



### Wednesday Afternoon's Timetabling Report

Nationally, Universities and Colleges represent and compete in competitions with the national governing body for HE sport in the UK, the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS). Across the country games take place on a Wednesday afternoon, alternatively known as BUCS Wednesday, with over 170 institutions taking part including University of Lincoln Students' Union. BUCS conducted research in 2013 to show the link between involvements in Sports at University with a higher success rate for employability once graduated from University. Primary Research in the form of a Graduate Survey showed that graduates who had taken part in sport at University had a salary around £32,000 compared to a salary of £26,000 for those who has not engaged in sport<sup>1</sup>. Not only can it be beneficial in graduate salary but also skills students gain such as; time management, financial experience, leadership and teamwork to name a few. In a world where a degree is not enough anymore, this is something to be aware of. Currently at Lincoln, approximately 525 students are a member of BUCS competing sports at Lincoln, and on Wednesdays we have up to 45 teams competing and representing Lincoln against other institutions.

Over the past few years, student members of Sports teams have reported issues to the Students' Union regarding timetabling clashing with their games as a member of a Sports Team, a fact which has continued this year. It was raised at the Student's Union Sports Committee, a body compiled of all Sports Club committee members, where it was requested that Sammi Storey (VP Activities) looked into the scope of this issue this academic year.

In late November 2015 we asked sports members to answer two questions:

- "Do you think Wednesday afternoon should be kept free?" (Required)
- "Do you have a module which schedules compulsory teaching on Wednesday afternoon?" (optional)

The total number of respondents were 193, 36% of students who are a member of a competing BUCS sports club. 187 (97%) of respondents answered "Yes" to the question about whether Wednesday afternoons should be free, of which 51%

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<sup>1</sup> Sheffield Hallam University and Sport Industry Research Centre with BUCS, "*The Impact of Engagement in Sport on Graduate Employability*", Final Edition June 28<sup>th</sup> 2013, <<http://www.bucs.org.uk/page.asp?section=18560&sectionTitle=Value+of+Sport>. (accessed February 2016).

declared that they had at least one compulsory teaching session on a Wednesday afternoon. The remaining 46% (92) of respondents who selected "Yes" but did not have teaching sessions on Wednesday afternoons, may have responded in this way in order to protect their future fixtures and timetabled sessions. 6 respondents (3%) answered "No" to the first question, and all but one of these students did not have compulsory teaching sessions on a Wednesday afternoon, which is highly likely why they responded this way.

The results of the survey showed that there were 103 modules (Fig 1.) across all levels of study with timetabled sessions on a Wednesday afternoon. These sessions prevented a total of 156 students from taking part in extra-curricular activities at that time. Whilst the research was underway, we were informed by colleagues within Student Affairs that most timetable issues may be due to issues with lab space, making us believe that the main issue may be that modules affected would be within the College of Science. The table of the modules, however, show that it was not just science subjects or modules that were affected.

Using information on the University timetabling page on Portal, we've been able to use this information to find out what type of teaching was held at these times for these modules, which can be seen in Fig.1. The method of teaching seems to vary from Lectures to Seminars or IT Lab Sessions. We understand that lab sessions may need to be at this time due to resource however, we would push to have teaching that only occurs once a week - such as Lectures - to be timetabled before Wednesday 1pm.

*Fig.1. Modules named by students as conflicting with Wednesday Afternoon Sports commitment, with courses and number of respondents affected as well as what type of teaching it was*

Module	Level of Study	Course(s) Affected	Respondents affected	Type of Teaching
BGY1008M	1	BSc Biomedical Science	2	Lecture (wk 23)
BMS1070M	1	BSc Biomedical Science	4	Practical (One group, wk 12)  Lecture (wk 5).
PSY1006M	1	BSc Psychology with Clinical Psychology	1	Tutorial Sessions. (wk 32) Lecture (wk 1)
BGY1002M	1	BSc Zoology BSc Biomedical Science BSc Forensic Science	4	Lecture. (wk 9)
BGY1004M	1	BSc Zoology	2	None found.
INT1001M	1	BA Interior Architecture and Design	1	None found.

**Commented [LW1]:** Thoughts on including this as an appendix rather than in document? Only reason for this is length of it.

