Brightspace Professional Development

Contents

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Introduction

After listening to what staff and students want from their Learning Environment, D2L's Brightspace was chosen as the best product. We believe that it offers a solution to improved student engagement and that you will love the enhancements and efficiencies it will bring to your teaching practice. Have a look at the benefits Brightspace will bring to your teaching.

This resource is your first step in your Brightspace professional development. You will find out:

- how you will be supported in your transition from Blackboard to Brightspace;
- how to align your teaching practice with the University Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy (LTES) using the features of the new Learning Environment;
- how to start preparing for teaching in Brightspace.

Listen to what some of your colleagues have said about Brightspace.

Developing capacity and confidence in Brightspace

To build capacity and confidence in using the new learning environment, three key strands of support are being provided:

1. Locally organised learning sessions at each academic partner;
2. Online self-directed Brightspace professional development module'
3. Support from Learning and Teaching.

1. Locally organised learning sessions

Each academic partner has nominated a Brightspace Sponsor, Champion and Communications contact. At least one Champion from each Academic Partner has received training from the Brightspace vendor, D2L, and are working together with the central project team to provide the necessary support for staff to transition from Blackboard to Brightspace. The names and contact details for each academic partner champion can be found here.

Your local champions will be providing local support and additional activities. For further information on support and Brightspace Learning activities provided at a local level contact one of your local champions.

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2. **Brightspace professional development module**

This module provides you with an overview of the university's new learning environment, including layout, structure and key functionality of Brightspace. It will introduce the key functionality and highlight the ways in which your use can align with the values of the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy (LTES). A comprehensive set of 'Benchmarks for the use of technology and teaching' have been created to support the embedding of the LTES values at a unit and modular level.

Through engagement with the module it is expected that you will develop new skills, knowledge and confidence in the functionality of Brightspace and identify ways of enhancing your practice through reflecting on and engaging with the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy (LTES) values.

Pixabay / CC0 1.0

3. **Support from Learning and Teaching.**

Throughout the coming months a series of webinars will take place. These webinars will be delivered by colleagues, invited guests from other universities that have undertaken the transition to Brightspace, and D2L experts. The aim is to share experiences, introduce you to key features of the LE, investigate techniques and share knowledge. These webinars will be recorded and made available for reuse. The webinars will be arranged through the Learning and Teaching Academy and the timetable will be available from the LTA Events and Webinars page and also form the Events and professional development page.

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The Educational Development Unit will continue to support programme teams to develop their new unit/module spaces in Brightspace in line with the LTES values and thereby maximise the benefits the new LE will afford students.

Embedding LTES values

The move to a new learning environment provides an ideal opportunity to reflect on teaching and learning professional practice and to implement the university Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy. The university LTES values can be used to guide and enhance your use of the learning environment. **A comprehensive set of 'Benchmarks for the use of technology in teaching' have been created to support the embedding of the LTES values at a unit and modular level.** You can download a quick reference guide by following the above link and selecting it from the downloads section at the bottom right of the page.
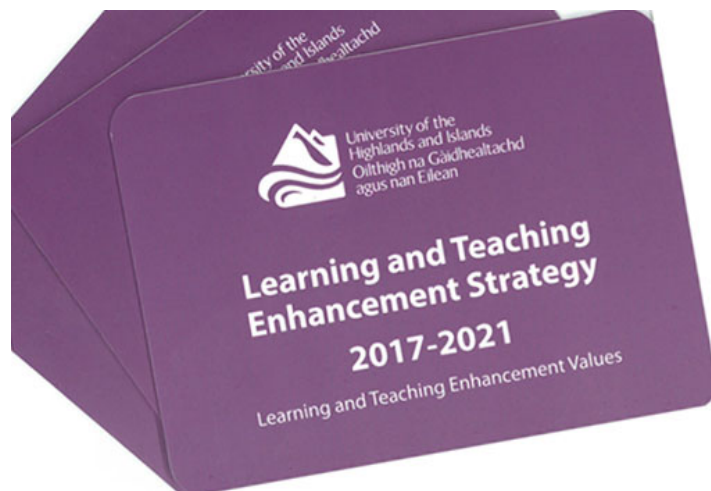
Learning and Teaching Enhancement Values

Guidance and terminology

You will see that the Brightspace professional development module uses D2L-developed resources which include short posts, downloadable documents and curated playlists of videos. Once you have completed the online module you will be given guidance on how to join the Brightspace Community. This will give you access to the resources mentioned above. There is real value in these resources, not least because they are continually updated to reflect changes to the platform. We would like to draw attention to a couple of points of terminology however, that do not follow standard UHI terminology at the moment:

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- **Where you read or hear 'course' think 'unit' or 'module'**. Depending on whether you are teaching in FE or HE at UHI you will think of sites in the LE as units or modules – in Brightspace, sites are referred to as courses.

My Courses page

- **Where you see 'module' think 'content item'**. Just to complicate things, Brightspace does use the term 'module' but they use it to mean content item, such as 'Week 1' or 'External links'. So, where you see 'Add a module' in the Table of Contents (shown below), think 'content item'.

