How to...

Set-up your Bb9 Course Unit

Bb9 Resources

The University of Manchester
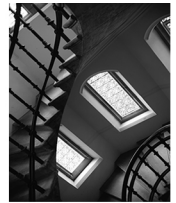

The Blackboard 9 Environment and Standard Course Structure

Adapting the Bb9 Standard Course Structure to your Needs

Blackboard 9 (Bb9) is a highly customisable environment. However student feedback tells us that inconsistent course navigation and naming conventions are causing confusion. To address this, a cross-faculty team has created a standard course structure (SCS) to ensure consistency across all course units.

Once you have deployed the SCS you will need to adapt it to your needs. The information below aims to help you through this process and directs you to the Bb9 resources on the University's Knowledge Base. Follow the link to access each resource; you may be asked to log in using your University username and password. Alternatively, you can access the Knowledge Base directly from the IT Service Desk webpage.

1. Edit Mode

To begin adapting the SCS to your needs first ensure that Edit Mode is On. The Edit Mode button allows you to change the view of content on the screen. To add, edit, rename, reorder, or delete content turn Edit Mode to On. To preview content, turn Edit Mode to Off.

2. Banner

A banner has been designed for each School; it appears at the top of the course entry point and module pages. If you would like a different banner please contact your eLearning Team.

3. Help
A help icon is located on each page and has been customized so that it links to the University of Manchester Knowledge Base, which contains all our Bb9 resources.

4. Breadcrumbs
Breadcrumbs appear at the top of pages and provide links back through the path you navigated through to get to the current page.

5. Course Menu
The course menu is the primary navigation for all users. The SCS course menu includes the following items:

a. Noticeboard
You can use the Noticeboard to create class announcements. For further information see the Knowledge Base article: How to: Create Announcements in Blackboard 9
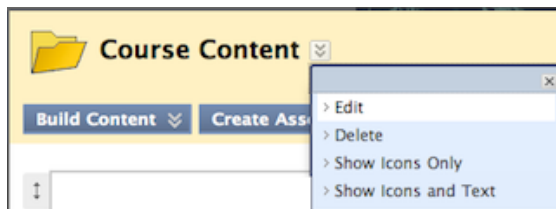
b. Course Content
The Course Content folder contains all the items, files, links, tools and other objects that you wish to present to students. The files you add to the Course Content are links to the actual files held in the **Content Collection** repository. It is good practice to keep your files organised via the Control Panel > Content Collection. For Further information see the Knowledge Base article: How to: Manage the Content Collection

The course content folder has been set as the course entry point for the SCS. You can change this via the control panel > customization > Style > **4. Select Course Entry Point**

i.   Name your Course Unit
To help orientate your students, add the name of your course to the course content folder title:
- Click on the action link button ⊻ to the right of the Course Content heading and select **Edit**

- In section **1. Content Folder Information** ✱Name, add a colon after Course Content: then the name of your course. For example, **Course Content: Data Networking**
- Click **Submit** to save your changes.

ii.   Show icons
You can use the same action link button to toggle between showing icons and text, icons only or text only for each item within the folder. Bb9 has one set of icons available. This option is available for all folders.

iii.   Rename the Topic / Week Folders
The Student Orientation item is by default the only item currently displayed to students.
- Click on the action link button to the right of the Topic 1/ Week 1 folder and select **Edit**.
- In section **1. Content Folder Information** ✱Name, change the folder to something more suitable and then write a description using the Text: visual editor.
- The folder can be made available to students in Section **3. Options.**

3.	Options	
Permit Users to View this Content		○ Yes ◉ No

- Click **Submit** to save your changes.

iv.   Build Course Content
- Hover the cursor over the **Build Content** button to access the additional menu.
- When you have created renamed created your topic / week folders you can add content to them using the same action link button to the right of Build Content.
- You can create files by linking to any files you have imported into the Content Collection or you uploading files to add new content.

v.   Organise Your Content as a Learning Module
For further information see the Knowledge Base article: How to: Create Learning Modules in Blackboard 9

c.   Communication Tools

You can use the Discussion Board tool to create links to Discussion Board pages and forums. For further information see the Knowledge Base: How to: Create Discussion Boards in Blackboard 9

There are lots of other communication tools, you can see them if you hover the cursor over the **Add Interactive Tool** button. There are tools to facilitate collaborative group work, personal reflection or for creating audio, for example wikis, journals, blogs and voice podcaster. See the Knowledge Base for more information, or contact your eLearning Team via eLearning@manchester.ac.uk.

d.   Assessment Tools

i.   Setting up Tests
- Click on the **Create Assessment** and select **Test** to create a test.
- If you imported any assessments as part of the transition from Blackboard 8, it will appear in the Add Test list, select it and click **Submit**. If you didn't import any Blackboard assessments click **Create**.

