Quick Start Guide
Student Manual Blackboard

1. What is Blackboard?

Blackboard is the online learning environment of Leiden University. Blackboard is a web-based tool designed to help manage and improve student learning. Blackboard offers facilities to have structured learning content (web pages, presentations, lecture notes, computer-aided learning applications, audio, video clips, etc.), but also provides student management, communication and assessment tools, and a range of other useful functions. Some functions are provided through third party applications which are integrated with Blackboard.

2. Accessing Blackboard

To access Blackboard, go to the Blackboard web page: https://blackboard.leidenuniv.nl. On the welcome page you will see a login box. Enter your ULCN username (= your student number: e.g. *s1111111*) and password and click the **Login** button.

Once logged in, you will see your 'My Institution' page with these tabs at the top of your screen:

- Your **My Institution** page is your personalised home page. It shows a number of modules that are relevant to you - for example, any new announcements, links to your courses, and faculty news. For some of the modules, you can change their location and settings to your liking.
- The **Courses** tab provides a list of (and entry to) your courses. It also shows the Course Catalogue.
- The tab **FAQ Student** provides help information including helpdesk details and a FAQ (list of Frequently Asked Questions).

2.1 Forgot your password?

You can reset your password by going to uAccess and choosing **Forgotten password**. In order to use this service, you must have registered your *security questions* and a *mobile number* or *private e-mail address*. This registration is done via the Account Self Service/uAccess application.

If these conditions are not met, please go to the ISSC Service Desk in any Leiden University building. They can help you to reset your password. Due to security reasons, the ISSC Helpdesk will never provide account passwords by phone or e-mail.

2.2 Help

If you have questions about the *content* of the course, please contact your instructor. If you have *technical* questions, try the tab **FAQ Student** in Blackboard. If you still have questions, contact the Blackboard helpdesk of your faculty.

2.3 (Un-)enrolling to courses

In addition to enrolling for your courses via uSis, you have to enrol for your courses in Blackboard. This is *not* done automatically! You can look up which courses you have to enrol yourself for in the e-Prospectus (e-Studiegids). Navigate to your study program and the year you are in to see a list of the courses that you are expected to take. A link to the *Timetable* of your study program is available in the list of *Links* that is displayed on the page for your study program in the prospectus.

To enrol for a course go to the tab **Courses** and select your faculty (e.g. 'Faculteit der Geesteswetenschappen/Humanities') in the **Course Catalogue**.

1. In the new screen select the desired category (e.g. *Bacheloropleidingen*) under **Browse Categories** in the drop-down menu. Click **Go** to confirm.
2. Again in the **Browse Categories** drop-down menu, select your study program. Click *Go* to confirm.
3. A list of courses will appear; find the one you want to enrol to. ***Only enrol in courses with the current academic year as a prefix***. Click on the chevron ⊙ behind the course ID and select *Enrol*. Confirm with Submit. The course will now be displayed in the module **My Courses** on your Blackboard homepage ('My Institution').
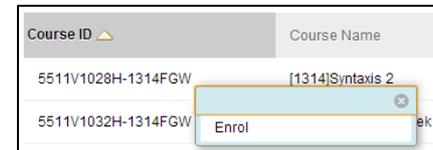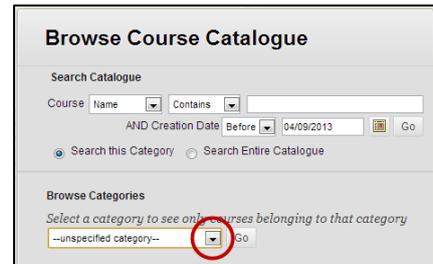
It is also possible to type the name or course code in the search field. Make sure you select *Search Entire Catalogue* before clicking **Go** to make sure Blackboard searches all courses, also from other faculties.

Unenrolling is only possible if this option is available in the course. If you would like to *unenrol* from a course, navigate to the **Tools > Unenroll Tool**. Unenrolling deactivates your membership in this course. After you have done this, you can no longer enrol for that particular course again. You will need to contact the instructor of the course or the Blackboard helpdesk; they can then re-activate your course-membership.

3. Blackboard Navigation

Your Blackboard homepage ('My Institution') has two important modules: 'My Announcements' and 'My Courses'.