INT1169M	1	BA Interior Architecture and Design	1	Workshop. (throughout year)
PSY1153M	1	BSc Psychology	1	None after 12pm.
BGY1001M	1	BSc Zoology BSc Forensic Science	2	IT Lab Session (wk 4,5,12)
BGY1003M	1	BSc Zoology	1	Practical Sessions (wk 4, 5)
DRA1033M	1	BA Drama	1	Workshop (wk 1-5, 7-10, 12)
DRA1034M	1	BA Drama	2	Mentoring and Workshops.
CMP1130M	1	BSc Computer Science	1	Workshop (wk 8-11,13)
BUS1001M	1	(CertHE) Business BA International Business Management BA Accountancy and Finance	3	Lecture (Week 7)
JOU1003M	1	BA Journalism	1	None after 1pm.
JOU1012M	1	BA Journalism	2	Workshop (wk 2,3,4-12,18-26, 29, 30-31)
HST1024M	1	BA History	1	Seminar (wk 11-12)
SOW1043M	1	BSc Social Work	1	Lecturer/Seminar (wk1-12)
GRA1012M	1	BA Graphic Design	1	None after 1pm.
MED1010M	1	BA Media Production	1	None found.
MED1012M	1	BA Media Production	1	None found.
ECO1023M	1	BA Accountancy and Finance	1	None found.
MED1015M	1	BA Media Production	2	Meet Grads ( wk 8)
MED1249M	1	BA Media Production	1	None found.
EGR1014M	1	BEng Mechanical Engineering	1	Drop-In Session (wks18,20,23,25,29)
BGY1005M	1	BSc Forensic Science	1	Practical (wk 31) Workshop (wk 30) Seminar (wk 26)
FRS1050M	1	BSc Forensic	1	Lecture (wk 32)

		Science		
FRS1051M	1	BSc Forensic Science	1	None after 1pm.
PSY1147M	1	BSc Psychology with Clinical Psychology	1	None after 1pm.
HST1007M	1	(CertHE) History	1	Off Site Visit (wk 7)
ILL2001M	2	BA Illustration	1	None found.
ILL2002M	2	BA Illustration	1	None after 1pm.
ILL2003M	2	BA Illustration	1	None after 1pm.
ILL2004M	2	BA Illustration	1	None found.
EGR2008M	2	BEng Mechanical Engineering	1	Drop -In Session (wk 24,6,8,10,12, 23,25,29) Practical (wk 3)
EGR2011M	2	BEng Mechanical Engineering	1	Drop - In Session (wk 3,11,17,19,21,24,30)
CMP2019M	2	MComp Games Computing BSc Computer Information Systems	2	None after 1pm.
MED2022M	2	BA Film and Television BA Media Production	2	Seminar A/B/C (wk 1-12,18-26, 29-31)
MKT2014M	2	BA Business and Marketing BA International Business Management BA Business Studies BA Advertising and Marketing	6	None after 1pm.
BGY2004M	2	BSc Zoology BSc Bioveterinary Science BSc Forensic Science BSc Biology BSc Biochemistry	7	IT Lab Session (wk 2,4,5,7) Lecture 2 (wk 2,5,6,7)
FRS2020M	2	MChem Forensic Chemistry	1	Lecture (wk1-3,5,7,9,11,12)
BGY2002M	2	BSc Bioveterinary	2	Seminar (wk 32) Practical (wk 24,

		Science		26)
BIO2036M	2	BSc Bioveterinary Science	1	None after 1pm.
JOU2010M	2	BA Journalism	1	None found.
CHM2003 M	2	MChem Chemistry	1	Seminar (wk19,29) Lecture (wk 23,29)
CHM2004 M	2	MChem Chemistry	1	None after 1pm.
CHM2005 M	2	MChem Chemistry	1	None after 1pm.
BIO2043M	2	BSc Zoology	4	Poster Session (wk 11)
ADV2009M	2	BA Advertising and Marketing	1	None after 1pm.
BIO2063M	2	BSc Bioveterinary Science	1	None found.
DRA2038M	2	BA Drama	1	Workshop (wk 1- 5,7-10)
FIN2037M	2	BA Business and Management	3	None after 1pm.
MGT2032M	2	BA Business and Management	4	Lecture (wk 3,7)
BGY2003M	2	BSc Forensic Science BSc Zoology	2	Lecture (wk 2,3,11)
BMS2010M	2	BSc Forensic Science	1	Seminar (wk 23)  Lecture (wk 23)
HEA2035M	2	BSc Health and Social Care	1	None after 1pm.
HEA2014M	2	BSc Health and Social Care	1	None found.
BIO2038M	2	BSc Biology BSc Pharmaceutical Science	2	Practical (wk 6-7,9- 12)
HST2003M	2	BA History	1	None after 1pm.
ARC2004M	2	BArch Architecture	1	Studio Activities (wk 8-13, 17-19)
BIO2042M	2	BSc Zoology	1	None after 1pm.
FRS2007M	2	BSc Biochemistry	1	Practical (wk 6)