Add a module

Summary

Through engagement with locally organised learning activities, the online self-directed module, and the series of professional development webinars it is expected that you will have developed the

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skills, knowledge and confidence in the new learning environment to enhance your teaching practice in alignment with the LTES core values.

Getting started

The Brightspace Server can be located at: https://brightspace.uhi.ac.uk/d2l/login

Please add this to your browser bookmarks.

You are now ready to log into your Brightspace. Follow the instructions below to get started. When you get logged in you will be on your landing page.

Photo by Sylwia Bartyzel on Unsplash

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Logging into Brightspace

Logging in:

Visit https://brightspace.uhi.ac.uk/d2l/login

You will be prompted to log in (shown below). Enter your UHI user ID details and password, then click Login.


Brightspace login screen

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Your landing page

After logging into Brightspace you will see a page like the one below containing your personal sandbox titled 'Name sandbox' e.g. 'John Smith sandbox' and the Brightspace Professional Development module. In the future you will see all your other modules here as well. The sandbox is an area where you can experiment with the tools and build content. You are an instructor in your personal sandbox.
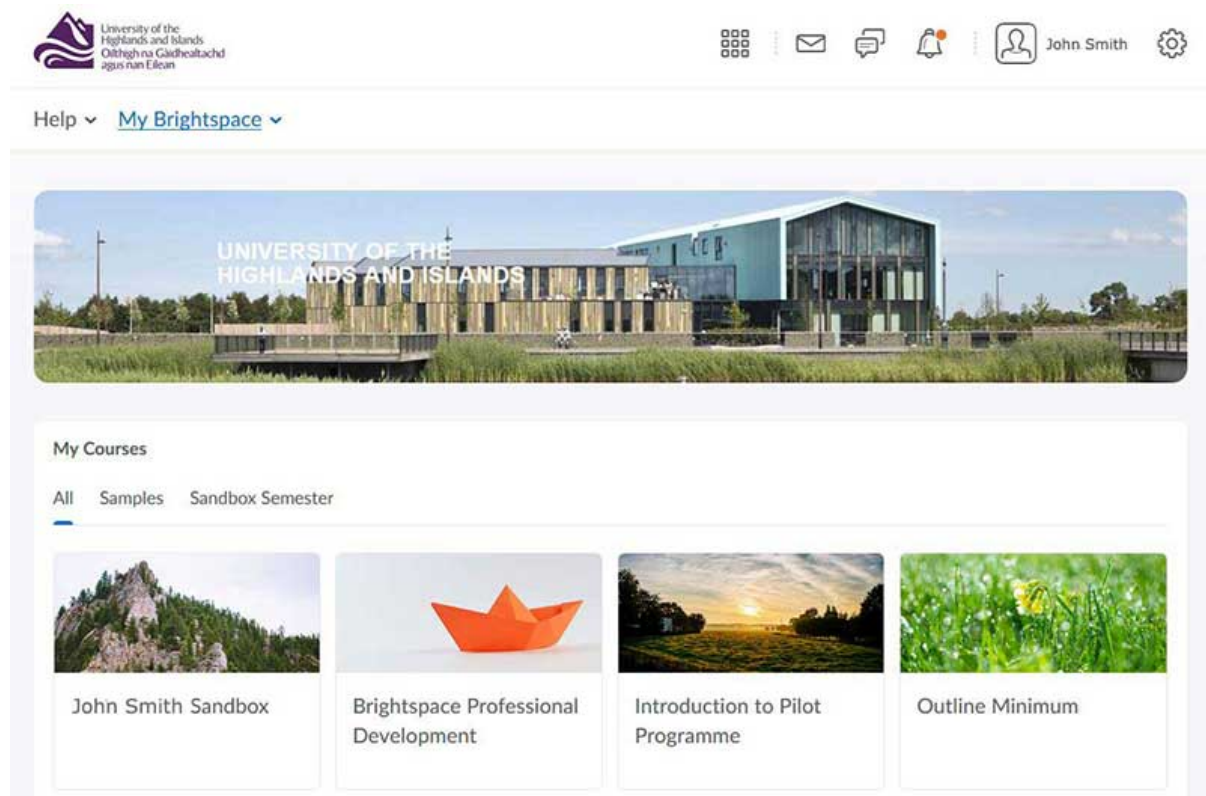
John Smith's sandbox in Brightspace

Take some time to look around. If you get lost, you can find your way back to your homepage by clicking on the small house icon at the top left of any page.

Building your unit/module

To start building your unit(s)/module(s) in Brightspace, there are two steps you need to take:

- Firstly, you must request access to the unit(s)/module(s) that you will be delivering;

Form 1: step by step instructions

Visit the LIS [Servicedesk self-service portal](#)

Note: You will have to sign in to the portal using your UHI credentials

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Instructions:

Initially, you will see a blank form. Select 'IT Request' as Request Type, then in the next box Brightspace/D2L:

In the third dropdown box, select Module/Unit access:

Follow the Instructions (in green) and complete the required boxes beneath:

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Help Request

Request Type | IT Request ▾
| Brightspace / D2L ▾
| Module/Unit Access ▾

Instructions
> You should complete this form if you require access to the unit(s)/module(s) you will be delivering in Brightspace.
>
> If you have more than 5 modules/unit spaces please complete another form.

