Blackboard Open LMS Instructor Essentials

Course basics

Creating and grading a course is easy.

1. Choose how you want it to look and feel in the course settings.
2. Add some learning resources and activities.
3. Use the Gradebook or Grader to grade completed activities.

Edit course settings

Steps in Snap: *Admin > Edit settings*

Steps in other themes: *Turn editing on > Administration > Course administration > Edit settings*

When you first enter your course, go to the course settings to decide the look-and-feel of the course.

- Add a description that informs users what they will be learning in your course.
- Expand *Course Format* to decide how you want to organize the course.
- Expand *Appearance* to decide how you want the course to look and feel.

  We recommend using the Snap theme. Snap lets you create modern and responsive websites for online learning. It removes the clutter and provides a modern professional feel. This lets users focus on information as and when they need it, without overwhelming them.

- Expand *Groups* if you want to allow group work in your course.

Add resources and activities

Steps in Snap: *Create learning activity or resource* > Choose an activity or resource > *Add*

Steps in other themes: *Turn editing on > Add an activity or resource* > Choose an activity or resource > *Add*

Courses are a collection of activities and resources.

- Activities are tasks you want students to do. For example, complete an assignment or participate in a discussion.
- Resources are items you use to support learning. For example, a video of a lecture or an article to read.

Common resource and activity settings

- **Outcomes:** Outcomes (competencies, standards, and goals) are specific descriptions of what a student has demonstrated and understood at the completion of an activity or course. Each outcome is evaluated by the instructor to determine whether the student has met the criterion.

  The site administrator must set up outcomes at the site level and the outcomes must be included in the course settings to be associated.

- **Ratings:** You can grade some activities by rating. You, and if you want, your students can rate the work of a student. Ratings are then aggregated to produce a grade for that student's activity submission.
- **Common module settings:**
  - Visible: Determine if the activity or resource is shown to or hidden from students within the course.
  - ID Number: Create a unique ID number to create advanced grade calculations within the gradebook. This allows the creation of formulas based on grades within this activity or resource.
  - Group mode: Decide if you want groups and if you want them to see each other or not.
  - Grouping: A grouping is a collection of groups within a course. If a grouping is selected, students assigned to groups within the grouping can work together.
- **Restrict access:** Decide when you want a resource or activity available to students. You can use dates, score ranges, Personalized Learning Designer rules, profile fields and/or the completion of other course activities to make items available.

  ALL availability restrictions must be met for the activity or resource to be made available.

- **Adaptive learning paths:** Applying restrictions to activities can create adaptive learning paths. For example, one of three different lessons appear to students, depending upon the range their quiz score falls into.
- **Activity completion:** You can set Activity completion options when you create or edit an activity. Activity completion works with course completion. With it you allow students to set their progress in a course or automatically update progress in a course based on conditions for activities.

- **Competencies:** Moodle's competency framework allows standards and competencies to be created and imported. Blackboard Open LMS supports importing CSV, ASN (RDF), Academic Benchmarks, RDF and XML based files. Imported standards or competencies can then be assigned to courses and activities. Competencies can be marked as completed by an instructor for a student or through a new setting in activities that marks a competency as being met once the student meets the completion requirements. Students and teachers can also track student progress against standards at the course level.

Recycle bin

Steps in Snap: *Admin > Recycle bin*

Steps in other themes: *Course administration > Recycle bin*

If you accidentally delete an activity or resource don't worry. You can restore any activities or resources that you accidentally delete.

The course recycle bin stores the activities and resources you deleted for a specified number of days before permanently deleting from the course.

The recycle bin does not show up until you deleted an activity or resource.

Grading

You must decide what activities you want to have students complete for a grade. Activities that you make gradable appear in the Gradebook for grading.

You can grade directly from the activity. Select the activity and *View responses*.

You can also grade from the following areas in your course.

- **Gradebook**: The Gradebook displays categories and course totals for each student.
- **Grader**: With the Open Grader you can grade and navigate through submitted assignments using a two-pane view. Assignments and Open Forums are currently supported.

Design your course

Effective content design can create a more compelling and engaging showcase for your course material. More importantly, well-designed content can help achieve the following:

- **Ease of learning**: How quickly can a new student navigate through your course while learning the material?
- **Efficiency of use**: After a student is familiar with your course setup, how quickly can they accomplish tasks?
- **Subjective satisfaction**: How much do students enjoy working through your course material?
- **Usability**: Can users with different levels of ability, experience, knowledge, language skills, hardware, or concentration level use your course easily?

- **Accessibility**: Products and services that are accessible provide the means for people with disabilities to receive the same level of information, services, and use that people without disabilities receive. Is your course a level playing field?

Strive for clean and simple.

