



# UNSW Blackboard

## Student Getting Started Guide

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## Introduction

This document has been prepared to assist students enrolled in courses using UNSW Blackboard for online learning. It introduces you to the Blackboard menus and navigation so you can find your way around and understand the structure of a Blackboard course.

## What is UNSW Blackboard?

UNSW Blackboard is an online learning management system (LMS) that is used in some UNSW courses that are taught either fully or partially online. It runs on the Blackboard Learn version 9 software.

In 2010 UNSW Blackboard is replacing My eLearning Vista as the primary online learning application for most courses. A very small number of courses will remain in My eLearning Vista for first semester only. Some courses, primarily in Engineering, will be piloting an alternative system called Moodle. Your lecturers will advise you if one of their courses will be using Vista or Moodle.

## Resources to Help Me Use Blackboard

This guide is a very brief introduction to the Blackboard user interface. Detailed support for learning to use Blackboard is available from:

- The **Student Support** section of <http://support.telt.unsw.edu.au/blackboard>. This site contains detailed step-by-step how-to guides on using UNSW Blackboard, video demonstrations, tips and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).



Figure 1.1

- This support site is also available via the **TELT tab** available once you have logged into Blackboard. From the TELT Gateway site you can click on *Go to UNSW Blackboard support*

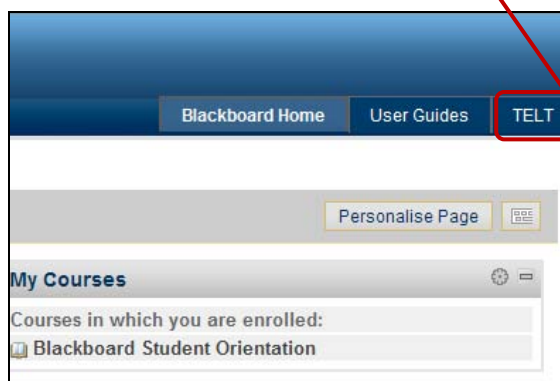


Figure 1.2

- The **User Guides** tab available once you have logged into Blackboard. This is where you will find a link to the *Blackboard User Manual* plus links to other support resources.

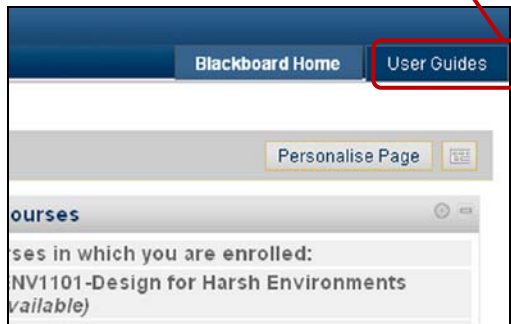


Figure 1.3

- The **Blackboard Student Orientation Course** that any user can self-enrol into as a student via the link on the Blackboard Home page or from the User Guide tab. This is a site where students can explore and try out all the Blackboard tools.



Figure 1.4

## What Do I Need to Access UNSW Blackboard?

To view your Blackboard courses you will need to have a:

- login account that consists of a UNSW zID and zPass
- computer with Internet access
- web browser installed with Java, JavaScript and cookies enabled in the browser settings.

You will find more details about configuring your browser settings in the **Technical Support Information** page on the Blackboard Support site at <http://support.telt.unsw.edu.au/blackboard>.

## Logging In to UNSW Blackboard

Log in to UNSW Blackboard via the TELT (Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching) Gateway:

- Go to <http://telt.unsw.edu.au>
- Click on the **Login to UNSW Blackboard** link
- Enter your Username and Password and click the OK button
- Your username is your UNSW zID
- Your password is your zPass

zPass is not the same as UniPass that you may have been using for other services. It is a new password system that is gradually being introduced across all IT services at UNSW. Visit the **zPass for Students** page at <http://www.it.unsw.edu.au/students/zpass/index.html> for information about zPass and how to activate it.

## Login Troubleshooting

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### Locked accounts

When entering your zPass be aware that three incorrect login attempts will result in your account being locked for 30 minutes. To unlock your account:

1. Visit the Identity Management site at [www.idm.unsw.edu.au](http://www.idm.unsw.edu.au).
2. Login with your zID and zPass.
3. Click the unlock link.
4. Logout and retry the Blackboard login again.

### Incorrect credentials

If you can't login to the Identity Management site this means you are using incorrect login credentials. To resolve this issue please contact the IT Service Centre as outlined below.

If you can't login to UNSW Blackboard after you have successfully activated or unlocked your zPass, try clearing your browser cache and cookies:

- In the Firefox browser this is done via Tools>Clear Private Data.
- In the Internet Explorer browser it is Tools>Delete Browsing History

### Expired passwords

Your zPass needs to be changed every 6 months, failure to do so will mean you can't log in to UNSW Blackboard. Go to the Identity Management site to change your password if you find yourself unable to login to Blackboard.

## Technical Support for Using UNSW Blackboard

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If you don't have a zPass, or have forgotten it, you should contact the IT Service Centre for assistance. All other support requests for TELT services should also be directed to the IT Service Centre.

