HTML in Blackboard

Using HTML in Blackboard

1 How can I add HTML pages to my Blackboard space?

There are three ways you can work in HTML in Blackboard:

- Write HTML directly into a Blackboard *Item* or *Page* using the text editor
- Add HTML files to a Blackboard *Content Folder*
- Add HTML files to a Blackboard *Learning Module*

To a limited extent you can create HTML directly in Blackboard use the HTML source view in the Blackboard visual text editor. However, for more complex pages, you will need to work in an HTML editor such as Dreamweaver or Nvu and then upload pages to Blackboard.
To find out more, refer to the Knowledge Base article **How to: Work with HTML in Blackboard**.

2 Can I edit HTML in Blackboard?

You can edit HTML that has been created by the Blackboard Visual Text editor (for example in a *Blackboard item* or *page*). To edit, click on the HTML Source Code toggle button `<>` in the visual text editor. However, the HTML is not formatted in any way, and you may instead find it easier to copy and paste the HTML into an HTML editor and then copy the edited content back to the Blackboard visual text editor.
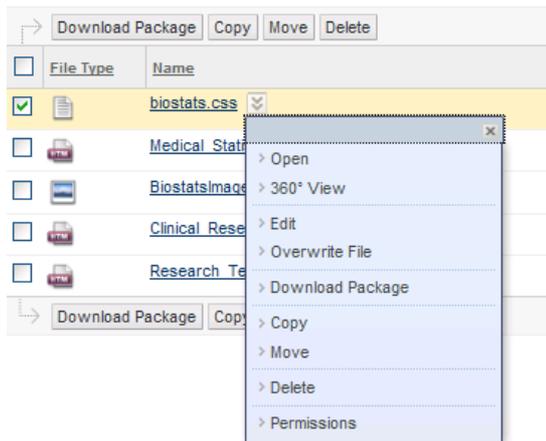
You can also edit HTML pages that have been created outside Blackboard and uploaded to the 'Files' area or the File Manager directly in Blackboard. To do this, navigate to the 'Files' area or the File Manager and locate the HTML file you want to edit. From the drop down menu available next to the file name, choose 'Edit in Blackboard'. For more details, refer to **How to: Work with HTML in Blackboard**.

3 Can I link to a CSS file or use a header <style> tag in the visual text editor source code?

No. If you do so, the styling will have a quite drastic and unpredictable effect on the whole Blackboard interface, including the main navigation menus. If you want to use CSS, create HTML pages offline, upload them to the *Blackboard Files area* or the *File Manager* and then deploy them as files in a student-facing *Content Folder*. For more details, refer to **How to: Work with HTML in Blackboard**.

4 How can I create links in my HTML pages to resources held in the Blackboard Content Collection?

In your <a href = ""> tag, you need to use the 'Permanent URL' of the resource you want to link to. All resources held in the Blackboard *Files* area or the *File Manager* have a Permanent URL. This can be found by clicking on the downward pointing chevron next to the resource name in the *Blackboard 'Files' area* or the *File Manager* and choosing '360° View'

For more details, refer to **How to: Manage files and file permissions for HTML content in Blackboard**

5 Does Blackboard have a full HTML editor?

Not at the moment. Blackboard's HTML editor is very basic, and if you need to do complex HTML editing, you will have to do it offline using Dreamweaver, Nvu or a similar editor.

Troubleshooting HTML

6 Why don't the links in my HTML pages work in Blackboard?

There are a few possible reasons for this:
- If the links work for you (with Edit Mode off) but not for your students, you need to set the file permissions correctly for target files in the Blackboard *'Files'* area or the *File Manager*. For more details on how to do this, refer to **How to: Manage files and file permissions for HTML content in Blackboard**.

- If the links do not work for you with Edit Mode off, then the problem is most likely caused by incorrect URL references in your HTML pages.
  - For references using relative paths, make sure that linked resources are located where you expect them to be in the Blackboard Files area or the File Manager folder structure.
  - For references using absolute paths, you need to make sure that you use the 'Permanent URL' to link to any resources in the Blackboard *'Files'* area or the *File Manager*. This can be found by clicking on the downward pointing chevron next to the resource name in the Blackboard *'Files'* area or the *File Manager* and choosing '360° View'.

Relative or absolute path?

If the resource (e.g. as CSS file) is located in the same folder as the HTML file that references it, a short, relative path can be used. For example:

> href="biostats.css"

Otherwise, the longer absolute path needs be used. More specifically, in Blackboard, if you need to use the full path, quote the 'Permanent URL' For example:

> href="https://online.manchester.ac.uk:443/bbcswebdav/xid-779435_1"

For more details, refer to **How to: manage files and file permissions for HTML content in Blackboard**.

7 Why can't students see HTML files or linked content – although with Edit Mode off, all the HTML content I have created seems to work?

Check that students have 'Read' permission for any content you want them to see. Permissions for files are set in the Blackboard *'Files'* area or the *File Manager*. For more details, refer to **How to: manage files and file permissions for HTML content in Blackboard**.

There can also be an occasional short delay between you adding file to the Blackboard *'Files'* area or the *File Manager* and them being visible to students.

8 Why is my CSS styling for content pages affecting the whole Blackboard interface?

This can happen when you link to a CSS file or use a <style> tag in the HTML Source Code 'behind' the visual text editor of a *Blackboard item* or *page*. For this reason, it is not recommended to use CSS in this

way. If styling with CSS is important for your content, the best way to do this is to create HTML and CSS files outside Blackboard and upload them to the Blackboard *'Files'* area or the *File Manager*.

9 Why can't students see correct CSS formatting for my pages but I can?

You need to give students 'Read' permission to linked CSS files in the Blackboard *'Files'* area or the *File Manager*. For more details on how to do this, refer to **How to: Manage files and file permissions for HTML content in Blackboard**.