- *Keep pages clean and uncluttered*. Use plenty of white space to separate paragraphs, images, and other page elements to avoid overwhelming readers.
- *Align text and headings on the left*. Online readers' eyes usually scan down the left side of the page. Centering headings will make your readers work harder to stay focused on the material.
- *Use block-style paragraphs*. Leave a space between each paragraph and do not indent the first line.
- *Be consistent*. Create predictability by using layouts that repeat design elements from page to page. Use the same fonts, colors, icons, and heading styles on each page to help students feel comfortable and find information faster.
- *Use headings*. Chunk information and make your page easier to scan. Choose your color scheme carefully and use colors that maximize readability. When in doubt, use black on white.
- *Use simple typography*. Use no more than three font faces in your entire course. Be consistent with how you use them. For example, use Verdana for body copy text, and use Times New Roman for subheadings. Use fonts that are standard for everyone's computers and easy to read, such as Arial, Times New Roman, Trebuchet, Georgia, and Verdana.

Choose course theme

If enabled by your site administrator, you can change the design of individual class pages using themes. Themes are design templates that you can choose for your course site. Two themes have been designed specifically for Blackboard Open LMS course pages – Snap and Boost.

1. From *Course administration* select *Edit Settings*.
2. Select *Appearance* and *Force Theme*.
3. Choose the theme you want.
4. Select *Save and display*.

Snap

Snap is a theme designed to increase learner engagement and make Moodle easier to use.

Designed with learning in mind, Snap presents courses in a modern and intuitive layout. With Snap's clear workflows, you and your students can focus on the learning that matters. No more time spent learning to use the system.

Snap is responsive. You and your students can get the most out of your courses from any device.

Best formats in Snap

The following formats work best in Snap.

- **Weekly Format**: The course page is organized into weekly sections, with the first section beginning on the course start date.
- **Topics Format**: The course page is organized into topic sections.

Folder view, social format, and single topic don't work well in Snap.

Add a course image

The Snap theme allows teachers with editing rights to add a course image to a course page. The course image appears in the user's personal menu and in course listings.

Select *Change image* and upload a course header image.

Find your way around Snap

The structure of Snap promotes a focus on the learning content. It presents the content in a single column. Information flows from top to bottom.

Each section or topic is a separate web page. This allows your students to focus on each topic without any distractions. Blocks are in their own area found in *Course Dashboard*.

At the start of each course is a table of contents. The table of contents creates a clear overview of the course structure. This structure means your students can navigate to each section in the course with ease. It also shows each participant his or her progress through each section in the course.

Course tools are in one simple location. Select Course Dashboard in the table of contents to go to them. Blocks are also found in this area.

A recent activity stream is available in the course footer. It shows you and your students a snapshot of what happened recently in the course.

Snap hides the Administration block to reduce page clutter. Select Admin in the top right to expand the block.

Snap uses icons and cards to help students recognize resources and activities at-a-glance. The color for popular file types match the product color. For example, an Excel® spreadsheet is green. This makes the file types easier to scan. A check mark shows users they have completed an activity.

The personal menu is the best place to see everything important you need to know at-a-glance. It includes feedback, grades, and forum posts. Go to the new Moodle feedback page and see all your courses and grades to date. Select *My Courses* at the top of your screen to stay engaged and keep current with what others are saying.

Select your name to create your profile and set your notification preferences.

Choose course format

One of the first tasks in designing your course is to select a course format. This sets how your course is organized.

The format you use depends on the theme you choose. Not all formats and themes work well together.

Steps in Snap: *Course Dashboard > Edit course settings > Course format > Format*

Steps in other themes: *Course administration block > Edit settings > Course format > Format*

- **Weekly:** You can organize resources and activities by week. This format creates a section for each week of a course so you can add content to it. This format is ideal to help keep students on track. They know what they should do and when.
- **Topic:** You can organize course content into sequential topics. You can then place all resources and activities related to a subject in the appropriate topic. You can decide how many topics you want to cover and hide some topics.
- **Collapsed Topics:** The Collapsed Topic format displays activities and resources within a folder that expands and collapses, allowing for easier editing of content. This course format can display all folders on a page or a single folder at a time with previous and next topic navigation buttons or a jump-to menu facilitating the navigation between folders.

Add sections

Sections help you to organize your course resources and activities for students. Each section can have a name and summary followed by activities and resources. You can edit the settings of sections to update the names, create summaries and restrict access to all activities and resources listed inside each section.

Depending on how you decide to separate the course pages, such as by topic or by week, your sections should reflect that organization.

Open the page in your course where you want to add a section.

Steps in Snap: *Create a new section*

Steps in other themes: *Turn editing on > Increase number of sections > Edit summary* icon

1. Type the *Section name*.
2. Place text, images, or multimedia into the *Summary*. In the HTML editor, use the toolbar toggle to show more buttons for text formatting and adding images and multimedia.
3. Optionally, you can restrict access to the section.
4. Select *Save changes*.

Personalized Learning Designer

Our Personalized Learning Designer (PLD) is designed to make your life easier. Use it to identify at-risk, inactive, or failing students. Then use the alerts in PLD to implement a remediation process and an appropriate learning path for each student.

How the Personalized Learning Designer works

The PLD uses rules to trigger automated events in your course. You can create rules to reduce excessive manual effort and reach out to at-risk students. For example, a rule can watch for at-risk grades and send messages to key figures in the student's life. A rule could also encourage students by watching for the completion of activities.

Each rule has an event, optional conditions, and at least one action.

