MHS eLearning Update

Is your Blackboard course ready for Semester 2?

Blackboard courses become visible to students on Monday 25 January 2016 (unless you selected a different option when you activated your Bb course). Please make sure your courses are activated and populated with content.

You can access Blackboard via My Manchester for staff. Click on the link to Blackboard in the Teaching category of links (you may need to click on 'View all'). You will be able to see and update your Bb course in the Course List on the Blackboard home page within 24-48 hours of it being activated.

Useful knowledge base articles

- How to activate Blackboard courses (STAFF) - link.
- Preparing Blackboard 9 courses for start of year and semester 2 - link.
- Knowledge Base: supportcentre.manchester.ac.uk

Have an eLearning query?

Requests for support for eLearning activities—from staff or students—should be directed via the University's online support centre, https://supportcentre.manchester.ac.uk/. You will be asked to log in, using your University username and password. You will then have the option to *make a request* (select 'General eLearning Enquiry') or *report a fault*. The support centre Knowledge Base is gradually being imported from its previous location at http://servicedesk.manchester.ac.uk/portal/ss, which is—for now—the most up-to-date resource.

You can still use elearning@manchester.ac.uk. However, if you are emailing from a personal email account, rather than a University account, you will receive a message asking you to submit your query via the online support centre. External staff, without a University IT account, can go to http://www.itservices.manchester.ac.uk/help, and click on the link that says, "I am unable to log in or don't have a University IT Account".

Inside this issue:

Key things to note

- Preparing for Semester 2
- How to request support
- Ensuring the stability of Blackboard

Online Learning Strategy Group

Following the first meeting of the OLSG, MHS representatives (Roger Harrison and Jane Mooney) met with the Associate Dean for Postgraduate Taught Education (Phil Padfield) and Faculty eLearning Manager (Diane Bennett) to discuss issues raised at the meeting, and agree how we will manage the online learning strategy in MHS, pending the establishment of the new faculty and associated roles and responsibilities. It was agreed that in future a report on OLSG will be submitted to the two teaching and learning committees. Any comments or queries from MHS will be raised by Roger and Jane. You can feedback/feed forward directly to roger.harrison@manchester.ac.uk or jane.mooney@manchester.ac.uk or via diane.bennett@manchester.ac.uk.

2015 Global Innovation Awards (Turnitin)

The Awards program recognises educators and technology administrators from around the world who have "demonstrated excellence in promoting academic integrity, student engagement and the innovative use of Turnitin and other educational technologies to support learning in their institutions". You can read about the 2015 UK HE winners here: http://www.turnitin.com/en_us/global-innovation-awards#ukhe.

JANET network issues and assignment deadlines

As you will be aware, since 1 December there has been unscheduled service disruption to external networks provided to UoM by Janet (Joint Academic Network). The network appeared to be more stable on 9 December. However, this has affected internet connections and access to websites, including Blackboard. As Blackboard is hosted externally, some students may be able to access Blackboard at home via non-Janet internet connections. However, students who rely on accessing the internet on-campus will have been affected (including halls of residence).

If you are planning or have scheduled deadlines, marking or feedback via Blackboard you may need to amend dates to accommodate this disruption.

Ensuring the stability of Blackboard

In order to ensure the stability of Blackboard it is sometimes necessary to undertake essential maintenance of the system.

From 27 September regular maintenance of Blackboard has been scheduled from 2am-5am GMT on Sunday mornings. This will include approximately 30 minutes downtime. Please be aware of this when planning work.

Key dates for Blackboard 9

This article provides a list of key dates, including the course unit life cycle (when courses become visible to student and staff, and when they are no longer available).

Reminder: the **provisional dates** for annual maintenance of Blackboard during the Easter vacation are 4pm on Thursday 31 March until 12.01am on Monday 4 April 2016. Please bear these dates in mind when planning teaching and learning activities (*but note that they may be subject to change*).

Resources and articles

Is Today's Ed-Tech fit for purpose?

#UCLedtech and brightspace hosted an event (10 November 2015) chaired by Maren Deepwell, Chief Executive of ALT, which asked the question, *Is Today's Ed-Tech fit for purpose*?

The lecture and discussion was recorded and can be viewed on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRxIUEz64tI. You can also follow the related discussion on Twitter: #UCLedtech

12 Apps of Christmas

Some fun, but hopefully informative, activities for December!

