

**Student  
eLearning  
Tutorial**



# Getting Started

This document will provide all the information you need to log in to Blackboard and undertake the Student 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 some time, 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 the Blackboard login interface. At the top left, there is a logo consisting of a red cross inside a white circle, followed by the word "Login" in bold. Below this is a purple horizontal bar with the word "Welcome" in white. The main content area is white and contains the text "Please login with your user name and password". Below this text are two input fields: "User name:" and "Password:". At the bottom of the page, there are links for "eLearning", "help desk", and "support form", and a "Login ->" button.

**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.

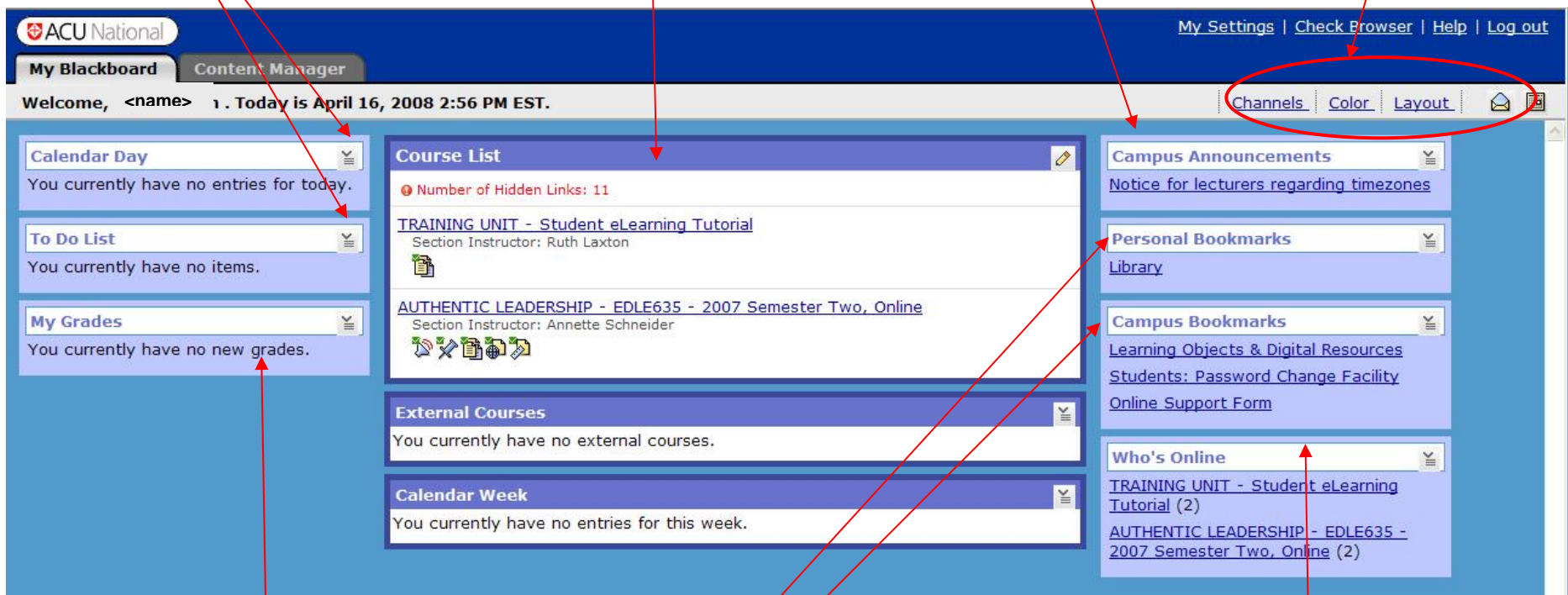


Figure 2 My Blackboard

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.

## *Content Manager*

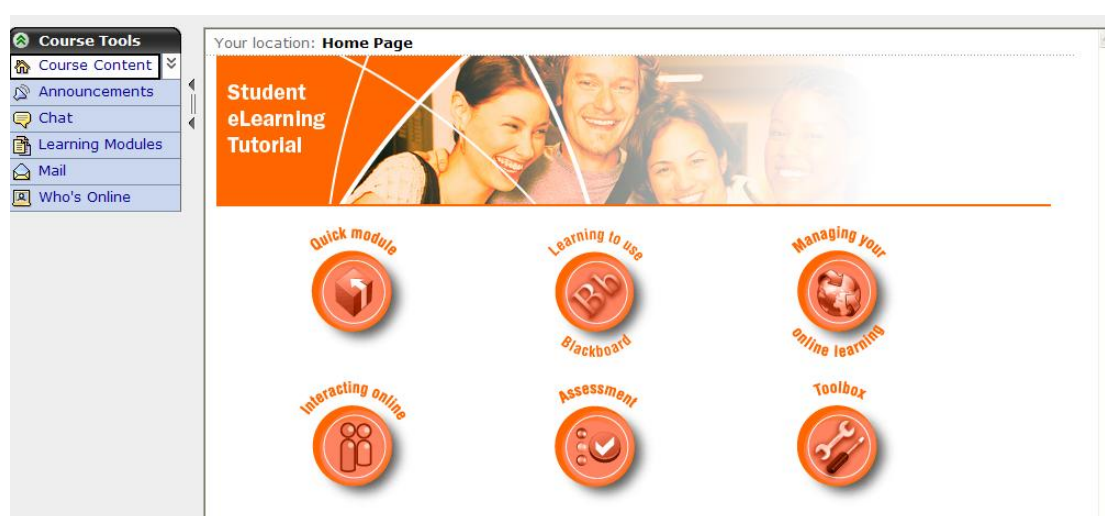
The **Content Manager** tab on the *My Blackboard* page takes you to your own personal My Files area. This is a place where you can store and order files that are relevant to your online units of study. You can create (HTML and text) files, upload and download files, and create folders in this simple file manager. These files stay with Blackboard so you can access them from anywhere. The files are available from within your individual units of study sites if you need to upload or download material. This file space is private to your account and cannot be shared among other users. It is for unit of study related material only.