- Events: An event is what triggers the rule, or causes it to run.
- Conditions: A condition determines if there are actions when an event occurs. If there are no conditions, actions happen automatically.
- Actions: An action is what happens when the right conditions are met.

  With the PLD, you can combine different events, conditions, and actions within a rule.

Add rules to the Personalized Learning Designer

Steps in Snap: *Admin > Personalized Learning Designer > Add a Rule*

Steps in other themes: *Administration > Course administration > Personalized Learning Designer > Add a Rule*

1. Select *Add a Rule*.
2. Type a meaningful name for your rule.
3. Select an *Event* type from the menu. Additional menus appear. They are different depending on the event. Choose what you want and select *Add*. You can add more than one event to a rule.

For descriptions of each event type, select the help icon in the course interface.

4. Optionally, select *Conditions*. Select a condition type from the menu and select *Add*. Additional menus appear. They are different depending on the condition. Choose what you want and select *Save*.

   You don't need to specify conditions if actions should always happen when an event occurs. For descriptions of each condition, click the help icon in the course interface.

5. Select *Actions*. Decide what happens when the event specified occurs. Select an action type from the menu and select *Add*. Additional menus appear. They are different depending on the action. Choose what you want and select Save. You must select at least one action.

   For descriptions of each action, click the help icon in the course interface.

6. Select *Save*.

You can stop a rule's action by checking the Disabled *box. The rule is not used in the course unless the check is removed from the* Disabled *box and then saved. The* Course grade change *event and the* Activity *events should be used respectively with the* Course *or* Activity *actions. Edit or delete existing rules by clicking the gear icon in the row for each rule.*

View the Personalize Learning Designer history

Steps in Snap: *Admin > Personalized Learning Designer > History*

Steps in other themes: *Administration > Course administration > Personalized Learning Designer > History*

View a list of the actions triggered in the course to see which students are triggering them.

1. Access the Personalized Learning Designer.
2. Click the *History* tab.
3. The list shows the rule, user, date, and actions fired. The list can be filtered for easier viewing.

PLD Terms and Definitions

Events

Use events as triggering items for PLD rules. You can have one or multiple events for a PLD rule. You can choose if you want all or any of the events to be triggered to enable the rule.

- **Activity completed** - Triggered when an activity is either manually or automatically marked as complete.
- **Activity graded** - Triggered when an activity is manually or automatically graded.
- **Activity viewed** - Triggered when an activity or resource is viewed.
- **Quiz or assignment submitted** - Triggered when a quiz or assignment has been submitted. Often used to release new content without waiting for manually graded items.
- **Forum reply** - Triggered when a user replies to a forum topic or to another user's reply to a forum topic.
- **Forum topic post** - Triggered when a user posts a top-level forum topic within a forum.
- **User added to group** - Triggered when a user has been manually added to a group, or added by a different rule in the PLD.
- **User removed from group** - Triggered when a user has been manually removed from a group, or removed by a different rule in the PLD.
- **Course entered** - Triggered when a user enters the course for the first time during a day. Leaving the course to visit other Blackboard Open LMS courses or pages will reset the trigger.
- **Course grade change** - Triggered when any grade in the course changes the course grade.
- **Specific date and time** - Triggered at a specific date and time as scheduled by the rule creator. This date can be set in the future to check conditions at that point. Note that this event does not have a triggering activity.
- **Recurring event** - Triggered at specific dates and times in the future as scheduled by the rule creator. This event can be scheduled to occur daily or weekly at a specific time of day.

Conditions

Use the conditions to create the conditions for when a rule is triggered. You can have one or multiple conditions for a PLD rule. You can choose if you want all or any of the conditions to be met to enable the rule.

- **Activity viewed** - Checks if an activity or resource has been viewed by the user who triggered the rule.
- **Activity completed** - Checks if an activity has been marked as complete for the user who triggered the rule. Requires completion tracking to be enabled for the site and the course.
- **Activity grade range** - Checks if the grade for an activity is within configurable bounds. For activities which allow multiple submissions, the grade used is the overall grade for the activity, not necessarily the most recent submission.
- **User role check** - Checks if the user who triggered the event is a member of a certain role. This may be useful to prevent some rules from triggering for educators.

- **Group membership check** - Checks if a user is within a specific group.
- **Course grade range** - Checks if a course grade is within a specific range.
- **Course login** - Checks to see if the user has logged into the course in a certain number of days.
- **Date check** - Checks if an event takes place before or after a designated date.

Students can't access the Personalized Learning Designer and don't see the rules. They only experience the actions.

Actions

- **Alert**: A message appears within the browser of the course. It requires the student's attention before being able to proceed.
- **E-mail**: An e-mail with a personalized message from the course is sent to the student.
- **Go to Activity**: The student is automatically redirected to another resource or activity within the course.
- **Go to URL**: The student is sent to a specific URL.
- **Release Codes**: The student can view (or lose rights to view) specific course content that is tagged with a specific release code.
- **Add/Remove User from Group**: The student may be added or removed from specific course groups based on their interaction in a course.

Open Gradebook

The Gradebook is more than just a way to record students' grades. It's a dynamic and interactive tool that allows you to record data, calculate grades, and monitor student progress. You can generate reports to communicate information to parents, administrators, and other stakeholders.

