

STUDENT JOURNEY PROJECT

Review of Events Scheduling

1. Introduction and Purpose of the Review

The Student Journey Project is centred on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of BU's student administrative processes and supporting services. It aims to ensure that students are at the centre of these processes and as a result have an enhanced experience embedded in a culture of service excellence and delivered as efficiently as possible.

Following the consultation on proposed service owners, a review of Events Scheduling is now to be undertaken. The Student Journey is using the word "Event" to encompass any activity that is scheduled to take place in University space; it is assessed that these will be predominantly in support of students but not exclusively. The Events Scheduling Review will therefore include the range of support areas involved in scheduling University events, the School based timetabling and room booking support, space planning and co-ordination, estates helpdesk and room bookings and timetabling support within Additional Learning Support. The Student Journey identified a number of ways in which the student experience could be improved, one of which was to provide a unified student calendar which would include all teaching events and other key dates such as exam dates, assignment deadlines, careers fairs and similar.

The Service Owner consultation completed in July 2013 confirmed that the Director of Estates is the service owner of Events Scheduling as part of the space planning function and that a space prioritisation policy and procedure should be established. This decision recognised the multiple competing demands on the University's estate. University space is used for lectures, seminars and other taught sessions throughout the academic year. The same space is also required for exams, conferences, research seminars, enterprise activities, open days, careers events and hire to external organisations. All of these different demands have to be prioritised against each other by different stakeholders across the University. The establishment of a single service owner who has accountability and responsibility for managing these diverse demands will provide a more effective service than the multiple channels that currently exist.

The Review will therefore consider the current provision of Events Scheduling support and future requirements, changes arising from IT system improvements, in particular the Unified Calendar, and the optimum model for future delivery of Events Scheduling support. The Review will also consider the recommendations made in the Timetabling Report which resulted from the work undertaken by Leon Smith in 2012.

2. Background and Strategic Context to the Student Journey

The Student Journey commenced in March 2012 when the University Executive Team approved a Project Charter to undertake the first phase of work with the following objectives:

- To enhance the student experience and embed service excellence by designing process, service and supporting organisational structures around student need
- To identify efficiencies in professional support and administration costs
- To produce a tender specification for a Student Record System (SRS)

Work was undertaken between May and December 2012 to review existing student administrative processes across the University. This work involved around 200 professional and support staff who deliver the processes. Their contribution and feedback has been central to understanding existing

processes and IT systems, issues of concerns and limitations and has helped to develop the optimal requirements for new systems and processes.

3. Service Ownership of Events Scheduling

The work undertaken during Phase 1 of the Student Journey analysed a range of processes that were within the project scope as they form part of the student's journey through the University. This included the support provided by Schools and Professional Services to deliver the scheduling of events for taught timetabled events and the support provided by Additional Learning Support.

Following consultation it has been confirmed that the service owner for Events Scheduling will be the Director of Estates. The responsibility of the support and resources associated with this service will therefore be centralised in Estates. The recommendation from the Target Operating Model Design Group during Phase 1 was that Events Scheduling should be centrally owned and managed but with delivery distributed locally where needed such as the timetabling function in the academic Schools.

4. Scope of Events Scheduling

The Director of Estates as the Service Owner is responsible and accountable for the delivery of Events Scheduling and the scope of this service, taking into account the needs of different stakeholders within the University. The work undertaken by the Student Journey to date has identified a number of roles within academic Schools and the Professional Services which provide the support which currently exists.

The School based role's main responsibilities, as detailed within current job descriptions, is to provide administrative support to prepare and maintain student and staff teaching timetables and also to support the workload planning cycle, although the extent to which the post holders are involved in workload planning varies across the Schools. The role therefore involves working closely with academic staff such as Heads of Department, Framework and Programme Leaders as well as individual staff members. The role is also responsible for making changes to timetables during the academic year and implementing any changes to the timetabling or workload planning process. The School based roles also include support for other resource related tasks and some also undertake financial tasks such as monitoring student fees.

The Professional Service roles which support events scheduling are based within Estates as part of the Service Desk and Space Planning functions and also within Additional Learning Support.

The main responsibility of the Service Desk role, as detailed within the current job description, is to co-ordinate central room booking requirements from across the University, the role also incorporates some other responsibilities. The Space Planning function includes roles which provide both overall responsibility for co-ordinating University space planning requirements and support for this activity. This includes the annual timetabling process, room audits, space prioritisation and utilisation. The other area of support within the Professional Services exists within Additional Learning Support where a role administers the timetabling support needed by students with additional learning support requirements. The role also provides technical resources support to students and staff and management information.

