

Assessing Discussions

The Discussions tool is a collaboration area where you can post, read and reply to messages on different topics, share thoughts about the unit [User Guides](#)



Why would you use the Discussions tool for assessing learning?

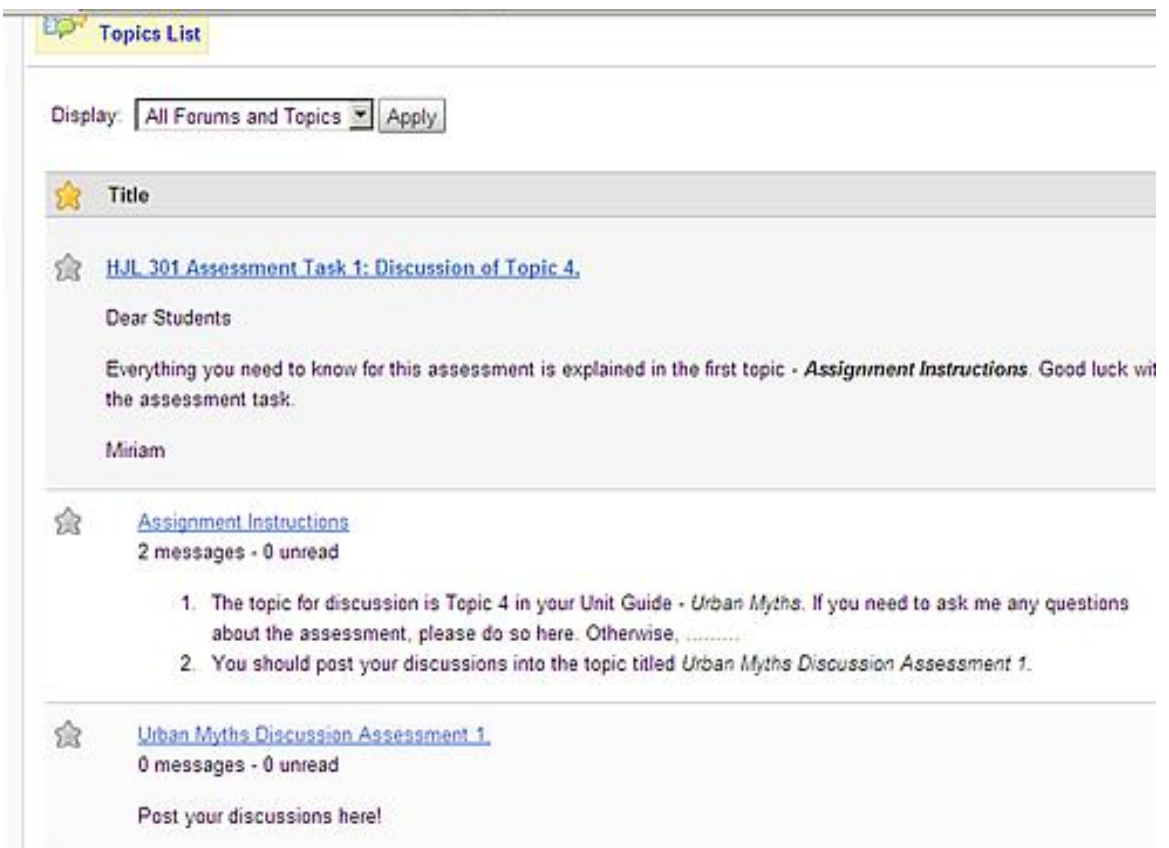
Opportunities

1. To design assessment tasks based on Bloom's taxonomy of learning and/or Biggs' constructive alignment, but primarily on your topic/unit intended learning outcomes
2. To acknowledge that learning is widely seen as a collaborative activity.
3. To create an 'extended classroom' outside your face to face meetings with students.
4. To create opportunities for students who are quiet in face to face classes to express their thoughts.
5. To encourage students to regularly read contributions from other students.
6. To require students to post their own thoughts on certain issues (perhaps use **Conditional Release**).
7. To oblige students to respond to prompts from you or from other students.
8. To gain valuable feedback from students on their levels of understanding of key concepts.
9. To provide formative feedback to students before their current or next assessment task is submitted.
10. To monitor and evaluate individual student contributions to group assignments.

TIP:

- ✓ Be clear about what you want to assess – assessing 'effort' or 'number of posts' is not really valid.
- ✓ Make sure you assess student learning in terms of your intended learning outcomes.
- ✓ As with all assessment tasks, publish your rubric to students.

Example



Link

With

Conditional Release

Discussions

Grades

Rubrics

Blog

The **Blog** tool is used to record your thoughts and ideas which you may choose to keep private or to share with selected others.



Why would you use the Blog tool?

Opportunities

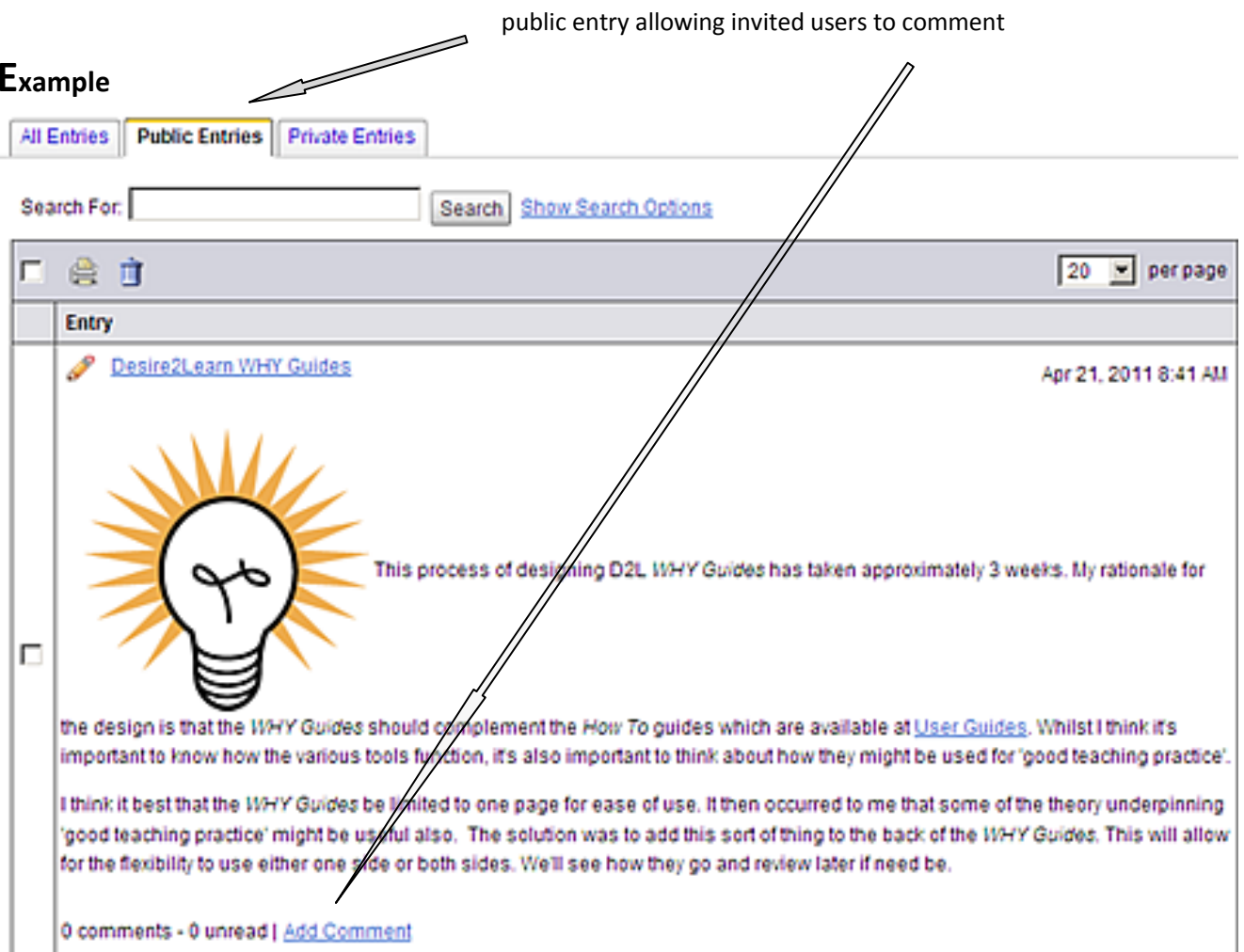
1. To use as an alternative to **Discussions** for students to share ideas.
2. To encourage students to record their thinking about learning during their time studying your unit.
3. To create a learning activity space for students.
4. To use as an assessable task.
5. To build in links to other sites.
6. To add images.
7. To set up a shared space in which to share thinking with other teaching team members.
8. To create lists of other blogs you wish to follow.