In the Gradebook, you can provide and manage your students' grades for assignments, tests, discussion posts, journals, blogs, and wikis. You can also create grade columns for any activities or requirements you want to grade, such as special projects, participation, or attendance.

You can set up grade categories, move assignments, and grade activities easier than ever. You can message students from the Gradebook and change every grade in a column at once.

With the Gradebook you can do the following.

- View the Gradebook with a simple landing page of Gradebook category and course totals.
- See at-a-glance if Gradebook categories are weighted in the course total.
- Navigate to other Gradebook categories with arrows and a jump-menu.
- Perform actions upon Gradebook columns and rows with a simple menu.

- Send a message to all students within a column whose grade falls within a specified range.
- Send a message to all students within a column who have not completed the assignment.
- Set all grades within a column to one value (and exclude rows with existing values, if desired).
- Edit all grades in a column. You can also set empty grades to "0".
- Hide or show a Gradebook column. Students won't see grades in a hidden column.
- Move an activity into a different Gradebook category.
- Edit all individual student grades. You can also set empty grades to "0".
- Send a message to an individual student.

Find your way around the Gradebook

Steps in Snap: *Course Dashboard > Gradebook*

Steps in other themes: *Navigation > Grades*

A. Use the tabs and menu at the top of the page to manage and customize your Gradebook. From here you can change your view, import grades, or set your Gradebook up just how you like it.
B. Students and gradable items are shown in an easy-to-read table. Students are rows and gradable items are columns. Where the two meet is where you grade a student for a specific assignment. Select a cell to enter a grade. Beside each student and gradable item name is an action icon that allows you to perform quick and common actions to the student or item. For example, you can send a message to the student or bulk grade everyone for a single item.
C. Filter your view by category or members in a group.

Set up your Gradebook

Setting up your Gradebook is simple.

1. Begin setting up your Gradebook by adding gradable activities to your course. Choose the activity you want to add and set the grade settings.
2. Add grade items to the Gradebook for any offline activities.
3. Organize your Gradebook with categories. Categories can help you manage the appearance and calculation of grades.
4. Set how you want grades to be calculated and assign weights.
5. Set your Gradebook preferences.

Add grade items to the Gradebook

Steps in Snap: *Course Dashboard > Gradebook > Setup > Add grade item*

Steps in other themes: *Navigation > Grades > Setup > Add grade item*

Not all assessments happen in your Blackboard Open LMS course. You may have "offline" activities, such as oral presentations. Keep grades for all assessments in one place. Add the activities to your Gradebook. When the activity is complete, enter the grades in the Gradebook manually. The grades are available to students and added to the course total.

1. From *Setup* in the Gradebook, select *Add grade item*.
2. Type a meaningful name for the item.
3. Select a type from the *Grade type* menu.
    - **Value:** Use a numerical value for grading. Type the *Maximum grade* and *Minimum grade* that can be earned.
    - **Scale:** Use a scale to grade. Select the scale you want to use from the *Scale* menu.
    - **Text:** Use text to give your students feedback only.
4. Select how you want the grade to appear in the *Grade display type* menu.
    - **Real:** Show the actual grade.
    - **Percentage:** Show the grade as a percentage.
    - **Letter:** Show the grade as a letter that represents a range of grades.
5. Optionally, set the following.
    - **Over all decimal points:** Set the number of decimal points to display for each grade. It has no effect on grade calculations, which are made with an accuracy of 5 decimal places.
    - **Hidden:** Hide the grade for this item from students. If you want to show students the grade for this item later, select a date from the Hidden until menu.
    - **Locked:** When selected, the item can't be automatically updated by related activity. You can set a date for when you want to lock the grade in.
    - **Weight adjusted**: Uncheck this to reset a grade item weight to its automatically calculated value. Checking this will prevent the weight being automatically adjusted.
6. Optionally, type a value for the *Weight*.
7. Select *Save changes*.

Use categories to organize your Gradebook

Steps in Snap: *Course Dashboard > Gradebook > Setup > Add category*

Steps in other themes: *Navigation > Grades > Setup > Add category*

Categories are used in the Gradebook to group gradable items. This can make the Gradebook easier to view. You can filter your Gradebook view by category. You can also use categories to combine grades, drop the lowest grade, and weight a group of grades.

To get the most out of categories you must add them to your gradable activities. From the activity settings, expand Grade and select the category from the Grade category menu.

Set aggregation method and assign weights

Steps in Snap: *Course Dashboard > Gradebook > Setup*

Steps in other themes: *Navigation > Grades > Setup*

By default, your Gradebook is set to calculate grades using the *Natural* aggregation. You can change how the Gradebook calculates grades.

1. From *Setup* in the Gradebook, select *Edit* beside the course name.
2. Select *Edit settings*.
3. Select the grade calculation method from the *Aggregation* menu. Select *Weighted mean of grades*, if you want to use your own weighted grading scheme.
4. Select *Save changes*.

After you have set the aggregation method, some aggregation methods allow you to assign weights to your Gradebook items and categories. A weight column appears in the Gradebook Setup. Type the weight for each item and category.

