

# Timetabling Newsletter

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## Production of 2015/16 Timetable

Dear Timetablers,

We are rapidly approaching the start of the data entry period for the 2015/16 timetable. Schools need to have updated course unit information in Campus Solutions by **5pm on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March** in order for those course units to be available in 2015/16 timetable. If you miss this deadline, you will still be able to add the courses to Syllabus+ but doing so will require more data entry.

Schools will gain access to the 2015/16 Syllabus+ database on **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March** and can start entering timetable data from that point onwards.

**All Timetabling data for 2015/16 must be input into Syllabus+ before the deadline of 29<sup>th</sup> May, after which room allocation will begin in CTS.** Failure to meet this deadline will reduce your chances of securing teaching rooms.

## Continued Timetabling Support

### Support – Drop in Sessions

From week commencing 6<sup>th</sup> April onwards the Timetabling Team will be running drop in sessions on both campuses twice a week. Please come along to see us for any of the following:

- Advice and guidance on the best ways to represent complex teaching patterns in Syllabus+.
- Queries about the transfer of data from Campus Solutions to Syllabus+.
- Help with inputting teaching requirements, welcome week bookings or PASS sessions.
- How to use Syllabus+ to catch timetable clashes, or to ensure complex staff availability requirements are met.
- Ways to export and print data from Syllabus+.
- Creating and working with variant and jointly taught activities.

Please use the following link for information on the drop-in sessions - <http://www.estates.manchester.ac.uk/services/timetabling/training/>

### Support – Training Sessions

In addition to the drop in sessions, we will be continuing our schedule of classroom based training for users. The full schedule of classes can be found on the Timetabling website.

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*Please contact Matt Casey ([matthew.casey@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:matthew.casey@manchester.ac.uk)) to book onto a training session or for more information on drop in sessions.*

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## Department Profile: Central Teaching Spaces (CTS)

Each month we profile a particular department within the University. We will share information on the employees that make up that department, their role within the University specific to Timetabling and a brief history of the department. This month we will be focusing on the Central Teaching Spaces (CTS).

The Central Teaching Spaces team (formerly the Central Timetabling Unit) manages and books central teaching and meeting rooms and other spaces at the University. These rooms are available to book for any University member of staff for any University related event.

There are two types of activity that the Central Teaching Spaces team would allocate rooms for - scheduled teaching activities such as lectures, seminar and workshops, or one-off bookings such as meetings, conferences, guest lectures.

In addition to this the CTS team processes any timetabling change requests that come in from across the University and during the summer are responsible for central room allocation to teaching activities for the upcoming Academic year.

### Contact Details

For all ad hoc requests please send an email through to [cts@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:cts@manchester.ac.uk) or call **57305**

Any changes that need to be made to activities on the timetable must be sent through to [ctschanges@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:ctschanges@manchester.ac.uk) (Please note that this includes additions to the timetable).

## Estates/IT Update

### Estates Update

At present we are trialling a Quick Response (QR) code feedback system on a selection of the CTS teaching stock. This provides staff and students alike with the opportunity to provide feedback on the condition, facilities and appropriateness of the room they have used (see picture).

### IT Update

Following the problems with personal timetables at the start of Semester 2, IT Services have investigated the cause of the problem and identified a number of measures which will be taken to prevent a recurrence in September.

The root cause of the problem was that the queries which extract data from the Timetable system and deliver it to MyManchester do not always do so in an efficient manner. When large numbers of students are using the system and a number of inefficient queries are executing these factors combine to prevent the MyManchester timetable grids from loading. To resolve this, IT Services are implementing the following solutions:

- Redesigning personal timetable queries so that they always run in a more efficient manner;
- Upgrading the timetable reporting database to be better at optimising queries for efficiency.

Additionally, an external company is being contracted to conduct load testing on the timetable system to ensure the reliability of these solutions.

