

Dundee Module Baseline

The Dundee Module Baseline (DMB) supports excellence in online and blended delivery of teaching at the University of Dundee. It aims to ensure consistency and inform the delivery of a high quality online and blended learning experience for students across all modules.

The DMB is designed to be practical and flexible. It is structured to ensure that students experience a common format when accessing core information relating to their modules whilst providing flexibility and space for lecturers to apply appropriate learning strategies and design within each week of teaching. Critically it addresses the need highlighted in the 2018 Enhancement-led Institutional Review for the University to:

Develop guidance for programme teams on expected good practice for the design and use of the VLE to help give greater equivalence and consistency in the online student learning experience and to improve student engagement.

It also assures our commitment to provide inclusive and accessible teaching that supports the diverse needs of our student community and complies with legal requirements.

We first introduced this guidance in 20/21 to support the transition to blended learning with a module framework supported by module templates and a range of module exemplars developed by our Digital Champions. A module checklist to support self-checking and peer review of online modules was also developed.

Student feedback throughout 20/21 consistently highlighted that good use of module templates aligned to the module framework contributed to a positive online learning experience. Building on this and a consultation process with all Schools involving staff and students we have reviewed and updated the module templates for 21/22. The feedback has also informed a review of the module framework and led to this iteration of the Dundee Module Baseline.

All module leads are now strongly encouraged to apply the DMB to their relevant School/Discipline 21/22 module templates. Where there are additional requirements module and programme leads should discuss with their School Associate Dean for Learning and Teaching. A range of staff development opportunities will be in place over the summer to support staff as they prepare and build their modules for 21/22. Staff can also get support via CTIL's twice weekly online drop-in sessions.

The University is committed to annually reviewing and iterating the DMB and the module templates as part of our education enhancement cycle. This will help us maintain and protect our reputation for excellence in student experience.

Core Principles of the Module Baseline

The module baseline is built upon four key principles which inform the structure and presentation of teaching modules in My Dundee¹. Applying these principles will ensure that modules are consistently structured to provide a consistent learning experience which will:

1. Allow students to easily find all module specific information, and to direct them to programme/school level information.
2. Ensure effective and consistent online communication between and among students and lecturers, both synchronously and asynchronously.
3. Ensure easy access to assessment information, resources and submissions for all those who require it, including External Examiners.
4. Present learning activities and resources in a meaningful, consistent and clearly structured and sequenced way, appropriate for the subject area.

The accompanying appendices provide additional information to support the application of these principles. Appendix 1 offers a suggested mapping between baseline and default template, whilst Appendix 2 outlines the tools that are available to you to ensure that your module meets the baseline specifications.

Principle 1 - Information

All modules should include and signpost to, key information for students to support and guide their learning on the module.

1a School and Programme Orientation and Information

A single point of information that is relevant to all students enrolled on a programme or a School/Discipline to help reduce the need to update content in multiple places and reduce the risk of inconsistent information across modules needs to be provided.

- 1a i) Use My Dundee Organisations, or SharePoint sites, to present core School/Discipline and Programme content. Schools should work with CTIL/UoDIT, to ensure that all students involved with modules taught by the school are enrolled, as well as all relevant staff.
- 1a ii) Deliver an online welcome to students via appropriate channels, including presenting essential information to students. This could include a welcome video from the Dean and the Student School President.
- 1a iii) Provide links to institutional policies.

¹ While this document references My Dundee throughout, the same principles should be applied to Moodle, for those modules using it in the Medical School.

- 1a iv) Ensure that students are made aware of all students support services and other support available from the University and School, e.g. Academic Skills Centre, LLC Digital Skills Team.

1b Module Orientation and Information

As students commence study on each module, help them to orientate themselves, especially outlining the model of blended learning you'll be using, and how they are expected to learn. Include a learning engagement plan presented as a diagram/infographic or text-based to enable students to see the overall picture.

