



# Getting Started

This document will provide all the information you need to log in to Blackboard and undertake the Staff eLearning Tutorial.

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# Introduction to Blackboard

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Blackboard is currently the Learning Management System (LMS) used at ACU National. All units, whether face-to-face or fully online, should have an online presence where appropriate and feasible.

An LMS is software designed to manage online learning programs. Most LMSs, including Blackboard, are web-based and enable participants to access content and learning activities at times and places convenient to them.

Those who have been at the University for a while may remember that we used to call our LMS WebCT. Blackboard and WebCT, both leading providers of eLearning and services to the education industry, merged in 2005. The company remains under the Blackboard brand.

## Logging in to Blackboard

All you need to log in to Blackboard is a computer with Internet access and a browser such as Internet Explorer or Firefox. Your login User name and Password are the same as your University network login name and password.

The url for logging in is <http://www.acu.edu.au/eLearning>



The screenshot shows a web page titled "Login". At the top left, there is a small icon of a person and the word "Login". Below this is a purple banner with the word "Welcome" in white. Underneath the banner, the text "Please login with your user name and password" is displayed. The main content area has a purple background and contains two white input fields. The first is labeled "User name:" and the second is labeled "Password:". At the bottom of the page, there are three links: "eLearning", "help desk", and "support form". On the right side, there is a button labeled "Login ->".

**Figure 1 Login**

However, there are some settings that you need to check on your browser to ensure all the tools in Blackboard will work properly. When you go to the Login page, you will see information about the technical requirements.

## *Technical requirements*

### **Browser Check**

It is recommended that you run a check of your browser. You simply click on the **browser check** link on the Login page and the check will tell you if you need to change any settings before using Blackboard.

### **Pop-up Blockers**

Blackboard makes use of pop-up windows. If you have a pop-up blocker installed, you'll be asked to disable it for Blackboard sites.

### **Downloading and opening Files in Blackboard**

In Internet Explorer when you try to download files in Blackboard, you may see the Information Bar which is a pale yellow bar just above the web page content and below the toolbars. This bar may warn you that a file has been blocked from downloading. Click YES to any warning.

### **Java**

Java is a program that allows many of the tools in Blackboard to function. It is important that you have a Blackboard compatible version installed. You can check if your version is compatible by running the browser check.

After logging in to Blackboard, you may be prompted to accept a Java Security Certificate. You must click Yes or Always to ensure that Blackboard functionality using Java will work properly in your browser.

## *Your My Blackboard page*

The first screen you will see when you log in is the *My Blackboard* screen that lists all the units to which you have access.

On the next page, you will see a sample *My Blackboard* screen (Figure 2) with some notes about the various tools and functions available.

**Note:** When working in Blackboard you must only use the navigation buttons within Blackboard. Your browser navigation buttons will not work.

You can use the Blackboard online calendar and To Do list. Just click on the arrow buttons.

The Blackboard units you have access to are listed here. Just click on the title to access the unit.

Campus wide announcements are listed here.

You can customise the tools available on your *My Blackboard* page (Channels), the colour and the layout.

