

FBMH Canvas Central Newsletter

Issue 3
July 2025



 elearning.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/canvas

 FBMH eLearning Community (Viva Engage)

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Preparing for the Canvas transition

From the 1st July there is only 70 days until the 8th September this is the date all semester 1 and full year units need to be published by. This is to meet our UOM DASS recommendations and was agreed by the FBMH Implementation group.

You'll receive details on how to book on your courses at the right time, but if you have any questions about this process, please get in touch.

Contact FBMH eLearning

Canvas School Open Meetings

Thank you all that attended, contributed and presented at the Canvas School Open Meetings.

“We were delighted to welcome staff from across the Faculty to three very informative open meetings, tailored to the needs of each School. Lots of important questions were answered by our elearning team. The comprehensive support available was explained, including face-to-face training, drop-ins and bespoke sessions on assessment and interactive video. I strongly encourage all staff who teach in Semester 1 to book onto training now. This will ensure they receive support to get their courses ready for students in September.”

Paul Shore, Associate Dean for Flexible and Digital Education

Key take aways from the open meetings from Laura Bond-Sykes eLearning Manager BMH:

- Put time aside between now and the end of August to build your S1 and Full-Year course
- Sign up for training: <https://elearning.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/training/canvas-training/>
- Rebuild your courses using the Template, Course Unit Standards and migrated data provided; see Jenn’s Comments below.
- Publish your S1 or Full-Year course by the end of August
- Share important information with colleagues.
- Remind students to download their submissions and feedback.
- Get in touch if your needs are complex or unusual
- Get support from the eLearning Team: <https://elearning.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/about/>
- Canvas Central – drop-ins

“To maintain consistency and ensure students benefit from a cohesive learning environment, all course units must follow the standards template provided in the course shell. The template ensures that standards are delivered across all course units in a predictable format for students.”

Professor Jennifer Hallam, Faculty Vice-Dean for Teaching, Learning and Students



FBMH Canvas Timeline



July



Build

70 days to go

Engage with Training and familiarise yourself with Canvas. Start to edit and build Canvas Units for 2025-26.

August



Develop

39 days to go

Staff to continue developing content, edit and build Canvas Units for 2025-26. Ready to launch for the publication date.

September



Publish

8 days to go

To meet DASS recommendations, Sem 1 and full year units to publish 2 weeks worth of content by 8th September 2025.

Support

Canvas Central Drop-Ins (Stopford 1.060)

Bookable Training

Unit Construction

Canvas Basics

Assignments in Canvas

Quizzes in Canvas

Canvas Studio

Say Goodbye to Blackboard and Hello to Canvas



Lisa Donlan:
eLearning Technologist

Blackboard to Canvas Migration: What You Need to Know

The University is working with an external provider, K16, to support the migration of Blackboard course content into Canvas. This content is being transferred into holding courses, which you can use to build your course for the 2025/26 academic year.

Semester 1 Courses

We're pleased to share that all Semester 1 courses have now successfully migrated to Canvas. Hopefully, all Semester 1 Course Unit Coordinators have now attended Canvas training and had a chance to start transferring materials from the migration holding space into the 25/26 version of their course. If you need any help getting started, do come along to one of our "Unit Coordinator" Canvas Training sessions.

Semester 2 and Year-Long Courses Coming Soon

K16, the external company handling the migration, began work on migrating Semester 2, Whole Year, and Community spaces during the week commencing 23rd June. We don't yet have a confirmed date for when these courses will be available to staff. However, we're hopeful that access will be granted in early to mid-July. Keep an eye out for comms as we'll let you know as soon as they are good to go.

Get Ready for 2025/26:


If you need to start building your unit in the meantime, we recommend manually downloading and/or copying and pasting material from Blackboard into Canvas, even if it is just materials for the first few weeks of teaching. This will allow you to get going with course building while we wait for access to the migrated sites. Do pop-in to one of our drop-in sessions if you need pointers on how to get going with this.

For any urgent or complex courses where manual copying is not possible, please contact FBMH eLearning - we're always happy to help!

What students need to know


Student communications have been and will continue to go out regarding our CLE transition. The main point we wish the student body to know is: download anything you may wish to look back on for example feedback and submissions. This message is going out via email directly, the Student news and UOM social media accounts.





Attention Students!
Goodbye Blackboard
Hello Canvas!