Phone: +61 2 9385 1333

Email: [ITservicecentre@unsw.edu.au](mailto:ITservicecentre@unsw.edu.au)

For locations of the walk-in Service Centre, see:

[http://www.it.unsw.edu.au/support/servdesk/servicedesk\\_home.html](http://www.it.unsw.edu.au/support/servdesk/servicedesk_home.html)

## Exploring the Blackboard Home Tab

After logging in to UNSW Blackboard, the contents of the Blackboard Home tab are displayed. It contains the My Courses module which lists all the courses to which you have access.

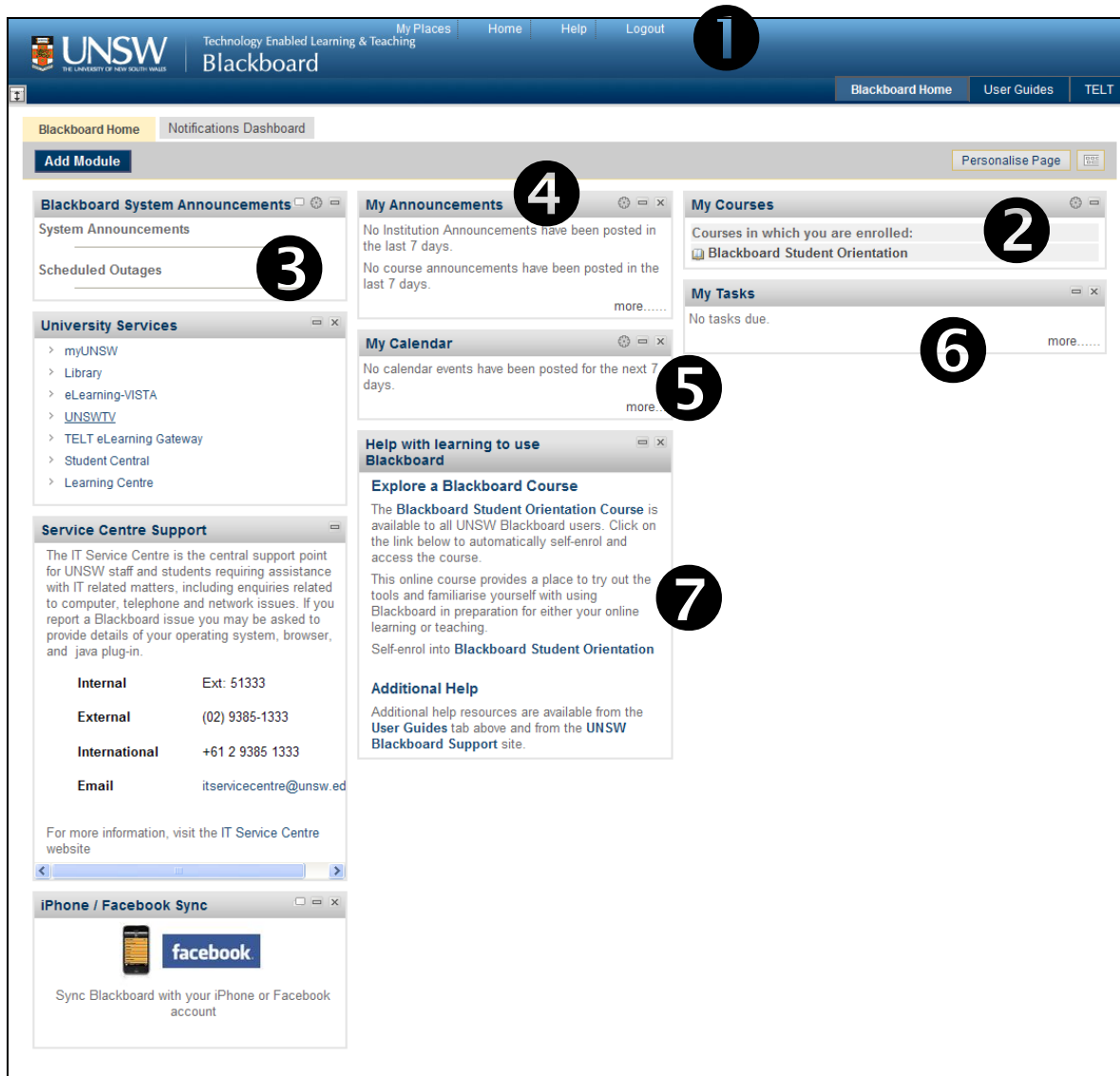


Figure 2.1

### ► Take Note

- 1 From the page header go to **My Places** where you can edit your settings, **Blackboard Home** page to access notices and courses, **Help** to launch the User Manual, or **Logout** to ensure no one else using the same computer can access your account.
- 2 **My Courses** – a list of all your courses that have a Blackboard site and the Blackboard Student Orientation site, if you have self-enrolled into it. See notes below about course availability.
- 3 **Blackboard System Announcements** – this is where you will be notified about upcoming scheduled outages or other important messages from the System Administrator.

