

Examination Timetabling User Group

14 July 2021 (2pm-3.30pm)

Microsoft Teams

Present:

Adcock, Raj (RA)	Teaching Operations Manager, Materials
Badshah, Dilshad (DB)	Teaching Support Officer, Chemical Engineering
Cerese, Damian S (DC)	Teaching Quality Officer, Computing
Dray, Thomas (TD)	Postgraduate Education Administrator, Earth Sciences & Engineering
Eves, Gavin J (GE)	MSc in Sustainable Energy Futures Coordinator
Farrar, Kate (KF)	Education Support Officer, Electrical & Electronic Engineering
Giorgi, Linda (LG)	Examinations Officer, Life Sciences
Groves, Cristebel B (CBG)	Admissions & Examinations Administrator, Chemistry
Harbert, Nicole (NH)	Teaching Operations Manager, Bioengineering
Harris, Chris D (CH)	Head of Programme Management, Faculty of Medicine Centre
Howard, Josie Ann (JH)	Senior Undergraduate Administrator, Mechanical Engineering
Kaiserman, Antoine (AK)	Timetabling Officer, Mathematics
Laskey, Peter (PL)	Examination Timetabling Manager, CTSO
Macdonald Robert (RM)	Programme Officer (Assessment), Faculty of Medicine
Mullin, Melanie (MM)	Centre Manager, CLCC
Ni Dhonnabhain, Fionnuala (FN)	General & PG Office Manager, Civil & Environmental Engineering
O'Neill, Jackie (JO)	Undergraduate Office Manager, Aeronautics
Pendlebury, Steph	IMSE Institute Manager, Faculty of Engineering
Pocsova, Dominika (DP)	Senior Undergraduate Administrator, Mechanical Engineering
Rahim, Momo (MR)	Senior UG & PG Administrator, Design Engineering
Russell, Veronica L (VR)	Director, Education Quality, Business School
Sajid, Madiha (MS)	Undergraduate Office Manager, Civil and Environmental Engineering
Sandhu, Raj (RS)	Admissions & Exams Administrator, Chemistry
Smith Helena (HS)	Director of Central Timetabling, Registry
Smith, Rebecca A (RS)	Undergraduate Education Manager, Earth Science & Engineering
Tite, Jo (JoT)	Postgraduate Education Coordinator, School of Public Health
Toutoudaki, Katerina	Senior Timetabling Officer, CTSO
Urubusi, Victor (VU)	Examination and Information Officer, Physics
Vera-Valderrama, Conchi (CVV)	CfAE Administrator, Education Office

Apologies:

Haines, Helen C (HH)	Education Office Manager, Mathematics
Middleton, Rebecca J (RM)	Faculty Education Manager, Faculty of Natural Sciences
O'Connor, Louise E (LOC)	Timetabling Manager, Business School
Owens, Joanna (JO)	MSc Administrator, Earth Sciences and Engineering
Stewart, Derryck L (DS)	Education Manager, Physics
Symmonds, Samantha (SS)	Postgraduate Education Manager, Earth Sciences and Engineering
Trick, Jemma (JeT)	Education Coordinator, National Heart & Lung Institute
Varleigh, Anique C (AV)	Head of Exams & Assessment, Business School

ETUG Chair

Helena Smith

Minutes

Peter Laskey

#	Item Description	Action
1	<p>Welcome and Matters Arising</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Previous meeting's minutes were agreed. 2. HS went through Action Tracker' items for 2020-21 meetings. All completed, aside from ongoing actions (including DAWG updates being communicated to ETUG). 	
2	<p>Summer 2021 TRAs</p> <p><u>Staff Survey</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. PL summarised findings over the three survey areas: Exam Timetabling, Preparing TRAs, Administrating TRAs and Conclusion. 4. For Exam Timetabling, the number of publication methods continued to vary. The majority published 8-10 weeks prior to exams (68%) in line with Exam TT Policy and following time zone guidance, 42% required additional sittings following the main exam. Staff comments included - draft Summer exam TTs being ready by Xmas, late time zone decision after TTs published and increased exam timing preferences from students. 5. For Preparing TRAs, assessment type findings included 6% closed book (to be referred to Quality Assurance), whilst multiple platforms continued to be in use, with 39% using Blackboard. Staff comments included issues with uploading files during submission, TRAs setup on Blackboard being time-consuming and a consensus staff making VLEs work as exam platforms but stressful for students and staff. 6. Small majority felt on-site exams required more preparation than TRAs, although workload shifted to post-exam. Majority felt there was enough local dept support in place. Staff comments included heavy workload monitoring TRAs in place of invigilators, TRAs set-up being moved centrally and some students practicing on platform prior but large number are not. 7. For Administrating TRAs, exam announcements were made by email or Blackboard to all students, however 73% depts used email for individual announcements. Noted this was not the most responsive tool for communication. 89% of depts still require students to handwrite/scan scripts (as in Dec/Jan). 8. HS asked if exam software can freeze use of other applications during exams. VR confirmed WISEflow software enabled this during BYOD exams (on-campus) but Business School not able to switch on for TRAs due to remote difficulties. 9. LG asked if internet connection required during WISEflow software. VR/PL confirmed connection required at certain points and auto-saving feature so no issues with students losing work. 10. 53% depts allowed 15-30 mins for submission post-exam and rest remaining with 60 mins (as per guidance). Staff comments on submission issues confirmed mixture of methods handling cases ranging from mit circs route, exam board consideration to emailed evidence or timestamp verification. 11. ICT support was generally not required but noted it was a still a requirement and impact would be huge if support unavailable. PL to feedback to ICT. 12. The most challenging aspects to administrating TRAs were similar to Dec/Jan in being varied with post-exam issues (22%) and student technical difficulties (20%) being most problematic. Staff comments included the scanning/upload period being stressful 	<p>PL</p> <p>PL</p>

