Quick Guide: Creating a Blog in Blackboard

This Quick Guide gives the eLearning team’s recommended settings for creating a blog in Blackboard. It is the first in a series of four quick guides covering the process of grading & providing feedback using online blogs.

Guides on other aspects of reflection, assessment & Blackboard are available at www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/resources/onlineassessment/blogs.php for a Quick Guide on how you can navigate students’ blogs and add comments to their entries.

1. Adding a Blog to Your Module

1. Access your Blackboard module and click on the plus button at the top left of the module menu.
2. Select Tool Link then give the blog a name (e.g. Reflective Blogs) and select Type: Blog.
3. You can choose whether or not to make the Blog Available to Users straight away. Click Submit.

This will add the link to the module menu. You can click and drag to move the link as needed. Click on the down arrow next to the link to show/hide the link to students. It can be useful to hide the link from students until you are ready for them to use the blogs.

2. Blog Information

Click on the Reflective Blogs link in the module menu then select Create Blog.

Enter a name and instructions. You can click on the down arrows on the right-hand side to view all of the options (including adding videos & images to your instructions).

3. Blog Availability & Participation

Leave Blog Availability as Yes. Under Blog Date and Time Restrictions you can optionally enter dates for Display After & Display Until – these control when the blog will be visible to students.

Under Blog Participation select Blog Type: Individual to All Students so that each student will have their own blog. Alternatively, you can set it to Blog Type: Module which creates a single blog page which students can post on but this can make it more difficult to assess an individual student's contribution and can be difficult to navigate when there are a lot of entries.

4. Blog Settings

Index Blog entries by month.

Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries and Allow Users to Delete Comments. This allows students to correct mistakes; you can disable this option later when you are ready to grade.

5. Grade Settings

For Grade: Points possible enter 100. Marking assessments out of 100 will make results easy to calculate and export in the module’s Grade Centre.

The Show participants in “needs grading” after every X entries option controls when you will see a student’s blog listed in your Needs Marking queue (covered in Quick Guide 3). This does not affect your ability to grade a blog if it has fewer entries than the specified number. Enter the minimum number of entries students are expected to create; for example 3 entries.

Optionally, enter a Due Date for when students are required to make their final entry. Entries can still be submitted & edited after this date but will be marked as Late in the Grade Centre; there is no automatic docking of marks.

You can also optionally add a rubric to provide grading criteria to students and to help you mark students' entries. Once you are ready, click Submit. You can change these settings at any time – see Quick Guide 2 for details.

6. The Next Step – Navigating Blogs

→ Visit http://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/resources/onlineassessment/blogs.php for a Quick Guide on how you can navigate students’ blogs and add comments to their entries.