TIP:

✓ You can set up **Blogs** so they are private, or public in which invited others can add comments.

Example

public entry allowing invited users to comment



The screenshot shows a blog interface with three tabs: 'All Entries', 'Public Entries', and 'Private Entries'. Below the tabs is a search bar and a 'Show Search Options' link. The main content area displays a blog entry titled 'Desire2Learn WHY Guides' dated 'Apr 21, 2011 8:41 AM'. The entry features a lightbulb icon and text describing the design process. At the bottom of the entry, it says '0 comments - 0 unread | [Add Comment](#)'. Annotations include an arrow pointing to the 'Public Entries' tab and a double-line arrow pointing to the 'Add Comment' link.

Link

With

Conditional Release Discussions

Chat

The Chat tool allows you to set up and hold live discussions with users through text messages.

Source: Desire2Learn



Why would you use the Chat tool?

Opportunities

1. To have a space for synchronous communication with some/all students.
2. To reinforce to students your 'online presence'.
3. To provide another space for communicating with off-campus students.
4. To provide the online replication of a classroom discussion.
5. To be able to give instant feedback to students which does not always occur in the **Discussions** space.
6. To set up an environment for a guest lecturer to interact with your students online.
7. To provide an opportunity for students to set up their own **Chats** if working in groups.
8. To have the opportunity to evaluate student contributions to a topic discussion or group task via the **Chat** archive tool.
9. To create a space in which you can communicate synchronously with your sessional tutors and or markers.
10. The **Chat** tool is specifically designed to be accessible by keyboard and screen readers (Source: Desire2Learn).

TIP:

✓ You can set up either a **Personal Chat** (restricted access) or a **General Chat** (open access).

Example

Chat List



Search For: [Show Search Options](#)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chat Title	Current Participants	Actions
Personal Chat				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marking Moderation Meeting	(0)	
		Meeting with markers to discuss marking requirements for Assignment 1.		



Checklists

A checklist is a way to highlight important or required assignments, readings or other items to complete. A checklist may list all the items which need to be completed immediately or may have items appear sequentially once other items are completed. [User Guides](#)



Why would you use the Checklists tool?

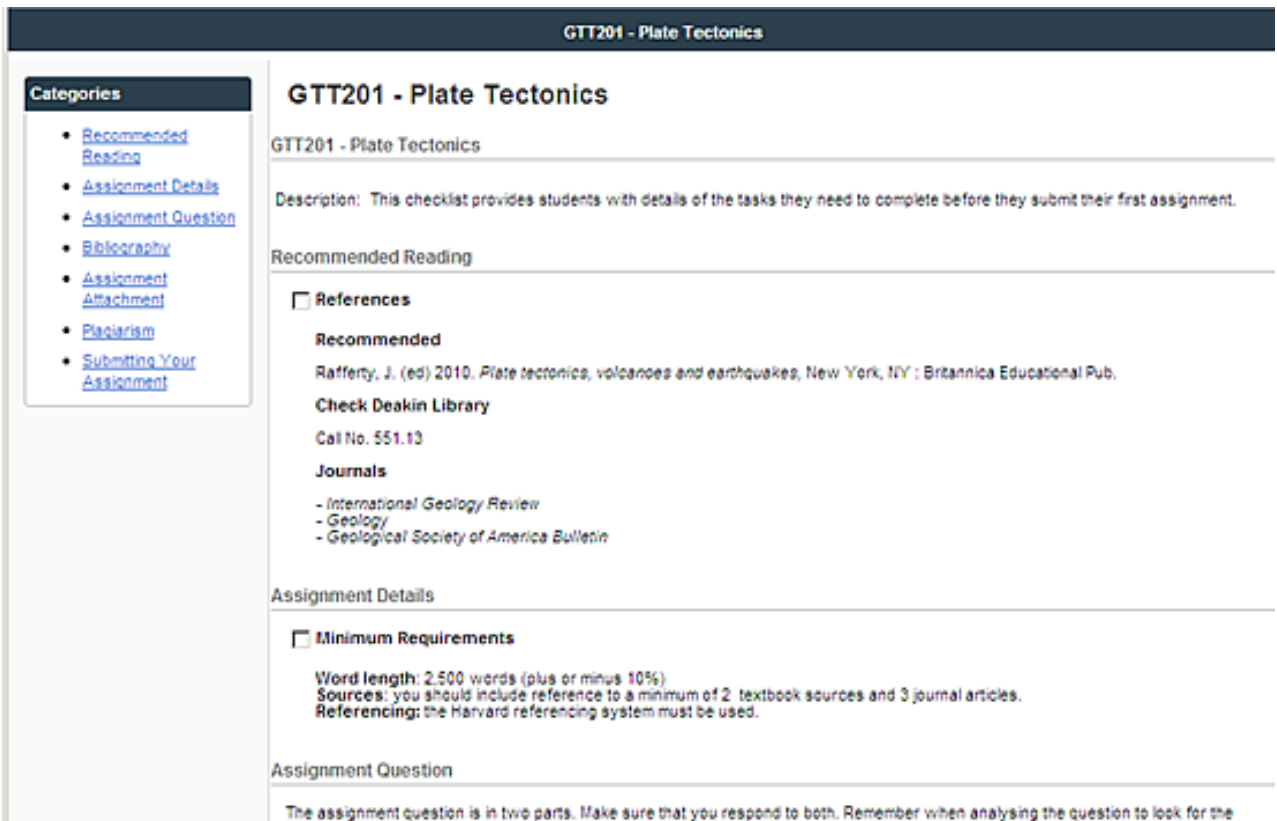
Opportunities

1. To provide a list of tasks students need to complete.
2. To present students with a visual summary of the requirements for a topic or assignment or unit.
3. To assist students to find their way around the content of your site.
4. To break your unit down into more manageable sections.
5. To better cater for individual learning needs by building in 'extension' activities or revision activities.
6. To help students manage 'due dates'.
7. To ensure pre-requisite tasks are completed before access to new ones is made available.
8. To reinforce topic learning objectives/intended learning outcomes.
9. To provide different groups of students with different tasks or sequences of tasks.
10. To provide a week-by-week guide for students during trimester.