The website for Central Teaching Spaces is as follows:

<http://www.estates.manchester.ac.uk/services/centralteachingspaces/>

Here you have the ability to book out teaching rooms and meetings rooms online, view a list of all CTS space and check our room availability



An example of the QR codes that have been placed outside CTS rooms in Beyer, Ellen Wilkinson and Mansfield Cooper

## Tip of the Month: Complex Filtering in S+

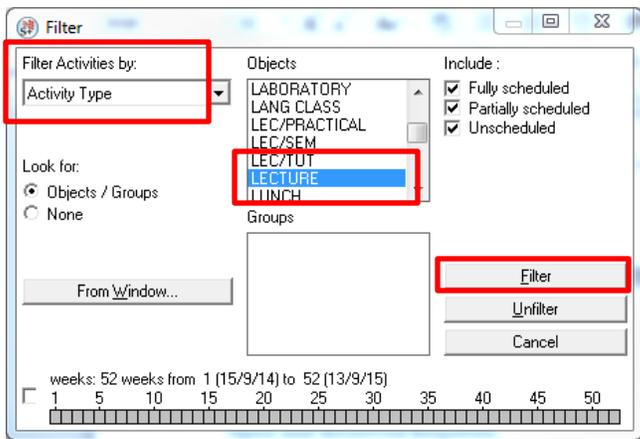


Figure 1

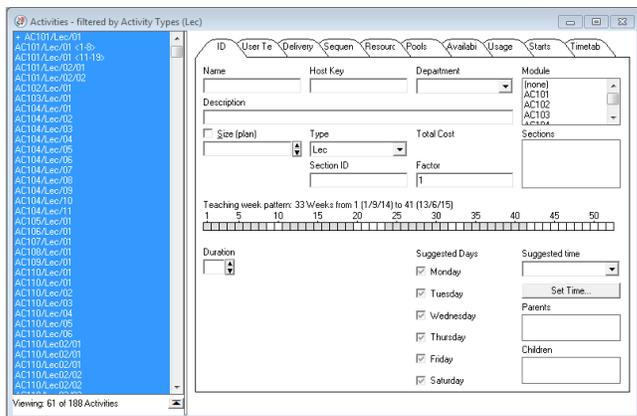


Figure 2

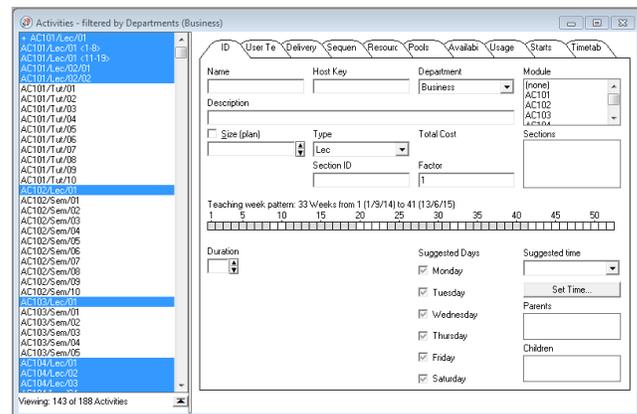


Figure 3

Generally you will only need to filter once. However, there may be occasions where you want to filter a set of information twice. An example of this would be if you wanted to view the Activities that are lectures belonging to your home department. So you may begin to do this by filtering the Activity window by Activity type in order to just show the lectures and then filter by Department. In this case, the second filter would negate the first filter, resulting in a list of Activities of all Activity Types attached to the selected Department. To solve this problem, a workaround can be used to obtain a multiple filter.

The trick is to highlight the objects in the window where you want to obtain multiple filters. You undertake multiple filters, and any objects that remain selected after filtering, meet all the filter criteria. You can then filter the window by itself to only show the selected objects.

Therefore, to perform a double filter to show the Activities which are lectures and owned by the relevant Department please follow these steps:

- Open the 'Activities' window and select all (either by going to the 'Edit' drop-down menu and choosing 'Select All' or using the shortcut Ctrl + A)
- Next click on 'View' in the top-left of the S+ interface and select 'Filter' from the drop-down menu that appears
- A box will then pop up (See fig 1) and in the top left of the box you will need to select what you are filtering the Activities by (in this example it would be 'Activity Type - Lecture')
- The simply hit the 'Filter' button in the bottom right of the box

This will then leave you with a list of Activities filtered by '**Activity Type Lec**' with all the Activities being selected (See fig 2).

Return to the 'View' drop-down menu, select **filter** and filter by **department**. Select your department from the list and click 'Filter'. The **Activities** window will show all the Activities owned by your department, but those that remain highlighted are the **lectures** (See fig 3).

Go back to the 'View' drop-down menu, select 'Filter' and using the 'From Window' button, choose 'Activities-filtered by department' from the list of windows. Click the 'selected' button followed by 'Filter' and you should have a list of **Lectures** owned by your department.