

Mark assignments online using Blackboard's assignment grading tool



Marking assignments online in Blackboard can be a useful method of delivering quality feedback to students on their work. This can be done either by setting up a Turnitin assignment, or a Blackboard assignment. This guide covers how to use Blackboard's marking tool for documents submitted to a Blackboard assignment inbox for adding general feedback, for marking assignments against a rubric, and for adding inline comments on the student's submitted file. The tool is not available for assignments submitted via Turnitin, or assignments where students have typed text directly into Blackboard using the content editor – they must submit a file.

Supported document types that are viewable in the grading screen are Word (DOC, DOCX), PowerPoint (PPT, PPTX), Excel (XLS, XLSX), and PDF. Students are allowed to submit multiple files to a single Blackboard assignment inbox. Original formatting and embedded images are preserved. Assignments submitted to a Turnitin inbox cannot be marked using the Blackboard marking tool. For Turnitin assignments you can use GradeMark for online marking; for information on Turnitin and GradeMark, refer to this [Knowledge Base article](#).

Getting started: view assignments in the Grade Centre

When you create an assignment in Blackboard, a column is added automatically to the Grade Centre. There are two ways to view items which need grading: using the Needs Marking view, or using the Full Grade Centre. We'll look at the Needs Marking view first.

Needs Marking view

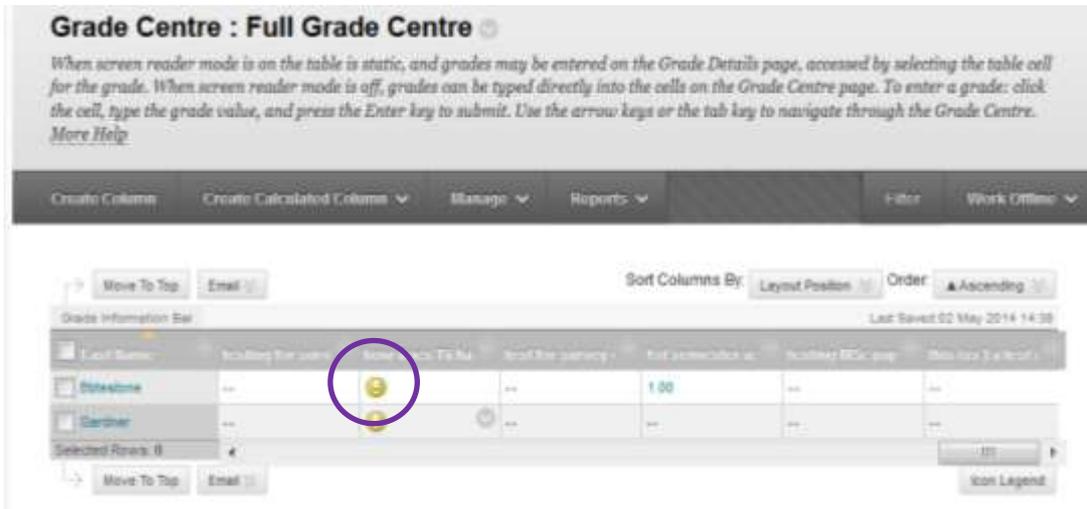
From the Control Panel menu, select **Grade Centre**, then **Needs Marking**. All items which have been submitted for marking appear in the window

Note: the terms **marking** and **grading** mean the same thing in this article and in Blackboard – you may see these terms used interchangeably.

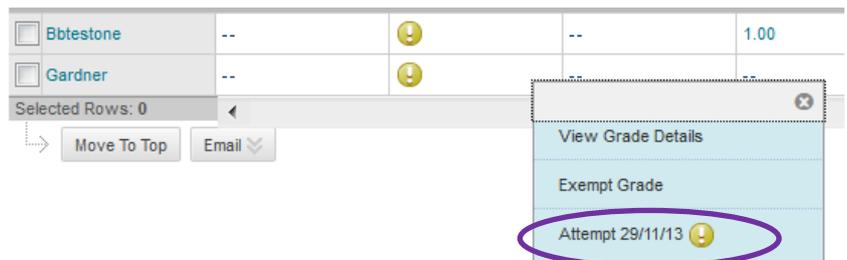
To grade items anonymously, in the Item Name column, rest the cursor over the item you need to grade and select **Grade with Usernames Hidden** from the drop down menu. This removes names from the "User Attempt" column and from the heading in the assignment grading view.