Name* [   ]

Username (e.g. EO02MP)* [   ]

1st module/unit ID* [   ]

Module name* [   ]

2nd module/unit ID [   ]

2nd module name [   ]

3rd module/unit ID [   ]

3rd module name [   ]

4th module/unit ID [   ]

4th module name [   ]

5th module/unit ID [   ]

5th module name [   ]

(Cancel)   (Save)

- Secondly, decide if you want all of your existing resources brought over from Blackboard for you.

If you are currently a Blackboard site owner, you have two options when it comes to migrating content into Brightspace: to build from the ground up (migrating content yourself) or to start with everything you currently have. Arguments can be made either way, depending on various factors,

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including the structure and currency of your content. We recommend you start work on the Brightspace professional development module before making your decision.

Option 1: Craft a new unit/module

Develop your unit/module from the ground up, using tools newly available in Brightspace. This could be a great opportunity to increase interactivity and update your resources. Note: You do not have to recreate every single resource. If you have items in Blackboard that you wish to bring into your new site, there are various ways to do this.

Textual items

In Blackboard

In Blackboard you may have textual items (which can include pictures and external links) such as Announcements, Discussion forums, or Learning resources items (Figure 1).

If you have any items like this that you wish to keep, simply select the text, copy and paste into appropriately named Word documents. Save these files in well-named folders ('Week 1 2018', 'Discussion forums Semester 2') and you will have an easy way to locate and reuse any of the content you keep.
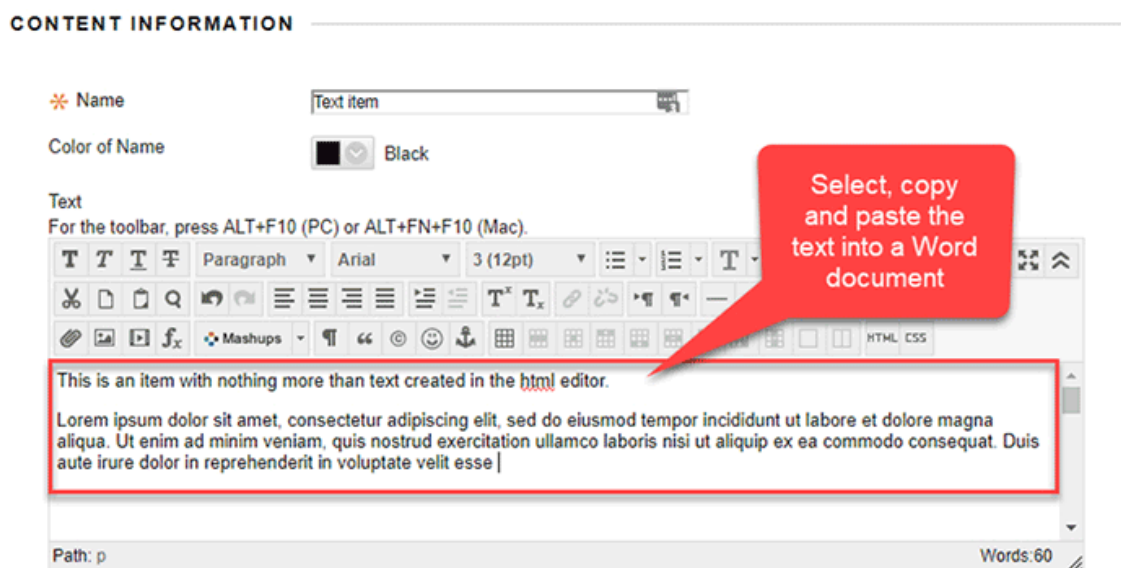

Figure 1: Example of textual item in Blackboard

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In Brightspace

Creating textual content in Brightspace is very similar to Blackboard. To reuse text that you saved from Blackboard, open the appropriate Word document, select and copy the text. In Brightspace, most item types, such as Announcements and Files, feature an html editor (just like Blackboard). Place the cursor where you wish to add your text and paste (Figure 2).
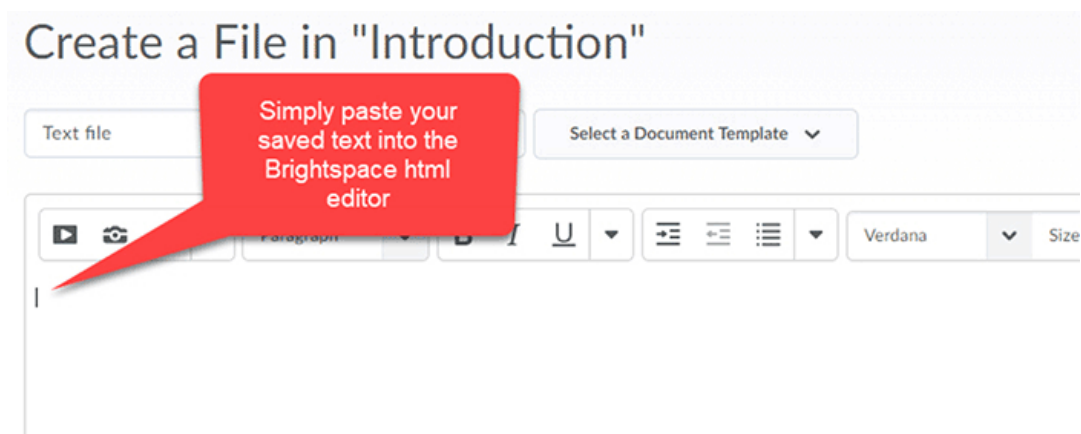

