

Simplifying the invigilator rostering process with Exam Management System



AUT Fast Facts:

- Established as a University in 2000
- 2nd largest uni in NZ
- 19.5k EFT students
- 3.8k staff
- Centralised timetabling process
- ~2,100 exam sessions in 2016
- ~64,000 exam sittings in 2016
- ~171 rooms in exam pool
- Scientia software users since 2012

The Challenge

An effective examinations invigilation process is a vital part of every academic institution. It ensures that exams are conducted in accordance with regulatory requirements. Invigilation is part of a wider exams management process: separate from – but integral to – the scheduling of exams.

Auckland University of Technology (AUT) has around 180 exam invigilators on its books. Between them, they observe more than 30,000 students sitting some 1,000 exams every semester. Just like any other staff member or student, each invigilator has restrictions and preferences around their availability.

Prior to deploying the Invigilator Rostering module in Exam Management System (EMS), the scheduling team at AUT would simply email their invigilators, asking them to reply with their availability for upcoming exams sessions. They would then manually enter individual invigilator's availability into Exam Scheduler (ES) – a very time-consuming process and prone to errors.



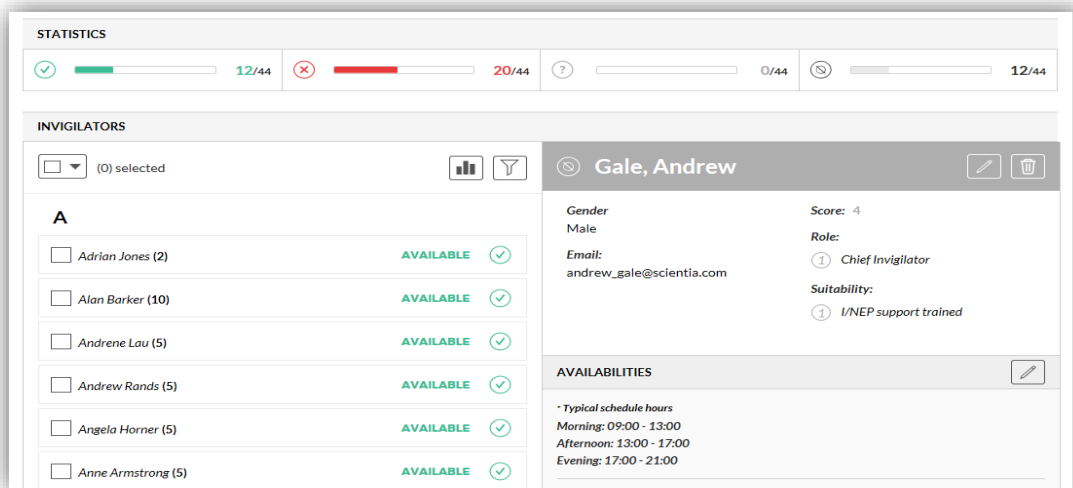
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The Solution

EMS is a collection of five independent modules which works in parallel with ES. Like all Scientia's Cloud-based applications, it's responsively-designed and optimised for mobile, tablet and desktop devices. It delivers a range of essential exam management functions through an easy-to-use interface.

Staff at AUT first became aware of EMS at the 2015 Exams Network Conference in Auckland, New Zealand. They were confident that the Invigilator Rostering module could significantly enhance the process of getting invigilator availability into ES during busy exam periods. They

deployed the software in April 2017 and used it to gather availability for their Semester 1 2017 exams.



The EMS dashboard enables the Exam Team to see which invigilators are available, and when. They can quickly identify who hasn't responded to availability requests and contact them separately.

“The fact that it has a very intuitive, user-friendly interface was a big draw for us,” said Blair Daly, Associate Director of Space Planning and Timetabling at AUT.

“Once we’ve scheduled the semester’s exams and know the number and type of invigilators we need, the Invigilator co-ordinator contacts our pool.”



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“Now, rather than sending an email request, we send a link to their personal portal in EMS, asking each invigilator to select which morning, afternoon or evening sessions they can observe. They simply click to select the ones they can do, submit the form online, and it automatically updates in ES. The integration between ES and EMS is really impressive. Data flows quickly and seamlessly between the EMS web portal and ES on premise,” said Blair.

The Outcome

Lisa Percy, Temps on Campus & HR Administration Support Manager at AUT, estimates that automating the invigilator availability process reduced the time collecting and collating invigilator availability from 2 weeks to 2-3 days in its first semester of use: ***“EMS has enabled us to remove the duplication of a vital but time-consuming data entry process. It has substantially reduced the workload of the Exam Team here, enabling them to focus on allocations, training and invigilator recruitment.”***

Feedback from invigilators has been very positive, with most reporting a preference for the new system: ***“It was quick and easy to use and I liked having control of the changes to my availability.”***

MONDAY	04 June 2018
Morning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Afternoon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Evening	<input type="checkbox"/>
TUESDAY	05 June 2018
Morning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Afternoon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Evening	<input type="checkbox"/>
WEDNESDAY	06 June 2018
Morning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Afternoon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Evening	<input type="checkbox"/>
THURSDAY	07 June 2018
Morning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Afternoon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Evening	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="button" value="CANCEL"/> <input type="button" value="SAVE CHANGES"/>	

The intuitive interface makes session selection easy for invigilators.



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It's had some unexpected outcomes too: ***"Whilst there were still changes to invigilators' availability after allocation, these were managed online in EMS by the invigilators themselves, resulting in fewer calls to the office asking us to make changes,"*** said Lisa.

To help with uptake of the new process, the invigilator availability screen in ES is a mirror image of the Invigilator Rostering module in EMS, making it easy for AUT staff to walk invigilators through the process over the phone – or enter the data themselves in a quick and easy way.

The AUT Exam Team were also complementary about Cyon's technical consultancy: ***"The support from the Cyon team while we were working through the installation process was timely and thorough,"*** said Nicole Wason, AUT's Senior Business Analyst.

As with any new system, there have been teething problems: ***"The USA date format caused some confusion and meant a short delay in going live, but that was easy to iron out. In all other respects, it's been a great step forward and improved management of the availability process significantly,"*** said Lisa.

What future improvements do AUT see in their exams management process? ***"We're very keen to implement the Paper Management and Needs Extra Provision (NEP) modules once we've sorted out some internal processes,"*** said Blair. ***"That's another great aspect of working with Scientia: they identify what you need to do ahead of an implementation to keep costs down and make the whole process work better."***

Find out more about EMS and our other solutions at scientia.com.