Your weights should total 100 to make sure the grade displayed is accurate.

My preferences

Steps in Snap: *Course Dashboard > Gradebook > Preferences: Grader report*

Steps in other themes: *Navigation > Grades > Preferences: Grader report*

Decide what you want to see in your Gradebook.

- Show/hide Toggles
    - **Show calculations:** A calculator icon appears for each grade item and category. There are tool tips over calculated items and a visual indicator that a column is calculated. You must select *Turn editing on* to see it.

- **Show show/hide icons:** Use the show/hide icon to show or hide the grade from students. You must select *Turn editing on* to see it.
- **Show column averages:** An additional row appears with the average (mean) for each category and grade item.
- **Show locks:** Control if an item can be automatically updated by related activity. Select the lock to lock the grade. Unlock to allow automatic updates. You must select *Turn editing on* to see it.
- **Show user profile image**: See user profile images beside their names.
- **Show ranges:** An additional row appears with the range for each category and grade item.

- Special Rows
  - **Range display type:** Display ranges as real grades, percentages, or letters.
  - **Decimals shown in ranges:** Display the number of decimal points for each range.
  - **Column averages display type:** Display the average (mean) as real grades, percentages, or letters.
  - **Decimals in column averages:** Display the number of decimal points for each average.
  - **Grades selected for column averages**: Decide if you want to include cells with no grade when calculating the average (mean) for each category or grade item.
  - **Show number of grades in averages:** Display the number of grades used when calculating the average (mean) in brackets after each average.
- General
  - **Students per page:** Set how many students you want to see on each page of the Gradebook.
  - **Aggregation position:** Decide where the category and course total columns are displayed in the gradebook reports.
  - **Enable AJAX:** Adds a layer of AJAX functionality to the Open gradebook. This simplifies and speeds up common operations. Javascript must be switched on at the user's browser level. This option is set to Yes because AJAX is required for Open gradebook.

How Gradebook interacts with your course

The Gradebook interacts with several tools and components in Blackboard LMS. Understanding how and where these interactions happen can help you take full advantage of this tool.

Tool/Component	Interaction
Activities and resources	When you create gradable items in your course it adds a grade column for that item to the Gradebook.

	Example: When you create a journal, you can select the grading option. A grade column is added to the Gradebook with the name of the journal.
Email tool	You can use the email tool in the Gradebook to send messages to students and, if applicable, their observers.
External data from other grading systems	You can export and import data to the Gradebook by uploading and downloading delimited files.
Open Grader	You can view and grade submitted assignments and posts made to Open forums. Grades assigned in the Open Grader appear in the Gradebook.
Observers	Observers can log in and access their observed students' released grades. Examples of observers might include a student's parents or guardians, or a tutor. Your institution controls observer access. If allowed institution-wide, you can determine observer access on a course-by-course basis.
Student view of grades	By default, students see their grades in their own personal Gradebook. You can hide their Gradebook from them in course settings. You can also hide individual grades by column, if you want.
X-Ray Learning Analytics	X-Ray extracts and analyzes information from the Gradebook to keep you informed on how your students are doing. X-Ray also suggests grades for forums but doesn't save those grades to the Gradebook. Teachers must add the grades manually, if they agree with the suggested grade.

Enter grades in the Gradebook

Steps in Snap: *Course Dashboard > Gradebook > Turn editing on*

Steps in other themes: *Navigation > Grades > Turn editing on*

Find the student and activity you want to grade. Type grades in the empty cells using point values, percentages and/or letter grades. Press Enter or click in another cell to save the grade.

Grades entered in the Gradebook override grades that are assigned automatically. If a student retakes a quiz after a grade has been entered in the Gradebook, the new quiz grade replaces the grade entered in the Gradebook even if it is higher.

How do I know what needs grading?

There are many ways for you to tell what needs grading in your courses.

- **From the activity:** Select the activity to view the summary page. Select *View/grade all submissions*. From here you can see if a student has submitted something and grade the submissions.
- **From Open grader:** In Snap select *Course Dashboard* and *Open Grader*. In the other themes select *Open Grader* from *Course administration*.
- **From the Needs Grading report:** In Snap select *Course Dashboard* and *Open Reports*. In other themes select *Open Reports* from *Course administration*. Select *Needs Grading* from the *Dashboard* menu at the top of the screen. Fill in the information and select *Generate report*.
- **From your personal menu:** Select *Menu* at the top of your screen to open your personal menu. New submissions needing grading are listed under *Grading*. The personal menu is only available with the Snap theme.

Can I override grades?

By default, you can override grades in the Gradebook.

You can choose to lock a grade item in the Gradebook. When a grade item is locked it can't be updated by related activity.

Can I grade offline?

Yes, you can grade items offline. Select Export in the Gradebook. Pick the format you want. For example, *Plain text file*. Select grade items you want included. All are selected by default. Select *Download*.

When you are done select *Import* to upload your grades to the Gradebook.

Manage grade items

Use column actions to perform bulk and individual grading and messaging tasks. Actions can be viewed by clicking the action icons in rows and columns. The actions below are available for column actions. Some actions are available when viewing categories where as others are only available for items within categories.