Figure 2: Brightspace html editor

Inserted files

In Blackboard

In Blackboard, one way you can attach files to course content is by using the paperclip (Insert File) icon in the html editor (Figure 3).
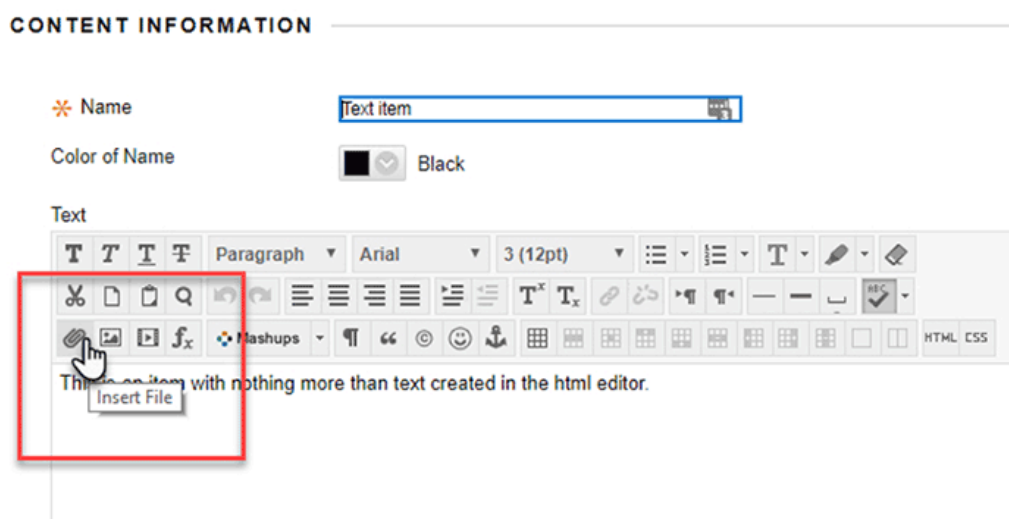

Figure 3: Blackboard Insert File icon

When added, inserted files are displayed as links. To save for future use in Brightspace, simply click on the url (Figure 4) and the file will be downloaded to your computer.

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Most browsers will have a default download destination. It is advisable to move saved files from this to a more appropriate location.

Figure 4: Example of inserted file in Blackboard item

In Brightspace

Inserting a file into a content item in Brightspace is very similar to Blackboard. To reuse the file that you saved from Blackboard, in the html editor click on Insert Stuff and navigate to your file (Figure 5 below).
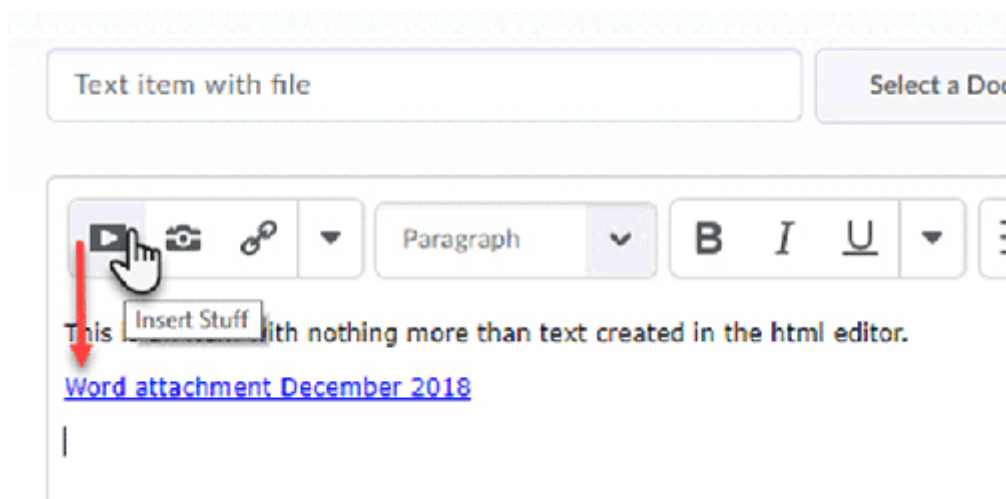

Figure 5: Insert Stuff icon in Brightspace

Attachments

In Blackboard

In Blackboard, files can also be added as attachments to items by using the Attach Files area of the Item editor (Figure 6). You can source files either from your computer or add them in advance to the Files area of your site.