TIP:

✓ Setup your **Dropbox** so that all tasks on the **Checklist** are completed before students can submit.

Example: An Assignment Checklist (student view)



The screenshot shows a web interface for 'GTT201 - Plate Tectonics'. On the left is a 'Categories' sidebar with links: Recommended Reading, Assignment Details, Assignment Question, Bibliography, Assignment Attachment, Plagiarism, and Submitting Your Assignment. The main content area has the title 'GTT201 - Plate Tectonics' and a description: 'This checklist provides students with details of the tasks they need to complete before they submit their first assignment.' Below this is a 'Recommended Reading' section with a 'References' checkbox. Under 'References', there is a 'Recommended' section listing a book by Rafferty, J. (ed) 2010, 'Plate tectonics, volcanoes and earthquakes', and a 'Check Deakin Library' section with call number 551.13. There is also a 'Journals' section listing 'International Geology Review', 'Geology', and 'Geological Society of America Bulletin'. Below the references is an 'Assignment Details' section with a 'Minimum Requirements' checkbox. The requirements state: 'Word length: 2,500 words (plus or minus 10%)', 'Sources: you should include reference to a minimum of 2 textbook sources and 3 journal articles.', and 'Referencing: the Harvard referencing system must be used.' At the bottom is an 'Assignment Question' section with the text: 'The assignment question is in two parts. Make sure that you respond to both. Remember when analysing the question to look for the...'

Link

With

Competencies

Dropbox

Classlist

You can use the **Classlist** tool to view students who are enrolled in your unit, check who is online and to send emails and pages (instant messages). From the **Classlist** tool you can view user profiles, ePortfolios, blogs, shared locker files and user progress; print a classlist; check enrolment reports.

[User Guides](#)



Why would you use the Classlist tool?

Opportunities

1. To create a centralised area from which to manage the administrative aspects of your unit.
2. To set up and administer different groups of people in your site – e.g. academics, tutors, students.
3. To check who is currently logged into your unit site.
4. To monitor individual student progress in your unit site.
5. To check which students are enrolled in which **Groups** if you use group assignments.

TIP:

√ You can use your **Classlist** together with the **Intelligent Agents** tool to both monitor student progress and email those students who you might sense are 'at risk'.

Example

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		RATHBONE, BABS	iti-babs	Student				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		ROBBY, CACHELLE	iti-cachelle	Student				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		ROVES, KIANA	iti-kiana	Student				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		TANIKA, PANKAJA	iti-pankaja	Student				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		THACKERAY, MEG	iti-meg	Student				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		WONDERLAND, ALISON	iti-alison	Student				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		ZANPOLO, ALFREDO	iti-alfredo	Student Feb 26, 2011 11:07 AM				

email selected students

view progress

view **Groups**

view **Blog**



Blog Groups Intelligent Agents

Competencies

In D2L, **Competency** is defined as “knowledge, skill, ability, or characteristic needed to perform a function” ([Source](#)). In the Deakin context, **Competencies** should be interpreted as any form of learned knowledge, not just something needed to ‘perform a function’.

? Why would you use the Competencies tool?

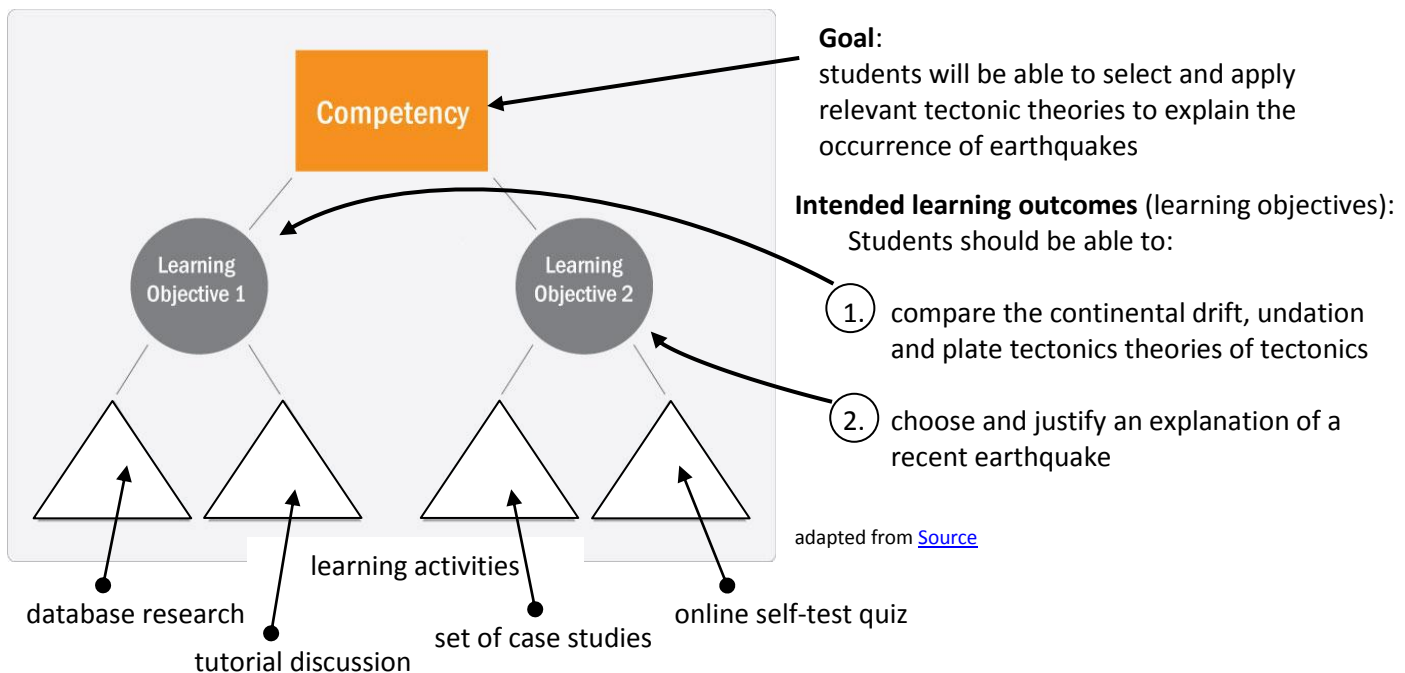
Opportunities

1. To determine the learning goals you want students to achieve from a topic, module, unit or course.
2. To align such goals with specific learning objectives/intended learning outcomes.
3. To align such specific learning objectives/intended learning outcomes with learning activities.
4. To align such learning objectives/intended learning outcomes and learning activities with assessment tasks.
5. To enable you to inform students of what they need to learn, the steps they will take to achieve that goal and the criteria by which they will be assessed.

TIP:

√ Interpret the term ‘competency’ as any form of learned knowledge, **not** just ‘skills based’.

