

FBMH Canvas Central Newsletter

Issue 5
September 2025



elearning.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/canvas

FBMH eLearning Community (Viva Engage)

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Preparing for the Canvas transition

8th September “Deployment Day” 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.

Please get in touch if you need any support, all routes show on the next page.

Contact FBMH eLearning



Canvas Support:

Canvas Confidence 3 day event 9-11th September

Join us for three exciting days of drop-ins, workshops, and panel discussions hosted by the Faculty eLearning teams. It's a great chance to explore Canvas, ask questions, and connect with colleagues who've already started using it. We will be covering: Deploying your canvas course so students can see it, Studio Master class, Building Inclusive materials & Canvas & Cake s running each day.

No need to register—just come along and get involved.

📍 Booth Street East Building (Building 26 on the campus map)

🕒 Tuesday 9 to Thursday 11 September, 10am–4pm

More details here <https://elearning.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/news/>



Canvas Unit Construction and Canvas basics online webinars

We understand that not everyone can make it to campus, whether you are on leave, working remotely, or simply need flexible options, these webinars are here to support your transition to Canvas.

Unit Construction Workshops are designed specifically for Unit Coordinators. These sessions help you organise Blackboard-migrated content into structured Canvas Modules.

Unit Construction will cover how to:

- Navigate the Canvas system confidently
- Use key Canvas tools and functionality, including creating, editing, copying, and moving modules, pages, files, and multimedia
- Apply pedagogical good practices to course design using the university/faculty template
- Use quality control tools such as the accessibility checker, student view, and link validator
- Access further support and resources

Canvas Basics is ideal for any FBMH staff who do not coordinate units but still need to use Canvas in their role, including those involved in teaching, student support, or content management.

Canvas Basics will cover how to:

- Navigate the Canvas interface
- Create, edit, and organise modules, pages, files, and multimedia
- Apply the university's pedagogical standards using the official Canvas template
- Use quality control tools like the accessibility checker, student view, and link validator
- Understand the 'To-Do' tool and add items to the calendar
- Access further support and resources

How to Book

Visit the [Canvas Training page](#) and select the blue links below the training events to book onto online sessions. New dates will be added throughout the summer.



Megan Broadbent:
eLearning support officer

Course Readiness: Is our Faculty ready for the new year?

September (when courses are available to students). The eLearning Team are looking through the courses to see if our faculty is ready and we will contact the Unit Coordinator to offer training and technical support where needed.

We will be looking at:

- Is the Course Unit Template in place?
- Is the Home page complete; images & emails?
- Is the Assessment & Feedback area complete? Assessments details in place (weightings, dates etc.)
- Is the module information completed?
- Is there 2 weeks content published? (DASS recommendation)
- Is the course Published? Each unit must be published by the Unit Coordinator, it is **not automatic**.

Accessibility

When you are creating a unit you can check how accessible the content is. This is available in your Ally Course Accessibility Report. It will give you an overall Score and list of easiest to fix & lowest to fix scores. For help on check out [our website](#) and pop over to Canvas Confidence in Booth Street East 9-11th September.