The University of Manchester
@FBMH_UoM



What you need to do in preparation for the CLE change:

If you want to keep these items


- Feedback from Assignments
- Journals
- Discussions
- Wikis



Then you need to download them from Blackboard -

Scan the QR code or follow the URL below to find our full guides on how to do this.

<https://elearning.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/student-cle-transition/>

When do I need to do this by?
17th October 2025





Digital Discovery Sessions are Back



Connor Allen:
eLearning support officer

Canvas Studio

On the 17th of June I hosted a Digital Discovery Series webinar all about Canvas Studio featuring academic staff from throughout FBMH showcasing use cases of how Studio can be utilised to make teaching more interactive, engaging and inclusive using video.

This was the first Digital Discovery Series of the Canvas transition era, so it was great to see so many people in attendance from across all three faculties.

We had a foreword from Paul Shore who introduced the idea of showcasing Studio to staff within the faculty, highlighting the exciting new opportunities that Studio can allow when it comes to educational video content. Next, we had Mark Johnson present an introduction and overview of Studio's capabilities. Michael Smith demonstrated Studio's use in formative and summative assessments and finally we rounded off with Richard Prince who gave an interesting and balanced review of Studio's accessibility options versus the current Podcasting Service. Each of these presentations showcased a unique aspect of Studio that has hopefully inspired staff to consider using Studio in their own teaching.

If you didn't manage to catch the webinar, it is/will be available on the FBMH eLearning website. The one-hour webinar is full of new and interesting ways to use video in your teaching so please do check it out! Additionally, if you are wanting to use Studio, but would like to have some more training – the eLearning team is running Studio-specific training sessions in July! Or, attend the eLearning drop-ins available at Canvas Central 1-3pm running until September!

Canvas Assignments and Quizzes: Assessment Training Workshops

These new workshops are designed to support staff across teaching and professional services roles to build, edit, copy and manage assignments and quizzes in Canvas.

Whether you're a Unit Coordinator, member of the teaching team, or part of the Professional Services staff supporting assessment delivery, deliver high-quality, consistent assessments that align with university policies and the pedagogical standards. We're offering two focused workshops. You are welcome to attend one or both, depending on your role.

Canvas Assignments: Creating and managing submissions assignments in Canvas.

This course is intended for staff who are responsible for setting up assignments, including those currently managing Turnitin or Blackboard assignments. While this will include instructions on marking, you do not need to attend this if you do not manage assignments yourself (training on only marking will be released later).

This session provides hands-on guidance for setting up and managing submission-based assessments in Canvas. Ideal for those involved in coordinating units, supporting teaching, or managing assessments, the workshop covers:

- Creating file-submission assignments and configuring submission settings
- Designing structured tasks to scaffold student learning
- Building and applying rubrics
- Setting up group work and allowing multiple file submissions
- Managing individual extensions
- Using the Turnitin Plagiarism Framework for similarity checking
- Coordinating the marking process, including releasing feedback, and accessing results

This session builds on the course structure developed in the [Unit Construction Workshop](#). We recommend attending after your Unit Coordinator has completed that session.

Canvas Quizzes and Tests

This course is for staff who previously managed Blackboard Tests and will be responsible for setting up quizzes and tests in Canvas. The workshop focuses on creating and managing quizzes using Canvas's assessment tools, with a strong emphasis on quality assurance and alignment with the University's Assessment Framework.

Topics include:

- Understanding your role in assessment delivery
- Copying, editing, and quality-checking quizzes migrated from Blackboard
- Exploring Canvas question types and their pedagogical applications
- Applying release and marking settings
- Testing quizzes for accuracy and reliability
- Manually marking responses and providing feedback
- Moving quizzes from the BB_Migration holding area into live course shells
- Brief introduction to building new quizzes from scratch

Why It Matters

Effective assessment design is essential for delivering a consistent and high-quality learning experience. These workshops support the University's commitment to pedagogical excellence by helping staff align with consistent, institutional standards and ensure fairness and clarity for students across all programmes.

The university's [Assessment Toolkit](#) includes a range of help guides and advice on running assessment, particularly digitally.

The university's [Course Unit Canvas Standards](#) address assessment and feedback as part of general pedagogic good practices.

Please note: Staff who are only responsible for marking do not need to attend the Assignments course. Instead, we will be running a Digital Discovery Series webinar later this summer and into Semester 1, focusing on marking and providing feedback in Canvas.