- 4 **My Announcements** – displays announcements for all the courses in which you are enrolled. It may also contain announcements from the system administrator. Click **more...** to see older announcements.
- 5 **My Calendar** –view all items from all courses on your Calendar. You also have the option to add and modify personal events. Click **more...** to create a personal event.
- 6 **My Tasks** – view all your tasks, including those from the Courses you are participating in and your personal tasks. You can create your own tasks and post them to the Tasks page. Click **more...** to create and manage tasks.
- 7 **Help with learning to use Blackboard** – follow the links to self enrol into an Orientation Course for self-exploration of the course interface, or to access the support Web site.

Information modules – view other modules, such as University Services links, Service Centre Support contact details, and a special module to allow you to sync notifications from Blackboard Learn with your iPhone or Facebook.

## The Notifications Dashboard

On the Blackboard Home Page you will see a **Notifications Dashboard** tab. The Notifications Dashboard displays notifications for changes to items. These notifications are displayed in two modules –**What’s New** and **To Do**.

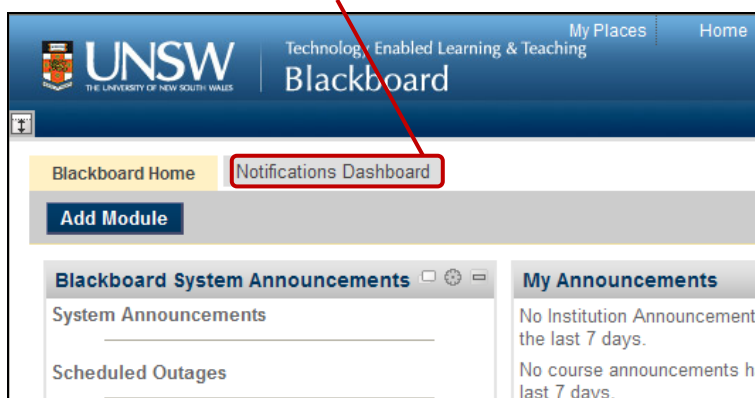


Figure 2.2

**To Do** displays information about any assessments, assignments or surveys that have a due date.

**What’s New** displays information about unread communications (e.g. discussion posts, blog posts) and any new created items (e.g. tests, assignments, announcements etc).

All the notifications settings are configurable.

## Missing Courses

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You should see a list of all your courses that have a Blackboard site inside the module called **My Courses** on the homepage tab. Click on the title of a course to enter it. If you see the word “unavailable” next to a course title this means the lecturer has not yet opened the course for students.

If you are expecting to find a course that is not listed, there are a few possible reasons:

1. Either the course has not yet been made available by your lecturer or there is no Blackboard site for the course. Ask your lecturer if they will be using UNSW Blackboard or another online learning management system for the course, and if so, when it will be made available.
2. Your enrolment in the Blackboard course has not yet been processed. Wait at least 24 hours after enrolment to see the course appear in Blackboard.
3. You are not correctly enrolled in the course. Check that your enrolment is correct in myUNSW.
4. Finally, if you know that a Blackboard site for the course has been made available and you are correctly enrolled in myUNSW but still can't see it listed, contact the IT Service Centre to investigate your Blackboard enrolment.

## The Course Environment

Each course will vary depending on how the lecturer has designed the course. However, there are some common features.