TRAINING-FBMHEI

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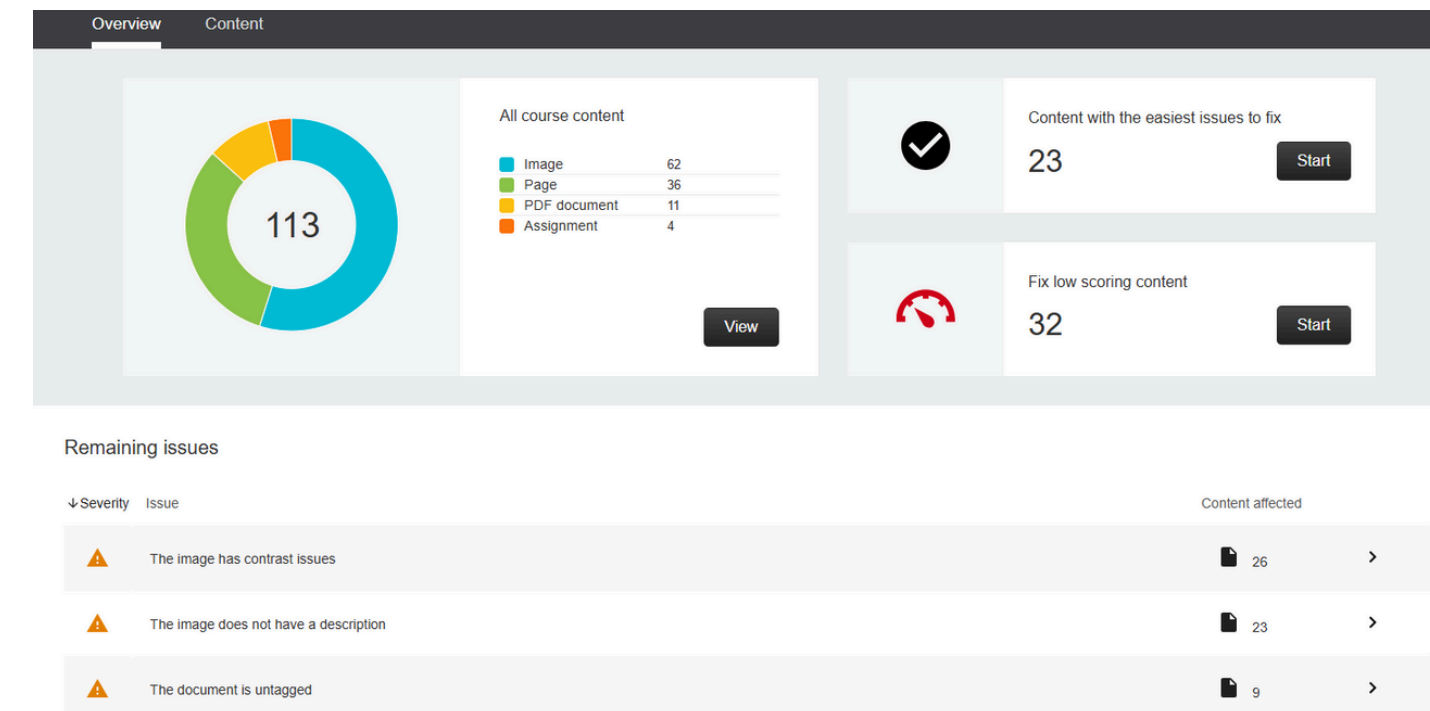
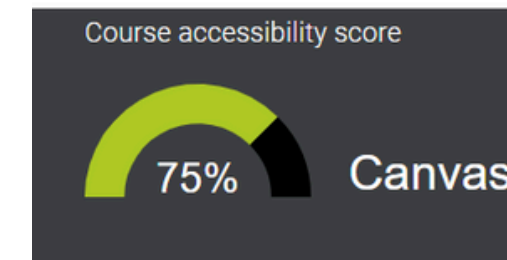
Syllabus

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Ally Course
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Student Partner Update

The Student Partners have been busy supporting the eLearning team across a range of projects in preparation for the new academic year. With Semester 1 just around the corner, our work has focused on ensuring that both staff and students are ready for a smooth start.

One of the biggest areas of contribution has been Course Readiness. With over 600 Semester 1 and Full-Year courses in FBMH, Student Partners have been assisting by contacting unit coordinators, signposting them to training and support, and encouraging them to publish their courses so they are visible to students. We have also been monitoring progress within courses and keeping detailed records of actions taken. In many cases, academics have asked for our views as students, which has given us the chance to share feedback from the learner's perspective and strengthen teaching delivery.

Alongside this, we have supported a Photo Stock project for the upcoming eLearning website, which will be shared with external partners. Student Partners volunteered as models for group-working photographs to represent collaboration and teamwork—core values of our student community.

We have also been involved in the ongoing Student Induction Review, where we reviewed this year's induction materials to ensure they are engaging, accessible, and genuinely useful for incoming students.

Finally, Student Partners have been preparing to contribute to the Canvas Confidence Festival, a university-wide event focused on helping staff get the most out of Canvas. Our role is to present our experiences of using Canvas Studio, especially around peer-to-peer video feedback and assessment. To prepare, we have trialled the features ourselves in a Sandbox course and shared our reflections with the eLearning team.

It's been a rewarding few weeks, and we look forward to continuing this work as the semester begins.

Manus Kapur:
Student Partner



Canvas Training Statistics

Training uptake is a cornerstone of successful change management. Within FBMH, our goal is for over 90% of Unit Course Coordinators to be trained in advance to support Canvas course building. A full breakdown of our Canvas training programme is available [here].

Timely engagement with training ensures staff are equipped with the knowledge and confidence needed for course preparation. For Semester 1 and full-year courses, our target is to have two weeks' worth of content ready by 8 September 2025—two weeks ahead of the academic year start—to meet DASS recommendations. We're actively monitoring training engagement using our catalogue, cross-referenced with known Unit Coordinators. While we acknowledge some data discrepancies, we're working with what we have, to ensure no one is left behind. If you've received an email from Michael Smith, FBMH Academic Lead for Technology Enhanced Active Learning, it's part of our effort to reach out to those who may not yet have completed training. Please respond to help us keep our records accurate.