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ATTACHMENTS

You can drag files from your computer to the Attach Files area or use the browse functions. Files are saved in t

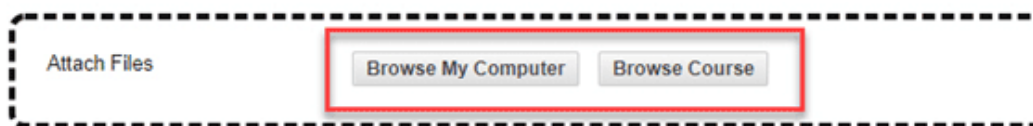Attach Files   Browse My Computer   Browse Course

Figure 6: Blackboard file attachments options

When files are added to Blackboard items by browsing your computer the files are automatically stored in the Files area (Figure 7) of the site. Folders and files can also be added directly into the Files area, without being added to items.

COURSE MANAGEMENT

▼ Control Panel
▶ Files   →
▶ Course Tools
▶ Evaluation   →
▶ Grade Center   →
▶ Users and Groups
▶ Customization   →
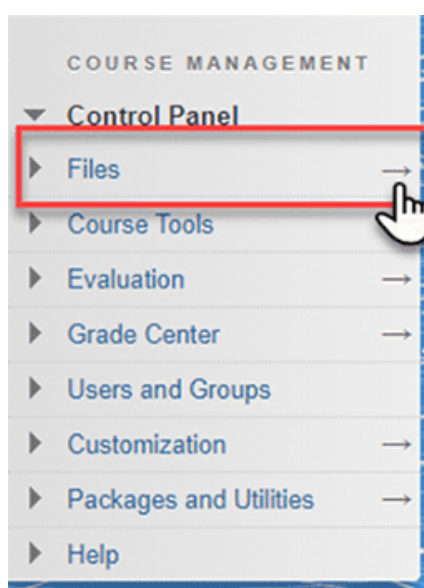▶ Packages and Utilities →
▶ Help

Figure 7: Blackboard Files entry point

In the Files area of a Blackboard site you are free to choose which files and folders you wish to save.

It's a straight forward process, simply check the boxes to the left of the files and/or folders you want to keep and then click Download Package (Figure 8). The files are saved in a zip file and downloaded to your computer.

Most browsers will have a default download destination. It is advisable to move saved files from this to a more appropriate location.
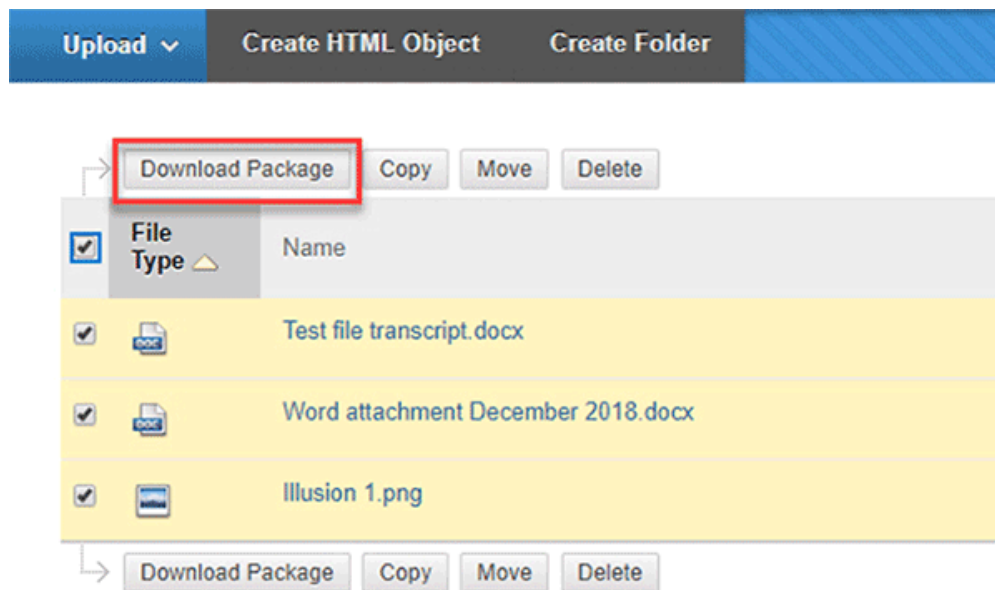
Figure 8: Downloading Files package in Blackboard

Important Note: There is one important thing to note about folders in the file area. Folders offer valuable structure wherever they are used but, oddly, in Blackboard if a folder in the Files area only contains files (and no additional folders) when the downloaded package is unzipped the folders disappear, leaving simply a list of files! However, **if you add folders to other folders the entire structure will be retained** in the downloaded package, e.g.:

- Folder: '2018 Content for use in Brightspace Module X'
    - Folder: 'Selected Announcements'
        - 'Reusable 2018 Announcements.docx'
    - Folder: 'Learning Resources'
        - Folder: 'Week 1'
            - File 'Introduction.pdf'
        - Folder: 'Week 2'
            - File: 'Image 1.jpg'
            - File: 'Reflective activity 1.docx'
    - Folder: 'Activities'

The following illustrations take you through the process of moving folders into one overarching folder, in order to retain folder structure.