Full Grade Centre view

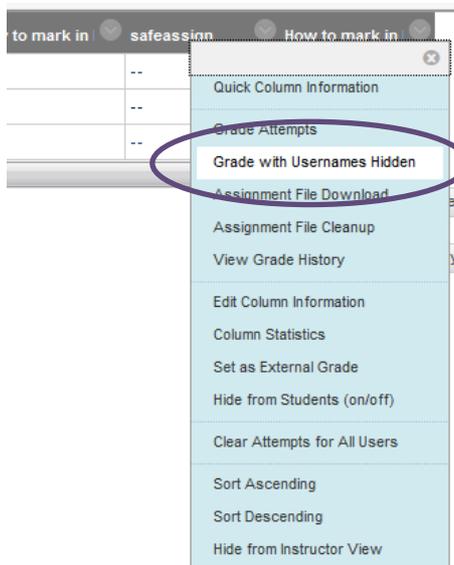
In the Full Grade Centre, an assignment that has been submitted but not graded is indicated with an exclamation mark—the **needs grading** icon.



Hover over the relevant entry you want to grade, and click on the downward arrow to show the additional menu. You can then click on the Attempt, with the **needs grading** icon, to view the student's assignment.



If a student has uploaded an unsupported file, you are prompted to download it as you will not be able to use the inline grading tool in Blackboard for unsupported files.



To grade anonymously from the full Grade Centre, click on the action menu at the top of the relevant column and select **Grade with Usernames Hidden**. This will hide the student name in the assignment grading view.

Inline Assignment Grading

On the **Grade Assignment** page, you can annotate directly within the browser on files uploaded and converted for display in the inline viewer. You can assign a grade, provide feedback to the students, and make notes for yourself or to share with other markers.

Annotation sessions expire after an hour. You will receive a warning message. After the time limit, annotations may not be saved.

To give yourself more space to read the assignment on the screen, hide the left hand course menu by clicking on the arrow that is revealed when you hover over the course menu's right hand edge.

- A. **View Instructions:** Expand the assignment instructions.
- B. **Add Comment or Annotation:** From the inline viewer toolbar, click the **Comment** function and the annotation tools expand. You can comment, highlight, draw, strikethrough, and zoom in and out. To remove a comment, point to the yellow comment and select **Delete**. To remove any other type of annotation, right-click the annotation. Use the arrow keys to view other pages in a student's file. You can also download () a copy of the file after you annotate it.

- C. **View Assignment:** Submitted files open within the grading screen. Supported document types that are viewable in the grading screen are Word (DOC, DOCX), PowerPoint (PPT, PPTX), Excel (XLS, XLSX), and PDF. Original formatting and embedded images are preserved. If a student has uploaded an unsupported file, you are prompted to download it.
- Assignment submissions typed directly into the content editor, rather than uploaded as a document, are not compatible with inline grading. Submissions of this type show in the window, but annotation is not available.
- D. **Add, Remove, or Reply To Comments:** Add comments wherever needed. Point to the yellow comment and the **Reply** and **Delete** options appear.
- E. **View Grading Details:** In the grading sidebar you can grade the submission and view the assignment details, the grading rubric, and each attempt submitted, if the student has been allowed to submit more than one attempt. After you assign a grade, return to this screen to review the grade and comments. Click the pencil icon to override the grade.
- F. **Provide Feedback.** This general feedback appears in the student's My Grades area. Plain text can be typed in this window while the assignment is visible in the window to the left. Feedback in html markup can also be typed in this window by clicking on the italic A symbol bottom left - toggle between html and design view using the HTML button. Special characters or symbols like Σ , $\sqrt{\quad}$, \hat{a} or £ can be entered using html codes or NUM-codes from the symbol button. You can also attach a separate file of feedback that you have created offline by clicking on the paperclip symbol bottom left of this window.
- G. **Edit Your Content:** Open the content editor to format your comments, attach a file, and check your spelling.
- H. **Add Private Notes:** Add notes and files that only you and other markers can see.
- I. **Download the assignment:** Download the original file as submitted by the student.

