

## 8 Ways to Improve Your Moodle Module Page

1. Keep to the standard layout
2. Use section names to label sections
3. Structure items within each section
4. Link consistently
5. Keep text brief on the module page
6. Name all items descriptively but concisely
7. Don't display unnecessary or out-of-date items
8. Format text to aid scanning & reading

Use these guidelines to make it easier for students to navigate, locate items and complete activities. The aim is for **consistency** and **clarity**. They are strongly recommended guidelines, rather than strict rules, based on web usability best practice & feedback from students and staff.

### 1. Keep to the standard layout

Refrain from removing or changing the content or the location of items in the original template. A consistent layout gives students clear expectations of what's available and where to locate similar information across all their Moodle modules. Commonly used and essential items have been included in the template.

*\* At Birkbeck a standard template was added to the blank 2012-13 modules but **not** to the 13-14 modules. This is because when **module contents are imported** from a 12-13 module to the blank 13-14 one, the template items will come across. ([More info: How to import.](#)) If you are starting from scratch (not importing a previous module) with a blank 13-14 module area, ITS can add the template for you ([its@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:its@bbk.ac.uk)).*

### 2. Use section names to label sections

Clearly signpost sections (topics) using the *Section name* to aid navigation and give a better sense of what the module is about. Section names also appear in the Module menu in the main navigation bar.

- Use descriptive but succinct terms
- Don't use the default names: Topic 1, Topic 2 etc
- To change a *Section name* use the *Edit Summary* button below the existing section name



### 3. Structure items within each section

Clearly structure each section to help students scan the page and quickly locate items.

- Use the *Label* resource to add sub-headings &/or space to sections.
- Use *Indent* to prevent long flat lists and to help identify related items
- Put related files in a *Folder* to prevent long lists. A *Folder* is a Moodle Resource.

### 4. Link consistently

Be consistent in your how you set links to open (same or a new window) to create a consistent user experience and expectation. Best practice for linking is debatable but consistency is key.

Recommended approach:

- Open external links (i.e. anything outside of Moodle) in a new window. When adding a *URL Resource* use the *Display* option: 'In pop-up'
- Open internal links in the same window; i.e. links to other resources within Moodle. When adding a *URL Resource* use *Display* option: 'Embed' or 'Open'

### 5. Keep text brief on the module page

Text on the module page is best used to guide students in their learning and to map out where resources are located. Using large amounts of text for content on the module page isn't recommended as it can make the page cluttered and difficult to navigate.

- Use short, direct sentences
- Avoid multiple paragraphs
- Put lengthy text into *Files* or *Pages*

### 6. Name all items descriptively but concisely

Item names should be descriptive & clear to help students identify them but as concise as possible to help minimise the amount of text on the page.

- Include sufficient context for easy identification
- Consider using a prefix for related items (or use indents – see 3).
- Don't include the module code in the name (e.g. as a prefix)

### 7. Don't display unnecessary or out-of-date items

Remove or hide redundant items (e.g. old teaching material) as they can cause confusion for both students & colleagues. They also make it difficult to manage module content and the Gradebook.

- Review materials before the module is visible to students
- Use *Hide* to temporarily hide items from students. You can use the *Restrict Access* settings (also known as Conditional Release) to make items become visible at a specific time in the future.
- Delete items that you don't intend to make available to students. Items copied from previous years or other modules will still be available in the original location.



## 8. Format text to aid scanning & reading

Format text consistently and sparingly to aid navigation - too much formatting can have the opposite effect. Simplicity is key:

- Limit the overall use of emphasis (bold, capitals, colour)
- Never underline
- Use colours sparingly (black plus 1 other colour)