Here we have three folders we want to keep in order to reuse the content in Brightspace (Figure 9):
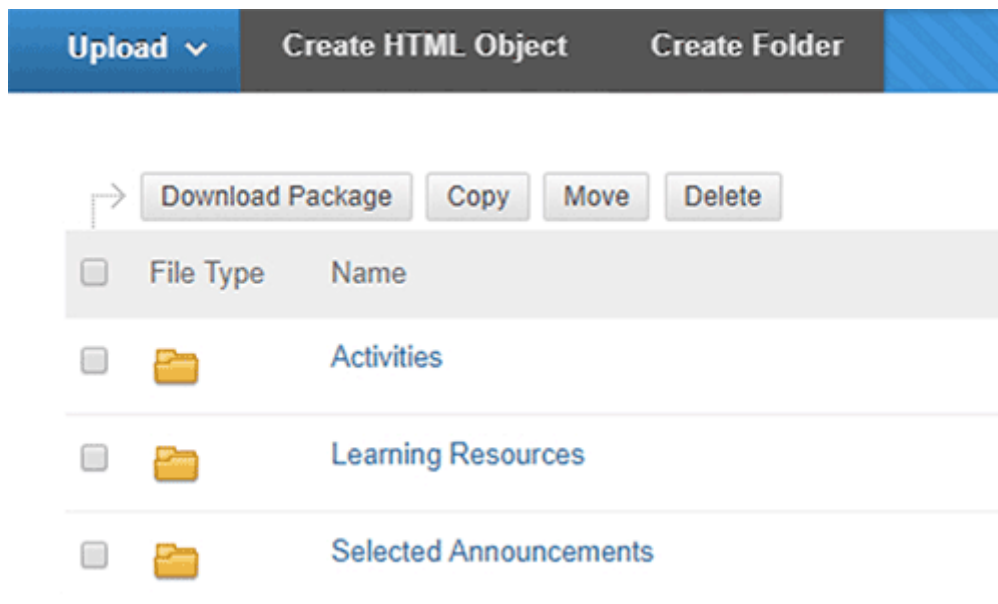
Figure 9: Folders in Blackboard Files area

Before we save them, we need to add an extra folder (using 'Create Folder') to move them into (Figure 10):
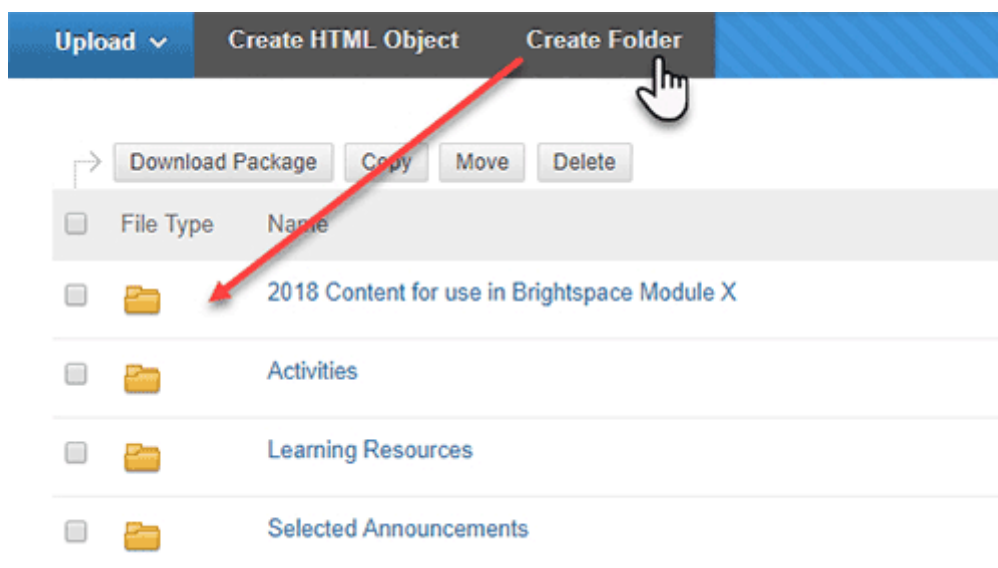