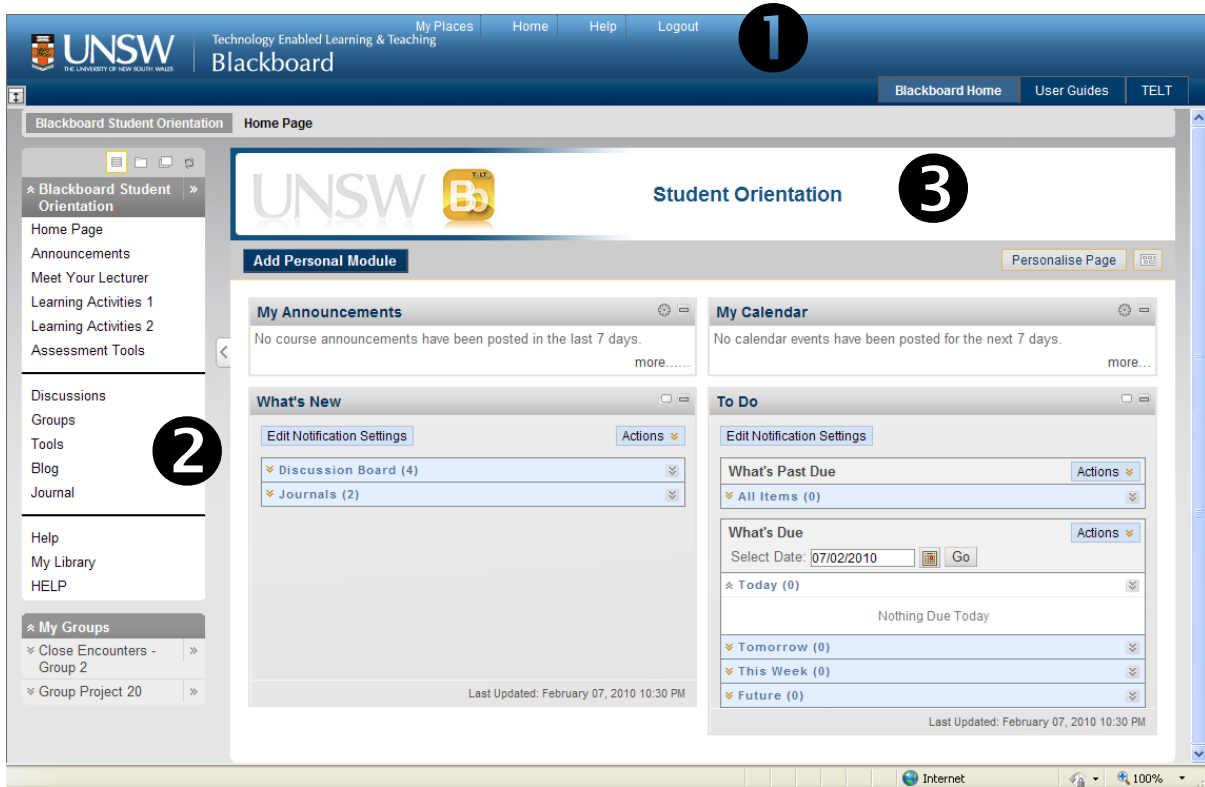


Figure 3

### Take Note

- 1 **Page Header** – identical to the page header you saw upon logging in. The Blackboard Home tab on the Page Header enables you to navigate back to the My Courses list to access other courses.
- 2 **Course Menu** – the access point for all course content. Lecturers decide which links are available and how the menu is organised.
- 3 **Content frame** – the area next to the menu displays the selected tool or content area. By default, when you enter a course, the Home Page appears. The lecturer can choose which menu link appears as your Home Page.

## Exploring the Home Page

The Home Page usually contains modules that provide you with an intuitive way to navigate through Blackboard, and keep abreast of content additions and due dates through notifications. The two most relevant modules are My Announcements and My Calendar.

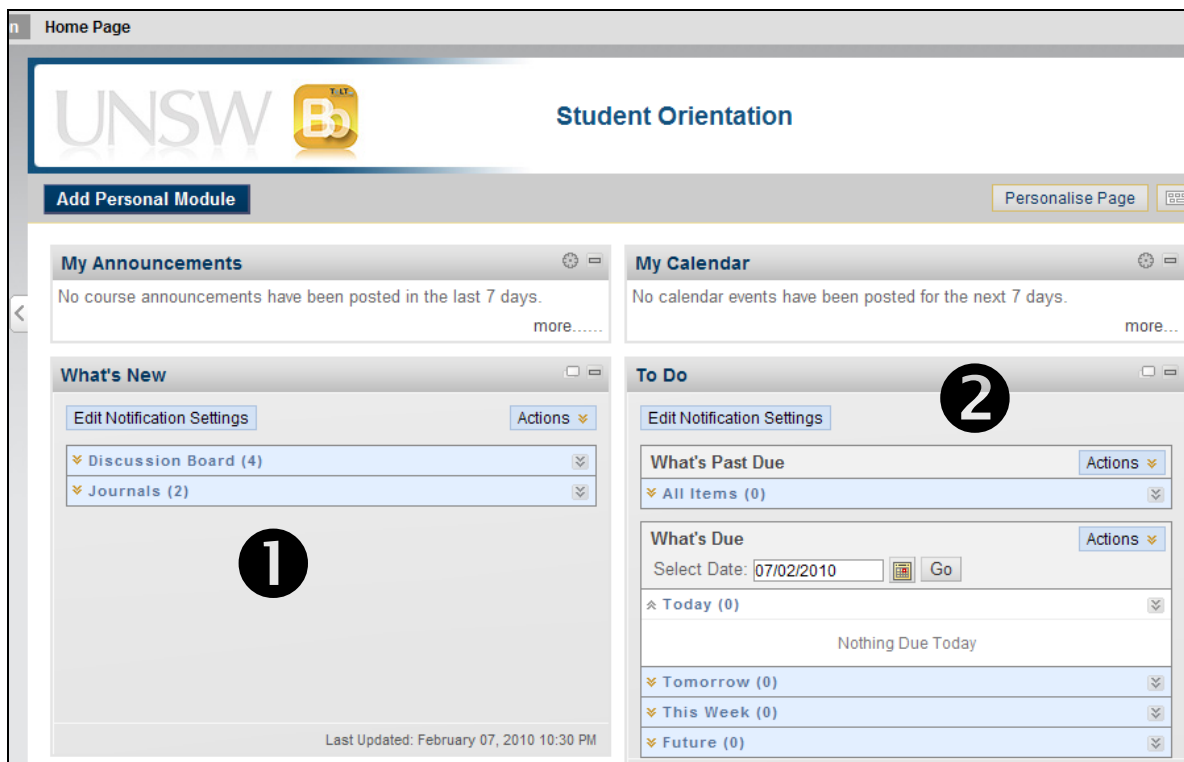


Figure 4.1

### ► Take Note

- ❶ What's New – contains links to any new content such as assignments, tests, newly graded items, and unread Discussion Forum messages.
- ❷ To Do – is divided into What's Past Due and What's Due. These provide a chronological listing of upcoming due dates to be used as the launching point for a student's daily course work.