For further information see the Knowledge Base article: How to: create an Assessment in Bb 9

ii.   Setting up Assignments
To create a Blackboard assignment, see the Knowledge Base article: How to: Use the Assignment Tool in Bb9
- To create a Turnitin assignment, click on the **Add Interactive Tool** button**,** select TurnitinUK Assignment and create in the usual way. For further help contact your eLearning Team

e. Course Information

i.   Course Information
Use the **Build Content** feature to add documents or links to useful course information, such as handbooks, syllabus and timetables.

ii.   Reading List
This link will take students to the JRUL reading list page where they search for their course unit reading list. To set up a reading list contact JRUL. There is also a reading list link in Learning Resources.

f. My Grades

For further information see the Knowledge Base article: How to: use the My Grades tool in Bb9

g. Learning Resources

i.   Generic Resources
The generic resources are provided to help support and orientate students. You can add to these or delete them as you wish.

ii.   Reading Lists and Past Exam Papers
Make sure that your JRUL reading list and past exam papers and assessments lists are up to date. The reading list link will take students to the JRUL reading list page where they search for the appropriate reading list. This past exam papers link will take students to the past papers section of the Crucial Guide on StudentNet.

h. eLearning Support

Links to the Knowledge Base and virtual helpdesk are provided for student queries. It is also a good idea to use the discussion boards to allow students to post their learning queries to each other.

i. Staff Area

Useful resources and guides for Course Instructors can be added here.

j. Staff Details

A contact profile for each instructor should be added to staff details. The minimum should include name and email address.

6. Content Areas

Content is stored in folders. The top-level folder for the SCS is named Course Content. You should edit this to include your course unit name. Folders can include more than just content, they can hold links, tools and other objects. It is possible to place assignments and tests in the same folder as content.

7. Content Frame

The Content Frame is the main area of the browser window where content items and tools are displayed. Items in the main content area and course menu can be repositioned to reflect the way you want it displayed. The drag and drop arrows enable you to re-position items directly on a page by dragging to the desired location. Content items can be displayed with icons only, text only or with icons and text. The icons cannot be changed**.**

8. Control Panel

The Control Panel is the interface for managing the content, features, and appearance of a course. It is accessible to users based on the privileges assigned to their course role. Students do not see the control panel.
Upload and store files that are used in the course content in the content collection. Create folders to organise your files and then link these files to your course content area.

Glossary

Action Link Button	An action link is an indication of the presence of a contextual menu enabling the user to perform actions related to a specific item.
Availability	Availability determines whether or not content or features are accessible to users. Availability, in most cases, is time sensitive.
Content Collection	The Content Collection provides central file storage for all content. Instructors can link to items anywhere in the Content Collection when creating content for this Course. When an Instructor changes an item in the Content Collection, all links to the item reflect those changes. Using the links in the Control Panel, Instructors can access the content in this Course, in all of the Instructor's Courses, in all of the Instructor's Organisations or in all of the Courses in the Institution.
Contextual Menu	Contextual menus are drop-down lists that provide access to additional actions associated with an item. The menu is accessed via an Action Link.
Folder View	The Folder View of the Menu items displays the tree structure of the file system. This view also provides the ability to expand and collapse folders.
Grade Center	The Grade Center is a customizable feature for tracking and analyzing performance. It interfaces with Assessments, Assignments, and the Discussion Board automatically.
Help	The Help icon appears in the top frame. The Help icon can be set by the System Administrator to point to institution resources for providing assistance to users.
Learning Modules	A Learning Module is a set of Content Items with an accompanying path for progressing through the items. The path can be set so that students must view content sequentially or to permit students to view the content in any order. All types of content, such as items, Assignment, and Assessments may be included in a Learning Module.
List View	The List View of the Menu items displays the names of the file system.
Modules	Modules are containers for content. Module pages can hold several modules and users can reorder them and even choose which ones they see. Module pages can appear within courses.
Text Editor	The WYSIWYG Editor, can be turned on or off. When the Text Editor is enabled, you can add links, attach files and images, or format text. When the Text Editor is disabled, you can edit in plain text.
View Results	The View Results controls are used to edit how many items appear on a page following a search.
Visual Editor	The Visual Editor is a tool to help instructors format text, add multimedia and equations without the need for using html coding. The visual editor can be turned off if plain text or HTML is preferred.

For further help contact your Faculty eLearning Team: elearning@manchester.ac.uk