- **12 Apps of Christmas** from the **Regent's University London** Learning Resources team: a "fun, free, practical online course", Christmas 2.0, following the success of last year's award-winning course; it offers a new range of carefully selected apps, with the same simple, entertaining formula. **1st to 16th December**. To enrol go to: https://openeducation.blackboard.com/mooc-catalog/courseDetails/view?course_id=_517_1 and follow on Twitter: #RUL12AoC.

- **12 Apps of Christmas** from the **University of West London** Institute for Teaching, Innovation and Learning (INSTIL): 12 free apps they think are useful for people in higher education. **Starting on 1 December**, one app per day will be unwrapped on the 12 Apps of Christmas website (the12apps.wordpress.com). You'll need a smart phone or tablet and about 15 minutes per day to visit the website, discover the app, and have a go with a short activity and share your tips, insights and ideas on the website or via Twitter https://twitter.com/uwl12apps.

- **#12brightapps** from the **University of Brighton**: "a satellite cMOOC of Regent's University London's 12 Apps of Christmas", this is a short online mini-course using a blog, Twitter and email. Each post will contain instructions on a different app and how you might use it. Each task should take about 10 minutes. Use the hashtag #12brightapps to connect to others via Twitter. See the blog for more information: http://blogs.brighton.ac.uk/12apps/

- **12 apps of Christmas** from **Dublin Institute of Technology**: the second instalment of the awarding winning 12 day free online project, **starting 1st December 2015**, a page will be released that reviews a particular mobile app and explores it in terms of how students personalise their learning; includes an information page for educators. Further information and registration: see http://the12appsofchristmas.zohosites.com/ and follow on Twitter via #12appsDIT.

Exploring Internationalisation of the Curriculum to Enhance the Student Experience

A special issue of the *Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice* (Vol 3, No 3 (2015)) has been published. It includes papers about: 'virtual internationalisation' using Web 2.0 based virtual, co-run and co-validated modules on traditional taught programmes to offer students "the possibility of an international experience at the home institutions"; and about "using technology to connect students with their peers in other countries [offering] a cost effective way of enhancing their cultural awareness". See: http://jpaap.napier.ac.uk/index.php/JPAAP/issue/current

Conferences and events

9-10 Dec 2015 Online	ALT Online Winter Conference 2015 (ALT Online 2015)	https://www.alt.ac.uk/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=180
18 Dec 2015 Sheffield	Social Media for Learning in HE (#SocMedHE15)	http://bit.ly/1k5gg0O
6-8 Jan 2016 Durham	16th Durham Blackboard Users' Conference: *Learning from Failure*	http://community.dur.ac.uk/lt.team/conference/ #durbbu
26 Jan—25 Feb online	Oxford Brookes University MOOC: First Steps into Learning and Teaching in HE . A five-week introduction to teaching in HE, it relies on sharing knowledge with your peers.	Accredited: 10 M-level credits (assessment incurs a fee) http://www.brookes.ac.uk/OCSLD/Courses/Teaching-and-learning/first-steps-into-learning-and-teaching/
2-3 Mar 2016 Birmingham	Jisc Digital Festival (free) [Digifest2016]	https://www.jisc.ac.uk/events/jisc-digital-festival-02-mar-2016
19-20 Apr 2015 Edinburgh	Open Culture (OER16)	https://oer16.oerconf.org/
9-11 May 2016 Lancaster	Networked Learning Conference (NLC2016)	http://www.networkedlearningconference.org.uk/

What would you like to see in the eLearning Update?

Tell diane.bennett@manchester.ac.uk

Team news

This month we bid farewell to two members of the team, and wish them well for the future!

- **Javid Ahmad** who, during his three years with the team, has focused on supporting pro-grammes in the Health Care Sciences Alliance (HCSA), and has also worked with Mo Islam in co-ordinating the clicker loan system.

- **Chikako Blything** who, during over six years with the team as eLearning Support Officer and then Learning Technologist, has been a key member of the team supporting the Master of Public Health.

We'd like to wish everyone a happy Christmas and look forward to working with you in 2016.

http://www.mhs.manchester.ac.uk/intranet/admingroups/teachingandlearning/elearning/