Inline Assignment Grading and Crocodoc

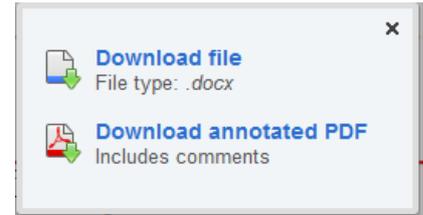
The inline viewer is powered by a third-party, cloud-based technology called Crocodoc. The viewer is supported on current versions of Firefox, Chrome, Safari, and Internet Explorer. No plug-in or other application is necessary.

Student file submissions are stored in Blackboard Learn. A copy of the submission is transmitted to the Crocodoc cloud service for conversion. The converted version of the document lives in the cloud on servers managed by Crocodoc.

No personally identifiable data about students is sent to Crocodoc. Blackboard retrieves a document ID from Crocodoc and assigns it to the document. That mapping of document ID to user, course, assignment, and attempt is tracked locally in Blackboard. None of that data is available to Crocodoc. All that is transmitted to Crocodoc is the file for conversion. The converted file is stored in the Crocodoc service along with any annotations made on the converted file.

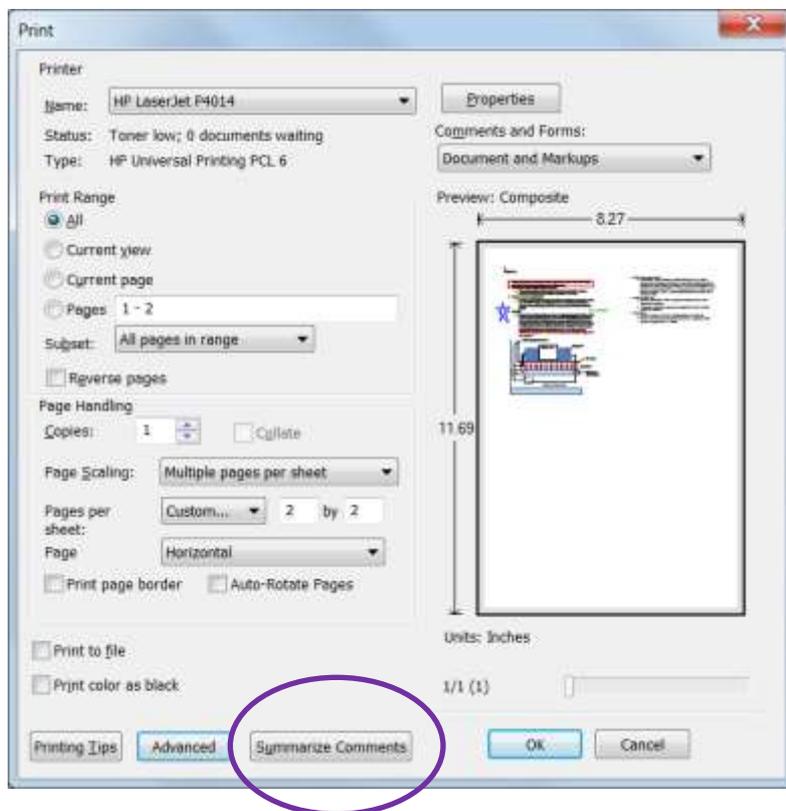
Downloading and Printing Annotated Assignments

If you want to print out a copy of a student's assignment with your annotations, download the file using the  icon to the right of the Comment button on the toolbar. Select the Download annotated PDF option. The default download filename is doc.pdf, so it is good practice to rename it once the file has been saved locally to avoid confusion. You will be given the option to download as a PDF only if you have added comments or notes to the file.



This method has been tested using Adobe Reader Version XI. It may work using other versions of Adobe Reader or other PDF viewers, but this cannot be guaranteed. Save the file generated in an appropriate folder on your computer and open it. Click **Print**.

In the print dialogue box, select **Summarize Comments**.



Select your preferred layout, and then click **Print Comment Summary**.