But remember, your lecturer may not have chosen to provide these modules in your Blackboard course site.

## Module contextual menus

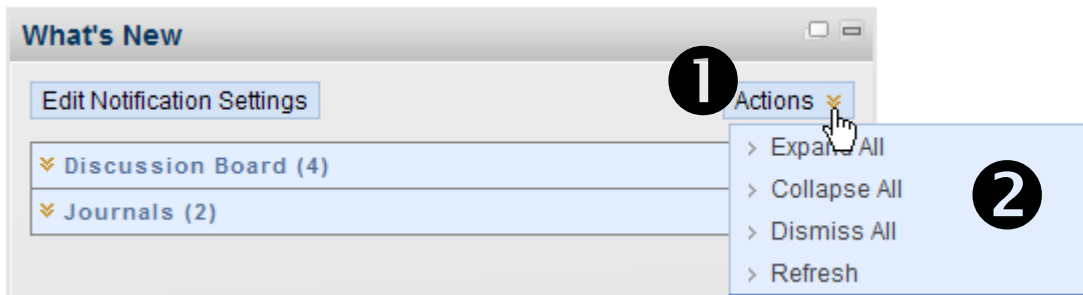


Figure 4.2

### ► Take Note

- ❶ Use the Action Link to access contextual menus displaying options.
- ❷ Use the Actions contextual menu to expand, collapse, or dismiss all items in the module. When items are dismissed, they are deleted from the Notification module.

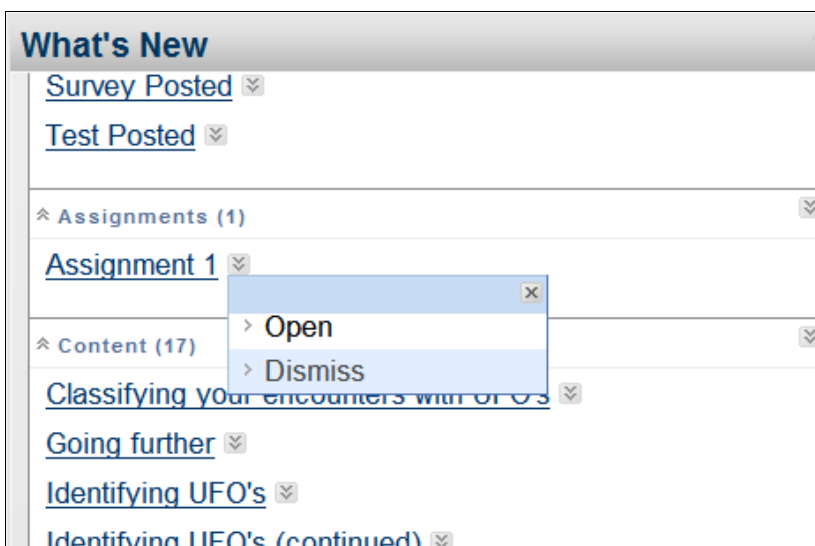


Figure 4.3

Each item in a module has a contextual menu to open or dismiss the item. When an item is opened, you are taken directly to the content.