Example



ePortfolio Grades Rubrics Quizzes

Conditional Release

Release conditions allow you to create a custom learning path through the materials in your course (unit). When you attach a release condition to an item, the user cannot see that item until they meet the associated condition. Source: Desire2Learn User Guide, 2009.

* You can put release conditions on:

Checklists Content Discussions Dropbox Grades News Quizzes Surveys



Why would you use Conditional Release?

Opportunities

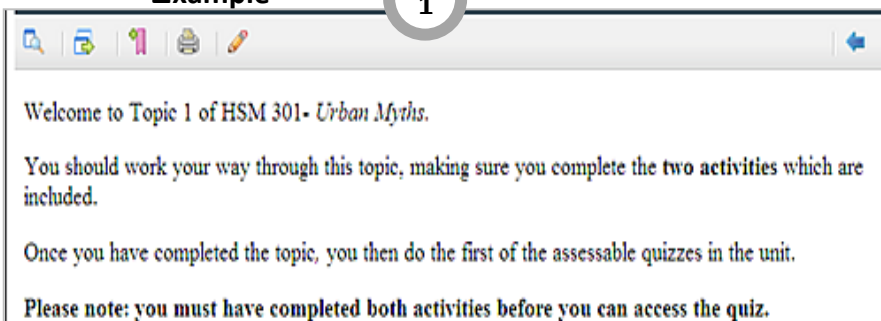
1. To ensure students read content before moving onto more **Content**.
2. To ensure students read content before attempting a **Quiz**.
3. To ensure students read a topic before submitting an assignment to the **Dropbox**.
4. To ensure students don't become overwhelmed by a mass of **Content** displayed all at once.
5. To ensure students complete a **Checklist** before submitting an assignment to the **Dropbox**.
6. To provide different content or instructions to different groups of students working on group projects.
7. To make sure students post to a **Discussion** forum before being able to access more **Content**.
8. To release a **News** item once students have met certain conditions.
9. To assist students become familiar with certain aspects of your site during the first week of trimester.

TIP:

Reflect on whether you are overusing release conditions, using them punitively or for valid learning reasons, using them so they confuse students, using them so that they counter each other making it impossible for students to move, overusing them to the extent that students disengage.

Example

1



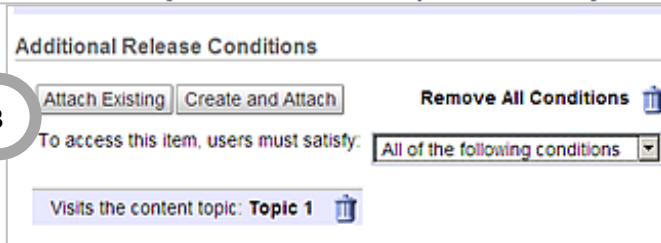
Welcome to Topic 1 of HSM 301- *Urban Myths*.

You should work your way through this topic, making sure you complete the two activities which are included.

Once you have completed the topic, you then do the first of the assessable quizzes in the unit.

Please note: you must have completed both activities before you can access the quiz.

3



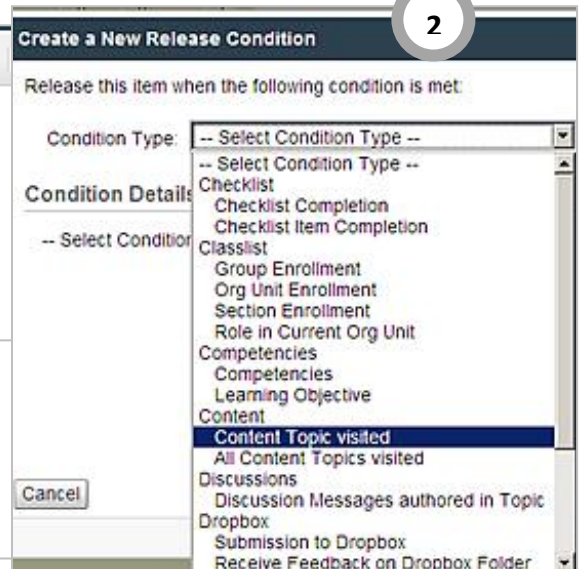
Additional Release Conditions

Attach Existing Create and Attach Remove All Conditions

To access this item, users must satisfy: All of the following conditions

Visits the content topic: **Topic 1**

2



Create a New Release Condition

Release this item when the following condition is met:

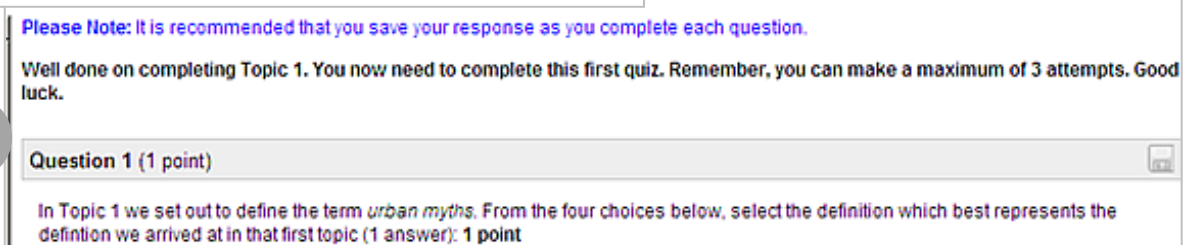
Condition Type: -- Select Condition Type --

Condition Details

- Select Condition --
- Checklist
- Checklist Completion
- Checklist Item Completion
- Classlist
- Group Enrollment
- Org Unit Enrollment
- Section Enrollment
- Role in Current Org Unit
- Competencies
- Competencies
- Learning Objective
- Content
- Content Topic visited**
- All Content Topics visited
- Discussions
- Discussion Messages authored in Topic
- Dropbox
- Submission to Dropbox
- Receive Feedback on Dropbox Folder

Cancel

4



Please Note: It is recommended that you save your response as you complete each question.

Well done on completing Topic 1. You now need to complete this first quiz. Remember, you can make a maximum of 3 attempts. Good luck.

Question 1 (1 point)

In Topic 1 we set out to define the term *urban myths*. From the four choices below, select the definition which best represents the definition we arrived at in that first topic (1 answer): **1 point**

Link

With

Checklists Content Discussions Dropbox Grades News Quizzes Surveys

Content

The **Content** tool enables you to create, edit, organise and delete modules and topics in your unit.
[User Guides](#)



Why would you use the Content tool?

Opportunities

1. To build your unit structure – modules and topics – by using **Manage Content**.
2. To have the choice of building structure by creating a new html file, using an existing file in the site, uploading a file from outside your site, or building **Quicklinks** into your unit topics.
3. To reorder the sequence of your modules/topics as you build.
4. To give yourself a complete linear view of how students will progress through your unit site.
5. To switch to **View Content** so you will see what your students will see.
6. To track student data regarding time spent in site and modules/topics visited.
7. To customise the look of your **Content Home Page**.
8. To manage individual files within your unit site by using **Manage Files**.
9. To set **Restrictions** on your content such as hiding modules/topics or release and close dates.

TIP:

✓ You can use the **Instructional Design Wizard** or the **Site Builder** as alternative means of building the structure of your unit.

