator: mediate prioritisation of competing demands in line with College Space Sharing policy, and approve and allocate events accordingly
  - d. Room Booking System Administrator: maintain system access permissions for staff, maintain the underlying data and configuration needed to operate the booking system, and act as 1<sup>st</sup> line support for users of the booking system
10. Management arrangements for bookable spaces include an expectation on all Booking Requestors to provide accurate, current and complete information about intended room usage to inform long term planning. The information to be recorded covers both desired and actual usage of rooms, and is defined at Appendix 2.
11. In the event that situations arise that cannot be resolved by application of the principles and policy articulated here, the escalation path for resolution will be the same as that in the [College Space Sharing policy](#).
12. Information and statistics about the usage of Bookable Shared Spaces will be:
- a. Available to members of College via self-service space analytics
  - b. Compiled and published on a quarterly basis
  - c. Made available on request by the office of the Assistant Provost, Space
13. The College has chosen not to define formal incentives and sanctions related to the booking of Shared Spaces, and Collegiate practices that facilitate the goals of this policy are encouraged, including:
- a. All practices as defined in College Shared Space policy
  - b. Cancellations to release booked spaces no longer required should be made at the earliest possible time
  - c. Events should only be booked for the period the space is actually needed<sup>18</sup>
  - d. Events should always be categorised to the nearest matching acceptable use case; and where the nature of the event could fit multiple use cases the closest should be selected
  - e. For spaces that are held pending final confirmation, the expiry time should be set to the minimum feasible to ensure spaces no longer required are available for other bookings at the earliest possible time

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<sup>18</sup> This can include periods with a demonstrable need to protect the integrity of operationally complex room setup. Examples include for examinations and for multi day events

## Appendix 1 – Moderation approach and room request windows

This appendix outlines how requests for space will be prioritised and moderated, based on how far in advance the request is made, and represented diagrammatically over the page.

Prioritisation is facilitated and coordinated by the phased release of rooms to different categories of use, over a period of up to 4 years:

1. Anchor events<sup>19</sup> with a very long lead time, core teaching blocks and exam blocks; are scheduled in advance and ahead of all other bookings
2. High priority events<sup>20</sup>, and those needing demand scarce<sup>21</sup> rooms are then scheduled to protect against unintended displacement by lower priority activities
3. All other acceptable uses of space can then make bookings into shared spaces

Room request windows (see diagram over page)

**Recurring** phase is for designated anchor events booked between 3 and 4 years in advance, enabling all other events to be scheduled around the anchors with confidence.

**Advanced Priority** and **Priority** phases provide booking windows for academic mission aligned events with long lead times in the following acceptable use categories:

- Research (including academic conferences, seminars, department led events)
- Advancement, Student Recruitment and Outreach
- Student community events (including ICU Clubs and Societies); and Staff community events (including staff training)
- College Governance and College Business

**Annual** phases provide (simultaneous) exclusive booking of:

Events spaces by the Events Team(s)  
Teaching spaces by Timetablers

**In year** requests for Teaching spaces are moderated by designated Booking Moderators; requests for Events spaces are moderated by the Events Team(s); and requests for Meeting spaces are not moderated except where agreed by the Office of the Assistant Provost (Space) on behalf of the Provost, in which case they will be moderated by suitably trained and supported local staff.

Moderation is applied to all requests, with increasing human and central coordination for the bookings made longest in advance:

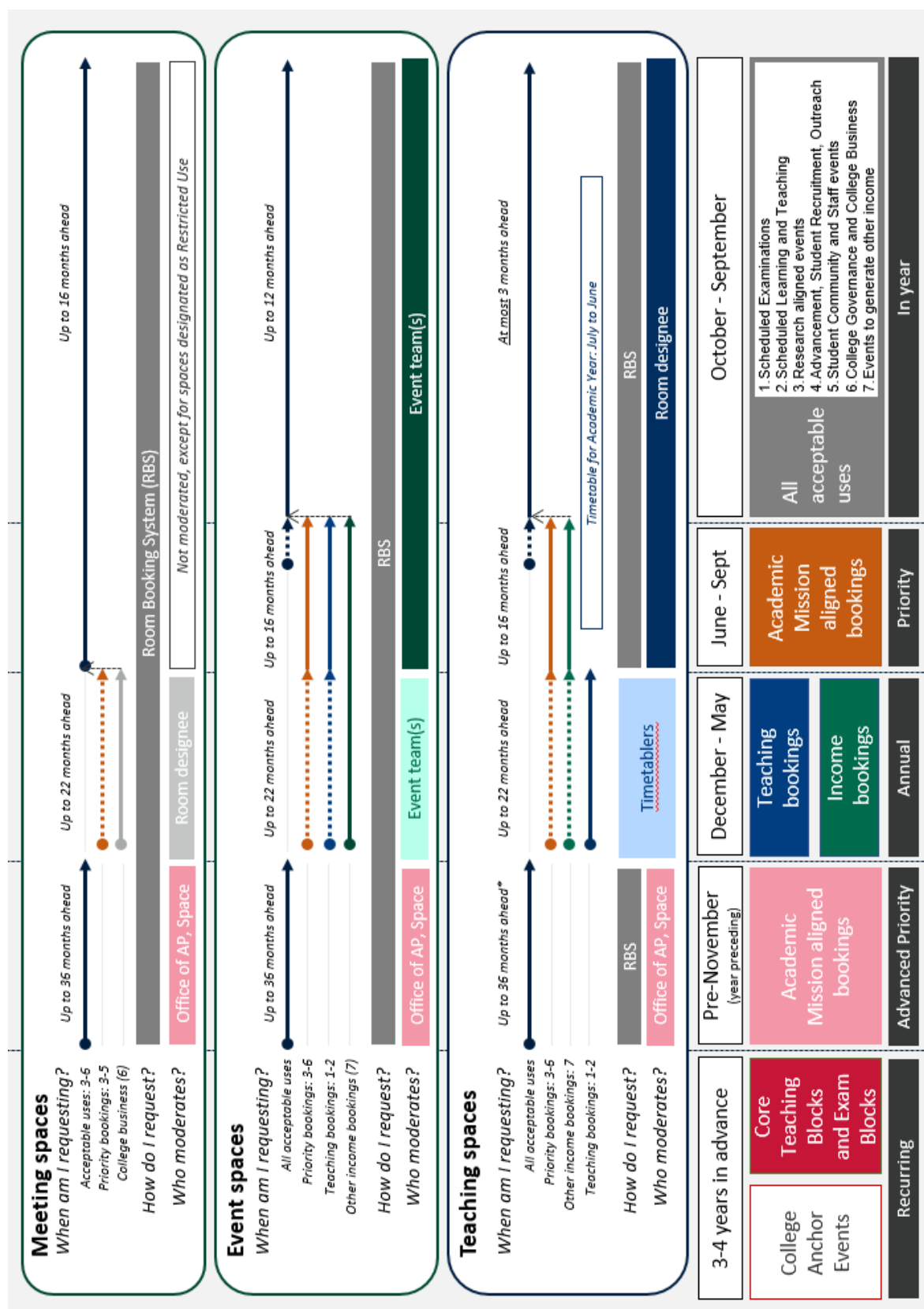
- a. Moderation by Office of AP, Space for all spaces booked 22 to 36 months in advance
- b. Moderation by CTSO / Timetablers for Teaching spaces booked 16 to 22 months in advance
- c. Moderation by Events teams for Events spaces booked 16 to 22 months in advance
- d. Moderation by designated room Booking Moderators for Meetings spaces booked 16 to 22 months in advance

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<sup>19</sup> Examinations periods, and commemoration days are examples of anchor events

<sup>20</sup> Scheduled teaching and Research conferences are examples of high priority events

<sup>21</sup> ICU Orchestra Practice that can only occur in the Great Hall is an examples of a demand scarce event



## Appendix 2 – Information requirements for Booking Shared Space

This appendix describes the information that must be provided by the Booking Requestor for all bookings of College Shared Spaces:

- Event Name
- Date
- Start time
- End time
- Event Type and Use Category
- Number of attendees
- Event contact person
- Booking contact person

When an event has any of the following attributes, these must also be recorded as part of the booking:

- External participants
- Catering required
- Disabled access required
- Additional facilities required
- Room setup required (where non-standard)