- **Open Grader:** Jump to the Open grader.
- **Link to activity:** Jump to the activity grades to view detailed results.
- **Single view for activity:** Input activity grades for all course participants at one time.

- **Message to Incompletes:** Send a message to all participants who have not completed a specific activity. All students that do not have a grade entered for the activity are added to a message automatically.
- **Message to Grade Range:** Set a grade range that will trigger a custom message to be sent to students whose grades fall within that range.
- **Change all grades in this column to:** Change all grades for an activity using this feature. If all students except a few received the same grade, you can use this feature to save time by only having to input the exceptions. Check *Ignore cells* with existing values to leave grades already entered in a column as they are, or uncheck it and replace all grades with the value that is entered. Use this to grade exception.
- **Toggle Visible/Hidden (Currently Visible/Hidden**): Makes the grade for the activity visible/hidden to students.
- **Move this to a different Gradebook category:** Move the item to a different category in the gradebook.

Manage students

The Gradebook is more productive with row actions to perform bulk and individual grading and messaging tasks. Click the action icon next to the student's name and select the Row Grader or Message to student options to grade all activities for the student or to send him/her a direct message.

- **Row Grader:** View and change grades for one student at a time. Quickly enter grades for all of a student's assignments, with the option to make any empty cells=0 by checking the box. Enter the grades for the student for each activity.
- **Message to Student:** Send a message to a student.

Open Grader

The Open grader is an alternate grading option that enables you to view, grade, and navigate through student submissions in a simplified, adjustable, two-pane view. Currently, only assignments and Open forums are supported in the grader.

- Use advanced grading methods, such as rubrics.
- Annotate PDFs within the grader.
- Use marking workflows and delegate grading.
- Teachers and students can discuss a particular grade or submission in the assignment's comments.
- Students can view only their own submissions and grades in the grader.

Grade activities with the Open grader

Steps in Snap: *Course Dashboard > Open Grader*

Steps in other themes: *Administration > Course administration > Open Grader*

The Grader lets you grade student submissions in a simplified, adjustable, two-pane view.

Student submissions appear in the left pane. Online text submissions and discussion forum posts appear in the submission frame. You can launch a PDF editor if you want to view and annotate submitted files directly in the submission frame.

You can filter your view to see only activities that need grading. Select *Show Activities Requiring Grading*.

Use the activity, participant, and group menus and arrows to move between activities or students.

Grade student submissions in the right pane. Options you set when creating the activity, such as whether *Activity Comments* are available, determine what is displayed in this panel. If an assignment uses an advanced grading method such as rubrics, checklist, or marking guide, you can view them from here.

Save grade and next to move to the next student who has submitted that assignment -OR- *Save* the grade and stay on the page. Grades saved here are recorded in the course Gradebook.

Mark up PDF submissions

Steps in Snap: *Course Dashboard > Open Grader > Find submission > Launch PDF editor*

Steps in other themes: *Administration > Course administration > Open Grader > Find submission > Launch PDF editor*

If you want to mark-up student submissions in the Grader you need to do these things when you create the assignment:

- Select *File submissions* for the assignment *Submission types*.
- Select *Simple direct grading* for the assignment *Grading method*.

Select *Launch PDF editor* under *Grading* to view and edit and PDF submission in the Grader. With the PDF editor you can mark up and add comments to student submissions. View inline lets you view the content only. You need to open the PDF editor to annotate.

Use these tools in the PDF editor to mark up the submission:

- Use the right and left arrows to move between pages.
- Search for comments in the submission.
- Add comments to the submission. You can change color of the comments.
- Move or delete the comment or mark up.
- Mark up the submission with free-hand drawing, lines and objects.
- Highlight words and sentences you want to stand out. You can change the color of the highlight.
- Stamp the submission with a happy face, sad face, checkmark or red x.

The PDF editor requires ghostscript on the server.

Marking workflows

With marking workflows, marks go through these stages before being released to students.

- **Not marked:** Marking hasn't started.
- **In marking:** Marking is in progress.
- **Marking completed:** Marking is finished but the marker might need to go back for corrections.
- **In review:** Marking is being reviewed the teacher in charge for quality checking.
- **Ready for release:** The teacher in charge is satisfied with the marking but is waiting to give students access to the mark.
- **Released:** The student can access the grades and feedback.

Marking workflows are ideal when you have more than one marker. For example, a teaching assistant can mark the submission and mark it complete for the teacher's review. The teacher can then release the mark to the student.

If you want to use marking workflows you need to do these things to set it up.

- Select *Use marking workflow* in the assignment *Grade settings*.
- Give another user marking permission. From *Course administration* select *Users*. Select *Enrolled Users* and *Assign Roles*. Select *non-editing teacher*. Choose who you want to give permission to. You can then give them give them assignments to mark.

You must have permission to assign markers to this.

If you want to release grades to more than one student or all students at the same time, grade from the assignment instead of the Grader. The Grader enables you to release a grade only one student at a time.

Allocate markers

Steps in Snap: *Assignment > View/Grade All Submissions > Set allocated marker*

Steps in other themes: *Assignment > View/Grade All Submissions > Set allocated marker*

You can designate one marker for all student submissions, or designate several different markers across student submissions.