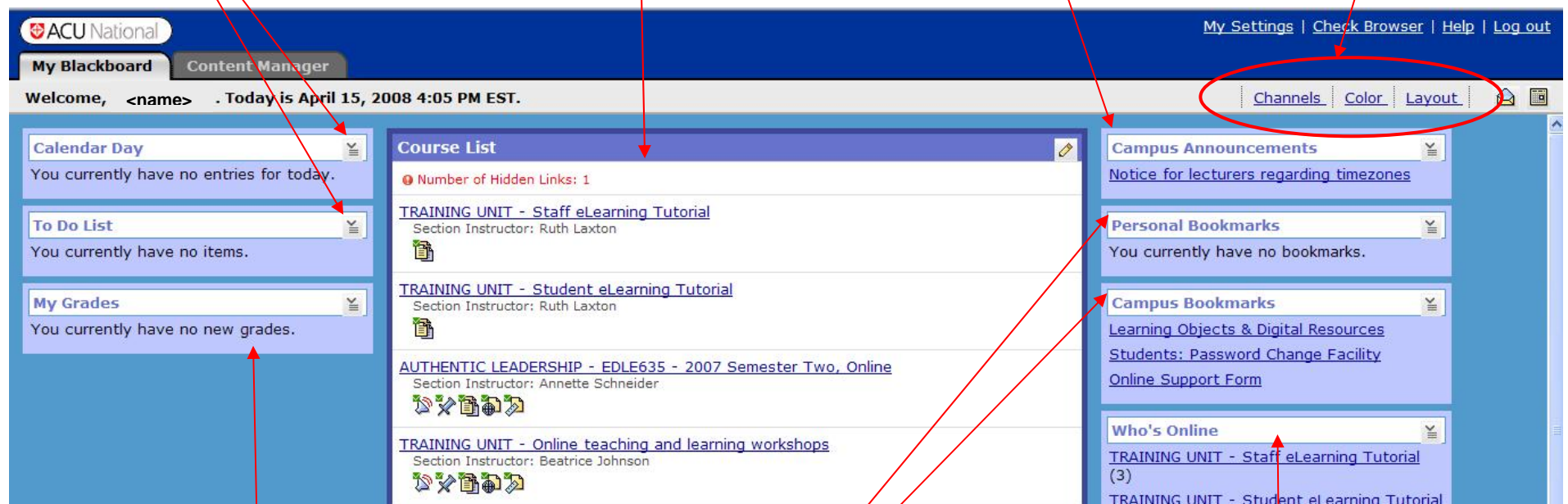


Figure 2 My Blackboard

If you are enrolled as a student in any units you will have a link to the My Grades tool.

You can add Personal Bookmarks. Some Campus Bookmarks are also available.

You can click and see who is currently online in any of your units.

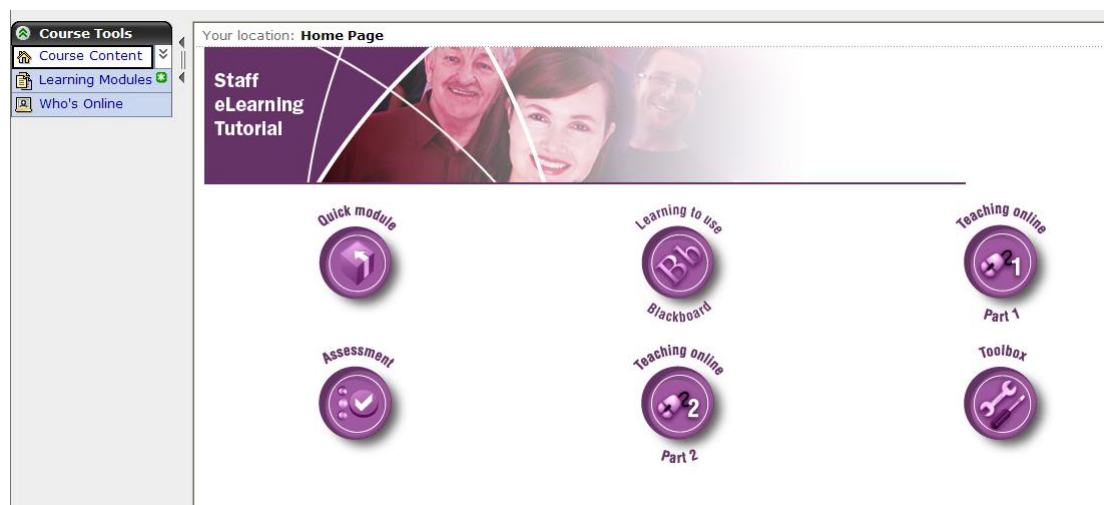
## Introduction to the Staff eLearning Tutorial

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The Staff eLearning Tutorial is available to help you develop some basic skills and knowledge in teaching online. It looks at both the technical and pedagogical aspects and you can dip in and out to learn whatever you need to know.

To enter the Staff eLearning Tutorial you simply click on the link on your *My Blackboard* page to **TRAINING UNIT – Staff eLearning Tutorial**.

You will then see the following home page.



### Modules and Toolbox

There are five modules within the **Staff eLearning Tutorial**:

- *Quick module* – for those who need to get online fast!
- *Learning to use Blackboard* – to learn the basics about Blackboard tools
- *Teaching online Part 1* – to develop some basic knowledge and skills in teaching online
- *Assessment* – to consider a range of issues related to assessment
- *Teaching online Part 2* – to develop some further knowledge and skills in teaching online.

**NOTE:** If you are teaching a **web-enhanced** unit (i.e. your online unit supports your face-to-face teaching) you need only do the *Quick module* to get online fast!

If you are teaching **fully online**, you are encouraged to work through *Learning to use Blackboard*, *Teaching online Part 1* and *Assessment*. When you have some online teaching experience come back and do *Teaching online Part 2*.

There is also a *Toolbox* where you can quickly access a range of resources included in the modules of the tutorial, as well as PDF versions of the content of each module.

Here is a summary of the key topics of each module.

### *Quick module*

- Getting your unit online
- Templates
- Your home page
- Announcements
- Learning modules
- Uploading files
- Downloading files
- Library
- Discussions
- Creating student groups
- Mail
- Setting student access dates
- Getting help
- Helping your students.

