

TA Timetabler - Quick start

We hope that you will find TA Timetabler intuitive and straight-forward to use, that it will save you time and make scheduling your teaching assistants a quick and efficient process.

User guide

If your school is not already connected, please see “Getting Connected” below.

1 - Create additional accounts

This step (if needed) can be carried out at any time and does not need to be done before Step 2. From the top-right menu, select “Manage users” from the drop-down. Enter the email address of the user you wish to invite in the appropriate box and click the “invite” button. The new user will receive an email and will be able to create an account and connect to your school straight away. Alternatively, additional users can create their own accounts by registering and selecting the school, as per Step 1 in ‘TA Timetabler - Guide to Getting Connected’. Once they have done this, the person who set up the initial account will receive an email asking them to login and authorise the new user. Once this has happened, the original and/or additional user(s) will be able to continue with the steps below.

2 - Create your first timetable

Once the connection from TA Timetabler to your MIS has been established and you log back into TA Timetabler, you will be taken to a page that asks you to create a new timetable. Typically, you will want to enter start and end dates that fit with your current academic year. Once you hit save, it will take a few minutes for all of the data to be downloaded from your MIS and for your timetable to be set up. Once this has completed, you will be able to continue to Step 3 below.

3 - Identify your Teaching Assistants

Once you have created your first timetable and the information has been downloaded from your school’s MIS to TA Timetabler, you should go to the staff page (you will be taken straight to this page following Step 2 above, or at any other time by selecting the Staff option from the top menu). Click on [Manage Staff] and select each member of staff that is a Teaching Assistant. This will allow you to set up preferences for these members of staff and to allocate them to lessons.

4 - Set up your Requirements and Preferences

Part of the power of TA Timetabler is making the future scheduling of your TAs a process that is as quick and efficient as possible, by setting up priorities and preferences. The idea is that you tell the system your priorities, in terms of the pupils that need TA support and the lessons they need the support in, and this allows you to manage the scheduling process using these priorities.

Similarly, telling TA Timetabler which subjects TAs are most suited to and which are your best TA/student/subject combinations will save you time creating your first and future schedules.

From within the Students, Staff and Classes sections, you can:

- set up preferences for as many or as few students and TAs as you like
- set a priority level (High, Medium, or Low) for each student and each of their subjects
- set up TA preferences for students (i.e. choose a particular TA that works well with a particular student in a particular subject)
- set up subject preferences for each TA
- identify classes that are a priority to be allocated TA support and/or identify particular TAs that you would prefer to work with a class. If you have already identified any pupils within a class as being a priority for support, the class will automatically show as being a priority for TA support.

You can set a start date and an end date for these priorities. Leaving the end date blank leaves a priority open-ended.

These preferences are then used by TA Timetabler in assisting you to schedule the TAs in a quick and efficient way.

5 - Schedule the TAs into the lessons quickly and easily

By selecting “Lessons” from the top menu and choosing the filters on the left as appropriate, you can quickly see the lessons that you will want to allocate TAs to. Lessons will be colour coded by priority and by whether a TA has been allocated to them. By clicking onto a lesson, you will be able to see a list of the TAs you can assign to the lesson, which will be ordered using the preferences you have set up in Step 4.

From here you can assign TAs to single lessons, to the selected lesson at the same time every week (or every two-weeks if you operate a two-week timetable) or to every lesson of that class. Any clashes with other lessons that a TA is already assigned to can be easily seen and managed from here. As your scheduling progresses, you can also view the timetables of individual TAs from this screen.

You can also return to your dashboard page, which will highlight to you any problems with your allocation and tasks you have not completed yet.

6 - Generate timetables for your TAs

Select “Export” from the top menu, select the desired TA(s) and choose start and end dates, to export PDF printable timetables, and/or email timetables to your teaching assistants.

Video tutorials

A comprehensive collection of video tutorials can be found via our help page:

<https://www.tatimetabler.co.uk/help/>

Getting Connected

In order for TA Timetabler to function it needs to be connected to your school's MIS (e.g. SIMS, Bromcom, Arbor). This brief guide outlines the steps to get connected. This is a one-off task that should never need to be repeated once you're set up.

1 - Register your school

Using your web browser, go to www.tatimetable.co.uk. Click the [Register] button, and fill in the brief required information. Once you have agreed to the terms and conditions and selected [Register], you will be sent an email, which will contain a link for you to click on to confirm your email address. You can then log in, using the previously entered information.

The first time you log in, you will be taken to the "Find your school" page. Enter your school's postcode and then select your school. You will then be asked to submit the details of a technical contact and an invoicing contact at your school.

If you have already connected to the test school and would now like to connect to your school, please click the link in the "Test School" banner at the top of the page and follow the on-screen instructions.

2 - Wait for Wonde

At this stage, you will need to wait until TA Timetabler is connected to your school's MIS via Wonde. This part of the process will be quickest if your school already has Wonde setup and connected to its MIS. Wonde is used by many other third-party applications to retrieve data from your school's MIS and it is very likely that your school will already have this setup. Your IT/Network manager should be able to let you know if this is the case.

If you don't already have Wonde connected to your MIS, then Wonde will get in touch with the technical contact you provided above. Getting connected is a straight-forward process but the exact details of what needs to be done will depend on which MIS you use and how/where it is hosted.

If you do already have Wonde setup, then any staff in your school that have Wonde Administrator accounts will receive an email asking them to log in and give Abacus Edutech permission to access various aspects of your staff and student data. It may take a few hours for this email to arrive, though Wonde Administrators should be able to log in and grant the relevant permissions pretty-much immediately. These permissions will need to be granted in order for TA Timetabler to work.

3 - Login and get started

Once Wonde has been connected and appropriate permissions for TA Timetabler has been granted, you will receive an email from TA Timetabler informing you of this. This may take up to one working day to arrive, as Wonde will do a manual check of your school's data first. You are now ready to create your first timetable and allow other staff in your school to create accounts. Please see the "User Guide" above.

Your feedback and upcoming developments

As TA Timetabler continues to develop, more features will be added and we would really welcome your feedback at any time.

Please do send any comments, questions, problems or suggestions to support@abacusedutech.co.uk at any time.