Example

Manage Content



Search For: [Show Search Options](#)

Content Items	Actions
PDCAS 2011	
<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Fiction 201	
<input type="checkbox"/> Welcome to Crime Fiction 201.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Navigating Crime Fiction 201	
<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Fiction Unit Guide	
<input type="checkbox"/> Topic 1: Introducing the Genre	
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Fiction 201 - Constructive Alignment Exemplar	
<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Fiction 201 - Self Study Guide	

web pages via
html editor

link to .pdf
document

Word
documents via
'Manage Files'



Instructional Design Wizard **Site Builder**

Discussions

The Discussions tool is a collaboration area where you can post, read and reply to messages on different topics, share thoughts about the unit [User Guides](#)

? Why would you use the Discussions tool?

Yes, you could use it as a space for students to ask questions, but there is more to discussions than just asking and answering questions.

Discussions are

- consideration of a question in open and usually informal debate - [Mirriam-Webster Dictionary](#)
- a formal treatment of a topic in speech or writing - [Mirriam-Webster Dictionary](#)
- a conversation, especially on specific subjects - [The Australian Oxford Dictionary](#)

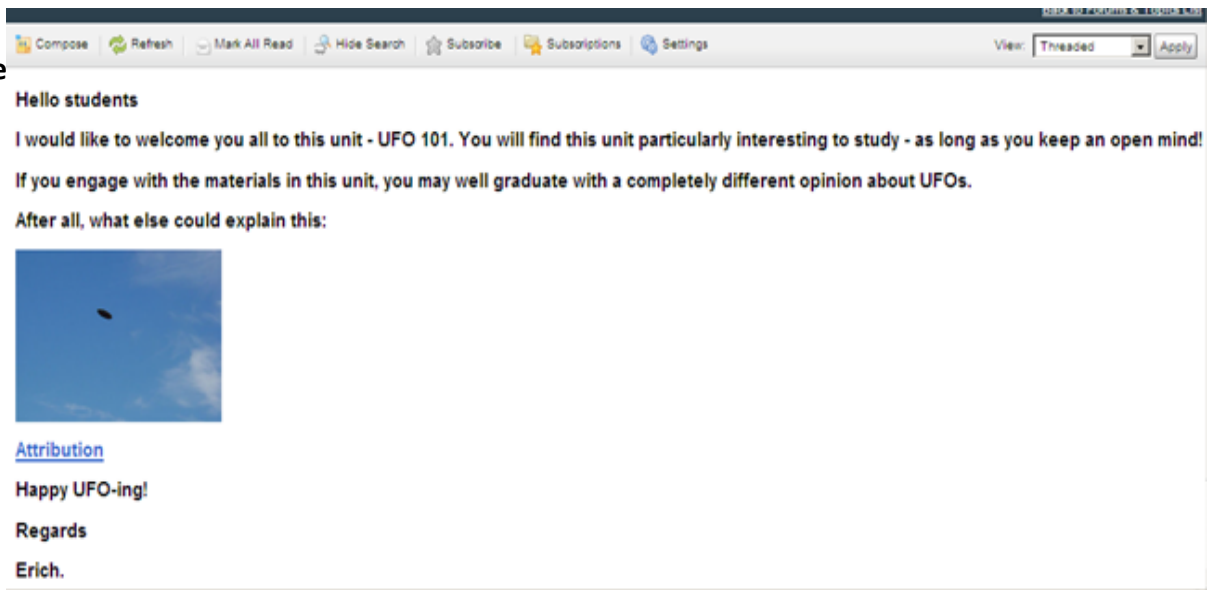
Opportunities

1. For seeding a conversation
2. For introducing yourself
3. For organising communications so that you manage them efficiently
4. For stimulating learning
5. For encouraging active learning online
6. For modelling professional communication practice
7. For creating your online presence
8. For establishing and reinforcing your expectations for your online learning environment
9. For assessment purposes

TIP:

- ✓ Ensure you have a regular presence in any discussion areas – students want to know there is someone who will respond to any discussions or questions.


Example



Compose Refresh Mark All Read Hide Search Subscribe Subscriptions Settings View: Threaded Apply

Hello students

I would like to welcome you all to this unit - UFO 101. You will find this unit particularly interesting to study - as long as you keep an open mind!
If you engage with the materials in this unit, you may well graduate with a completely different opinion about UFOs.
After all, what else could explain this:



[Attribution](#)

Happy UFO-ing!

Regards

Erich.

Link

With

Assessing Discussions News

Dropbox

The Dropbox tool enables the student to submit assignments online, eliminating the need to mail, fax, or email assignments. Students upload their assignments to the appropriate folder. This tool also helps you track when assignments are submitted. [User Guides](#)

? Why would you use the Dropbox tool?

Opportunities

1. A one-stop-shop for students to submit assignments, with a plagiarism check tool available.
2. For you to mark assignments, grade them and give feedback to students.
3. You have a record of who submitted assignments, when they were submitted, when they were graded and when they were available for students to access.
4. To set up separate folders for separate tasks or for separate groups of students.
5. To provide folders for group assignments to be submitted.
6. To provide feedback to individuals, select groups or to all students.

TIP:

- ✓ Link your **Dropbox** with your **Grades**.
- ✓ Set up a **Turnitin plagiarism check** for when students submit their assessment tasks.

Example









Question 1 (10 points)

Read through this book review [The Redeemer](#). Respond to these **three** questions:

- a. provide evidence from the review that you can recognise some of the conventions of the crime fiction genre
- b. provide evidence from the review of some of the techniques of crime fiction writing
- c. provide evidence from the review of why this reviewer thinks this book is worth reading.

Assessment Task

Dropbox

Folder	Total Files	Unread Files	Flagged Files	End Date	Actions
Crime Fiction 201					 
Crime Fiction 201 Assessment Task  	0	0	0	Aug 26, 2011 4:59 PM	
Crime Fiction 201 Final Exam  	0	0	0	Sep 10, 2011 4:00 PM	

plagiarism checking tool turned 'On'.



Competencies **Dropbox-Plagiarism Checker** **Grades**

Dropbox – Plagiarism Checker

The *Dropbox - Plagiarism Checker* tool is used to check for plagiarism by students before/when submitting an assignment to the *Dropbox*.

[User Guides](#)



Why would you use the Dropbox-Plagiarism Checker tool?

Opportunities

1. To encourage/require students to do a plagiarism check before submitting an assignment.
2. To use as an educational tool for students unfamiliar with academic writing protocols.
3. To provide opportunities for students to gauge the originality of their writing and edit if necessary.
4. To create learning opportunities for students to independently research required referencing systems.
5. To use another avenue of communication to remind students of the seriousness of plagiarism.
6. To create and store evidence of plagiarism by students for when you need it.

TIP:

✓ **Plagiarism** checks can be used for both educational and punitive purposes.

Example 1.

linked to **Grades** group submissions allowed

Dropbox Folders		Total Files	Unread Files	Flagged Files	End Date	Actions
20 per page						
No Category						
<input type="checkbox"/>	MMM 378 -Group Assignment Folders	0	0	0	Aug 5, 2011 5:00 PM	
<input type="checkbox"/>	MMT 378 - Major Assignment	0	0	0	Sep 23, 2011 5:00 PM	
20 per page						

plagiarism checking tool turned 'On'.