How to Book

To book your place, email fbmhcontact@manchester.ac.uk or book directly via the Training Catalogue: [Canvas Assignments](#) and [Canvas Quizzes and Tests](#).



Megan Broadbent:

eLearning support officer

Why Canvas's Immersive Reader Leaves Blackboard Behind



Alisha Hawkeswood
Student Partner

In the shift from Blackboard to Canvas, one standout feature that's winning over students and staff alike is the Immersive Reader. Built directly into Canvas, this tool transforms written content into a fully customisable reading experience. With read-aloud functionality, customisable text size and spacing, grammar support, translation and font colour options, the Immersive Reader empowers students to take control of their learning experience. It especially benefits those with dyslexia, ADHD, or language barriers, making education more accessible and engaging.

Compared to Blackboard, Canvas offers a more modern, student-centred approach. While Blackboard provides basic content delivery, it lacks integrated tools that actively support accessibility, leaving many students to search for external apps to meet their needs. The Immersive Reader in Canvas closes this gap by offering an intuitive interface that doesn't require additional third-party tools. The ability to break down text into manageable parts, change the font, and focus line-by-line makes a noticeable difference in how information is processed.

More than just a reading tool, the Immersive Reader reflects a shift toward inclusive learning environments. It supports independent learning by allowing users to control how they best engage with content. For a generation that values digital accessibility and personalised learning, this feature is a welcomed upgrade.

Student Partner update

During the recent open staff meeting from the Schools of Health Sciences (SHS), Medical Sciences (SMS), and Biological Sciences (SBS), student partners such as myself and Ashneet gave a major update on our contribution in the transition to Canvas Learning Environment (CLE).

We started by setting out the extensive range of activities student partners have been involved in. These include reading through CLE induction guides, attending implementation and comms meetings, and designing student-facing materials like help guides and video tutorials. We explained how these efforts are student-led, with the aim of making the transition to Canvas easier and more user-friendly for the broader student body.

Secondly, we prioritized having student partners be part of the process of transitioning to CLE. Through our participation, we ensure that not only are students informed but that their concerns help actively inform how Canvas will be implemented and supported. Through participation in CLE meetings and providing constructive feedback, we close the loop between institutional planning and student life. Already, our presence has resulted in real gains around communications strategy and student support design.

Finally, we mentioned some of the tangible advantages students have observed with Canvas. These are a neater user interface, simpler navigation between courses, and improved accessibility features like Immersive Reader and translation functionalities. Students have especially valued how material is now more centralized and uniform across modules.

In conclusion, we illustrated how staff-student collaboration through the Student Partner Programme is crucial in the CLE transition success. We await further interaction to make the changeover to Canvas as smooth and useful as possible for all concerned.

Manas Kapur Student Partner

Slide for all 3 Canvas staff Open meeting and recording will be able on the elearning.bmh.manchester.ac.uk



Canvas Training Statistics

Our training team have spent months planning the training courses for the CLE transition, and we are proud to show you what they have done so far. As we progress through the CLE transition, more data will be available and, in turn, we will expand our reporting to you.

What is a training? “hit”: it is a point in time when an academic staff member took part in some training. It may be attending training, a drop-in or something else where we took attendance:

Total attendees at training events so far:

- Unit Construction Workshops (Unit Coordinators): 221
- Canvas Basics for OneMed (Teaching staff): 79
- PS Orientation to Canvas (PS): 51
- Drop-ins: 19