### *Learning about Blackboard*

- Getting your unit online
- Templates
- Purpose of your online unit
- Your home page
- Getting help
- Menus and course tools
- Announcements
- Calendar
- Learning modules
- Uploading files
- Chat
- Who's online
- Discussions
- Web links
- Mail
- Assessments
- Assignments
- My grade tool
- File manager
- Setting student access dates.

### *Teaching online Part 1*

- ACU's learning philosophy
- What makes an effective online unit?
- Needs of online learners

- Accessibility
- Building an effective online unit
- Designing learning activities
- Library
- Dealing with common problems
- Timeline for setting up your unit
- Setting student access dates
- Planning for revisions.

## *Assessment*

- Purpose of assessment
- Link between graduate attributes and assessment
- Link between learning outcomes and assessment
- University's assessment policy
- How do students feel about assessment?
- Different kinds of assessment
- Assessing online participation
- Teacher's role in assessment
- Some useful resources.

## *Teaching online Part 2*

- Review of *Teaching online Part 1*
- More about designing online learning activities
- More about facilitating online learning activities
- Incorporating new technologies in your online teaching
- Access more help.

## How to use the tutorial

The *Quick module* contains the essentials from *Learning about Blackboard* and the *Teaching online Part 1* modules. It is intended as a basic instruction if you need to get online quickly. It is designed for lecturers teaching **web-enhanced** units (i.e. teaching face-to-face with a supporting online unit). It doesn't cover every possible tool that you might want to add in a web-enhanced unit, but acts as a starting point. For other tools to increase flexibility, you should work through the later modules.

However, if you are not in a huge hurry, it is valuable to work through the other four modules. There is no need to do the *Quick module* if you are doing the other four.

If you are teaching **fully online** you should try and work through *Learning to use Blackboard*, *Teaching online Part 1* and *Assessment*. *Teaching online Part 2* is better taken once you have some online teaching experience.

### *How long will it take?*

Each module should only take around 30 minutes, depending on your entry level knowledge and skills, although *Learning to use Blackboard* may take a little longer.

### *When should I do the tutorial?*

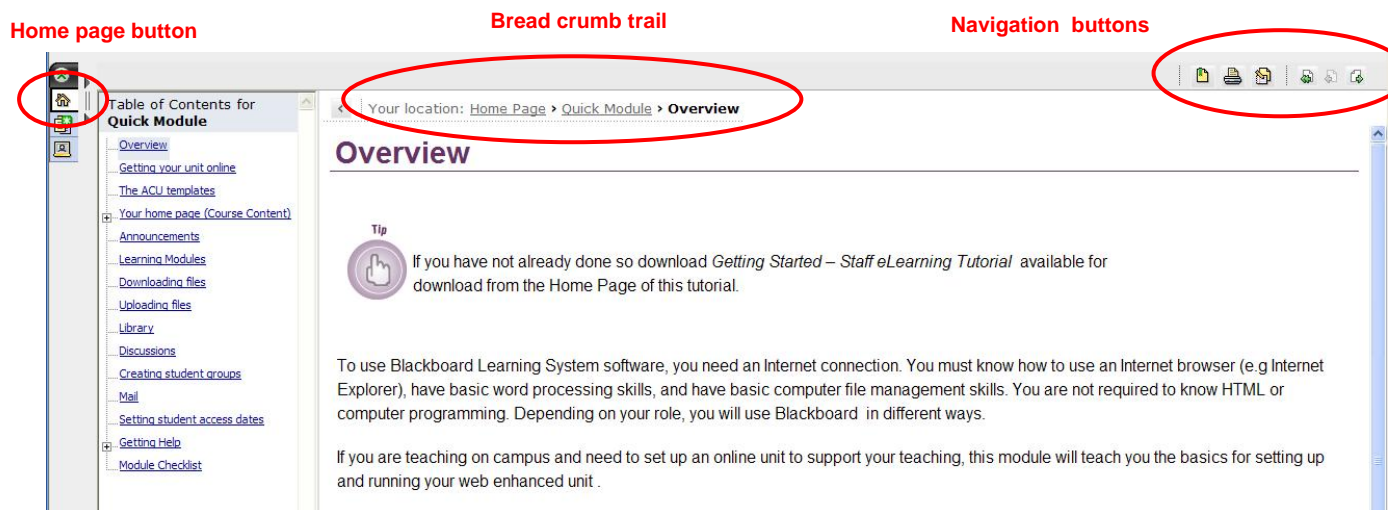
If you are teaching face-to-face, you should try and complete the *Quick module* before set up your unit site.

If you are teaching fully online you should try and work through the four modules apart from the *Quick module* before you start your online teaching.

You are then encouraged to drop back into the tutorial to refresh some key points as needed.