This should provide

- 1b i) A short module welcome message for your students to help them make a successful start to the module. This could provide an explanation of any introductory content and activities that are required to be completed to get students started and an overview of the teaching approaches being adopted. This welcome could be presented as a video or audio message, or an initial online Blackboard Collaborate session.
- 1b ii) Details of module leads and key teaching staff and School Administrators including names, positions, telephone, email, office location and drop-in hours (both physical and virtual as appropriate). Posting photographs can also be helpful. Information on School President, course reps, school/discipline accessibility, EDI contacts etc, should already be included in central School/Discipline/Programme information.
- 1b iii) A brief overview of the core themes and subjects covered in the module together with the learning outcomes.
- 1b iv) A more detailed orientation overview explaining the module learning participation requirements and how they will learn e.g.
- Ensure students understand their responsibilities as learners, and how they are expected to engage with My Dundee.
 - Ensure students know how different activities relate to others; what they need to prepare for synchronous teaching sessions and where they need to engage with asynchronous learning activities. This includes activities on campus, and activities online.
 - Outline the standard policy for recording live sessions in the module (e.g. live content driven – recorded; discussion-based sessions only recorded with the permission of the whole group present)
 - Detail indicative times to complete the directed activities and the balance of activities, i.e. the total directed study time required. Include length of videos (though noting that students may take longer to take notes etc. from them.)
 - Explain how students are expected to use UoD tools, including the default tool for particular types of activities (e.g. Collaborate for large classes / Teams for meetings with small group work). Link guides for these tools, and to instructions for installation if needed.

- If non-supported external tools are used, ensure that all appropriate checks, in particular relating to GDPR and accessibility have been carried out. Include relevant guides and links.
- Explain what digital devices and software students are expected to provide for themselves if required.

Principle 2 - Communication

Clear communication is critical, and this principle ensures that communication between students and staff is effective and consistent. Students should know who to contact, and how to contact them. This section covers communication for handling information and related questions; see also [section 4b](#) for interaction during active learning sessions.

2a Communication between Staff and Students

- 2a i) Outline how students and staff will communicate for different purposes (e.g. using My Dundee discussion boards for module-related enquiries and email for personal matters)
- 2a ii) Outline expected staff response times to queries.
- 2a iii) Use announcements in My Dundee and options such as emailing all students to share important news, changes to the module, key dates and events, etc.
- 2a iv) Encourage staff and students to upload profile pictures as this will help personalise the online environment and allow online discussions between collaborators to be more easily followed.
- 2a v) Ensure communication regarding assessments is clear and timely, and that students have opportunities to clarify questions through both synchronous and asynchronous channels.
- 2a vi) Ensure the calendar is used where appropriate for date related information, in addition to announcements.
- 2a vii) Ensure students have a clear link to the help resources provided by CTIL and UoDIT

Principle 3 - Assessment

The module orientation should clearly outline how students will be assessed including submission and feedback information as required and should align with the module descriptor.

Summative assessment should be contained within a single area, containing all relevant information. Formative assessment may be within the assessment area, but may also be in the weekly Learning Modules if more appropriate (e.g. weekly formative quizzes).

3a Summative Assessment

- 3a i) A clear description of the module assessment, what learning objectives assessments cover together with the schedule, criteria and submission details.
- 3a ii) A clear timetable of assessment dates, ideally in the calendar.
- 3a iii) Provide links to tools, guides and information on referencing and how to ensure academic integrity.

- 3a iv) Appropriate online submission points (typically Turnitin for written individual work, Blackboard assignment for group written work, or non text-based coursework).
- 3a v) There should be clear guidance for students on how to submit and receive feedback on their work.
- 3a vi) Allow students to check their work for similarity prior to submission.

Principle 4 - Learning and Teaching

Adopt a structured study planner approach, including topic titles for each section (typically a week) and present content in 'chunked' manageable segments.

Structure topics consistently to improve usability through familiarity, and to enhance accessibility. Use headings and include short overviews of each section or topic.

Guide students through the sequence of learning activities and tasks that need to be completed. Release content sequentially, for example on specific dates, or making use of sequential release based on completion of previous tasks.

4a Learning Materials and Resources appropriate

This section is primarily looking at the content that will be provided for students to learn from. [Section 4b](#) looks primarily at activities – though clearly the two overlap significantly.

- 4a i) Provide descriptive titles for all resources and consider displaying a short description to help students understand the importance and purpose of the resource and how it relates to learning activities.
- 4a ii) For files that can be downloaded, ensure the file names are clear, (e.g. "XY11010 – Lecture x– Title - slides)
- 4a iii) Provide a module reading and resource list using the Library Resource Lists and detailing which readings and resources are compulsory and which are optional (more information in Appendix 2)
- 4a iv) If introductory / preparatory material is to be used before an activity focussed live session ensure it is released in good time, to enable students to prepare, while fitting in other commitments.
- 4a v) If live sessions are primarily content driven, ensure slides or other material are available 24 hours in advance, in line with existing accessibility guidelines.
- 4a vi) For recordings of live sessions, ensure the recording is available adjacent to the resources for the live class. Yuja is recommended for this, as it is easy to locate in the correct position, as well as offering students a browsable library if required.
- 4a vii) Make use of UoD Library and Archive collections, external resources and open educational resources. Many of these can be embedded in My Dundee, which makes it easier for students to access.
- 4a viii) Regularly check that all external resources are up to date and fix or remove broken links.