Total attendees at training events so far: 1157

- F2F: 820
- Async: 337

Breakdown

- Unit Construction Workshops (Unit Coordinators): Total 426
 - F2F: 345
 - Async: 81
- Canvas Basics (Teaching staff): 253
 - F2F: 126
 - Async: 127
- Bespoke programme-based training attendees: 65
- PS Orientation to Canvas (PS): 51
- Creating and Managing Assignments in Canvas: 148
 - F2F: 107
 - Async: 41

- Quizzing and Testing in Canvas: 108
 - F2F: 75
 - Async: 39
- Interactive video with Canvas Studio: 70
 - F2F: 21
 - Async: 49
- Unit Deployment Workshops: 30
 - F2F: 30

Events

- Total training sessions:
 - Unit Construction Workshops (includes Pioneers): 36
 - Canvas Basics: 15
 - Canvas Basics for OneMed: 5
 - Creating and Managing Assignments in Canvas: 10
 - Quizzing and Testing in Canvas: 7
 - Interactive video with Canvas Studio: 4
 - PS Orientation: 5
- Total drop-in sessions: 75

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.



Canvas quick wins: What if?

Canvas includes a built-in feature called 'What If Grades' that allows students to explore how future scores might affect their overall course grade. While this feature is only visible to students, it is helpful for you to be aware of it, especially when advising students on their progress or discussing grade-related concerns.

In the Grades section of any Canvas course, students can select an assignment score and enter a hypothetical grade. Canvas will then recalculate their total grade based on the new input. This does not change the actual grade. It simply allows students to model different outcomes and understand how each assessment contributes to their final result.

This feature can be particularly useful for:

- Planning ahead for upcoming assignments
- Setting academic goals
- Reducing anxiety around performance
- Encouraging self-directed learning

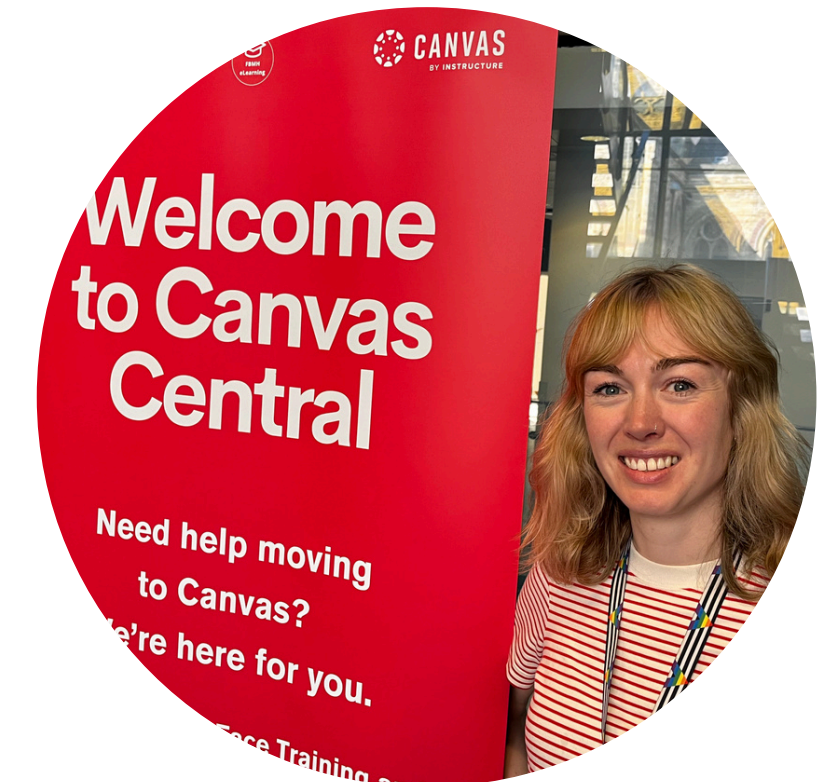
Why It Matters

- Helps students understand the impact of future assessments
- Encourages proactive planning and goal setting
- Reduces grade-related anxiety by offering transparency
- Promotes student ownership of learning

While in Student View, navigate to Grades. Students can select any upcoming assignment and enter a hypothetical score. Canvas will recalculate the total grade based on the input.

Important setup tips for instructors

- Ensure your Assignment Groups are set up correctly in the Assignments area
- If using weighted grades, double-check that the weights add up to 100%
- Clearly communicate to students that these are unofficial projections



Megan Broadbent:
eLearning support officer



Quick wins: The importance of adding a due date

When setting up a Canvas course, one of the simplest and most effective steps you can take is to add due dates to every assignment and quiz. This small action can make a big difference by helping students stay organised and reduce the number of missed submissions.