## Moving around the tutorial

From the home page of the tutorial click on the icon for the module you wish to begin. You will be taken to the first page of that module. Here is the first page of the *Quick module*:



**Figure 3** First page of *Quick module*

You'll see that there is a **Table of Contents** down the left hand side which will link you to any page in the module.

You can also go forward and back using the **navigation buttons** in the top right corner. There are also buttons there for bookmarking, printing and making notes.

The house icon in the top left corner takes you back to the **home page**.

Note: the **bread crumb trail** at the top of the page shows you where you are in the tutorial. You can click on any of these links to go back.

## Learning activities in the tutorial

The tutorial will not be facilitated. However, there are some learning activities within the modules.



At various point in the modules you are asked to reflect on your own teaching in order to consider new approaches or improvements.



A range of videos is included. These may be demonstrations of Blackboard functions, or brief videos of staff and students talking about key aspects of eLearning.



In the *Learning to use Blackboard* module, you're occasionally encouraged to go to a Playground to try out some Blackboard tools. A playground is simply an online unit in Blackboard where you can practise in private. In the next section about the eLearning Staff Portal, you will be given instructions on how to set up your playground.

**Note:** You may not be able to have two Blackboard sites open at the same time. You can try opening two browsers - either two versions of Internet Explorer, or Internet Explorer plus another browser such as Firefox or Mozilla. If you cannot access Blackboard via a second browser, you'll need to exit the Tutorial (by clicking on *My Blackboard*) to go to your Playground to practise.



There are also helpful tips included throughout. These are highlighted by this icon.

# eLearning Staff Portal

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The eLearning Staff Portal is available via the eLearning web site and enables you to:

- set up new units in Blackboard using a University template
- add/change current staff and students to your units in Blackboard.

There are two templates available in Blackboard – one for **web-enhanced** units and one for **fully online**.

If you are teaching on campus and need to set up a Blackboard unit to support your face-to-face teaching, you can select a web-enhanced template which will provide the minimum tools on your site. You can also choose to use no template once you are familiar with the Blackboard system and tools. In the first instance, you should select the template.

If you are teaching fully online, your site will be set up for you by ACUonline.

## Setting up your Playground

In the *Learning to use Blackboard* module, it is occasionally suggested that you go to a playground to try out some Blackboard tools. A playground is simply a Blackboard unit you can set up to practise in. Here are instructions on how to set up your playground.

1. Access **eLearning** through the University home page <http://www.acu.edu.au/>
2. Go to **Staff** section
3. Select **eLearning Staff Portal**
4. **Login** using you network username and password
5. Select **Request a course** be set up
6. Under the question ‘Will the Blackboard unit be based on a unit in Banner?’, Select **No**
7. Select **Use the web-enhanced template**
8. Select **Next**
9. Under the question ‘Do you wish to be added to the unit?’ select **Yes**
10. Set Role to **Instructor & Designer**
11. Select **Yes** to the question ‘Do you wish to be a primary instructor...’
12. Click on **Submit**

Note: If you wish to add more staff to the unit click on **Select Staff** and select an appropriate role for each additional staff member you add

13. Click **Specify Students**. There are no students so just move to next step.
14. Click **Go to Access Dates**. We don’t need to set specific access dates so leave dates blank and move to next step.

15. Click **Go to Review**
16. Select **eLearning Staff Portal Home**
17. Then you can **logout** of the eLearning Staff Portal

Now when you log in to Blackboard you will see your playground listed and you can click and enter and begin to practise in private!

**Note:** You may not be able to have two Blackboard sites open at the same time. You can try opening two browsers - either two versions of Internet Explorer, or Internet Explorer plus another browser such as Firefox or Mozilla. If you cannot access Blackboard via a second browser, you'll need to exit the Tutorial (by clicking on *My Blackboard*) to go to your Playground to practise.

## Ready to begin?

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You should now know how to:

- Ensure your browser is set up properly to access Blackboard
- Log in to Blackboard
- Find your way around your *My Blackboard* page
- Access the Staff eLearning Tutorial
- Navigate around the tutorial.
- Set up a private Blackboard playground to practise in.

## Need more help?

The Blackboard HelpDesk provides full telephone and email support from:

- 8am - 10pm AEST weekdays
- 9am - 5pm AEST weekends and public holidays.

The Blackboard HelpDesk can also be contacted via:

- an online support form (available via the Help section of eLearning web site [www.acu.edu.au/elearning](http://www.acu.edu.au/elearning))
- email ([blackboard.support@acu.edu.au](mailto:blackboard.support@acu.edu.au)), or
- by calling 1800 730 288 (ask for ACU Blackboard Support).

For help with online teaching strategies contact your Faculty eLearning Coordinator. Contact details can be found on the Learning and Teaching Centre (LTC) web site <http://www.acu.edu.au/LTC> .