Figure 10: Creating a new folder
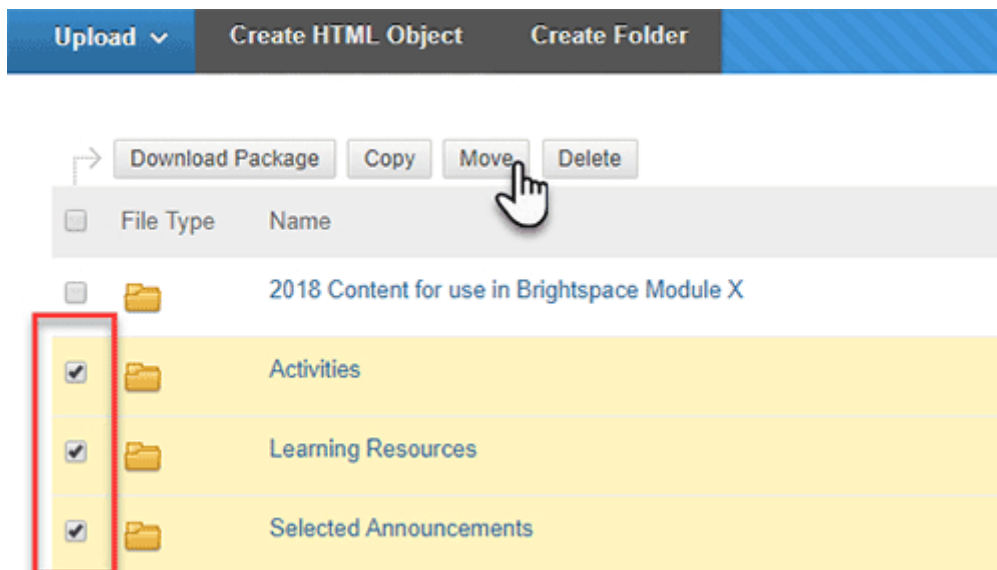
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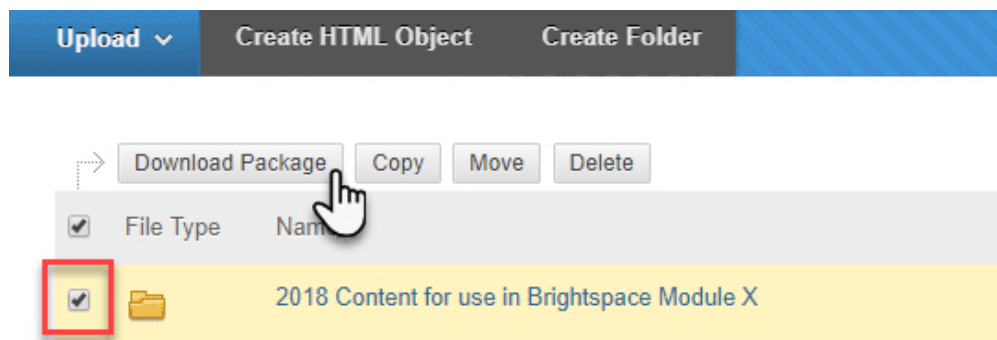
Figure 11: Selecting and moving folders

Figure 12: Downloading package file

In Brightspace

To upload saved folders or files to Brightspace go to Manage Files (Course Tools > Course Admin > Manage Files) (Figure 13).
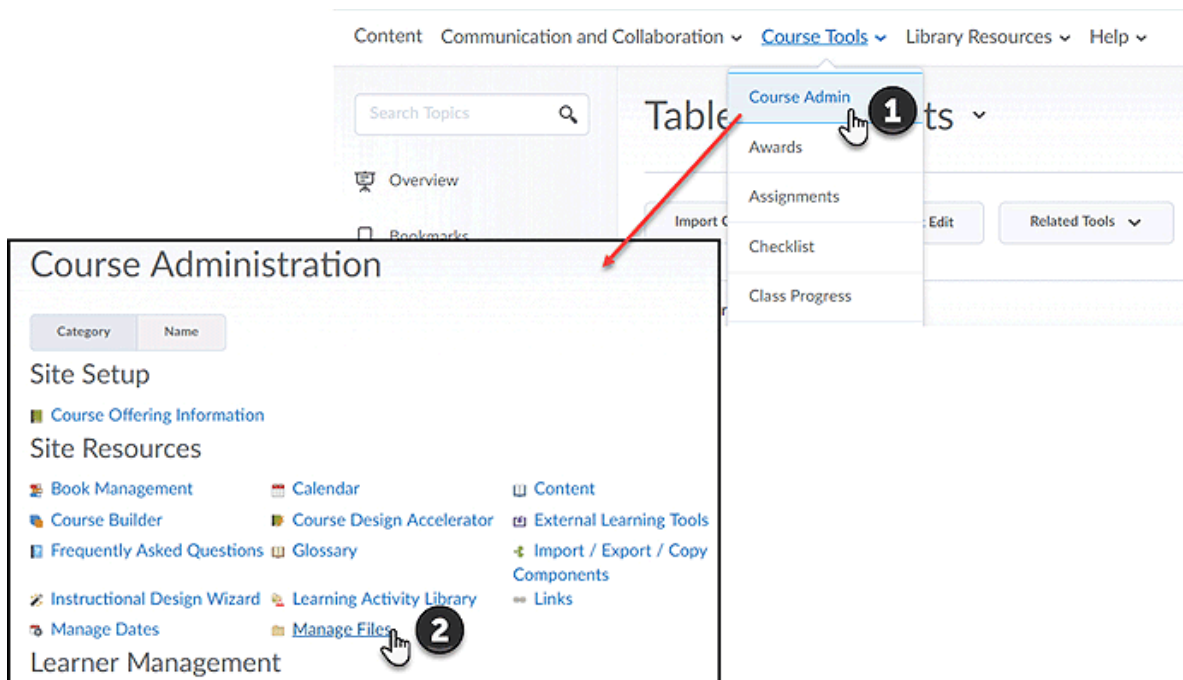
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Figure 13: Course Administration panel in Brightspace

Note: You will need to extract any zip packages downloaded from Blackboard before uploading to Brightspace. We would advise you to save your extracted files in a safe location (e.g. your desktop/shared UHI drive).