Example 2. Grades List

Grade Item	Type	Association	Max. Points	Actions
MMT 378 Group Assignment	Numeric	Dropbox	30	
MMT 378 Major Assignment	Numeric	Dropbox	30	
MMT 378 Exam	Numeric	-	40	
Final Calculated Grade				
Final Adjusted Grade				



Competencies Dropbox Grades

Grades

You can set up grade books that reflect your approach to evaluation. You control the grading formula used to calculate grades; what projects, assignments and tests are graded; how grade items are associated with other tools; and when grades are released to users and what information they see. [User Guides](#)



Why would you use the Grades tool?

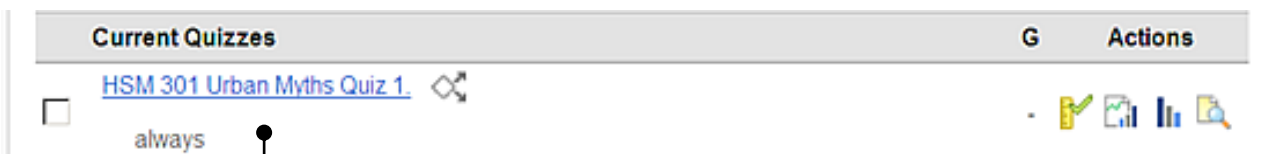
Opportunities

1. To create a connection between your **Dropbox** and/or **Quizzes** and your **Grades**.
2. To create assessment task items and record student grades/marks in your **Grades**.
3. To allocate different weightings to different assessment tasks.
4. To assess students by means of different grades/marks types.
5. To release grades/marks to students when available.
6. To use the statistical analysis function to analyse your distribution of grades.
7. To analyse the grades of individual students.
8. To export grades to a spreadsheet.

TIP:

✓ The **Grades Setup Wizard** allows you to choose *Weighted, Points* or *Formula* grades schemes.

Example



and

Dropbox Folders

		Folder	Total Files	Unread Files	Flagged Files	End Date	Actions
No Category							
<input type="checkbox"/>		HSM 301 - Essay	0	0	0	Oct 21, 2011 5:00 PM	
<input type="checkbox"/>		HSM 301 - Reflective Journal	0	0	0	Nov 4, 2011 5:00 PM	



Competencies Dropbox Quizzes

Groups

The Groups tool allows you to establish groups of students by setting up the category the group belongs to and the number of members, locker files, dropbox folders and discussion messages associated with the group. Source: Desire2Learn



Why would you use the Groups tool?

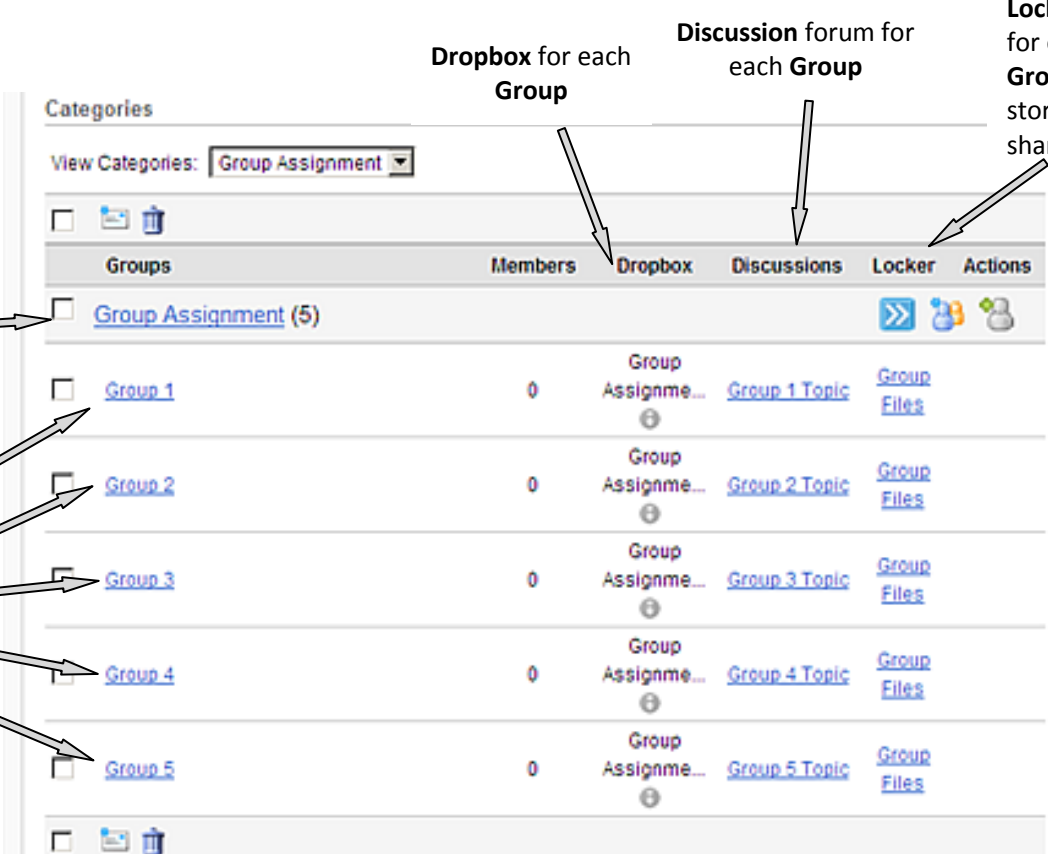
Opportunities

1. To create work spaces for groups of students.
2. To create learning spaces for students with different needs or interests.
3. To create a single space for students to form online groups, work on and submit a group assignment.
4. To establish a discussion group for a particular interest.
5. To set up a 'group of one' – e.g. a space for each student to write a reflective journal.
6. To allocate students to groups automatically, randomly or to allow students to self enrol.
7. To monitor individual contributions to group assignments.
8. To restrict access by students to only their group or groups.

TIP:

√ **Group** spaces can be limited to only those students who are members of that group.

Example



Groups	Members	Dropbox	Discussions	Locker	Actions
Group Assignment (5)					
Group 1	0	Group Assignme...	Group 1 Topic	Group Files	
Group 2	0	Group Assignme...	Group 2 Topic	Group Files	
Group 3	0	Group Assignme...	Group 3 Topic	Group Files	
Group 4	0	Group Assignme...	Group 4 Topic	Group Files	
Group 5	0	Group Assignme...	Group 5 Topic	Group Files	



Discussions Dropbox Groups Locker

Locker

The Locker tool can be used to upload, create, edit, move, copy, zip, and delete files.

Source: Desire2Learn



Why would you use the Locker tool?

Opportunities

1. To use the **Locker** as a storage space for your files.
2. To store files separate from your unit site content so it is less cluttered.
3. To store files which you might use in several different unit sites.
4. To set up **Group Lockers** for groups of students to use as a shared workspace.
5. To provide a workspace for collaborative learning tasks and group assignments.
6. To send emails directly from the **Locker** to students in groups lockers.
7. To create new files through instant access to the html editor.
8. To organise your files into separate folders.

TIP:

- ✓ A **Locker** can only be accessed by that **Locker's** 'owner'.
- ✓ **Group Lockers** can only be accessed by members of that **Group**.

