Ultra Course View: Creating Blackboard Assignments

This Quick Guide will take you through the process of creating Blackboard assignments within the Ultra Course View of MyAberdeen. It does not deal with TurnitinUK.

Course Assessment Lists

You and your students can quickly access a list of all course assessments by clicking on the GradeBook icon on the Navigation Bar.

If you wish you could also replicate that list of course assessments within a Course Information folder at the top of the content page. A listing of all the assessments within the course area and a description should contain basic details of the assessment and especially it’s weighting towards the course grade.

Creating an Assignment

On the content page, click on the plus sign and select Create. In the Create Item panel click Assessment, then select Assignment.

On the assignment page, type in your assignment name where 'New Assignment undefined' appears at the top left of the page. The students will see an Add Content box which allows them to upload their file or use the text editor.

If you wish to include some assignment instructions:

- Click on the plus sign in the middle of the screen
- Select Add text (DO NOT add a question, e.g. “Essay Question”, these are not required for an assignment)
- In the text box, enter text, attach files (using the + icon and Insert Local Files) or add a link to further assessment information.
- For ease of grading do not make these instructions too long or include any images.
- Once you are satisfied with your entry, click **Save**.

**Assignment Settings**

Click on the **cog** icon to reveal all the Assignment Settings.

- **Due Date**: Set an appropriate date which will appear automatically in the calendar, generate notifications in the Activity Stream and stamp overdue submissions as late in Gradebook.
- **Allow class conversations**: if you allow class conversations, a small icon will appear at the top right of the assignment screen. Clicking the icon allows students to discuss the assignment with their peers and teaching staff. Conversations do not send out notifications, so check regularly if you wish to participate.

  Conversations cannot be activated if you set anonymous submissions (see below).

- **Randomise questions** and **Randomise answers**: used for online tests only.
- **Collect submissions offline**: allows you to create an assignment where students do not submit a file, e.g. an oral presentation, class debate.
- **Grade category**: choose the relevant option, usually **Assignment**, to help you search and filter your gradebook later, construct an “Overall grade” for the course grade or combine assessment sub-component grades in a calculated column.
- **Attempts allowed**: choose from 1 to 10 attempts or as many as the student wants (unlimited). For group assignments (see below) attempts are limited to 1.
- **Grade using**: choose **Points**.
- **Maximum points**: type 22 in line with the University’s Common Grading Scale.
- You have options for **anonymous grading** and **double grading** (called parallel grading).
- **Additional Tools**: allow you to set a time limit (almost exclusively used in online tests), use a grading **rubric** (recommended) for grading and feedback, enable originality checking using **SafeAssign** (recommended) and assign to groups rather than individuals (group assignment, see below).

Once you are satisfied with your assignment settings click **Done**. To close the assignment page, click the X button at the top left. The assignment is automatically saved and the Gradebook column added.
Group Assignments

To create a group assignment, proceed as above. In the assignment settings select Assign to groups.

Assigning Students to Groups

There are three options for assigning groups in the “Group Students” dropdown menu:

1. **Custom** is selected by default:
   a. click on the plus sign to manually create your groups.
   b. Add students by clicking on the ellipses (...) next to each student’s name and selecting the group you want to assign them to.

2. **Randomly Assign**: enter the Number of Groups and Students will be randomly assigned to a group.

3. **Reuse working groups**: If you previously assigned groups for other assignments or discussions, these can be reused in a new assignment. (NB: these groups are not the same as course groups)

Group names can be changed by clicking on the pencil icon when “hovering” the mouse over a group name.

Editing group membership & messaging groups

- Clicking on the ellipses to the right of the group name allows you to message the group, unassign members or delete the group.
- Clicking on the ellipses to the right of a group member’s name, allows you to reassign the member to another group or to remove them from a group.

Enabling Group Conversations and Collaborate Meeting Room

- If you allowed class conversations for a group assignment, a conversation space and a Collaborate meeting room are automatically created for each group (in addition to the class conversation).

Student Preview

When you enter Student Preview in your course you can check what the assignment looks like to students. The student preview user remains enrolled in the course, so you can work through the whole assessment and feedback workflow by using your preview user. Please refer to the Blackboard Help pages for more information.

Where do I start grading?

In the course area, you can access the Gradebook from the top navigation bar. This is where you can see all the graded items in your course, and access student submissions to start grading and giving feedback.

For more information, read our guide on Grading and Feedback on MyAberdeen using Ultra Course View or visit Blackboard Help.
Summary Assignment Workflow

1. Create an assignment. Set availability window and a due date.
2. Use Student Preview to validate all aspects of your assignment.
3. Students submit to the assignment
4. Grade submissions and provide feedback
5. Post grades and feedback

Further Resources

- Creating content on Ultra
- MyAberdeen: Ultra Course View - Content and Communication

Creating tests and assignments

- Blackboard: ULTRA: Create a test
- Blackboard: ULTRA: Create an assignment
- Blackboard: ULTRA: Group assignments
- MyAberdeen: Ultra Course View – Creating a Turnitin Assignment

Further settings for tests and assignments

- Blackboard: ULTRA: Conversations
- Blackboard: ULTRA: Accommodations
- Blackboard: ULTRA: Create a rubric
- Blackboard: ULTRA: SafeAssign
- Blackboard: ULTRA: Anonymous Grading
- Blackboard: ULTRA: Parallel Grading

Grading

- University of Aberdeen: Common Grading Scale
- MyAberdeen: Ultra Course View - Grading and Feedback for Staff
- Blackboard: ULTRA: Where do I start Grading?

Other

- For further eLearning advice, visit: www.abdn.ac.uk/elearning
- For course design information, check our Course Design Guidelines.