## Accessing Course Content and Tools

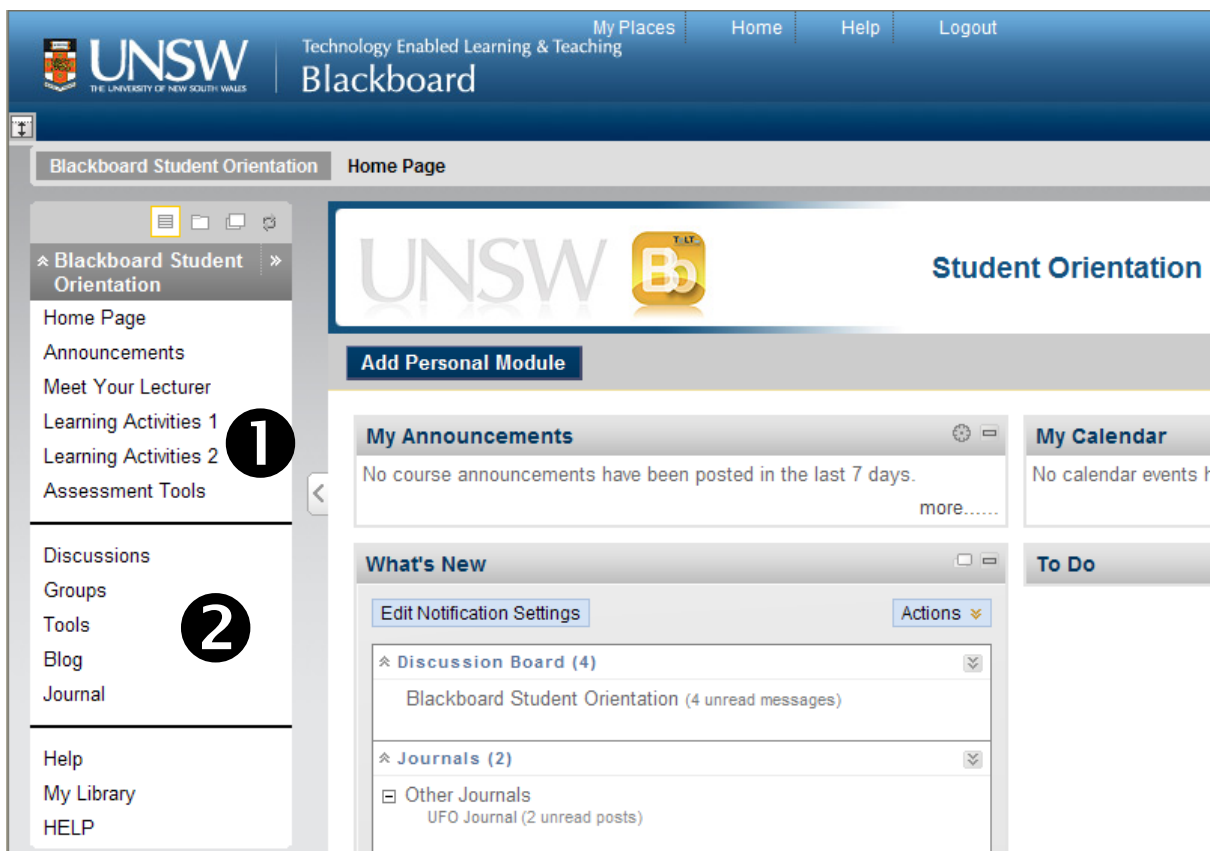


Figure 5.1

### ► Take Note

Access all course content from the Course Menu. It can contain links to the following:

- 1 Content Areas – top level containers that organise and store course content, such as lecture notes, assignments, and tests. In the example above the content areas are called **Learning Activities 1** and **Learning Activities 2**.
- 2 Individual tools – such as Discussions, Groups, and Blogs.
3. External links – such as web sites used for an assignment.
4. Course links – direct links to content inside the course, also available as links on a Content Area page.
5. Module pages – pages that contain modules such as What’s New and My Calendar. The Home Page is an example of a module page.