5. Process and Service Improvements

A number of service and process improvements for events scheduling have been identified, this includes findings from Phase 1 of the Student Journey work and also recommendations from an externally facilitated review of timetabling undertaken by Leon Smith from Manchester Metropolitan University on behalf of BU also during 2012.

5.1 Process User Group Improvements

During Phase 1 of the Student Journey Project, a Process User Group (PUG) reviewed timetabling and the scheduling of other events. A number of suggestions were made for improving the service provided to students. These included:

- The recommendation that the current online student timetable could be replaced with an online calendar, which includes teaching events and other key dates as well such as exam dates, dates of careers fairs and assignment deadlines.
- The online student calendar should be personal to each student, so, for example if the student was given an extension for an assignment, the calendar would reflect the changed date. The online calendar would also allow students to add their own events.
- The online calendar could also be available for academic members of staff.

5.2 External Timetabling Review

The externally facilitated review of the University's timetabling process was undertaken during the summer of 2012 and a number of recommendations were made as to how BU could enhance the timetabling process and thereby the student experience. The report recognised that some recommendation could be addressed by BU Projects such as Student Journey, Common Academic Structure and on-going development of the timetabling system. The recommendations were:

- To develop measures of timetable quality.
- To allocate students to individual classes within the timetabling system.
- To consider the feasibility of system based attendance monitoring.
- To introduce an online planning system for taught sessions.
- To review the role and grade of administrative timetablers.

This Events Scheduling Review will therefore consider the improvements identified in Phase 1 of the Student Journey and the relevant recommendations from the external timetabling review. It will not, for example, consider the feasibility of system based attendance monitoring as this is outside the scope of Student Journey.

6. Review Format and Timescales

The review of Events Scheduling will be led by the Student Journey Organisational Change Lead in conjunction with the Head of Facilities Management.

The following timescale is proposed for the review:

| Activity | Timescale |
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| Review of Events Scheduling commences | w/c 18 th November 2013 |
| Review of Events Scheduling completes | 20 th December 2013 |
| Outcome of review and decision on next steps | End of January 2014 (due to Christmas holiday) |

The review work will incorporate the following:

- Discussion meeting with School based support staff, timetablers and those involved in room bookings
- Discussion meeting with Additional Learning Support.
- Discussion meeting with Estates functions: Space Planning, Helpdesk and Room Bookings.
- Assessment of changes expected from Unified Calendar and resulting changes to processes and operations.
- Assessment of external Timetabling Review undertaken in 2012.
- Discussions with School based stakeholders, including as appropriate, Heads of Department, Programme or Framework Leaders, Associate Deans Education or Student Experience.
- Discussion with Professional Service based stakeholders including Exams, RKEO, Events and Conferencing.
- Discussion with student representatives
- Review of job descriptions and roles required to support future service delivery.
- Assessment of the Process User Group review work and recommendations

There are a number of key questions to be addressed as part of the Review. In particular the following issues need to be determined:

- Does the definition of “Events” and range of support for Events Scheduling identified by the Student Journey cover all of the services necessary for ensuring excellent support to students?
- Are there any additional areas of service improvement which can be identified in the School based timetabling and room booking support?
- Are there any additional areas of service improvement which can be identified in the support provided by Estates Service Desk and Space Planning functions?
- Are there any additional areas of service improvement which can be identified in the timetabling support provided by Additional Learning Support?
- What impact might the planned Unified Calendar have on current operational practice and processes?
- What needs to be considered in order to establish a BU Space Prioritisation policy and procedure? Do we assess the priority of different types of events effectively at present, and if not how could this process be improved?
- What constitutes an “excellent” student timetable, what are the common factors that contribute to this and how could they be measured?
- How can best practice be most effectively shared across the range of Events Scheduling support?
- The Target Operating Model Design Group recommended central management (as well as ownership) of Events Scheduling with local delivery where appropriate, e.g. school timetabling. Is this the optimum model?

During the Review in addition to discussion sessions, staff can raise questions or provide information through the Student Journey email: studentjourney@bournemouth.ac.uk or direct to the Organisational Change Lead, Jackie Molnar: jmolnar@bournemouth.ac.uk.

Once the Review has been completed the findings, along with an equality assessment, will be considered by the Head of Facilities Management with the Organisational Change Lead. A decision will then be made as to next steps and how those proposed changes are taken forward.