Spring clean your course checklist
Trimester 1 2021

The following checklist can help you check if your Blackboard course is ready for your new cohort of students. Take a look and tick off each item as it is completed. For support with making any changes, attend a CAD 'Spring clean your course' session, pop into the CAD Zoom drop-in or contact your Faculty Learning Designer.

Course Information

- ☐ Check that your School **template** or the VUW template has been applied to your course, which includes up-to-date **student support information**.
- ☐ Add / update your **welcome** section. The Welcome Section in the template contains prompts that you can use.
- ☐ The **course outline** should have been linked automatically. Check that all the details are correct, and if not notify your administrator.
- ☐ Add / update the **timetable and / or course calendar**, if applicable. If not using a timetable, delete this content area from the menu.
- ☐ Add / update the **staff contact details**.
- ☐ Add / check the **Virtual Classroom Zoom link** for the course if you plan to use it. If not using a virtual classroom, hide or delete this content area.
- ☐ Add / update your clear plan for how the course teaching will change if we are put into different levels of lockdown. Specify for **each level how you will continue to interact** with the students.

Learning Material

- ☐ **Readings**: Check that your Talis list is linked to the course and update it if necessary. Ensure that textbooks and readings are all available in a digital format.
- ☐ **Vstream Videos:** Check that the course Vstream / Panopto folder is working. (And if you're teaching face to face, remember to schedule your

lecture capture recordings). Check that any concept videos from a previous course have been moved to the current course folder and re-relinked.

- [ ] **Modules/Schools:** Decide how you want to organise your course flow. Consider organising content in modules, and decide how to name and organise each module (or however you call your learning units) so that modules are consistent throughout the course.

- [ ] **Embed learning material** such as videos, readings, other activities within the module folders to minimise the number of clicks students have to follow in order to access the content for a module. Add context, instructions, worksheets to readings and videos.

- [ ] Add **short module descriptions / guides** for each module or school (1-2 sentence summary, key dates and tasks required to complete the module). See the templates and examples at the bottom of the course menu.

- [ ] **External links:** Check if all external links to videos, websites, articles still work and update if necessary.

- [ ] **Keep things manageable** for your students: If you add content, consider if you might be able remove something else. Remove items and content that are no longer necessary, or move them to a separate folder for additional material.

Assessment

- [ ] **Modify** existing assignments, and/or **delete** the old ones and **add** new ones.

- [ ] **Tidy up grade center,** ideally before teaching starts. It's good to delete columns that are not needed in the course before any students have submitted assignments. Get help with that if needed.

- [ ] **Check the Grades and Feedback section**: Is everything that is visible to students something they should already see? Consider hiding assignment columns and total columns until assignments have been graded and moderated.

Making the course available to your students

The following steps are best done in the order in which they appear below:

- ☐ Set an **entry point** for the course (usually the Announcements section). Go to Course Management > Control Panel > Customization > Teaching Style. This is also where you can add a **course banner**.

- ☐ Decide what you want students to **see** immediately, and what you want to **hide** for now. **As a minimum, have the welcome section ready** when you open the course.

- ☐ Use **student preview** to check if everything that you want students to see for now is available to them, and to check that everything that you are still working on is hidden for now.

- ☐ **Make the course available** to students by clicking on the lock-icon in the top right corner, or confirm with your administrator that the course is ready to go live.

- ☐ **Send out an announcement** to students to let them know that the course is now available to them when they log into Blackboard, and what they should be doing when they first log in (e.g. start with the Welcome -Start Here section).