VLE MINIMUM STANDARDS

ℹ Minimum standards have been created to ensure all VLE courses offer a good and consistent digital pedagogic baseline, improving consistency in courses across programmes of study. Output from user research activities and co-design workshops conducted in March 2022 have identified the minimum expectations that learners have when they access their courses in Canvas and where they broadly expect to find things. A new suite of VLE Templates and a Toolkit to support Canvas course development is available.

☑ QUB Canvas Course Checklist

	Yes	Partial	No
1. A **Homepage** is included with links to key content within the course.			

TO MEET THIS STANDARD, ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE INCLUDED:
- ✓ Short introductory (welcome) message from the Module Coordinator
- ✓ Clear links to important Information pages/sections of the course e.g. *Course Information, Learning Content, Assessment Overview, Help & Support, Meet the Team.*

	Yes	Partial	No
2. Important **Course information** is presented upfront.			

TO MEET THIS STANDARD, ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE INCLUDED:
- ✓ Module learning outcomes
- ✓ Contact information for tutors (including availability, office hours, communication preferences, response times, profile picture and/or link to biography)
- ✓ Information on how the module will be assessed and how assignments align with learning outcomes
- ✓ Information on deadlines and format (e.g. brief description of any exam, test, coursework, etc.)
- ✓ Lecture and Seminar timetable with room locations (or clear Instructions on how to access the timetable on Qsis)
- ✓ Information on where to get help and support
- ✓ Key events/activities added to the calendar, where feasible

💡 Consider the use of a centralised repository like a school-wide module for the purpose of linking to important course-related information or support services which are relevant to all courses within a programme of study (e.g. Library, Learning Development, Disability, Student Wellbeing, etc.).

	Yes	Partial	No
3. Course **Navigation** is clear and consistent. Unused menu items are hidden.			

TO MEET THIS STANDARD, ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE INCLUDED:
- ✓ A clear course menu structure is in place. As 72% percent of QUB Students frequently access their courses via the Canvas mobile app, it is critical to streamline the navigation so that It requires as few taps as possible
- ✓ Navigation links are presented in a consistent order, agreed at a Programme level. Recommended order of top 3 links: *(1) Home, (2) Modules, (3) Discussions*
- ✓ Any unused or unnecessary navigation links are hidden from course navigation, for example: *Files, Pages, Quizzes, Outcomes, Attendance, BigBlueButton, Chat, People, Syllabus, etc.*

4. Course **Structure** has been created using the 'Modules' feature with course content organised by weeks, themes or topics.

TO MEET THIS STANDARD, ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE INCLUDED:
- ✓ Content is organised into manageable parts (e.g. presented by week, theme or topic)
- ✓ Course structure is presented in a logical order and all content is populated consistently across each week/theme/topic in order to ensure a consistent learner experience throughout the course
- ✓ Each 'Module' (i.e. week, theme, topic) contains a very brief introduction to contextualise the content

	Yes	Partial	No

5. **Key learning content** is populated within the course, including information on how module learning outcomes will be assessed.

TO MEET THIS STANDARD, ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE INCLUDED/CONSIDERED:
- ✓ Key learning content such as course materials, supplemental textbooks, reading lists are included
- ✓ Information on how the learning activities in the module align with learning outcomes
- ✓ Multimedia content such as lecture presentation slides are embedded in Canvas pages, rather than presented as a link out to external resources
- ✓ PowerPoint slides are shared in original PPT format (where available), rather than PDF to preserve transitions, animations, embedded videos and layers of content (which are omitted from PDF copy)
- ✓ Copyright law is followed

	Yes	Partial	No

6. **Recorded video content** is available in the course.

TO MEET THIS STANDARD, ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE INCLUDED/CONSIDERED:
- ✓ Recorded video content is available, either pre-recorded by the lecturer or captured during their live lecture. Learners have expressed that this is essential for accessibility, study and revision purposes
- ✓ Video recordings are produced in a way that allows for automated captions
- ✓ Videos are embedded within Canvas pages. In addition to the embedded version of the video, consider providing a hyperlink directly below the video to open in an external browser. This step helps students when accessing video content via the Canvas App or Safari browser where videos embedded from MS Stream may not display correctly due to some restrictions on Apple iOS mobile devices

	Yes	Partial	No

7. Compliance with **Accessibility** legislation for developed resources (including MS Word, PowerPoint, videos, etc.).

TO MEET THIS STANDARD, ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE INCLUDED/CONSIDERED:
- ✓ The Blackboard Ally 'Course Accessibility Report' is accessed to check course accessibly score, Identify accessibility Issues and address low scoring content
- ✓ Alternative text, or "alt text" which describes the content of images, graphs and charts is added to every image that conveys meaning
- ✓ Heading styles are used correctly in pages rather than use of bold or underlined fonts
- ✓ Hyperlinks include words and phrases to provide context for screen-readers. Avoid using a raw url
- ✓ Closed captions are available on video recordings

	N/A	Yes	Partial	No
8. Any **Assignment** released through Canvas which contributes to the final mark should be set up in line with the official QUB guidance and regulations.				

TO MEET THIS STANDARD, ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE INCLUDED/CONSIDERED:
✓ Information on how the assignment aligns with learning outcomes
✓ Any Assignment groups that are created, are appropriately weighted (if not using assignment groups, the weighting must be clearly stated)
✓ Clear instructions are outlined for learners on what is expected of them (e.g. assignment completion and submission, technology requirements, marking criteria, module weighting, mark scheme, word counts/format requirements, literature links for critical reviews, etc.)
✓ All assignments are marked out of 100 points (as required by QUB regulations)
✓ Appropriate dates are set i.e. 'Due', 'Available from' and 'Until' dates (with consideration of extensions, exceptional circumstances and late submissions)
✓ Any other optional settings as required are correct. Refer to the latest Canvas Assignment Checklist