<p>for students & staff, late submission being time-consuming, a large number of plagiarism/collusion cases and staff mental health deteriorating during this period.</p> <p>13. HS noted any impact on staff mental health should be highlighted due to heavy staff involvement pre, during and post-exam with no invigilator support. For any additional staff support, 'during the exam period (inc post exam)' was deemed best, however comments indicated an emphasis on exam platforms rather than staff.</p> <p>14. On academic misconduct comparisons, 42% staff believe there was more during TRAs than with on-site exams (with evidence to support). Staff comments included 20% sample checks being done with Turnitin, using platforms designed for exams and student trust being undermined by a suspected increase in cheating.</p> <p>15. Staff comments on how to further improve TRAs included a more reliable exam platform, one system across depts to simplify multiple systems/instructions, more staff help monitoring during/post-exam and considering students with poor IT, Wi-Fi.</p> <p>16. HS asked whether the increase in mitigating circumstances had had a significant impact on staff workloads.</p> <p>FN: Massive workload relating to this, two members looked at each case from board after admin filtered cases and template recommendations very useful to determine outcomes. Even students late by one-minute triggers huge issues. Requires due diligence in case of student appeal.</p> <p>RM: Over 500 mitigating circumstances requests to manage from Summer 2021 TRAs.</p> <p>17. PL outlined next steps would include taking the survey to the Digital Assessment Working Group to advance discussion with ICT on exam platforms and furthering WISEflow support.</p> <p>18. FN asked whether a WISEflow demo is possible. PL to speak with ICT on who is best placed to demo WISEflow to interested parties, rather than relying on experienced depts e.g. Business School.</p> <p>19. PL to circulate ICU survey feedback on Summer 2021 TRAs once available.</p> <p>20. HS advised depts to email CTSO with any further comments or issues on TRAs not mentioned or discussed at the meeting.</p> <p>21. FN asked whether further exam platforms have been explored, as dept staff are expected to absorb heavy workload from current platforms. HS advised central support was considered but not deemed viable due to multiple platforms in use. However, DAWG and PL currently pushing ICT on establishing/supporting exam platforms, planning beyond Dec/Jan exams and BYOD exams from all feedback collated.</p>	<p>HS</p> <p>PL</p> <p>PL</p> <p>Depts</p>
<p><u>Library Priority Exam Space</u></p> <p>22. PL summarised activity over the Summer exam period, with a breakdown of bookings made, no of students registered for the service and feedback received.</p> <p>23. Larger spaces used were more prone to disturbance from non-exam students entering/leaving the room. Any future use would ensure clearer signage in place to block-off exam areas and targeting individual/smaller spaces for booking.</p> <p>24. Depts were asked how their own space was made available and whether this was manageable in future. HS requested feedback from depts to indicate whether library priority exam space should be made available in future and what dept/faculty space was provided during Summer 2021 TRAs.</p>	<p>Depts</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;">2020-21</p> <p><u>Exam Timetabling</u></p> <p>25. PL advised a request for resit exam timetables will be made shortly, to be collated for College purposes, including ICT support coverage.</p> <p>26. For Dec/Jan TRAs, exam timetables will be collated for the same purposes as 2020/21 and CTSO support will be available to any depts requiring this (for exam timetabling or creating Celcat exam events).</p> <p>27. PL/CTSO will reserve traditional on-campus exam space for 2022 following Dec/Jan TRAs, for any on-campus exams which may take place in future exam periods.</p>	<p>PL</p> <p>PL</p>
3	<p style="text-align: center;">AOB</p> <p>28. None.</p>	
4	<p style="text-align: center;">Summary of actions from the meeting</p> <p>See ETUG Action Tracker</p>	
5	<p style="text-align: center;">Future ETUG meetings</p> <p>29. 2021/22 ETUG meetings planned are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early October • Mid-February • Early April (Pre-Summer) • July 	