## Course Menu views

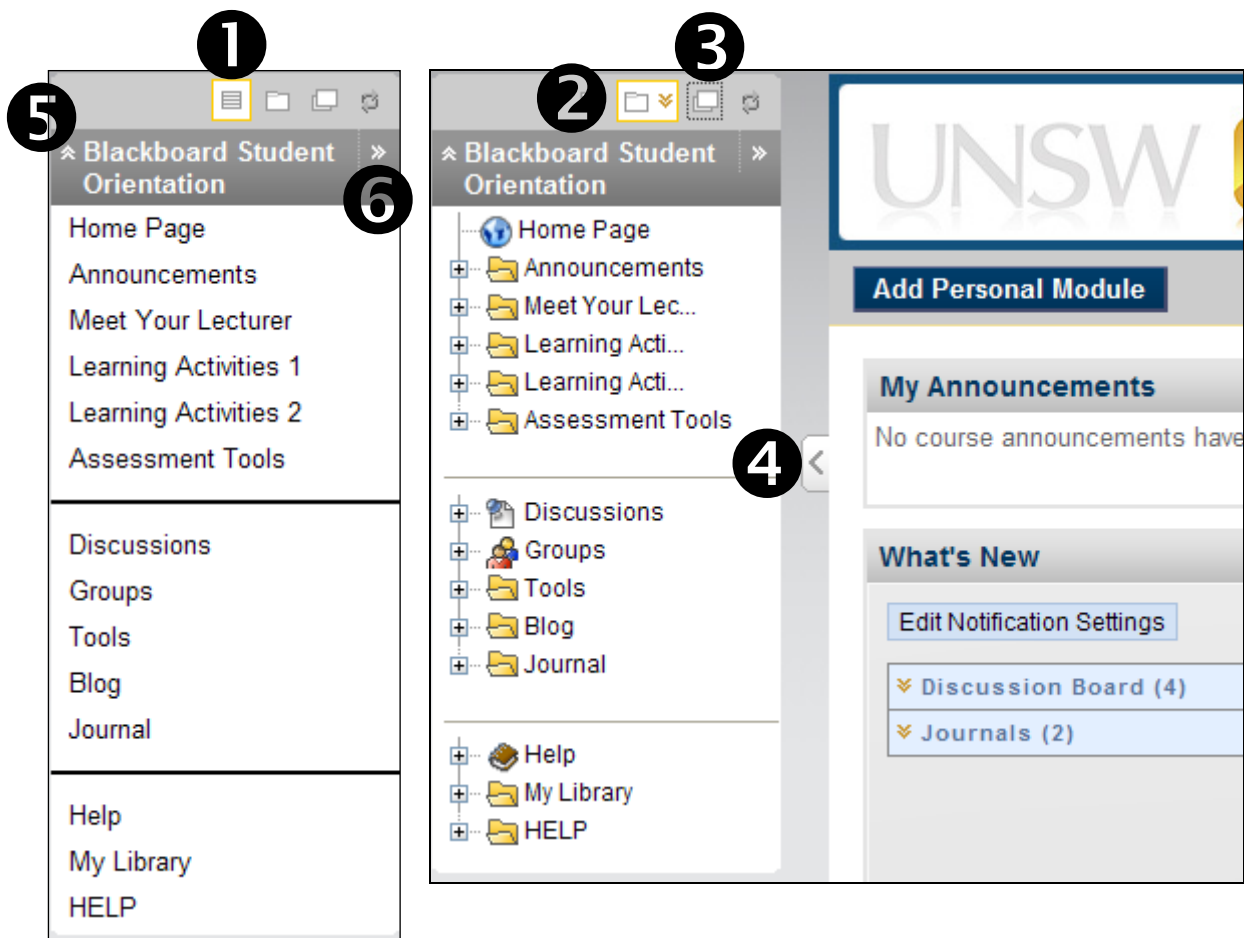


Figure 5.2

### ► Take Note

You can change what is displayed in the Course Menu, and where the menu itself is displayed.

- ❶ List View – displays the top level of the Course Menu only.
- ❷ Folder View – displays the entire hierarchy of material. Expand and collapse folders, and access links within folders.
- ❸ Display Course Menu in a Window – displays the Course Menu in a separate window. The window can be moved to a different screen location.
- ❹ Expand or Collapse Menu – Collapse the Course Menu for more viewing space in the content frame. Use in conjunction with Display Course Menu in a Window to customise the viewing area.
- ❺ Collapse or Expand the Course Menu in the sidebar – collapse the links in the Course Menu.
- ❻ Go to Course Home Page – return to the page chosen by the lecturer as the starting point.

## Accessing Content in Content Areas

A Content Area can contain multiple components. For example, the lecturer may create a Content Area containing a week's worth of course material, such as readings, an assignment, a discussion forum, and an external link.

The screenshot displays the UNSW Blackboard interface. At the top, the UNSW logo and 'Technology Enabled Learning & Teaching Blackboard' are visible. The navigation menu on the left includes 'Blackboard Student Orientation', 'Home Page', 'Announcements', 'Meet Your Lecturer', 'Learning Activities 1' (highlighted with a red circle and the number 1), 'Learning Activities 2', 'Assessment Tools', 'Discussions', 'Groups', 'Tools', 'Blog', 'Journal', 'Help', 'My Library', and 'HELP'. Below the menu is a 'My Groups' section. The main content area is titled 'Learning Activities 1' and contains a document icon, the title 'Learning Activities 1', and a sub-section titled 'Thinking critically about flying objects'. Below this is a question: 'Is that really a bird, a plane or a cloud?'. A red circle with the number 2 is placed over the text 'Do you say it was a bird?'. Further down, there is an 'Assignment 1' section with a document icon, 'Weighting: 15%', 'Due date: 12 January 2010', and the instruction: 'Write a short report on a recent encounter with a UFO. Include... Submit this report using the Assignments tool.'







Figure 6.1

### ► Take Note

To navigate Content Areas:

- 1 On the Course Menu, click the name of the Content Area. The content appears in the content frame.
- 2 In the content frame, click a link to access its content, such as a Discussion Board link or a file link.

The table below identifies some of the components commonly added to Content Areas. The word *item* is used as a generic term meaning any one of the components added to a Content Area.

SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION
	Folder – further organizes content
	Item – text or file
	Assignment – link to an assignment
	Course Tool or Course Link – link to a tool or other area in course
	External Link – link to a Web site
	Test – link to a test

**NOTE:** You may see different icons than shown above.

## Breadcrumbs

As you view the items and links presented in a Content Area, use the breadcrumbs to navigate to previous pages. In the example below, click the title of the course in the breadcrumbs to return to the course Home Page.

**NOTE:**

1. Do NOT use your browser navigation buttons.
2. If you cannot see the breadcrumbs you may need to scroll up to the top of the content frame.

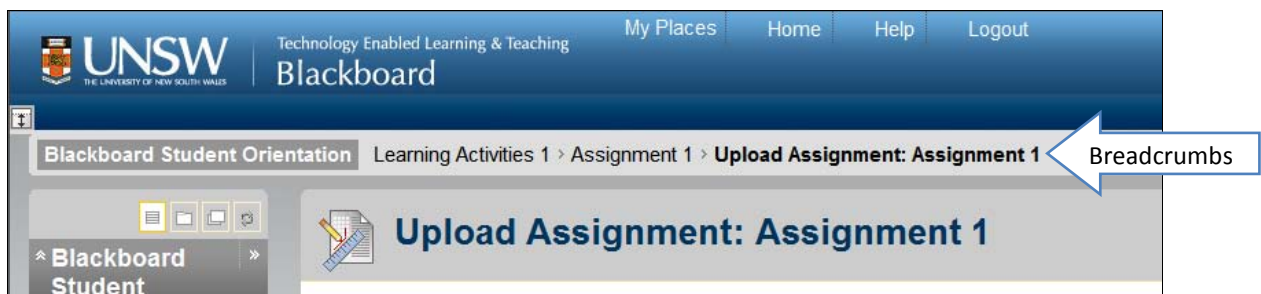


Figure 6.2

## Using the Tools Link

The Tools link contains links to all of the tools the lecturer has made available in the course.

