

# Blackboard®

## Blackboard Learn™ Q2 2019 and Q4 2018 Release Highlights

### Overview of the Blackboard Learn™ 9.1 Q2 2019 and Q4 2018 releases

The latest releases for Blackboard Learn 9.1 (the Original experience for managed and self-hosted institutions) deliver many new features and enhancements that improve:



Engagement  
and efficiency



Assessment  
and grading



Standards and  
interoperability



Quality and  
maintenance



### Engagement and Efficiency

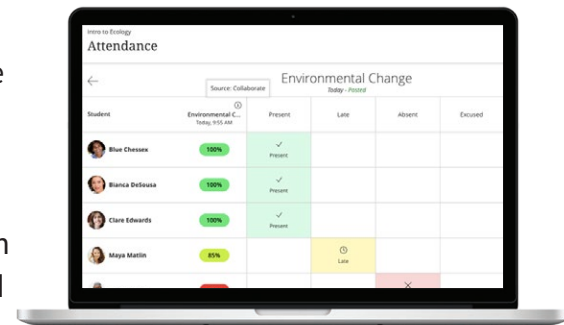
**Calendar items and due date notifications for additional content types (Q2 2019)** – To give users a single, comprehensive view of their class requirements and activities, Calendar and To Do modules are now expanded to include the due dates from additional content types including manual columns, SCORM, and those from third-party solutions.

### **New Facilitator course role and more granular permissions (Q2 2019)**

For institutions that centrally manage course development and settings, these more granular course role permissions enable roles to teach, engage, and grade but not modify materials or settings. There is also a new default course role called Facilitator. As with other default course roles, the specific permissions can be edited.

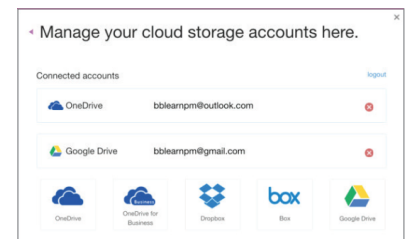
### **Blackboard Collaborate™ attendance integration\* (Q2 2019)**

For instructors hosting Collaborate sessions, taking attendance is now automated, eliminating the need for manual tracking. Collaborate session attendance will be recorded within the Attendance page of the Learn course, and can be factored into students' grades.



**Content Collection updates (Q2 2019)** – To improve the performance and usability of the Content Collection, files uploaded as part of a SCORM package are now shown in the Content Collection folder, and when versioned files are imported/restored, the version number is indicated in the file name.

**Cloud storage integration (Q4 2018)\*\*** – Instructors can upload documents from their preferred cloud storage accounts—including OneDrive, Google Drive and Dropbox—directly into their course when authoring content items or creating assignments. Students can do the same when uploading assignments.



**Enhanced accessibility (Q4 2018)** – To make it easier for users of assistive technologies to navigate the structure of pages, skip links now work more consistently across Learn tool areas.

### Nynorsk language support (Q4 2018)

Support for Nynorsk (written Norwegian) has been added.

## Assessment & Grading

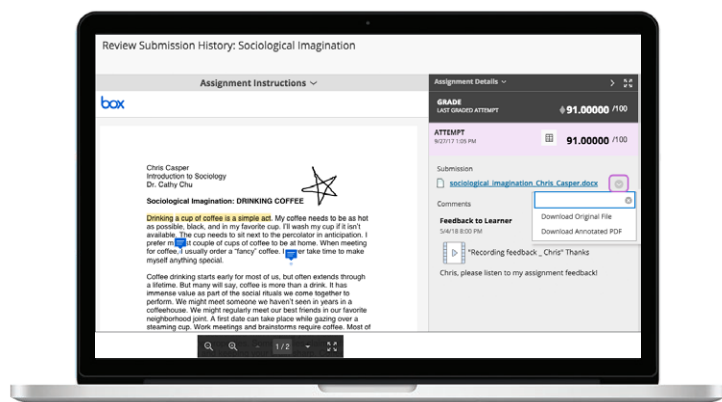
### New SafeAssign Originality Report (Q2 2019)

The SafeAssign Originality Report has been updated and reformatted for improved usability, responsiveness, and accessibility. It employs Blackboard's Ultra design philosophy and includes new information about the overall risk of a submission having been copied from another source.

**Improved Grades Journey support for merged courses (Q2 2019)** – Institutions using merged courses can now more readily use all the capabilities of Grades Journey.

### Download annotated PDFs (Q4 2018)\*\*

A highly requested feature, instructors and students can now download annotated files for permanent record using in-line grading (aka New Box View). DOC, DOCX, or PDF files with annotations will download as an annotated PDF. Students can download the annotated file after their submission has been graded.



### Grading in Blackboard Instructor App (Q4 2018)\*\*

Instructors can now grade assignments in the Blackboard Instructor mobile app. They can review assignment submissions and attachments, provide comments and inline annotations, grade with rubrics, and publish grades to students, making this the easiest way to grade on the go.

### Granting grade reconciliation using Delegated Grading (Q4 2018)

Instructors now have the authority to grant permission to any delegated graders within their course to reconcile final grades, eliminating the need for system administrators to manage this task. When grading is delegated, the “Can reconcile grades” option appears. Granting grade reconciliation is now as simple as checking a box.