The Due Date and Time indicate when an assignment is expected to be completed. If a student submits work after this deadline, it will be marked as late in the Gradebook.

Although Canvas does not require due dates, using them helps structure your course and keeps everyone on track. It is a quick and easy way to support better course management and student success.

Why It Matters

- Canvas Automatically adds items to students' calendars and to-do lists
- Improves visibility of graded work
- Supports students who rely on calendar-based planning
- Reduces the chance of students missing deadlines

Some students will likely work almost exclusively from the Canvas calendar or to-do list.

While this isn't always ideal, it's a reality so adding due dates ensures your assignments show up where students are most likely to see them.

How to add a due date

- Go to the assignment or quiz you want to edit.
- Select 'Edit'.
- Scroll to the 'Assign' section.
- Set the Due date, Available from, and Until fields as needed
- Available From: The date and time when students can start accessing the assignment or quiz.
- Due: The deadline for submitting the work. Submissions after this time are marked as late.
- Until: The final cutoff date. After this time, students can no longer submit the assignment at all.
- Select Save or Save & Publish.

Assign Access

A screenshot of the 'Assign Access' form in Canvas. The form has a section titled 'Assign to' with a dropdown menu showing 'Everyone' and a search bar. Below this, there are three rows of date and time selection fields. The first row, 'Due date', is highlighted with a red box. Each row has a date field with a calendar icon and a time dropdown menu. To the right of each row is a 'Clear' link. At the bottom of the form is a button labeled '+ Assign to'.

What the BMH eLearning Team is doing (... Beyond Canvas)

It was a real privilege for FBMH eLearning to be invited to the Faculty of Medicine at Mansoura University, Egypt, to help them prepare for their move from Problem-Based Learning to Team-Based Learning in their pre-clinical medical curriculum. Alongside academic colleagues Michael Smith & Liz Sheader, we had the pleasure of consulting on curriculum design, advising on modifications to their physical and digital estate, and training over 50 facilitators on TBL pedagogy and best practice.

One of the most interesting aspects of our visit, involved the challenge of adapting our version of Team-Based Learning to Mansoura's very different teaching environment. With smaller teaching spaces and a more limited digital infrastructure, a direct replication of our model wasn't possible, so we had to be creative in working with staff to explore alternative provisions that would fit their context but retain the spirit of Team-Based Learning.

Encouragingly, of the 52 attendees who completed our post-session survey, 90% reported leaving with a good understanding of how TBL will work at Mansoura, and staff also reported a significant increase in their knowledge of TBL pedagogy more broadly.

We're really excited to see how Mansoura takes TBL forward, and we hope this is just the start of FBMH eLearning's global collaborations.



Lisa Donlan:
Learning Technologist

MEET OUR TEAM



**HELEN DAVIES:
LEARNING TECHNOLOGIST**



**KATE HILTON:
LEARNING TECHNOLOGIST**

Hello! I'm Helen, and I'm an eLearning Technologist in the FBMH eLearning Team. I've worked in eLearning at the University of Manchester for 19 years and before that had a career in business software development. I gained my MA in Digital Technologies, Communication and Education (DTCE) here at the University, culminating in a dissertation on adult learning and Web 2.0 technologies.

Although an eLearning technologist's role is varied and often dependent on time-critical requirements, my main focus is training. For over 12 months, the training team has been heavily involved in the development of training materials, workshops, asynchronous courses, and webinars covering all aspects of our new CLE, Canvas.

Outside of work, my main passion is supporting the Dogs Trust, and I have fostered several dogs as part of the Freedom Project. In addition, I have 2 pooches of my own and they keep me on my toes! I am also an avid reader and dabble in origami and paper crafts.

Hi, I am Kate (She/Her), I graduated with a BSc in Genetics from Victoria University of Manchester in 2004, which is the same year that VUoM merged with UMIST. In my final year of study I undertook a project where I built an eLearning package... and I never looked back!

I have now been in eLearning in UoM for 21 years, Canvas will be the 5th Learning Environment I have helped roll out in one form or another. I have experience in supporting students creating or completing online learning, staff training, project management, video, distance learning, interactivities and much more (it's a long list after 21 years!).

Outside of work, I am an avid sci-fi and fantasy fan who loves a cheeky Nandos. I have somehow acquired 4 budgies (all named after members of the Weasley family) and two tortoises thanks to my long suffering partner and 10 year old.

You can't see this; but if we are in an online meeting, behind my camera is a wall full of fantasy world maps and blueprints from the Starship Enterprise!

Canvas Microsite

Canvas Central

Canvas Training



Contact FBMH eLearning



elearning.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/canvas



FBMH eLearning Community (Viva Engage)



[FBMH eLearning \(LinkedIn\)](#)



FBMH eLearning (YouTube)