# Introduction to the Student eLearning Tutorial

The Student eLearning Tutorial is available to help you develop some basic skills and knowledge in learning online. It looks at both the technical aspects and some skills and strategies to help you be an effective online learner. You can dip in and out of the tutorial anytime to learn whatever you need to know.

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

You will then see the following home page:



## Modules and Toolbox

There are five modules within the Student eLearning Tutorial:

- *Quick module* – for those who need to get online fast!
- *Learning to use Blackboard* – to learn the basics about *Blackboard* tools
- *Managing your online learning* – to develop some skills in managing learning online
- *Interacting online* – to help you interact effectively online
- *Assessment* – to consider a range of issues related to assessment

**Note:** If you are studying face-to-face with an online unit to support your learning (**web-enhanced** mode) then the *Quick module* should be enough to help you get online fast.

If you are studying **fully online** then the other four modules - *Learning to use Blackboard*, *Managing your online learning*, *Interacting online* and *Assessment* have been designed for you.

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*

- Home page
- Getting help
- Announcements
- Learning modules
- Library
- Discussions
- Mail
- Am I ready to study online?
- Access more help.

### *Learning about Blackboard*

- Home page
- Getting help
- Course tools and menus
- Moving around the site
- Announcements
- Calendar
- Learning modules
- Downloading documents
- Chat
- Who's online
- Discussions
- Mail
- Web links
- Assessments
- Assignments
- My files
- My grades
- My progress.

### *Managing your online learning*

- Managing your time
- Being organised
- Understanding your learning style
- Help with academic skills
- Help with disabilities
- Accessing the library
- Some useful resources.

## *Interacting online*

- Importance of interaction
- How online discussions work
- Making valuable contributions
- Different kinds of online learners
- What to expect from your lecturer online
- Some useful resources.

## *Assessment*

- Purpose of assessment
- Link between learning outcomes and assessment
- Different kinds of assessment
- Feedback on assessments
- Access more help
- Some useful resources.

## How to use the tutorial

The *Quick module* contains the essentials from *Learning about Blackboard* and the *Managing your online learning* modules. It is intended as a basic instruction if you need to get online quickly.

If you are studying in **web-enhanced** mode (i.e. you are studying face-to-face and the online unit is a supplement to your face-to-face study) just working through the *Quick module* may be all you need to know. But you may be interested in working through the others too.

If you are studying **fully online** it is best to work through the other four modules. There is no need to do the *Quick module* if you are doing the other four.

### *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 studying face-to-face, you should try and complete the *Quick module* before the beginning of semester.

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

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*:

Home page button

Bread crumb trail

Navigation buttons

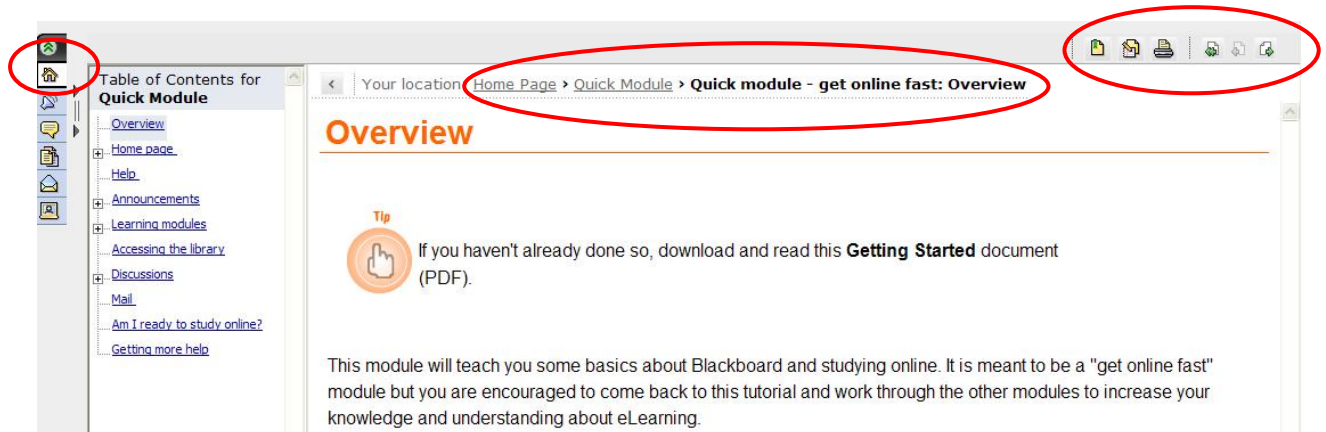


Figure 3 First page of *Quick module*

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 approaches and consider new approaches or improvements.



There are some brief videos of staff and students talking about key aspects of eLearning.



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

## 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 Student eLearning Tutorial
- Navigate around the tutorial.

## 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 website [www.acu.edu.au/elearning](http://www.acu.edu.au/elearning))
- email (blackboard.support@acu.edu.au), or
- by calling 1800 730 288 (ask for ACU Blackboard Support).

If you have problems with being an online learner you should always first contact your lecturer. Their contact details are on the first page of the Unit Outline. They will be able to direct you to the most appropriate help.