In Manage Files, select Upload and navigate to the folders or files you wish to bring into Brightspace (Figure 13).
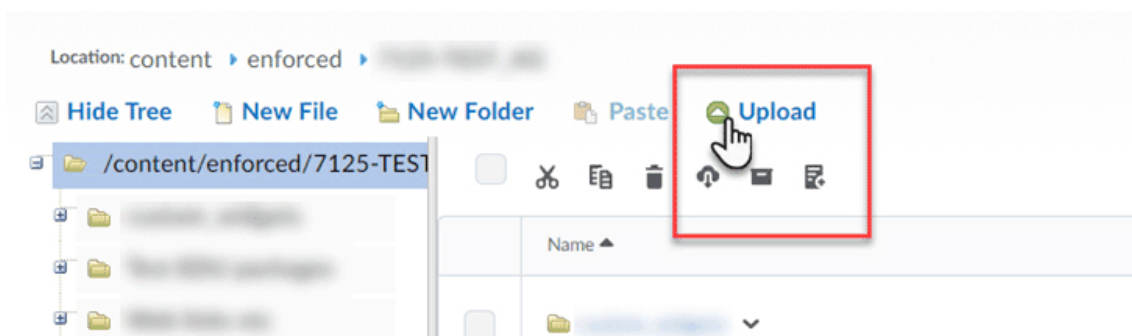

Figure 14: Manage Files - Upload in Brightspace

You will now have access to the content you have uploaded whenever creating content within Brightspace. Via the html editor, for example if using the Insert Stuff or Insert Image icons, select Course Offering Files from the source location options and you will see all of the content you uploaded (Figure 14).

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Figure 15: Course Offering Files in Brightspace

Export/archive course

There is a third option in Blackboard for saving content in order to transfer it from one site (or VLE) to another, this is the Export/Archive Course option. Although technically possible, we would advise against this option for two main reasons:

1. Export/Archive Course is a time-consuming multi-step process (both in terms of exporting from Blackboard and importing into Brightspace);
2. This option does not allow for individual file choices to be made, if you select Learning resources, you get all the content in Learning resources; if you select Announcements, you get all the Announcements in the unit/module. If you want all this content – you would be much better served selecting migration **Option 2**, where all exporting and importing is done for you.

Option 2: Request all your existing Blackboard resources to be transferred into your new unit/module space for you.

Option 2: Migrate all existing Blackboard content

Request all your existing Blackboard resources to be transferred into your new unit/module space for you. There are some factors that should be considered if taking this option.

You can request your existing Blackboard resources to be transferred into your new /unit module space. If you feel that you have a solid structure for your content, with tried and tested interactive resources, this may be a good option for you. The vast majority of the content you currently have in Blackboard will come over to Brightspace fully functional and in the same order; however, it is important to note:

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- You will need to check every page of teaching content (especially links, as any internal links set up using Blackboard will no longer be active).
- You will need to update anything that bears a specific date (like an announcement) or a due date (like an assignment).
- You will find that some content created with Blackboard's own tools may come over partially or not at all; again, a thorough check of every item is essential.
- The migrated materials will be the version in Blackboard at end December, you will need to transfer any subsequent versions manually as described in the Option 1 guidance.

Requests for migrated material need to be submitted by 22nd February 2019 in order for the material to be available in Brightspace by the end of March.

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Form 2: step by step instructions

Visit the LIS Servicedesk self-service portal

Note: You will have to sign in to the portal using your UHI credentials

Initially, you will see a blank form. Select 'IT Request' as Request Type, then in the next box
Brightspace/D2L:

In the third dropdown box, select Material Transition:

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Follow the Instructions (in green) and complete the required boxes beneath:

Help Request

Request Type	IT Request ⌄
	Brightspace / D2L ⌄
	Material Transition ⌄

Instructions

> You should complete this form if you require your unit(s)/module(s) and materials within the unit(s)/module(s) to be transitioned from Blackboard to Brightspace.
>
> Users of Brightspace must comply with all applicable legal requirements and relevant employer, Academic Partner and University policies, for example the creation of, transmission of or access to material in such a way as to infringe a copyright, moral right, trade-mark, or other intellectual property right is not permitted. Please note that users who violate such policies may be subject to penalties and disciplinary action, including dismissal or revocation of user access.
>
> If you have more than 5 modules/unit spaces please complete another form.

I confirm that I have read, understood and will adhere to my employer's, Academic Partner's and university's policies regarding acceptable use of IT equipment and copyright* No ⌄

Name*

Username (e.g. EO02MP)*

Please transfer content from Blackboard to Brightspace for module/unit e.g. UX10735*

Module name*

2nd module/unit ID

2nd module name

3rd module/unit ID

3rd module name

4th module/unit ID

4th module name

5th module/unit ID

5th module name

Cancel   Save

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Contacts

Assistance

If you require any assistance, please visit the [Brightspace FAQs](#) in the first instance. If you are still having trouble, then contact your local Brightspace champion.