

Overview of the Blackboard Learn[™] 9.1 Q4 2019 Release

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



Engagement
and efficiency



Assessment
and grading



Standards and
interoperability



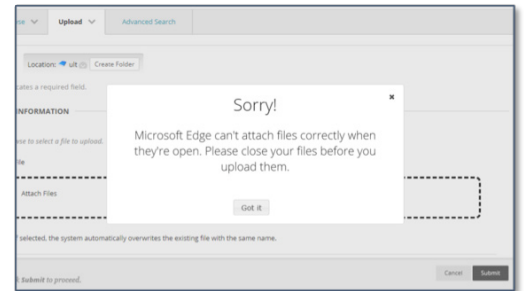
Quality and
maintenance



Engagement and Efficiency

Open file upload warning for Edge browser users

Due to a known Microsoft Edge issue, users who access Learn through the Microsoft Edge browser have encountered problems attaching and submitting open Microsoft Office files. To minimize user frustration, Learn now prompts Microsoft Edge users to close files before uploading them.



Course availability controls now in more places

The popular course availability indicator and toggle control for courses is now accessible on additional tools and management pages, like the Discussion Board page.

Usability improvements for the Learn 2016 Theme

Improvements for the Learn 2016 Theme in this release include:

- When configured, course color menus also apply to the pop-out course menu
- Contextual menus now display with dividers between sections
- Tab and sub-tab navigation improvements for unauthenticated users who use Tab Page (Direct Access) as the start page

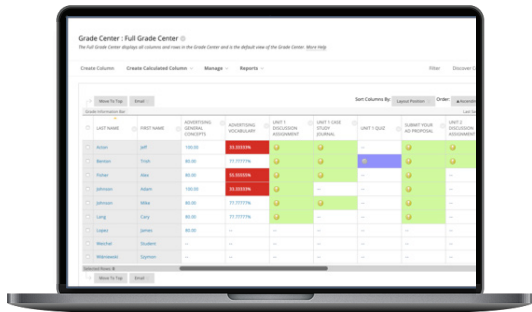
Assessment and Grading

Needs Grading filter selection is remembered

On the Needs Grading page, an instructor's "Show attempts that don't contribute to user's grade" filter preference is now remembered across sessions and courses.

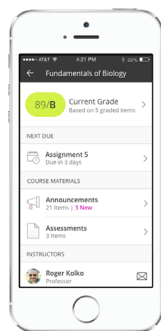
Grade Center improvements on desktop for the Learn 2016 Theme

For the Learn 2016 Theme, the cell padding in the Grade Center for desktop users has been decreased so that more Grade Center data will display.



Grade Center improvements on mobile for the Learn 2016 Theme

To increase instructor efficiency on mobile devices, the behavior, display, and actions of the Grade Center's mobile card view are now more consistent with the grid view.



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 the transition from Building Blocks to LTI and REST, create an increasingly consistent user experience between Learn Original and Learn Ultra, and ensure a deep integration between our products and others.

Java 11 JDK and Building Blocks

Learn 9.1's Q4 2019 release uses a new version of Java, Java 11 JDK. Java are the libraries on which the Learn application runs and the libraries that power Building Blocks. We're implementing Java 11 to improve security and performance. Staying on recently updated libraries is crucial to staying ahead of those who may try to compromise your learning environment. For additional resources on Java 11, view the Community site to read the blog, ["8 Steps to Prepare for Java 11"](#).

LTI Advantage improvements

- **LTI Assignment and Grades Service** – If a tool implements the grading and submission state handling in the LTI Assignment and Grades service, instructors will be able to see which students have submitted, including in the Needs Grading workflow, and whether grading has started. Students will have more accurate due and overdue notifications because their submissions will register with Blackboard Learn even if the submission requires grading before a score is sent to the grade book.
- **Context Membership Service** – For some time, tools using the Names and Roles Provisioning Service have been able to request a list of students in a class. Now, using an extension to this service, the Context Membership Service, tools can also request group definition and group membership data. Tools use this existing group data in Learn to create group activities or list filters without requiring instructors to set up their groups again.
- For additional LTI enhancements, see the [Release Notes](#).

New and enhanced REST APIs

These releases include new REST APIs and enhancements to previously released web services, including: assignment (expanded, including attempt modified filter), content (expanded, including created/modified date filter), content review status (new), course categories (expanded, including filters), course resources (new), OAuth token (expanded, including create, compare, modify), and performance dashboard (new).

Pearson's MyLab and Mastering (MLM) integration

Major features of the Pearson MLM Building Block are available with the new Partner Cloud integration, including single sign-on, deep content linking, and manual grade synchronization. This integration works with both Learn Original and Ultra which will help simplify the process for institutions moving to Ultra courses.

Quality and Maintenance

Authentication lockout after five failed login attempts

Too many failed attempts to log into a user account could be a security risk. In this release, when Blackboard Learn is involved in the authentication process (default authentication type or LDAP), administrators can decide when Learn locks user accounts to protect them from unauthorized access. By default, Learn will lock user accounts after 5 failed login attempts.

Administrator tools list displays alphabetically

To help administrators more easily find the tools they need, the Tools and Utilities list in the Administrator Panel now displays alphabetically.

Hostname configuration management

To improve security, all URLs allowed access to the application must be explicitly defined. This includes older URLs that institutions would still like to support because of historic links or bookmarks.

Legacy authentication type removed

With this release, we've removed the deprecated and unsupported "Legacy" authentication type from the Administrator Panel > Authentication. Custom authentications should use the extensible authentication framework instead.

Guest Account can't be enrolled in courses

To stop potential data exposure concerns between unauthenticated users, "Guest" accounts can no longer be enrolled in courses. Existing "Guest" account enrollments will remain and be visible to instructors and administrators for clean up through the user interface.

For more details on the contents of each release, see the Release Notes on help.blackboard.com. Plus, visit the [Blackboard Community](https://community.blackboard.com) site to connect with your peers and Blackboard experts.