Example

Personal Locker

	File Name ▲	Size	Last Modified	Actions
<input type="checkbox"/>	2011 Surveys			
<input type="checkbox"/>	ALD 196 Reading Lists 2008 - 2010			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Files from Blackboard			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Past Exam Papers			
<input type="checkbox"/>	YouTube URLs			

Example Group Lockers

Group Lockers

My Locker Group Lockers

Available Group Lockers

Please select a group locker to view:

ALD 196 Group Assignment

[Group 1](#)

[Group 2](#)

[Group 3](#)

[Group 4](#)

[Group 5](#)

[Group 6](#)

[Group 7](#)

[Group 8](#)



Classlist Groups

News

The News tool enables you to communicate updates, changes and new information to your students quickly and effectively. News postings appear in the News widget on the unit homepage. Since this is the first page that the users often see when they log in or access their units, it's a good way to display pertinent information. (This is similar to the Announcements tool in the old DSO system.) [User Guides](#)



Why would you use the News tool?

Opportunities

1. To introduce yourself to students
2. To welcome students to your unit
3. To direct students unfamiliar with the D2L environment
4. To encourage students to come to regard the **News** as the 'launching pad' to the unit
5. To provide positive feedback to students
6. To alert students to an upcoming or recently past event
7. To engage students by means of links to a video, blog, Twitter, online resource
8. To make an announcement
9. To encourage students to regard it as a 'one stop shop' for information about the unit (via **Quicklinks**)
10. To demonstrate to students via constant news changes - e.g. photos, quotes, URLs - that your online presence is regular
11. To engage students by means of links to a video,

TIP:

✓ News is meant to be informative, relevant to many and worth reading.


✓ Keep it concise, relevant and up to date.

Example

News

Welcome to Equestrian Psychology

Hi



Welcome to the *Equestrian Psychology* unit site.

[Creative Commons Licence Attribution](#)

Congratulations on choosing this unit to study. The teaching team hopes that you enjoy the issues we will cover during trimester.

We want to be sure you can navigate around this site, so the first thing we suggest you do is to try our [Quick Tour](#) - which will lead you back to here!

You no doubt will be interested in the assessment in this unit, so the details are available in the [Unit Guide](#). So is a whole lot more information for you!

We suggest that you read through the Unit Guide carefully before you post your questions into our unit [Discussion Space](#). The teaching team will monitor this space regularly during business hours and you can expect a response from us within 24 hours - weekends will take a little longer!

Good luck with your studies.

Rachael, Kelvin and Ursula
The Teaching Team.



**Conditional Release
Discussions**

Quizzes

The Quizzes tool is used to create, categorise, store, manage, publish and grade questions you set for your students to respond to either as reinforcement of learning or as formal assessment tasks.

[User Guides](#)



Why would you use the Quizzes tool?

Opportunities

1. To give students the opportunity to reinforce their learning.
2. To reinforce to students the purpose and value of learning objectives or intended learning outcomes.
3. To design a series of small quizzes to support sequential learning.
4. To design quizzes as formal assessment tasks.
5. To give students opportunities to complete multi-choice quizzes prior to multi-choice exams.
6. To create, build and maintain a library of questions which can be re-used in other quizzes or units.
7. To have data available (e.g. student grades, attempts, class average, numbers of responses).
8. To identify particular concepts which students appear to find challenging.
9. To provide instantaneous feedback to students as they complete a quiz.
10. To provide a variety of quiz question types so as to encourage different thinking styles.
11. To export quiz results to a spreadsheet.

TIP:

✓ Online quizzes, well designed, can be a very efficient way of assessing student learning and providing instant feedback. Feedback on learning is the essential ingredient of good assessment practice.

Example



(Source)

Which of the following conventions of the Crime Fiction genre are evident in this image (2 answers): **2 points**

- setting
- the criminal
- timeframe
- police detective investigation

Comment: (given as feedback)
Setting and police detective investigation are the best choices.

Clearly a serious crime has been committed in a Library and the police have established a crime scene to investigate.



Competencies Content Grades Rubrics

Rubrics

Rubrics are an assessment tool which can be used for grading or to evaluate Competencies Activities and ePortfolio items. Rubrics enable the evaluation of an activity or item based on a predefined set of criteria. They help ensure that activities and items are evaluated fairly and consistently. [User Guides](#)



Why would you use the Rubrics tool?

Opportunities

1. To establish your criteria for an assessment task.
2. To inform students of exactly how they should respond to your assessment task.
3. To give students a means by which they may assess their own response before submitting it.
4. To make the marking process more consistent and efficient.
5. To have a marking guide which allows the marker(s) to assess student learning objectively
6. To discriminate between what is required for Pass, Credit, Distinction, Higher Distinction (& Fail).
7. To have a framework from which to give feedback on learning to students.
8. To facilitate an objective discussion with students who want to follow up on their grades.

TIP:

✓ D2L allows you to design either **analytic** (breaks performance down into multiple criteria) or **holistic** rubrics (the user making the assessment may consider several different criteria, but ultimately makes only one overall assessment).

Example

Criteria	Excellent 4 points	Satisfactory 3 points	Improving 2 points	Unsatisfactory 1 point
Main idea	Main idea is clear, focused, and interesting	Main idea is focused but could be developed further	Main idea is simplistic and/or does not fulfil all aspects of the assignment	Lacks a main idea and fails to meet expectations of the assignment
Organization	The structure flows logically from point to point, enhancing the central idea	Organization is clear, and generally enhances the assignment, but does not always flow smoothly	Organizational attempt is present, but appears haphazard, not serving the main idea	There is no discernible structure to the assignment
Language Use	Language, graphics, or other means of communication are sophisticated, accurate, and clear	Language use satisfies all aspects of the assignment, but does not show mastery of discipline-specific language	Language is adequate, but sometimes vague or not appropriate for the discipline	Many errors in usage, enough to detract from the assignment and fail to meet basic standards of the discipline
Overall Score	Level 4 10 or more	Level 3 7 or more	Level 2 4 or more	Level 1 0 or more

Source: adapted from D2L Sample Rubrics



Competencies Dropbox e-Portfolio Gradebook Quizzes

Self Assessments

Self assessments allow you to create non-assessable quizzes which students can access in order to reinforce their learning.



Why would you use the Self Assessments tool?