				Lecture (wk13)
MKT2013M	2	BA Business and Marketing	1	IT Lab Session E,B,G,D,A,H,F,C (wk 24-25)
BUS2029X	3	BA International Business Management	1	None found.
PSY3121M	3	BSc Psychology	1	Tutorial sessions (wk 1-13, 17-26, 29-30)
BUS3110M	3	BA Business and Finance BA International business Management BA Business and Management	3	None after 1pm.
FIN3026M	3	BA Business and Finance	1	None after 1pm.
MED3004M	3	BA Media Production	1	Mentoring Session (wk 1-12)
MED3006M	3	BA Media Production	1	Meet Grads (wk 8)
ARC3004M	3	BArch Architecture	1	Studio Activities (wk 6-12, 18-22)
ARC3005M	3	BArch Architecture	1	Lecture (wk 17)
BIO3024M	3	BSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare	1	Field work (wk 8)
BIO3030M	3	BSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare	1	None found.
BIO3036M	3	BSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare	2	Presentation (wk 13)
DRA3035M	3	BSc Drama	2	Seminar(wk 1-5, 7-9)
HST3033M	3	BA History	2	Mentoring (wk 1-2, 4-5, 7-13, 18-22, 24-26, 29-32)
BUS3019M	3	BA Business Studies LLB Law and Business	2	Lecture (wk 1-5, 18, 21)
MKT2087M	3	BA Business Studies	1	None found.
FRS3026M	3	BSc Forensic Science	1	Practical Session (wk 23,29)
FRS3027M	3	BSc Forensic	1	Practical Session

		Science		(wk 8)
				Lecture (wk 4,13)
FRS3028M	3	BSc Forensic Science BSc Criminology and Forensic Investigation	2	Drop- In Session (wk10)
BUS3057M	3	BA International Business Management	2	None after 1pm.
CRI3002M	3	BSc Criminology and Forensic Investigation	1	None found.
CRI3073M	3	BSc Criminology and Forensic Investigation	1	None after 1pm.
FRS3029M	3	BSc Criminology and Forensic Investigation	1	Lecture (wk 30)
TOU3008M	3	BSc Events Management	1	None after 1pm.
SOS3061M	3	BSc Events Management	1	None found.
SOS3062M	3	BSc Events Management	1	None after 1pm.
SOS3752M	3	BSc Events Management	1	None found.
TOU3028M	3	BSc Events Management	1	Lecture (wk 1-5,18,21)
BGY3003M	3	BSc Biomedical Science BSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare	3	Lecture (wk2,7)
BMS3007M	3	BSc Biomedical Science	3	None after 1pm.
DRA3048M	3	BA Drama	2	None found.
PSY3002M	3	BSc Psychology with Forensic Psychology	2	None after 1pm.
BMS3008M	3	BSc Biomedical Science	2	None after 1pm.
BMS3010M	3	BSc Biomedical Science	1	None after 1pm.
POL3001M	3	BA Criminology	1	None after 1pm.
EGR3001M	3	MEng Mechanical Engineering	1	Class Session (wk 8,24) Independent

				Study (wk 21, 26,30) Drop-In Session (wk 3,11,19,21,24)
EGR3006M	3	MEng Mechanical Engineering	2	Practical (wk 2,4,6,8,0,12,17,19)
PBR3018M	3	BA Journalism and Public Relations	1	None after 1pm.
BGY9004M	PG	MSc Biotechnology	1	IT Lab Session (wk 2)
HST9034M	PG	MA Nineteenth Century Studies	1	Seminar (wk 1-5, 7-12)
BIO9013	PG	MSc Biochemistry and Molecular Biology by Research	1	None found.

For other teaching which happens on Wednesday afternoons such as Seminars, Workshops or Practicals, we would request that students be able to change these sessions, where there are other timetabled sessions of the like in the week, to enable these students to take part in BUCS Wednesdays. This may mean that the group that they are allocated to is changed e.g. from Seminar group C to Seminar Group A.

The Central Timetabling Department within Planning and Business Intelligence have created a Central Seminar Change request form which can be found on the portal.