Total: 226

Events

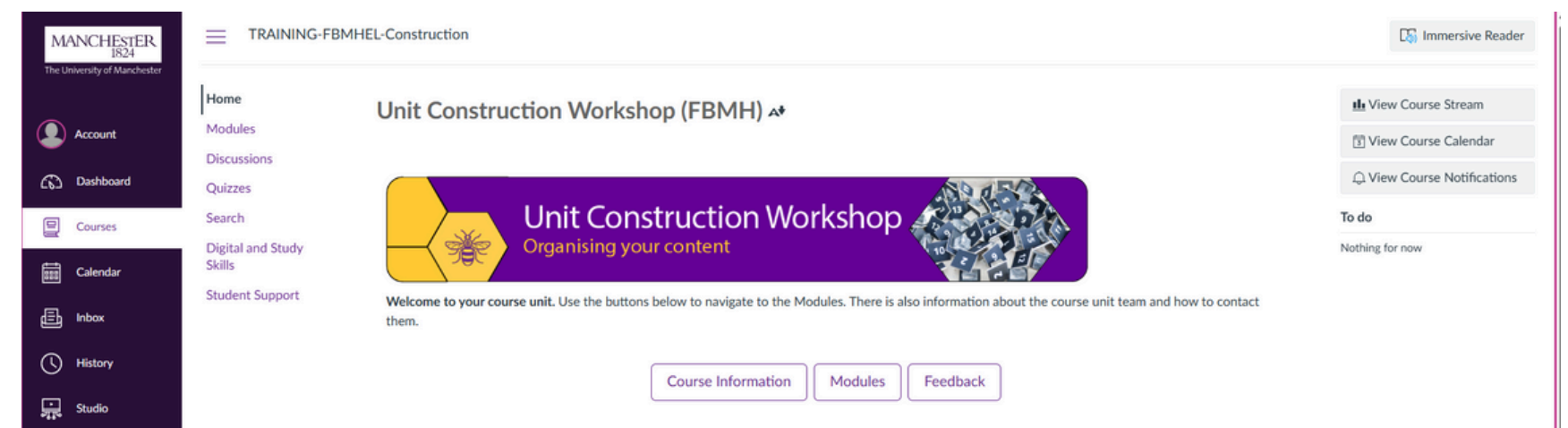
- Total training sessions: 41
- Unit Construction Workshops (includes Pioneers): 23
- Canvas Basics: 9
- Canvas Basics for OneMed: 5
- PS Orientation: 5

Total drop-in sessions: 29

How many units in FBMH have had a Unit Coordinator or associated member of staff attend training: 430 (based on trainees providing course units in session)

We are offering groups of 10 or more colleagues the opportunity to work together on course development. You can select a training date which suits your group, please contact FBMHcontact@manchester.ac.uk with details.

Please do book on the training on our [website](#) to find the best training for you and your role. We don't want to run out of places later in the year.



MEET OUR TEAM



RACHEL HEYES: LEARNING TECHNOLOGIST



CONNOR ALLEN: E-LEARNING SUPPORT OFFICER

I joined the Technology Enhanced Learning in Medicine (TELiM) team in 2019, bringing a love for all things digital to support the medical programme and our bespoke VLE, 1Med Learn. I helped set content standards and developed a style guide to keep everything looking consistent. Now part of the FBMH eLearning team, I work with academic and clinical staff to create engaging, accessible learning content. I'm especially interested in content creation, and development. I also volunteer as an editor for the ALT Blog, where I share best practices with the wider learning tech community.

As a disabled staff member, flexible working is a game-changer for me, helping balance my energy-limiting conditions with my passion for my work. I proudly served over two years as Co-Chair of the Disabled Staff Network, championing inclusion and advising senior leadership, and other areas on policy and practice #NothingAboutUsWithoutUs. (Yes, that is me on all the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower posters you may have seen around campus). In 2024, I was shortlisted for the Disability Power 100. Proof that you can make waves while working from home.

Before eLearning, I taught Creative Media Production (Film & TV) for over a decade in FE, guiding students from all backgrounds, some of whom are now BBC apprentices. I've also been a Principal Examiner for Cambridge Assessment. I hold an MA in Film Studies, and proudly worked with Grimmfest Film Festival, where I honed my event management, interviewing, and social media skills. Yes, I will analyse your favourite film if you give me half a chance, though not if it's too scary!

When I'm not working, you'll find me in the garden, hanging out with animals, or enjoying sound baths, aromatherapy, and Pilates. All the calm, and cosy things that help keep life in balance.

Hello! I'm Connor and I've been on the FBMH eLearning team for around 2 and a half years now.

Before working at the university I taught MFL in a high school and sixth form specialising in French and Spanish. Before that, I had also worked at a boba tea stall and as a Christmas elf (not at the same time).

My work in the eLearning team consists of lots of different jobs, but my main areas of interest are Team-Based Learning and pedagogy, video production and editing, and training.

Outside of work I like to keep on top of practicing and learning new languages which goes alongside my love of video games. My degree in French and Japanese specialised in translating video games! I have also been learning Korean and attempting (so far...unsuccessfully) to master the guitar.