- 4a ix) Where appropriate, include formative assessment to consolidate learning.
- 4a x) If content items are short, text-based resources, avoid file uploads, and use Blackboard Ultra documents.
- 4a xi) Compress large files, particularly to help students viewing them on mobile devices or in areas of low bandwidth.

4b Active and Social Learning

Make use of online activities and peer interaction to motivate active and social learning supported by the collaborative and communication tools in the UoD online learning environment.

An essential component of the online blended learning experience is student interaction. Students will be expected to participate in online learning activities and group activities as outlined in the module orientation.

- 4b i) Model practice – e.g. by ensuring you make time at the start of a session for informal chats with those students who arrive early.
- 4b ii) Encourage students to interact with each other and participate in online activities and highlight where engagement will be monitored and contributions may be measured or count towards assessment.
- 4b iii) Design learning activities that help to build a sense of community and support collaborative learning and provide guidance on participation including the purpose of the activity, learning outcomes, key instructions and netiquette.
- 4b iv) Be mindful that where sensitive topics and issues are being discussed and debated that face-to-face sessions or synchronous Collaborate sessions may be more appropriate than discussion boards. Where these sessions are run in Collaborate they should not be recorded. Tools that anonymise student comments may also help here, e.g. Mentimeter.
- 4b v) Check learner engagement weekly. Track student participation and send reminders to those who have not yet contributed or engaged.
- 4b vi) Encourage and motivate inactive students.

4c Compliance

Provide an inclusive learning experience for all students. This should include following accessibility, copyright and data protection legislation, as well as ensuring resources are inclusive for all students.

Accessibility of resources

Accessible course content makes it easier for everyone to read and access module information and learning materials and can help improve overall quality and usability. Many points have already been covered in previous sections (e.g. clear signposting, labelling, etc)

- 4c i) The UoD Disability Services “Creating inclusive teaching Materials” provides help information and support on producing accessible learning.

- 4c ii) My Dundee includes Blackboard Ally, a tool that helps ensure digital teaching material is accessible to all students. Once a resource is uploaded to Blackboard, it automatically generates several alternative formats to allow students to select which is most compatible with their learning needs. Microsoft Office Word and PowerPoint also include an Accessibility Checker which can check the accessibility of your resources. Like Blackboard Ally, it will make suggestions on how to improve the accessibility of your materials.
- 4c iii) A brief, module-level accessibility statement has been provided in the template for you. This links to the University's Online learning Accessibility Statement and also outlines how students can raise any accessibility challenges. This statement should NOT be deleted.

Ethical Use of Resources and Services

- 4c iv) Ensure that you observe intellectual property and copyright legislation. Make use of Reading Lists and LLC services to ensure that resources are used legally. Rather than copying text, link out to external websites. Where possible make use of openly licensed and creative commons images or copyright-cleared images.
- 4c v) Communicate any potential data protection issues when students are asked to use non-UoD systems. Students are not obliged to use external services and alternative options should be provided where a student does not wish to register with an external service.
- 4c vi) Ensure that student generated content and artefacts are stored on a password protected system. Non-password protected sites and public facing sites on Learning Spaces, should only be used if students are aware that their work is publicly available and maybe viewed by anyone and they understand and are happy with the implications of this.

4d Quality Assurance

Evaluation with feedback from students, external examiners and staff together with collective reflection as part of the annual learning enhancement cycle help to enhance the learning experience year on year.

- 4d i) All stakeholders, including lecturers, administrators and support staff can contribute to the module evaluation.
- 4d ii) Module leads are encouraged to engage with peer review of their My Dundee modules. Peer review can help provide invaluable feedback on module usability and inform module enhancements as well as ongoing personal development.
- 4d iii) Students across the University highlight the value of understanding the learning enhancement process and other drivers to module development. To support this, outline enhancements and changes made to the module.

APPENDIX 1 – Mapping to the core template

Please use this as a checklist to help you ensure all points have been covered.

