



## **Policy on the timetabling of meetings and events in the Law Faculty**

The following guidelines were recommended by the Equality and Diversity Committee and approved by Law Board in February 2022.

**1. Regular Faculty meetings should not be scheduled to begin before 9.30am or finish after 4pm. Bank holidays should be avoided.**

By 'Faculty meetings', we mean meetings of the Equality and Diversity, Personnel, PRC, Research, USC and GSC committees, as well as course committees; professional/technical staff meetings; meetings of Law Board; start-of-term and annual whole Faculty meetings; and Faculty research seminars. By 'regular' Faculty meetings we mean those ordinarily scheduled to occur throughout the academic year, in contradistinction to extraordinary meetings. From time to time, it may be necessary to convene extraordinary meetings outside the above times, but naturally, this should be avoided to the maximum extent possible.

We acknowledge that there are at least two types of Faculty meetings that may be whole-day meetings that extend beyond 4pm: final meetings of examination boards, and meetings of the Faculty undergraduate selection committee. In such a case, the Chair should: (a) consult in advance with Committee members as to whether they have caring responsibilities that may impact participation at the relevant meeting, (b) strive to support these members in discharging these responsibilities, including by permitting Committee members to leave and come back into meetings, and through the use of hybrid facilities after 4pm. We understand this to be the current practice.

- 2. The use of hybrid facilities for research-related events after 4pm on weekdays, and on weekends, is strongly encouraged.**
- 3. Applications to the Faculty's Research Support Fund for support for research-related events should evidence substantive consideration of the impact of scheduling on participation by those with caring responsibilities.**

A field should be added to the standard form for this purpose.

- 4. Research Group Chairs should regularly remind group members of the potentially exclusionary effects of timetabling research-related events to begin after 4pm on those with caring responsibilities.**

By 'regularly', we mean at least once a year. It may be most effective to issue this reminder each September, in the lead-up to planning the calendar for the new academic year. Chairs should strive to encourage genuine reflection on this by group members.

The Associate Dean for Equality and Diversity should periodically remind Research Group Chairs of this.

- 5. At least one third of discussion group meetings, and other regular research-related meetings (such as the Business Law Workshops, for example), should be held between the hours of 9.30am and 4pm.**

The Committee regards the one third suggestion as a bare minimum and strongly encourages convenors to strive for a higher proportion than this.

Where meetings are held outside the hours of 9.30am and 4pm, the use of hybrid facilities is strongly encouraged (see 2. above).

The Committee recognises that conferences and other special research-related events may need to be scheduled to occur on weekends, or outside of the hours of 9.30am and 4pm on weekdays. It is hoped that appropriate regard for the impact of scheduling on those with caring responsibilities will be secured through the combination of 2., 3. and 4. above.

- 6. One or more Faculty offices should be made available to external speakers who participate in a day event and need space to work in between the event and a related dinner.**

Some external speakers may prefer to speak in the day and then return home. Others may wish to stay on for a dinner with Faculty members. The suggestion is that an office be made available so that the speaking event can still be held between 9.30am and 4pm, when convenient for the speaker.

- 7. The operation of this policy should be reviewed by the EDC after two years of operation, and then annually thereafter.**




The recommendations above do not apply to teaching (noting the complexities of timetabling, and the fact that we have part-time as well as full-time programs). However, it strongly endorses the current practice of consulting with Faculty members about timetabling decisions, and of allowing Faculty members to indicate where they cannot teach outside the hours of 9.30am and 4pm.

A summary version of the recommendations can be seen in table format on the following page.

Kristin van Zwieten

Associate Dean for Equality and Diversity

February 2022

|  <b><u>DO NOT:</u></b>  |  <b><u>PAUSE BEFORE:</u></b>  |  <b><u>DO:</u></b>  |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Schedule regular Faculty meetings to begin before 9.30am or finish after 4pm, or on bank holidays. (NB: The definition of regular Faculty meetings in our policy includes Faculty research seminars).</p>   | <p>Arranging research-related events (including discussion groups and other regular research-related workshops, as well as special events) to occur after 4pm or on weekends, so that you can consult potentially affected Faculty members (NB: applications to the Research Support Fund should evidence substantive consideration of the impact on participation by those with caring responsibilities).</p> | <p>Consult relevant Faculty members before scheduling research-related events (including discussion groups and other regular research-related workshops, as well as special events) if you think that any component may have to be scheduled outside 9.30am-4pm. Ditto all-day Faculty meetings.</p> |
| <p>Schedule all meetings of a discussion group, or other regular research-related workshops, to be held outside of 9.30am-4pm (NB: at the very minimum, one third of such meetings should be scheduled to begin after 9.30am and finish by 4pm).</p> | <p>Deciding not to use hybrid facilities for research-related events that occur after 4pm or on weekends; the use of such facilities may better enable participation by those with caring responsibilities.</p>  | <p>Listen openly to, and be flexible in response to, requests for further accommodation of caring responsibilities.</p>  |
|  | <p>Assuming that an external speaker for a research-related event will not be interested in presenting between 9.30am and 4pm, or that such timetabling would preclude the holding of a related dinner. (NB: our policy requires that one or more Faculty offices be made available for use by visiting speakers).</p>   | <p>Strive to play your part in creating an inclusive culture that maximises opportunities for meaningful participation in governance and all research-related events by Faculty members.</p>   |