

# WHAT'S NEW WITH LEARNING@GRIFFITH IN 2007?

In response to feedback from users requesting improvements to the functionality, usability, and scalability of the Learning@Griffith system, a team of dedicated staff from across Information Services, working with academic stakeholders, will add a range of enhancements to the Learning@Griffith environment. These enhancements will allow us to provide our clients with a greater range of educational tools in an environment which is more streamlined to the way that Griffith University staff and students use online learning. The new, enhanced Learning@Griffith will be available for students from Semester 1 2007.

## 🔗 WHAT IS CHANGING?

Behind the scenes, we will be upgrading to a more recent version of Blackboard, the software that drives Learning@Griffith. This upgrade will enable us to take advantage of the improvements and bugfixes made in the Blackboard software over the past few years.

## 🔗 WHAT'S *NOT* CHANGING?

Although the enhanced Learning@Griffith environment will have a slightly different appearance in colours and layout, to conform to Griffith University web publishing standards, most of the basic Learning@Griffith functions you are accustomed to using will remain the same.

## 🔗 WHEN IS ALL THIS HAPPENING?

To ensure that we minimise the risk of disruption to students and teaching staff, we will not be altering the existing Learning@Griffith system for many months. The new, enhanced Learning@Griffith system will be installed on a new server, and we will gradually move all staff and students onto this new system. Academic staff will be given access to the enhanced environment in early December 2006. From mid-January, as students begin a new study period or semester, their course material for the new semester will be accessible from the new Learning@Griffith

## 🔗 THE PROCESS

From December 2006 to April 2007, there will be two different Learning@Griffith systems in use - the version used throughout 2006, and the new enhanced version. Students and staff will access Learning@Griffith the same way as they always have: by going to the Griffith University homepage at: [www.griffith.edu.au](http://www.griffith.edu.au) and clicking on the link to Learning@Griffith

## 🔗 COMMUNICATION

- The Learning@Griffith Support Site at [www.griffith.edu.au/ins/learningatgriffith](http://www.griffith.edu.au/ins/learningatgriffith)
- The Learning@Griffith Newsletter (you can request to be notified by email of a new issue)
- You may invite us to attend any School meeting or staff gathering, on any campus

## 🔗 HELP AND SUPPORT

**Phone:** Internal x55555 - Brisbane +61 (0) 7 3735 5555 - Gold Coast +61 (0) 7 5552 5555

**Website:** [www.griffith.edu.au/ins/learningatgriffith](http://www.griffith.edu.au/ins/learningatgriffith)

# LEARNING @ GRIFFITH ENHANCEMENT LIST

Here are some of the new and enhanced features that will be available to students and staff in Learning@Griffith from Semester 1 2007.

## DISCUSSION FORUMS

Discussion Forums allow asynchronous discussion amongst the participants in a Learning@Griffith course site. Enhancements include:

- Threads or posts can be graded
- Students can be allowed to rate the usefulness of each others' posts
- Participants can subscribe to a thread, and be notified by email whenever a new message is posted in that thread
- Forums can have a nominated Moderator, who can approve posts prior to publication

## TESTS AND SURVEYS

Enhancements include:

- Tests and Surveys can be individually exported/imported.
- There are now 17 question types (up until now, there have been 7). This includes a new variable integer question.
- Questions on Tests may now be set as Extra Credit only (which does not count toward overall score).
- Instructors have the option to randomise the answers in multiple choice questions.
- Answer Numbering (Arabic, Roman, Upper/Lower Case).
- Answer Orientation (Vertical or Horizontal listing of possible answers).
- Assessments may now be set to allow unlimited attempts or a specific number of attempts (and details of all previous attempts can be recorded in the Gradebook).
- Students now receive a detailed confirmation screen on successfully submitting a Test or Survey.
- And many more

## ASSIGNMENTS

The Assignments tool allows students to submit assignment files online via a single link, and for teaching staff to retrieve all submitted files from the Gradebook for marking. Enhancements include:

- Students now receive a detailed confirmation screen on successfully submitting an assignment .

## GRADEBOOK

The Gradebook is where all student grades for assessments (taken both online and offline) are stored. The student responses to Tests, Surveys, and Assignments are all accessible from the Gradebook. Enhancements include:

- "Gradebook Null" option excludes incomplete items from Gradebook calculations.
- Can handle more than 999 students; in the past, more than 999 students caused display issues

## EMAILS

The Email tool provides basic email-sending capabilities, allowing messages and file attachments to be sent from within Learning@Griffith to selected user groups who are enrolled in a course or Organisation site. Enhancements include:

- It is now possible to include multiple attachments per message
- Course ID now appears in the subject line of sent messages

## CONTENT ITEMS

Content items are the text and files that can be added to Learning@Griffith for viewing by students. Enhancements include:

- Adaptive Release rules allow greater control over the display of content. Files can be displayed to different students and staff in the course based on rules such as date or time, group membership, Griffith ID number, having read a particular other document, or on completion of a particular test, survey or assignment.
- New Course Link options are available, to allow easy linking to other pages within the course site.

## COURSE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING BLOCK

The Course Administration Building Block is the tool that has been used within Learning@Griffith to allow the assigning of Instructors and Teaching Team to course sites. Behind the scenes, it also manages the creation of Learning@Griffith course sites. Enhancements include:

- More logical Course IDs, with the inclusion of a course code.
- Changes to interface to improve usability.
- Data feeds for Course Convenor, gradually being introduced over Semester 1 2007 for the beginning of Semester 2, will help reduce workload to initially assign Instructors to courses.
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## PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

The Performance Dashboard is a new course tool that allows instructors to quickly see key information and outcomes for all course users. It displays:

- the last time each user logged in
- their course role
- Adaptive Release criteria (see the Content Items section for more information on Adaptive Release)
- the review status for content items
- grades

Instructors can sort the information by multiple criteria.