Quick wins: Cleaning Up Formatting in Canvas

Simple Methods

When copying content into Canvas, especially from Word documents or migrated Blackboard content, you might notice inconsistent fonts, odd spacing, or strange formatting.

Why This Matters

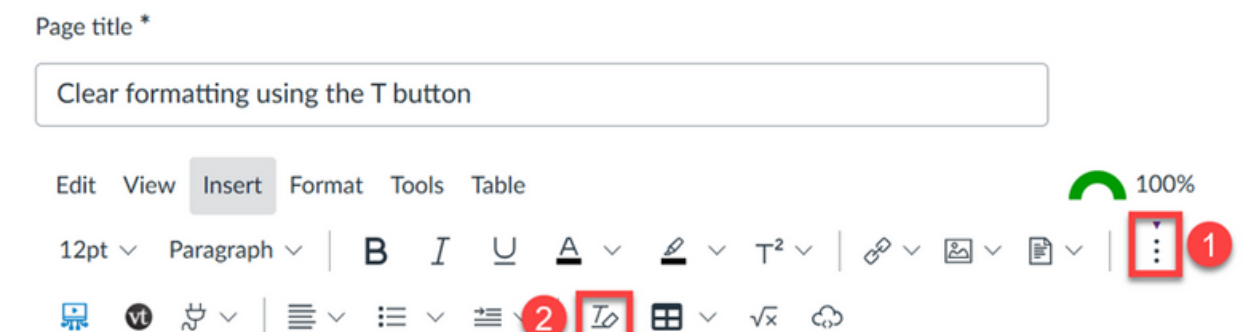
Clean, consistent formatting improves readability and accessibility for all students. It also helps your course look more professional and easier to navigate, especially when students are accessing content on different devices.

Method 1: Use the Rich Content Editor

This is the quickest and most reliable way to tidy up your text directly in Canvas. To do this:

- Open the page or item you want to edit.
- Select Edit to open the Rich Content Editor.
- Select the three dots next to the rich content toolbar to expand the full editor [1]
- Highlight the text with formatting issues.
- Select the Clear Formatting icon [2]
- Select Save to apply the changes.

This method preserves links and structure while removing unnecessary styles.



Method 2: Use Notepad or TextEdit

If the formatting is especially stubborn, you can strip it out completely using a plain text editor.

- Copy the text from Canvas.
- Paste it into Notepad (Windows) or TextEdit (Mac).
- On Mac, make sure TextEdit is set to plain text (Format > Make Plain Text).
- Copy the cleaned text and paste it back into Canvas using Ctrl + shift + v (to paste without formatting)
- Delete the original version and replace it with the cleaned one.
- Select Save.

This method removes all formatting, including links, which means that you will need to relink to content, reapply headings or hyperlinks.

What the BMH eLearning Team Can Do for You (... Beyond Canvas)

What is new in Mentimeter?

Mentimeter has rolled out a series of exciting updates designed to enhance interactivity and improve slide design. The most significant change affects how you build and present text-based content.

Unified ‘Text’ slide combines existing content slides into one

Mentimeter slides have received a refresh. Previously, text-based content was more limited and less customisable, with separate slides for each different text type. For example, separate non-customisable slides for headings, lists, bulleted lists, paragraphs etc.

Now, ‘Text’ is a single option within Content slides, making it easier to add non-interactive, informative content. The new Mentimeter Text slide format is quite familiar to tools and layouts used in PowerPoint, where you can mix headings, bullet points and a range of other formats in one place. You can now use rich formatting (bold, italics, underline), which mirrors standard document editors like Word or Google Docs.

The new text slide enables you to create:

- multiple headings and subheadings
- bulleted and numbered lists
- text formatting like bold, italics, and underline

How to update old content slides to fit the new ‘Text’ format?

Don’t worry! If you have created presentations using the old Mentimeter content slides, you can easily update your content. Selecting ‘Move Content’ will apply the new ‘Text’ formatting to your page; converting them into the new unified format.

Enhanced Sharing Options

You can now assign different access levels when inviting collaborators. Edit access grants full control, allowing collaborators to modify slides, questions, and design. This is ideal for co-creators or team members. Comment access enables users to leave feedback without altering the content, making it perfect for content reviews or supervisor input. View access offers read-only permissions, useful for allowing students to review material after a session.

[Read more about sharing here](#)

Canvas Microsite

Canvas Central

Canvas Training



Contact FBMH eLearning



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