1. Access the assignment and select *View/Grade All Submissions*.
2. Select a set of students by checking the boxes.
3. Select *Set allocated marker* in the *With selected* menu.
4. Select *Go*.
5. Select an *Allocated Marker* from the menu.
    - Only users with grading permissions appear in the menu. To add a user to the list, select *Locally assigned roles* in *Administration*. Select *Non-editing teacher* and select a *Potential user*. Select *Add*.
    - When allocating markers to several students at one time, it is possible to allocate a marker to their own submission. Double-check the grading list to ensure this doesn't occur.
6. *Save changes*.

Notify the allocated markers

Allocated markers aren't notified that they are assigned to student submissions. Tell your markers so they know to check for submissions.

If you enable notifications in the assignment settings, an email is sent to markers telling when students submit something for them to mark. Let your markers know to expect these emails and how to mark the submission.

What do allocated markers see?

The user specified as the allocated marker for the activity sees the student's submission in these locations:

- **View/Grade All Submissions in the assignment:** Only assignments that are submitted and allocated to the marker are listed.
- **Grader:** Allocated markers see only their own submissions for all gradable activities except for the activity that they were assigned to mark. For that activity, the drop-down menu shows the current user's name as well as the name of the user to mark. After a marker assigns a grade, the marker can change the workflow status.

Do both instructors and allocated markers grade submissions?

The student receives only one grade. Both the instructor and allocated marker can update the grade and change the Marking workflow state as many times as necessary. The workflow state is visible in the grading grid.

Open Reports

Reports display data gathered by the Collect block configured by your administrator. As an instructor, you have these reports available to you.

- **Course reports:** View student engagement in course activities.
- **Correlation reports:** Compare course grades to level of engagement in activities.
- **Exception reports:** Track students who are not engaging in the course activities and may need assistance.
- **LearnerView reports:** View specific students and see how they are progressing in the course.
- **Comparison reports:** Compare students' engagement, grades, completion, and teacher correlation. At the site level, program administrators can view comparative data about courses and teachers.

There are also admin and learner reports for administrators and students to use. Admin reports show aggregate data for site administrators and department heads on courses and programs as a whole. Learner reports show students their own engagement in course activities.

Data is not collected about hidden assignments. This means that if you un-hide an assignment, you will not see report data about that assignment until after the collector has run and collected data about the assignment. Please allow several hours to pass before expecting to see report data about assignments that you have recently made visible. Also note that report data will be delayed about 2 hours from real time, depending on the set interval.

How do I view reports?

Steps in Snap: *Course Dashboard > Open Reports*

Steps in other themes: *Course administration > Open Reports*

From Reports, use the headings to choose the reports you want to see.

Course reports

Course reports give a simple view of student engagement within your course activities. Most course reports can be viewed by grade category, sections, groups, and users.

Use the filters to expand or narrow your view. You can send messages to students you see in the reports. Select the student and the option to send them a message from the report Action *menu.*

- **Activity Grades report:** Gives an overview of how students scored on the course activities.
- **Activity Views report:** Helps you determine the popular or most used resources and activities in the course. It gives you a simple view of the number of times students viewed activities.
- **Assignment Submissions report:** Gives you an overview of assignment submissions in the course. It shows details on the submission compared to the assignment due date. It also shows how many submissions were made and the grade made.
- **Dashboard:** Shows the charts for the most common reports. These include Recent Activity, Forum Posts, Quiz Submissions and Assignment Submissions.
- **Forum Posts report:** Shows how engaged students are in the course forums. It shows all enrolled students and the number of posts they made to each forum.
- **Glossary Posts report:** Shows how engaged students are in the course glossaries. It shows all enrolled students and the number of posts they made to each glossary.
- **Needs Grading report:** Shows you what is ready for grading. It lists each student and their activities that need grading. Select Grade now to grade the activity.
- **Outcomes report:** Gives you an overview of student outcomes for activities with assigned outcomes. It shows all enrolled students and their outcome ratings on all activities with assigned outcomes.
- **Quiz Submissions report:** Gives you an overview of quiz submissions in the course. It shows when the quiz was attempted, as well as the attempt and final grades.
- **Recent Activity report:** Helps you see overall student participation in the course. It gives you a simple view of all activity by every student enrolled in your course.
- **Roster:** Shows you when students were last in the course.
- **SCORMs report:** Shows you all SCORM packages and SCOs in those packages that students have accessed in the course.
- **Wiki Posts report:** Shows how engaged students are in the course wikis. It shows all enrolled students and the number of posts they made to each wiki.

Correlation reports

Compare grades in the course to the level of engagement against activities.

Use the filters to narrow your view.

- **Activity Grade via Engagement Detail Report:** Shows the relationship between student engagement and success in the course activities. It gives you a simple view of the number of views and posts made by students as well as the average grade achieved for each activity.

  By default, the report displays the activity and average grade for every activity in your course in table and graph formats. In the graph, point to the bars to see the overall total of views and posts for each activity.
- **Learner Engagement Distribution Report:** Shows the relationship between student engagement and success in your course. It gives you a simple view of the number of views and posts made by students in different grade categories.