GRADER	SUBMISSIONS TO GRADE	VIEW SETTINGS	RECONCILE GRADES
Cathy Chu Instructor	None	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can view other graders' scores, feedback, and notes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can reconcile grades
Monica Gonzales Teaching Assistant	Random Set 25	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can view other graders' scores, feedback, and notes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can reconcile grades
Tony Brown Grader	Random Set 25	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can view other graders' scores, feedback, and notes	<input type="checkbox"/> Can reconcile grades

### Outcomes Assessment roles based on Institutional Hierarchy (Q4 2018)

To enable use beyond that of the centralized assessment office, the Outcomes Assessment solution has been enhanced to respect the access limitations you've put in place by configuring your Institutional Hierarchy. Outcomes roles can now be assigned to key stakeholders within each department; these users will be able to create their own evidence collections, manage evaluations, and view reports for courses within their node of the Institutional Hierarchy.

## Standards and interoperability

To ensure you're able to integrate your portfolio of solutions with Blackboard Learn in a deep, rich, and consistent way, we continue to invest significantly in building more REST APIs, supporting Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI), and supporting additional IMS standards like Questions and Test Interoperability (QTI). The result of these efforts will ease your transition from Building Blocks to LTI and REST, create an increasingly consistent user experience between the Original and Ultra experiences, and ensure a deep integration between our products and others—all to drive toward the most powerful user experience for your instructors and students.

[LTI Advantage certified and in production \(Q2 2019\)](#) – We're excited to share that Blackboard Learn is the first major LMS to be LTI Advantage certified and to make LTI Advantage available in production. [LTI Advantage](#) is the latest in interoperability standards for integrating tools into a learning environment. The capabilities of LTI Advantage allow for deeper, richer, and more consistent and secure integrations than with the previous versions of LTI.

[Support for IMS Global's Questions and Test Interoperability \(QTI\) specification \(Q2 2019\)](#) – To simplify the online management of assessment, instructors and course builders are now able to add and export Learn question pools as QTI packages.

[LTI enhancements \(Q4 2018\)](#) – We've made several enhancements to the LTI Tool placement section of the provider setup:

- By selecting “Student” course tool, tools are placed in the “Student Tools” area of the course for immediate student use; no instructor action is required.

The screenshot shows the 'Create Placement' form. It has a header 'Create Placement' and a note: '\* Indicates a required field.' Below this is the 'PLACEMENT INFORMATION' section. It contains a 'Label' field, a 'Description' field, and a 'Handle' field. The 'Availability' section has radio buttons for 'Yes' (selected) and 'No'. The 'Type' section has radio buttons for 'Course tool' (selected), 'Student', 'Non-student', 'Course content tool', 'System tool', and 'Administrator tool'. A purple arrow points to the 'Non-student' radio button.

- The “Non-student” course tool type is for instructor and course builder tools only. Instructors can access these tools via their Control Panel and no longer need to incorporate them into their course.
- The new “System tool” placement type allows a tool to be added to the Tools menu on the My Institution or other module tab for tool access outside of the course context, such as a library system.
- The new “Administrator tool” placement type allows administrators to place LTI tools in the “Tools and Utilities” menu of the Administrator panel.

[Cross-origin resourcing tool for administrators \(Q2 2019\)](#) – Administrators can now allow an external script or third-party application to make direct calls to their Blackboard Learn instance's REST APIs.

[New REST APIs and enhancements \(Q2 2019 and Q4 2018\)](#) – These releases include new REST APIs and enhancements to previously released web services. These include in Q2 2019 attendance, course categories, course group users (updated),

file attachments for submission attempts, course grade attempts (updated), proctoring and observers and in Q4 2018 calendar, content, content file attachments, course grade attempts, course gradebook categories, and courses v2 including cross-listing and privacy.

## Quality and maintenance

**SAML updates (Q2 2019)** – Using SAML with Learn is now more secure and compatible in this release by improving the logout process for SAML single sign-on sessions and enabling administrators to configure the SAML session age as unlimited.

**Data integration logs storage load reduced (Q2 2019)** – To enhance performance and reduce system strain by improving the way data integration logs store information in the shared file system, searches in SIS logs are now limited to seven-day date ranges.

**Software library updates (Q2 2019)** – Various third-party and open source libraries have been updated throughout the application to improve security.

**General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) User Report (Q2 2019 & Q4 2018\*\*)**  
In compliance with the requirement of the GDPR to allow users to receive human-readable reports of personal information that has been collected about them, administrators

may submit a case on Behind the Blackboard to request the user's exported report package. The reports generated are CSV files with site- and course-level information about the user's activity, tool interactions, uploaded content, or submitted work within Learn. In the Q2 2019 release, our GDPR reports also include attendance tool data and improvements to the structure of user activity data.

**User privacy improvements in accordance with GDPR (Q4 2018)** – As a part of our commitment to protect the privacy of users, updates have been made in accordance with changing global data and privacy regulations including those of the GDPR. For example, enhancements include:

- Increased visibility of Blackboard's privacy and data use as well as terms of use statements
- The ability for an institution to add its own privacy and data use statement
- An updated end-user acceptance experience with additional data use disclosures when using Blackboard Learn for the first time

**Additional performance improvements (Q4 2018)** – We have made several performance improvements in areas such as content management (Xythos) and the Purge Accumulator. Multiple areas of logging have also been improved to reduce log volumes.

For more details on the contents of each release, see the Release Notes on [help.blackboard.com](https://help.blackboard.com). Visit the [Blackboard Community](#) site to join other institutions in the [Upgrade Club](#). Plus, provide your product suggestions and vote on ideas for our upcoming releases in the [Blackboard Idea Exchange](#).

\*Only applicable if your institution licenses Blackboard Collaborate.

\*\*This feature was also made available for one or more prior releases via a Cumulative Update. Please check Behind the Blackboard for more information.