[Fig. 2 Screenshot of the Central Timetable Change Request.](#)



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://ps.lincoln.ac.uk/services/registry/PlanningandBusinessIntelligence/timetabling/SitePages/Timetable%20Changes.aspx>. The page header includes the University of Lincoln logo and 'PROFESSIONAL SERVICES'. The main content area is titled 'Academic Timetable Queries & Changes' and includes a welcome message and a form for submitting change requests. The form has the following fields:

- School \*
- Programme Area \*
- Module Code
- Module Title
- Timetable Event Type
- Timetable Change Information
- Timetable Change Reason
- Attachments (with a link to attach a file)

Buttons for 'Submit' and 'Close' are at the bottom of the form. To the right, there is a sidebar with the following content:

- View Your Requests** (button)
- About Timetable Changes**
- Timetable change requests should follow these guidelines.
- Change reasons may include:**
  - Changes to group allocations.
  - Student numbers.
  - Changes to module delivery.
  - Staff changes.
- Change requests may not include:**
  - Personal reasons, unless signed off by Head of School.
  - Change requests to current scheduled time slots, unless for valid reasons.
- All timetable amendments will in the first instance be considered by your School Timetabler, but ultimately by Central Timetabling. All changes must fit the current schedule and constraints of module/programme delivery and space utilisation.

Colleagues confirmed that this form was created on behalf of schools but use of it is varied from school to school. Once a student has submitted a change request using this form the administrators within Schools are notified but from then it can be an informal route or a Head of School route. Currently the "Timetable Change Reason's" are listed as:

- Student Numbers
- Staff leaving/Illness
- Clashes
- Changes to programme delivery
- Specific staff related timetable change
- Room
- Other

Research within each school with administrators showed that there was indeed a varied use of this form – with many suggesting students don't know about this form or can't find it when directed.

Within the School of Architecture and Design, the Architecture division have not received any requests through this methods. If there have been changes requested, these have been through informal methods for personal reasons, or one or two were for BUCS fixtures at the beginning of term one.

Within the School of English and Journalism, they have an allotted period of time to request change of seminar and are flexible to make any requested teaching changes that students make during this time period if the numbers within groups will allow. Most common request is due to the need to work their job alongside studies but have received requests to change due to taking part in sport on Wednesdays which have been allowed. If the request is unsuccessful, the school will inform the student as to why this is, for instance due to seminar group numbers or a clash with timetabling for a different module. If a student wishes to change their teaching after this point in the term, this would tend to be through the tutor teaching. This appears to be the same process within the School of History and Heritage and School of Film and Media.

Lincoln School of Fine and Performing Arts, don't tend to receive requests for teaching changes due to the number of practical sessions that they deliver. The don't tend to use the central form due to the performance and practical sessions needing to be approved by a programme leader which is approved or denied then forwarded on to the administrator to change if necessary. The school tries to accommodate all requests, including any involving sport, but can't go over group set numbers.

Within the School of Chemistry, administrators don't receive many requests generally or for students who are part of BUCS teams. If they do receive a request, it is over email and then a discussion is had between the administrator and module leader to seek advice as to whether the change is practical for the seminar groups affected.

The School of Computer Science use the central system on the portal which they direct students to if they are approached about a potential change request, so that they can monitor all applications from students. Most change requests are made within the first month of term and will be accepted for work or other genuine reasons if they can receive proof of the requirement e.g. a work schedule. BUCS Wednesday requests are usually accepted and met where practical, due to the tradition of keeping Wednesday afternoons free for Sports and Societies. The School did raise concerns that in the future this may not be possible due to the high intake of students in the future as this will limit places in teaching sessions as well as potentially resulting in timetabled sessions on Wednesday afternoons.

In the School of Life Sciences, the students don't tend to use the form that is hosted via the Portal site, as if they have any problems the students will email administrators directly who will then input the request for them. Staff couldn't remember a time when there had been a practical session or seminar change request declined unless it had clashed with another aspect of the student's timetable. This school also commented that they had previously received requests for changes due to sporting commitments.

In the School of Maths and Physics, staff haven't received timetabling change requests directly nor any academic queries or changes forms over the last academic year. However, in a School Subject Committee Meeting this year, students have raised any issues with timetabling or rooms that they have had. This has included requesting to have Wednesday afternoons free in order to attend Sports games or Societies. As a result Programme Leaders have made changes with Timetabling where this was possible.