- 'My courses' lists the courses that you are enrolled in. Clicking on the **title** of the course takes you to the resources for that course in Blackboard. This list is also shown on the Courses tab.
- 'My Announcements' displays the most recent announcements in the courses you are enrolled in. Instructors use the announcements as a notice board with general or specific information, e.g. homework, changed time table etc.
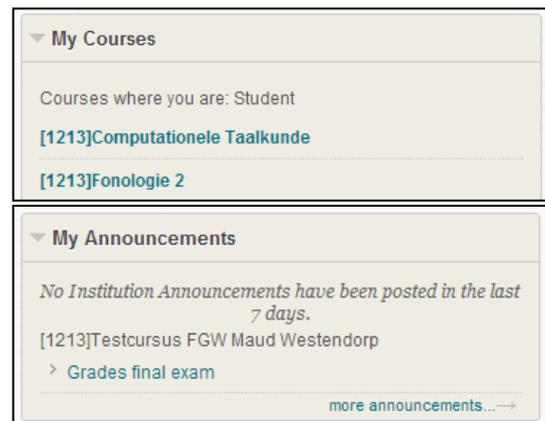
Another helpful feature is the **Global Navigation Panel** that can be accessed by clicking the chevron next to your name at the top of the screen. This panel gives you an overview of announcements, new content, your grades and other notifications from Blackboard.
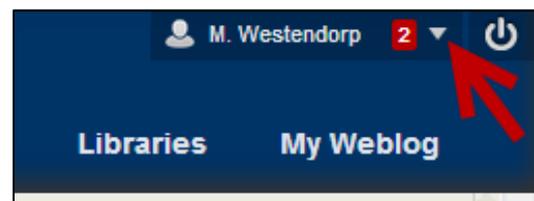
3.1 Course Overview

All courses have the same basic layout, with a menu on the left and content on the right. The menu buttons indicate the different content areas of the course, where instructors can place information like the course handbook, lecture notes, reading materials, assignments or other materials. Each instructor can customise these links, so the names may vary from course to course.

4. Course Content

The instructor will determine how much and in what way they will use Blackboard. Content is stored in folders or as single items. There are several types of content, ranging from simple documents to communication tools, assignments, assessments and your grades. To open a folder, *click on the title*. Items may have files attached to them – *click on the link* to open the file. Some files will open in a new tab, some may open a new window or the program (*e.g.* PowerPoint) with which they are associated.

If you have trouble opening or playing content, like mp3 audio files or mp4 video files, first download the file to your local computer (right click on the link and choose Save as). You can open and play the file from there.

4.1 Communication Tools

Blackboard provides enhanced tools for staff-student and student-student communication. We will highlight some of the most used Blackboard Tools if this is made available to you by the instructor.

- **Email** is most often used by instructors to send you information. These will be delivered to your uMail-inbox. Make sure that you check this inbox often or forward the emails to your personal email account. You can find a manual on how to do this on the university website. If you have been provided with a group workspace (see below), you will be able to send e-mail directly to your group members.

- **Discussion Boards** are a tool used for out-of-class interaction. The Discussion Board offers forum-like conversations, organized in threads, which you can follow and reply to. Click on the **Discussion Board** button in the menu to access it. As a student you can view threads in the different forums, create new threads, reply to existing threads, flag or subscribe to threads etc.

- **Groups** can be created within a course to provide students with a private space to work together or hand in assignments. Each group can be allocated a discussion board, an email list, a chat room and a file exchange, where you can share documents. Click on the **Groups** button in the menu, and click on the name of your group. Groups that you are not a member of will be listed, but you will not see a link to enter them.

4.2 Assignments

Instructors may place an Assignment in any of the content areas of your course. A Blackboard Assignment allows you to digitally submit a paper, essay or assignment to your instructor.
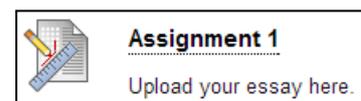
After clicking the link you will see a submission form to fill in. Use **Browse My Computer** to upload a document from your computer. Choose Write submission if you want to use a Mashup (like Kaltura, YouTube, Slideshare etc.). The use of mashups is explained below. In most assignments you can only submit a document once so make sure you upload the right document. After completing the form click **Submit**.

Please note: By clicking **Safe as Draft** your assignment will *not* be sent to your instructor.

4.2.1 Uploading Media Content with Kaltura

Kaltura is a video platform used by Leiden University. If you want to upload media content to Discussion Boards, Blogs, Wikis etc., you may first need to unfold the Edit Function bar:

Use the Mashups button in the 3rd row and choose **Kaltura Media**:

A pop-up screen opens. To add your (video, audio or image) file to your personal media space, called *My Media*, click **Add New**. Before you can continue please agree to the terms and conditions. Next, click **Choose a file to upload**. Select your file and click **Open**. The upload is complete is you see the message that the upload is 100% completed.

