

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Tips

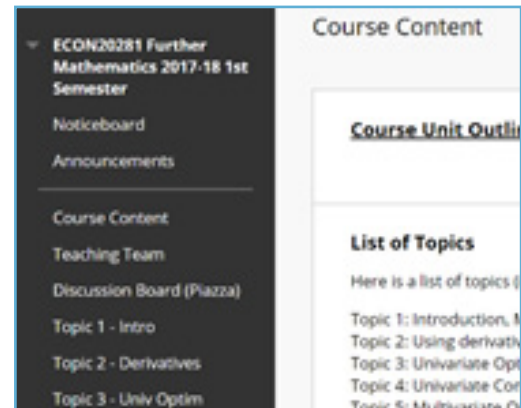
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Know your Support

Your department will have ways to access support for your VLE. Find out who your support people are and find out how to access them. Then use them!

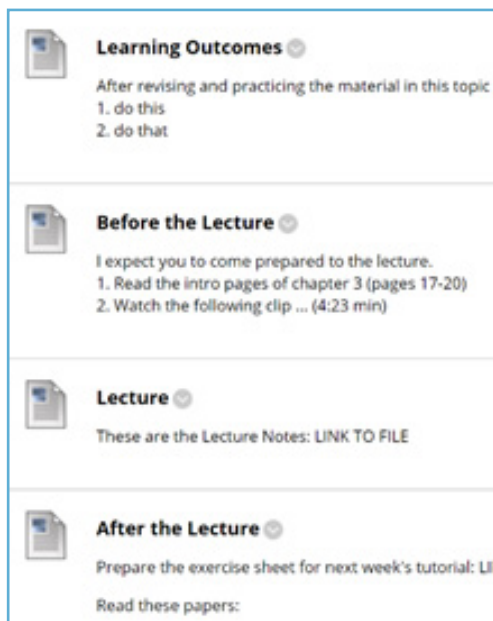
Use and Adapt your Course Menu

Find out how to adapt your course navigation bar (the left hand panel used to navigate to main items). You can create new Sections (e.g. for particular weeks or topics) from here.



Make your VLE support good study habits

Complaining about student's lack of good study habits (like preparing for a lecture or attempting tutorial questions before the tutorial) is very easy – and often justified. But remember that students are not born with these and we have to do our bit to help students adopt these. Use the way in which you present your content material to help students understand what they ought to do.



Teaching Staff Section

Introduce all teaching staff in a dedicated section. Do include pictures if at all agreeable and links to your staff's research, as well as office hour info and info on how to contact teaching staff.

Using documents as part of your VLE

Most of us upload documents (eg pptx or pdf files) with lecture notes/slides and tutorial questions. Students will often download these files and perhaps annotate these. And that is great, but also means that ideally these documents, once uploaded, do not change. If they do you ought to label this clearly. Information which is likely to change or update (like assessment info or organisational informational) should be communicated directly through the VLE and not through a document.

Expectations

What do you expect from your students? What can they expect from you? Make a clear statement to clarify this.

Assessment Info Section

Many student queries centre around assessment. You need to provide coherent and clear communication on this. Consider creating an Assessment Info section in your VLE through which you communicate all relevant info. All further queries can then be referred to this.

Ask your colleagues

Talk to your experienced colleagues to find out what works for them. But make sure you ask them how they know what works. They may not have water-tight causal evidence but hopefully some anecdotal evidence.