MANCHESTER 1824
The University of Manchester

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FBMH eLearning Newsletter

Contents

- Preparations for Start of Year
- New eLearning Tools
- Summer Updates to TurnItIn
- Looking for Solutions? We can help
- Exam Statistics
- ABC Learning Design
- TDM/Lifelong Learning

Contact Us

As we head into a new academic year, the eLearning team are always on hand to help with any teaching and learning queries big or small. There are a number of ways in which to get in touch with the team, all of which are suited to different problems:

IT Support Portal (Ivanti) - most suitable for queries relating to technical systems, such as Blackboard, TurnItIn or specialist eLearning applications (e.g. Nearpod, Softchalk).

Live Chat - our live chat is available Monday to Friday between the hours or 10am-12pm and 2pm-4pm. This service is best suited to quick queries, those that are expected to take perhaps just a few minutes to complete or answer.

Make an appointment - want to troubleshoot a complex problem, or explore a teaching idea that you've had? Fill in the form with a range of dates of times that you are available and we can match you with someone best placed to meet your needs.

Get in touch

Newsletter Feedback

We're looking for feedback on how effective our newsletter is in its current form. If you can spare a couple of minutes, click here to fill in a short survey about our newsletter.

Preparations for Start of Year

Over the summer, the FBMH eLearning Team have been busy at work preparing for your 2022-23 courses. By now, you should have access to your course spaces in Blackboard and be able to edit for the new year. If you don't have access, check with your Campus Solutions Administrator to make sure you have been given access, if problems persist after your access is confirmed, get in contact with us here.

Some of our students provided us with feedback about their Blackboard experience recently, and they told us that they often get lost when navigating around Blackboard, so we have put together this useful help guide for all staff to use when updating their courses: . Please take a few minutes to look through its simple suggestions on how to improve the student experience for all.

As usual at this time of year, we have been updating and creating guidance for our new (and returning) students. Our latest version of our Online Computing Induction for student can be found here for SMS/SHS/SBS PGT.

Alternatively, for SBS UG: in the Blackboard Community "Student Support Hub". Please direct your students to look at these resources, as it helps to familiarise them with online learning at Manchester.

If you would like help with anything "eLearning", feel free to contact us by one of the methods at the page below:

www.elearning.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/about/

New eLearning Tools

Part of the University's ongoing commitment to the current blended teaching model includes investing in new eLearning tools. The FBMH eLearning Team (in conjunction with various interested parties across the University) has been involved in the testing/piloting of a number of tools over the past year or more. While some of these are not 'new' as such, they are now available for staff use:

Camtasia - Great for Content Creation

Camtasia is an all-in-one screen recorder and video editing tool for both Mac and Windows. At its simplest, it can used for video lectures, but you can also use it to add animations, quizzes, hotspots, and more.

- An introduction to accessing and using Camtasia (PDF):
- Apply for a Camtasia license

Padlet - Great for Collaboration

Some of you are already familiar with Padlet, and may well have used the free version for some time. It is an 'online noticeboard' that enables tutors and students to share information in various formats such as images, documents, videos and music.

- Information on the tool (including case studies) and how to request a licence is available here.
- We also have useful information on our own website.

Gradescope - Great for Assessments

Gradescope is an assessment tool that can be accessed from within your Blackboard units. This tool allows paper-based assignments such as hand-drawn diagrams, mathematical calculations, programming code, etc to be scanned and uploaded by the students for online marking. Various assessment types are offered, including exams, problem sets and bubble sheets.

Further guidance on Gradescope is available here.

Summer Updates to TurnItIn

We recently wrote to you to let you know that TurnItIn was changing. In the last couple of months, the advertised changes have been completed and the university is now using a new version of TurnItIn, specifically TurnItIn LTI.

To ease the transition, and minimise the risk of mistakes, the eLearning Team have gone through new courses and removed any old TurnItIn assignments that were automatically copied from last year. In most cases, you won't see your copied TurnItIn assignments in your new courses and so aren't at risk of students uploading to the wrong place. However, there's a slim chance that a small number of units (usually activated too early or too late) that may still contain these copies. If you enter your Blackboard course for the first time and find a TurnItIn assignment, be sure to remove it before setting up a new one to avoid problems in the course.

So what's different?

Hopefully you made the transition to the new version of TurnItIn last semester, but if not, here's what's "new":

- You now create TurnItIn assignments by clicking "Build Content" instead of "Assignments".
- To access a TurnItIn submission inbox, you click the assignment link (i.e. the same link that students see in the course). The left hand menu item should no longer be present.
- You access groups from within the main submission inbox and see where you are up to with marking.
- Student data should now automatically sync between Blackboard and TurnItIn, so your student list should be kept up to date.

If you aren't familiar with the new version, take a look at our training pages here.

Looking for Solutions?

Did you know that FBMH eLearning has a learning design team? We also have a team specialising in support for digital learning applications. We are therefore well-positioned to advise on solutions to problems and on ways to optimise student engagement and active learning.

With this in mind, please get in touch to request eLearning involvement in any aspect of your SEAP or in the upcoming student enhancement and programme review meetings. We are also available year-round if you would like us to review your courses or any particular learning activity and make suggestions.

If you'd like help in resolving a particular solution, want to explore an idea or are just looking for some advice, you can get in touch with us here.

