

Promoting the Equity of the Student Learning Experience

Case Study 3: SRUCSA Timetable Deadline

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What was the issue?

This academic year (2021-22) term 1 timetables were released to students just over a week before term started. There were several causes attributed: extended 2020-21 Academic Year; pressures on staff time and availability; COVID guidance; and short amount of time between the end of one academic year and start of the next. However, this is not a new issue. Prior to this academic year, it was common for timetables to be sent to students late in the summer. The COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated an existing problem.

Although inconvenient for all students, late release of timetables affects those who have additional responsibilities (providing care to children or other family members, or having to work to fund their way through studying) significantly more. It is no longer the case that, during the week, a student is either engaged in study, or with nothing else to do. Our students are now parents, care givers, bar workers, volunteers or running their own business. Learning has also changed - although our students may be enrolled as "full-time", they are not engaged in synchronous learning and teaching 9am-5pm Monday to Friday. Receiving a timetable begins a cascade of further processes - it can mean contacting employers and carers as well as making family and travel arrangements. Not being able to do this can compromise a student's ability to study effectively and properly balance studying with their personal commitments and social activities.



What we did

We took a paper describing the issue to the SRUC Academic Board in November 2021. The paper asked SRUC to take steps to introduce a deadline for timetable release (both term and exam timetables). It included supporting data from the NSS, Annual Monitoring Process Report and the 2021 Marketing and Induction Survey. It also included example policies from other institutions, and most importantly, testimonies from real students explaining how this affected them. Some students explained how it cost them job opportunities, they missed lectures as they had to work, they couldn't book childcare and made planning life outside of study very difficult.

What happened next

The Academic Board agreed that the problem needed to be addressed. This was made a priority for the registry teams and academic staff and as a result timetables were produced ahead of students starting and made available to students who were pre-enrolment through the SRUC website by the start of August. This process will be repeated each year and because of SRUCSA's actions, students will always have advance notice of their timetables. Making the challenging balance of study, life and work a little more manageable.



Find out more

This case study is one of nine published as part of the 2021-22 Student-led Project from the Resilient Learning Communities Enhancement Theme.

The project in year 2 explored equity and inclusivity in the context of a more blended learning environment and how we can best develop representative systems and student/class representative skills to effectively support all the students they serve.

You can find further case studies and resources on the [Enhancement Themes website](#).

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