

## The University of the West of England empowers students with Student Allocator and reduces workload for timetablers

### Student Allocator chosen to focus on engaging more effectively with students

The University of the West of England (UWE Bristol) has used Scientia's timetabling solutions for many years and has developed into a highly experienced user. In 2006, the institution purchased Scientia's Student Allocator solution in order to improve efficiency of operation and give particular focus on engaging more effectively with students. Enhancing the student experience is one of UWE Bristol's strategic goals.

### Reducing workload for timetablers

In the first phase of the roll-out, UWE Bristol deployed Student Allocator for **online module selection** which was used by approximately 4,000 students across the Bristol Business School, School of Law and School of Life Sciences. This phase was successful in that it:

- increased student involvement in the module selection process.
- reduced staff workload in terms of administration.
- informed and enabled early decision-making regarding operation of modules.

Following on from this phase, UWE decided to roll out Student Allocator across the entire institution in 2009 for choices made for the 2009-10 academic year. Students were given access to Student Allocator and encouraged to make appropriate selections on all courses offering module choice. Importantly, this meant that the planning and programme structuring processes were brought forward and students felt empowered to make their own choices.

### Student engagement is increased

Student Allocator has empowered students and increased staff engagement with the overall module and activity selection process. The former should help improve student retention, whilst the latter will reliably inform early decision-making regarding classes thereby ensuring more stability.

Released timetables, however may not fit with the desires, requirements or restrictions of individual students, which include wanting late or early starts, condensed or spread out teaching activities, and catering for childcare, work or medical commitments.

**"Student Allocator has enabled us to see the relative popularity of optional modules before the autumn term started, resulting in class sizes and memberships being stabilised earlier than in previous years. Planning has been improved and students empowered to make their own choices."**

**"Student Allocator has been a great help to UWE Bristol. It allows students to make changes to their timetable, giving them more control over shaping their timetables, and reducing workload on the timetablers that would otherwise come to us at our busiest time of year".**

Andy Elson, Central Timetabling Manager



The next phase, deployed at the start of 2010-11, involved allowing undergraduate students from the Faculty of Business & Law to use Student Allocator to change **activities** on their individual timetables. Individual, clash-free timetables are produced from students' module selections using Scientia's *Syllabus Plus* scheduling solution.

The number of changes made by students remained constant in 2010-11 and 2011-12.

Most recently, however, this number has now increased by 48% in 2012-2013. Interestingly, staff made changes to a larger number of student choices than the students did themselves - 1,405 students in 2010-11, 880 in 2011-12 and 1080 in 2012-13.

Students were given a specific timeframe in which they could request changes to the timetable and this process was found to reduce ad-hoc queries further down the line.

Looking back over the experience of using Student Allocator within the University Of The West Of England, Andy Elson, the Central Timetabling Manager commented "Student Allocator has been a great help to UWE Bristol. It allows students to make changes to their timetable, giving them more control over shaping their timetables and reducing workload on the timetablers that would otherwise come to us at our busiest time of year".

### About the University of the West of England

UWE Bristol is the largest provider of Higher Education in the South West of England and much of its research is rated as world class (RAE 2008). The university has established partnerships with the BBC, Taylor's University, the University of Bristol and Hewlett Packard and its goal is to ensure that its students have the best experience possible.



University of the  
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