The School of Health and Social Care is a different response when compared to other schools. As the programmes are already set and don't have multiple choices for seminars they don't receive change requests from students. If a student on these courses was to raise a request they would need to do so through the portal and provide a strong reason to do so. Additionally, on these types of courses sporting activities on Wednesdays would not be taken into account due to placements as it is not feasible to do so. Currently there are not weekly occurrences of teaching on Wednesday afternoons.

Within Lincoln Law School, their approach is to be open to requests from the portal, email or face to face much like some of the other schools previously mentioned. Generally, although can request evidence from students, they feel that when there is a request for a timetable change there must also be a genuine reason. This approach is to encourage students to have the teaching style they require amongst other reasons in order for them to attend and engage in a session. The only reason for refusal is if the seminar group is full or if requests are later than the two weeks at the start of term due to the fact groups will have meshed together by this point. Currently within this school, there are no timetabled classes on a Wednesday afternoon.

The School of Sport and Exercise Science main requests are for seminar/lab group changes or changes of their options, although they don't receive a high number of requests for these. As with other schools, changes are submitted through the portal request page or directly with an administrator or other member of staff. If it is made within the first few weeks of term then the change is usually allowed. There is a need to keep the various groups to a balanced size so will deny a request if there is not enough room to facilitate that student within the groups. If this is after the first few weeks of term, then administrators will always check with tutors to ensure that no group work has begun and it would not affect the group too much. The School will try and accommodate most reasons such as childcare or use of public transport to attend university, which may lead to a check of the public transport used or route travelled to find out if this is correct or will ask for further details. Change requests within this School aren't usually agreed for part-time work commitments and any other reasons are considered subjectively. If the School cannot accommodate the initial request but the reason is valid then they will try to make an alternative change to the timetable to improve it for the student. If there are still issues, then there may be a suggestion to swap with a student in another module who may be facing the same issue and swap options but this doesn't happen very often. At the moment the School of Sport and Exercise Science do not receive or facilitate any change requests due to BUCS fixtures as they do not have any Undergraduate timetabled sessions on a Wednesday afternoon.

Unfortunately, there were no responses from colleagues from Business, Social and Political Science, Psychology or Engineering.

As can be seen from the input of administrators from Schools across the University, there is a range of flexibility in order to accommodate student timetable requests unless impractical to do so; the class is already filled or there are not enough facilities in rooms such as Computer Labs. There also appears to be in each school a willingness to allow timetabling changes for the reason of BUCS Wednesday fixtures as long as it's completed within an appropriate amount of time. Other Schools that don't appear to do this at the moment are those who don't currently have timetabled sessions on a Wednesday afternoon or due to placements – however, this may not always be the case as the University grows. For this reason, the Students' Union would ask the University to include the reason of BUCS Wednesday fixtures as a reason.

In order for this to be accepted, we at the Students' Union, understand there must be a level of proof to show that a student is a member of a BUCS competing sports team. Currently being accepted as evidence is the receipt of purchase that a student retains from joining the Sport Club, however we're aware that not all students may keep this. For this reason we're introducing the potential to allow for staff within schools to contact the Sports Assistant role within the Students' Union for confirmation of membership to a Sports Club should the student not have their receipt of purchase for their membership.

Commented [LW2]: Thoughts?

To conclude, students have brought to the Students' Union attention that they have faced problems with regards to their timetabled sessions of teaching on a Wednesday afternoon clashing with engaging with their sporting commitments to represent nationally. After talking to colleagues within Schools across the University, we have found that most schools will allow changes on their course within reason, accepting Wednesday BUCS Fixtures as a reason for the change of timetabled sessions for students if they wish to change. However on the formal process, this is not included as a reason. We recommend that the University:

**1. Include Wednesday BUCS Fixture as a reason for a change in timetabling request.**

The information of what types of sessions are timetabled on a Wednesday afternoon in Figure 1, show that some of the issues are to do with a need for a specific room, for example an IT lab space. However, this was not the case for all sessions named by respondents to us. For this reason we would recommend that:

**2. Timetabled sessions that do not need an equipment specific room to not be timetabled on a Wednesday afternoon i.e. post 12pm.**

Finally, it was seen in Figure 1. that there were a number of lectures on a Wednesday afternoon. These occurrences do not allow for students to engage with their sporting commitments due to lectures for each module typically only happening once per week for each module. For this reason we would recommend that:

**3. No compulsory lectures are timetabled for a Wednesday afternoon i.e. post 12pm.**