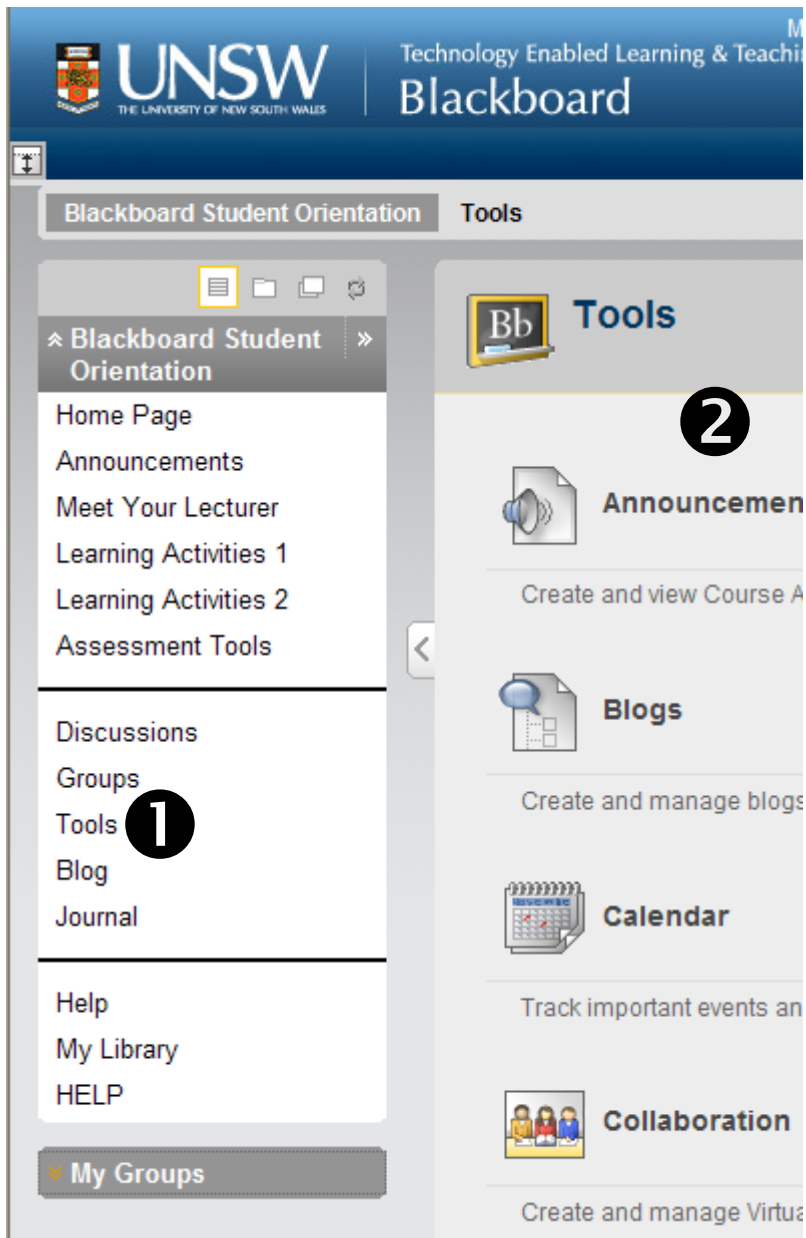


Figure 7

### ► QUICK STEPS: accessing tools using the Tools link

- 1 From the Course Menu, click Tools.
- 2 Click the name of the tool to access.

## Going further

This document is designed to get you started quickly with UNSW Blackboard. To learn more, log in to Blackboard and self-enrol in the UNSW Blackboard Student Orientation course. This online course will give you an opportunity to try out the tools and familiarise yourself with using Blackboard in preparation for your online courses.

Use the detailed step-by-step instructions and video demonstrations on the UNSW Blackboard Support site at <http://support.telt.unsw.edu.au/blackboard> to guide you in your exploration of Blackboard.

## Glossary

Blackboard Learn v9	The product name and version number of the software behind UNSW Blackboard.
LMS	Learning Management System – a type of software that supports online learning activities.
Moodle	An LMS that is being piloted during 2010 with the intention of running it beyond the pilot phase as an alternative system alongside UNSW Blackboard.
My eLearning Vista	The main LMS used at UNSW prior to UNSW Blackboard that is being phased out during 2010.
UniPass	The University's original password system that is being gradually phased out, but is still needed for some systems during 2010.
UNSW Blackboard	A web-based application used for online learning activities, otherwise known as a learning management system.
zID	A user ID for logging into UNSW Blackboard consisting of a lower case 'z' followed by the users Staff or Student Number.
zPass	The password that is associated with a user's zID.
UNSW Identity Manager	An Identity Management System that enables users to manage their UniPass and zPass passwords and UNSW email account attributes. See <a href="http://www.idm.unsw.edu.au">www.idm.unsw.edu.au</a> .
TEL	TEL, or Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching, is the suite of technologies and applications that support learning and teaching at UNSW.
TEL Gateway	The web site which is the central access point for all the applications currently available on the platform with login links or instructions on how to sign up for each service. Training resources and support information to help users is also linked to this Gateway. See <a href="http://telt.unsw.edu.au">telt.unsw.edu.au</a> .