The next step is to fill out the form: add a description (required); add comments if you like. Finally, click **Save**. Click **Back to Browse and Embed** to return to your overview in *My media*. To submit the file, click **Select** behind the file you want to add. The pop-up screen closes.

Fill in the form in blackboard and click **Submit** to add its content to Blackboard.

After submission, do not change the Publish permissions, or your instructor may not be able to watch your files. **Please note:** when you delete the file, no one will be able to see your file anymore, including your instructor!
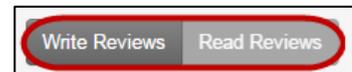
4.2.2 SafeAssign and Turnitin Assignments

It is also possible that your instructor asks you to upload a file through either SafeAssign or Turnitin. This works essentially the same as uploading an Assignment, but these tools will check your submission for plagiarism.

To upload your assignment via one of these tools click **View/Complete**. You will now see a form through which you can upload your essay.

- The **SafeAssign** form is similar to the form for an Assignment. In section 2, you can enter some comments and you can attach the file by clicking Browse. Then, in section 3, you are asked whether you want to have your paper added to the Global Reference Database. If you check this box, your paper will not only be added to the paper database of Leiden University – which is always done – but also to the world-wide database, such that papers from students of other universities will be compared to your paper.

- For **Turnitin** you will be directed to your 'Class Homepage'. Click the blue button **Submit** and fill in the form to submit your assignment. Turnitin sends you a confirmation receipt by email when you have submitted your paper succesfully.

- **PeerMark** is a feature within Turnitin for peer review among students. To review a peer, click the **View/Complete** button of the PeerMark assignment. Next, click **Write Reviews** to start reviewing. You will be able to add comments to the text of your fellow student and might also be expected to answer some questions about the paper set by the instructor. You will be able to read the reviews your peers have written about your paper after the end date of the assignment. You can do this by selecting Read Reviews.

Note: Both SafeAssign and Turnitin accept files with the following file format: .doc, .docx, .odt, .txt, .rtf, .pdf, and .html. Do not upload files in any other format. Your instructor may give additional notes on the desired file format or file name. The file size must not exceed 10 MB for SafeAssign or 40 MB for Turnitin, or submission may fail. If your document is bigger than this, we suggest compressing the images in your file, or leaving them out.

4.2.3 Pitch2Peer

Pitch2Peer is a review-tool that combines assignments and reviews with a social platform. The assignments can be to upload a video, poster, animation, PowerPoint presentation, etc. You can enter the Pitch2Peer module by clicking on the icon you see here.

In the Pitch2Peer module you can find the assignment(s). The 'Home'-page of your Pitch2Peer module will show you exactly what actions are required at any moment in time, along with the exact deadline and a button that takes you to the right page for completion.

If your instructor has included reviews and/or selfreflection, these will be shown here as well.

Depending on the settings the instructor selects, your pitches and reviews can be seen by your peers. Self reflections are always private. However, none of your contributions are visible to people who are not enrolled in the Blackboard course.

4.3 Assessments

Tests provide questions in a variety of forms (e.g. multiple-choice, either/or, ordering). A test can be used as a diagnostical tool or as an electronic test via Blackboard for a grade.
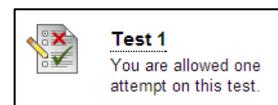
4.4 Accessing *My Grades*

Via the course: View your grades via the menu button **Tools > My Grades**. Underneath the grade, click on Comments to read feedback by the instructor; click on Description to see your submission.

Via *My Institution:* In the module 'Tools' on the left, you can access your grades for all your courses by clicking **My Grades**.
Please note: Official grades are ONLY registered in uSis.

4.5 Course Content Unavailable

At the end of the academic year all your courses of that year will be made unavailable. They will be removed from your **My Courses** list and you will not be able to enter them anymore. Your data (uploads, grades etc.) and the instructor's materials are archived.

5. Logging out

When you have finished working on a public computer, make sure you log out of Blackboard. To do this, click the **Log out button** at the top right of the screen.

6. Blackboard app

You may want to download the free **Blackboard Student app** for your smartphone or tablet via the app stores. When you start the app, enter "Leiden University" and log in with your ULCN account. The app pushes new messages etc. to you, rather than that you have to visit Blackboard and find them yourself in all your courses. The app does not replace the desktop version of Blackboard; it is a light version, just for consulting your Blackboard pages. Not all content might be displayed on your device.