Item	Template area	Present
1 Information		
1 a	Direct link within the “About this module” area. The linked area should include all items in 1a	
1 b	Aims / Learning outcomes have placeholder. If further information is needed (e.g. core weekly themes, “What you will learn” can be used. For all of 1b, if contained in downloadable Module Handbook, ensure key points are also available without the need to download	
1 b i	Stand alone item (by default, first item)	
1 b ii	Document within Module Guide	
1 b iii	Document within Module Guide. (What you will learn)	
1 b iv	Document within Module Guide (How you will learn)	
2 Communication		
2a i, ii	Contained within “Contacting Key People”	
2 a iv	Note that users will have to upload profile pictures to both My Dundee and Collaborate. They could be different images, or schools may prefer to require students to use the same in both.	
2 a vi	Using Turnitin / Blackboard Assignments generates dates in the calendar automatically.	
3 Summative Assessment		
3 a	Ensure all content remains within the Assessment folder.	
3 a ii	Use of Blackboard assignment / Turnitin will automatically create calendar entries. Ensure that other submissions are added to the calendar.	
3 a iii	May be in School/Programme area overall content (could be linked) Library LTI can allow guides to be linked directly from the assessment area.	
3 a iv-vi	Usually easiest to have briefs, instructions & assessment points located close together.	
4: Learning and Teaching		
<p>A set of 11 Learning Modules have been provided, by default configured to be presented in reverse chronological order, clearly labelled with theme & date. It may be that other sequences are more appropriate for some modules.</p> <p>All Learning modules include a “Learning Overview” document, to outline the specific learning activities. These could be presented as a list, visualisation, or other as appropriate for the course.</p>		

4 a iii	University Resource Lists are available in the “Library Resources folder” at the top level. Some staff may additionally prefer to link relevant sections into Learning Modules.	
4 c iii	The Accessibility Statement (in Module Guide) can be used to alert students to specific items not being fully accessible, and any Accessibility Statements for non-supported 3 rd party tools.	

APPENDIX 2 – Mapping the baseline to the Dundee Digital Campus

The University has a well-established suite of educational technologies supporting learning, teaching and assessment which collectively provide an online learning ecosystem that supports the delivery of online and blended learning. In effect the Dundee Digital Campus. The table below maps the Dundee Module Baseline to these technologies highlighting how they can support online teaching delivery.

Note:

For colleagues in the School of Medicine please read My Dundee as Moodle or MedBlogs and ensure that that these are similarly used to fulfil the baseline.

Some of the tools detailed below are not currently licensed by the University, where this is the case, these are presented in italics.

Baseline Element	Educational tools in Dundee Digital Campus
School and Programme Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blackboard Organisations – documents can be created in Office 365 and linked into My Dundee. Create School and Programme welcome videos in Yuja or Microsoft Stream and upload to Yuja
Module Design and Structure	Blackboard Modules and associated content options
Module Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present orientation information in My Dundee. Module documents can also be linked to in office 365. Create Module introduction videos in Yuja. A weekly introductory video can also be helpful to students as can be an end of week wrap-up. Yuja can also be used to create module podcasts as can Audacity which is available through Apps Anywhere. Eesysoft to create contextualised welcome messages and custom induction walkthroughs of modules.
Communication and Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blackboard announcements Blackboard discussion boards Teams chat Learning Spaces (WordPress)

Baseline Element	Educational tools in Dundee Digital Campus
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackboard Collaborate for synchronous sessions including simple class polls. • Teams for one-to-one student support • Mentimeter • Padlet
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackboard quizzes • Blackboard assignments • Turnitin submissions, online marking and feedback • Questionmark OnDemand • Blogs (Learning Spaces) • Yuja (video and podcast assignments) • Office 365 • Wikipedia assignments
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackboard modules and associated content types • Yuja - Video lectures, video demonstrations, podcasts • Office 365 (PPT, Word, Excel, OneNote) • PDF documents • Learning Spaces (WordPress) • Library Resource Lists • eResources, Textbooks, Collections, Publisher content e.g. Pearson etc • Learning Online (bob / Box of Broadcasts) • LinkedIn Learning • Open education resources
Active and Social Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams and Office 365 to support group work • Blackboard discussion boards • Reflective blogs (Learning Spaces) • Personal reflections (Blackboard Journals) • Blackboard Quizzes • Class and individual blogs on Learning Spaces • Mentimeter

Baseline Element	Educational tools in Dundee Digital Campus
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual Labs and Simulation • Padlet
Accessibility and Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackboard Ally checks files and provides accessibility scores and advice on how to improve the accessibility of content. • Blackboard Ally also enables students to access content in different formats. • Office 365 – Word and PowerPoint also include accessibility checkers. • Refer to the Learning X resources for further advice on copyright and open resources.
Quality Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackboard Enterprise surveys can be used to run online module evaluation. • Mentimeter can be used for informal feedback.