  By default, the report displays the overall activity in your course for every grade range in table and graph formats.
- **Learner Engagement Trends Report:** Helps you see when students are engaged in your course. It gives you a simple view of the number of views and posts made over time.

  By default, the report displays the overall activity in your course over the life of your course in table and graph formats.
- **Learner Grade via Engagement Detail Report:** Shows the relationship between how engaged a student is and how successful they are. It gives you a simple view of the number of views and posts made by each student in your course as well as their overall course grade.

  By default, the report displays the activity and grade for every student in your course in table and graph formats. In the graph, point to the bars to see the overall total of views and posts for each student.

Exception reports

Track which students are not interacting with the course activities and may need assistance. Most exception reports can be viewed by grade category, sections, groups, and users.

Use the filters to expand or narrow your view. You can send messages to students you see in the report. Select the student and the option to send them a message from the Action menu.

- **Activity Grades report:** Gives you an overview of who is still waiting for a grade on their activity. It gives you a simple view of students and the activities waiting for grades.
- **Activity Views report:** Gives you an overview of who hasn't viewed an activity. It gives you a simple view of students and the activities they haven't viewed.
- **Assignment Submissions report:** Gives you an overview of who hasn't submitted assignments. It gives you a simple view of students and the activities waiting for their submission.
- **Forum Posts report:** Gives you an overview of who hasn't posted to a forum. It gives you a simple view of students and the forums waiting for their posts.
- **Glossary Posts report:** Gives you an overview of who hasn't posted to a glossary. It gives you a simple view of students and the glossaries waiting for their posts.
- **Outcomes report:** Gives you an overview of students who have NOT performed against an outcome within the course.
- **Quiz Submissions report:** Gives you an overview of who hasn't attempted a quiz. It gives you a simple view of students and the quizzes they haven't attempted.
- **Roster report:** Shows you students who have not accessed the course.
- **SCORMs report:** Shows you students who have not attempted SCORMs in the course.
- **Wiki Posts report:** Gives you an overview of who hasn't posted to a wiki. It gives you a simple view of students and the wikis waiting for their posts.

LearnerView reports

View what specific students are doing in a course and understand an individual's progress. Most LearnerView reports can be viewed by grade category and sections.

Use the filters to expand or narrow your view. You can send messages to the student. Select an activity and the option to send them a message from the Action menu.

Quickly navigate between users in the course to view their report information.
Select Previous user to return to the report of the previous user in the list. Select Next user to navigate to the report of the next user in the course. A menu can also be used to jump to a specific user in the course. When navigating between users, the report filters stay the same for each user, providing a quick view into the same data for each user for an apples-to-apples comparison.

- **Activity Grades report:** Gives an overview of how a student scored on the course activities.
- **Activity Views report:** Helps you determine the activities and resources students view most often. It gives you a simple view of the number of times a student viewed activities.

- **Assignment Submissions report:** Gives you an overview of assignment submissions for a student in the course. It shows details on the submission compared to the assignment due date. It also shows how many submissions were made and the grade made.
- **Forum Posts report:** Shows how engaged a student is in the course forums. It shows the number of posts a student made to each forum.
- **Glossary Posts report:** Shows how engaged a student is in the course glossaries. It shows the number of posts a student made to each glossary.
- **Outcomes report:** Provides the student's outcome grade by activity for the course. View report by activities and date grade on.
- **Quiz Submissions report:** Gives you an overview of a student's quiz submissions in the course. It shows when the quiz was attempted, as well as the attempt and final grades.
- **Recent Activity report:** Helps you gauge how a student is participating in the course. It gives you a simple view of all activity for a student enrolled in your course.
- **Roster:** Shows you when a student was last in the course.
- **SCORMs report:** Shows all SCORM **packages** and SCOs in those packages that a student has accessed in the course. This report also shows the attempt, time on attempt, and grade for the SCO.
- **Wiki Posts report:** Shows how engaged a student is in the course wikis. It shows the number of posts the student made to each wiki.

Comparison reports

Compare students' engagement, grades, completion, and teacher correlation.

- **Course summaries report**: Helps you see how your courses compare to each other. It gives you a simple view of the grade, completion rate, engagement level, and sample of activities for each course.
- **Participant summaries report**: helps you see how students in all of your courses compare. It gives you a simple view of the grade, completion rate, engagement level, and sample of activities for each student in every course.

You can send messages to students you see in the report. Select the student and the option to send them a message from the Action menu.

- **Participants comparison report**: helps you see how students in a course compare to each other. It gives you a simple view of the grade, completion rate, engagement level, and sample of activities for each student in the course.

  You can send messages to students you see in the report. Select the student and the option to send them a message from the Action menu.

- **Activities comparison report**: Helps you see how activities in a course compare to each other. It gives you a simple view of the grade, completion rate, and level of engagement for each activity in the course.

Export reports

Tabular data for all reports can be exported to a spreadsheet (XLS) or comma separated values (CSV) file. You are asked if you want to save or open the file, depending on the browser's settings.

Send messages to students

You can send emails to student from the Course, Exception, and LearnerView reports. Check the box next to a student and select Send message to student from the Action menu.