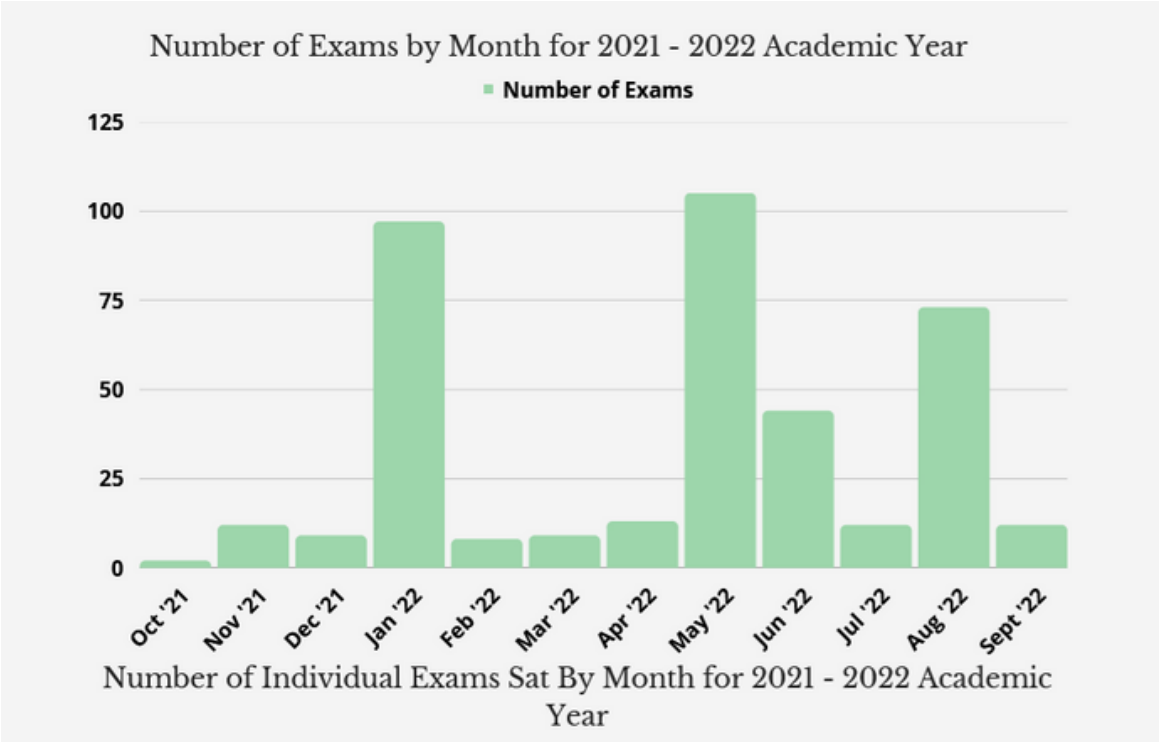
Alternatively, you can contact us or book an appointment at the page below.

www.elearning.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/about/

Exam Statistics

Over the past academic year, the eLearning Team has facilitated in the building, deployment, and support of 388 exams, inclusive of resit exams, across 11 different subject areas. This has allowed a total of approximately 32,500 individual exams to be sat by students across the University. Our range of support has included exam support for Blackboard (235 exams), TurnItIn (152 exams) and Cadmus (1 exam) based exams. Whilst most exams were undertaken online this year, our team also provided dedicated in-person exam support for 27 course units, covering a total of 3657 individual exams being sat on campus.

As seen below, FBMH eLearning has provided constant exam support throughout the year, with the busiest periods occurring in the January exam period, and the Easter & resit periods towards the summer months. A full, more detailed breakdown of FBMH eLearning's examination support up to the Easter exam period can be viewed by following the link here.



ABC Learning Design

As the University moves to embrace blended learning as the norm, it is likely that many will feel a need to review their teaching. This can be a difficult process, but the use of a framework for guiding the process can make it much more manageable. In the near future, the eLearning team will start to offer a series of learning design services for academics wishing to review the structure of their own teaching, that of the units they lead, or the programmes they direct.

These services will be based on the popular and proven ABC curriculum design method created by UCL and adopted worldwide. This method allows you to review your current practice, assess the intended learning objectives for suitability, and revise the teaching model and structure. By the end of a session, you should have a clear plan for what needs to be done. These sessions will also enable you to consider how you can incorporate additional factors into your teaching, such as digital capabilities, and help you to consider accessibility and inclusion issues.

As soon as the details of this service have been finalised, it will be made available across the Faculty. In the meantime, you can read more about ABC Learning Design in the case study below.

Case Study: ABC Learning Design

TDM/Lifelong Learning

The University has acquired a new externally-facing education platform to make it much simpler to host courses for those without an internal IT account. Once available, it will open up new possibilities for CPD courses , public education, outreach, and other such opportunities. This platform has been referred to by several different names over the course of its adoption, including TDM and Flexible Courses, but its final name will be the Lifelong Learning Portal or LLP.

The last six months have been especially busy for the project team as we decommissioned the FBMH Canvas environment (which LLP is replacing), and configured and tested the new system. The hope was to launch the Portal at the start of the academic year, but it is with no shortage of frustration that we must say this will no longer be possible.

Over the coming year, Blackboard will be releasing updates to the course catalogue and self-enrolment system than underpins much of the vital functionality of the Portal. These updates will be substantial, and their nature is as yet unclear. What we do know is that they will involve changes to both the look and feel of the system, and to the workflows involved in its operation. There will also be the need for some manual migration work for courses on the Portal when the updates are installed, due to an unspecified risk of data loss during the automated phase of the process. The extent of the changes and the potential risks involved have forced us to delay the full launch of the Portal until the updates have been installed and tested, and the user guides updated.

Those who have had courses migrated onto LLP from Canvas can continue to run them as far as the system permits, and will continue to be supported in their operation by the eLearning team. However, until the updated system is ready, we cannot accept new courses. Updates on this situation will be included in our newsletters, and communications will be sent out when the system is ready to be launched. A set of training materials and processes (including approvals processes for new courses) will be available from launch, which is currently estimated as September 2023.