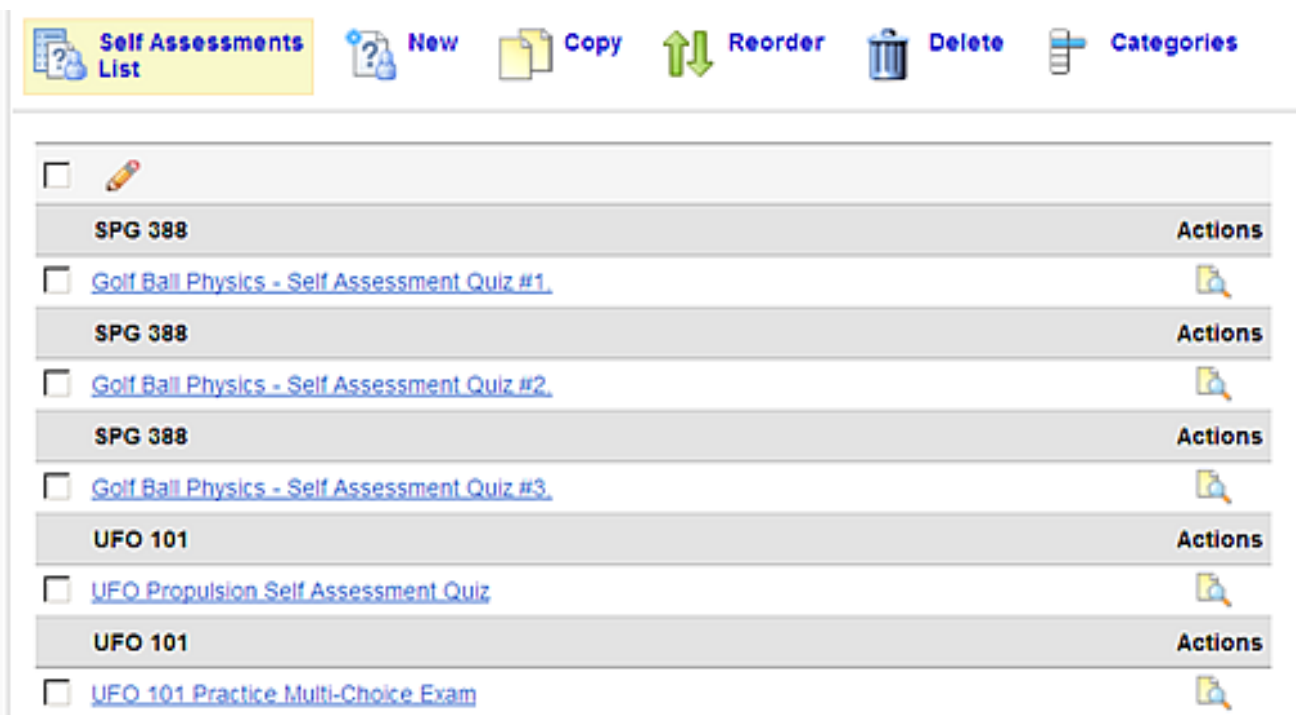
Opportunities

1. To create quizzes which allow students to 'test' what they are learning.
2. To assist students to reinforce their learning by interspersing self assessments into your **Content**.
3. To build in feedback with your quiz questions and answers.
4. To provide opportunities for students to determine what aspects of their learning they need to revise.
5. To give students experience of doing informal online quizzes before tackling formal assessments.
6. To provide opportunities for students to practice for multi-choice exams.

TIP:

- ✓ You can link your **Self Assessments** to selected questions in your **Question Library** so you don't need to keep creating questions continually.
- ✓ Adult learners value the opportunity to check how well they are understanding concepts.

Example



Course	Quiz Title	Actions
SPG 388	Golf Ball Physics - Self Assessment Quiz #1	Actions
SPG 388	Golf Ball Physics - Self Assessment Quiz #2	Actions
SPG 388	Golf Ball Physics - Self Assessment Quiz #3	Actions
UFO 101	UFO Propulsion Self Assessment Quiz	Actions
UFO 101	UFO 101 Practice Multi-Choice Exam	Actions

Link

With

Quizzes

Site Builder Tool

Site Builder enables you to interact with your unit materials and a variety of assessment tools in one consolidated interface so you can see and review your entire unit at once. ...Whether you're starting from scratch or updating existing units, Site Builder is an excellent tool for planning and organising unit materials.

[User Guides](#)



Why would you use the Site Builder tool?

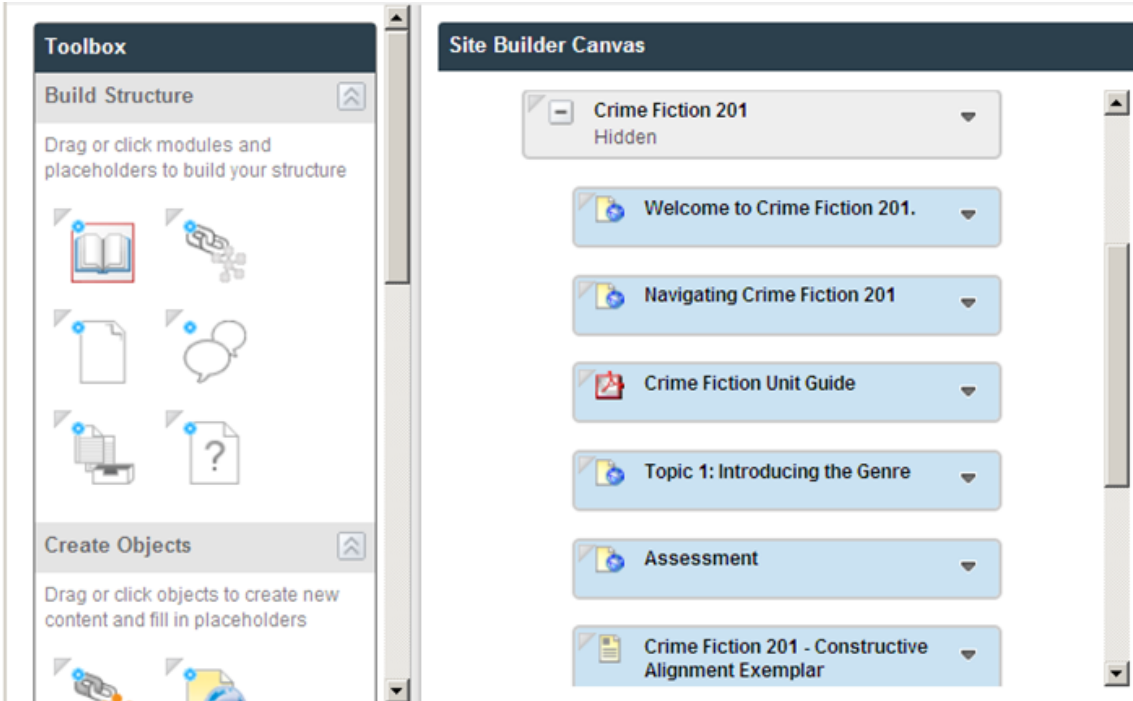
Opportunities

1. To plan the structure and sequence of your unit on a 'blank canvas' without 'locking it in'.
2. To set locations in your unit for content, quick-links, discussions, drop-boxes and quizzes, even before you have created them.
3. To help you set learning objectives and align them with unit content and unit assessment tasks.
4. To create objects (e.g. html files, quizzes, discussions) which you add to the planned structure.
5. To upload files into your unit.
6. To alter the sequence in which your unit is organised.
7. To edit components of your unit.
8. To set 'Start Dates' and 'End Dates' for components of your unit structure.

TIP:

✓ You can use the **Manage Content** tool as an alternative means of building the structure of your unit.

Example



The screenshot displays the Site Builder Canvas interface. On the left is a 'Toolbox' with two sections: 'Build Structure' (containing icons for book, link, document, and speech bubble) and 'Create Objects' (containing icons for link and document). The main canvas area, titled 'Site Builder Canvas', shows a hierarchical structure for 'Crime Fiction 201'. The structure includes a 'Hidden' folder, followed by 'Welcome to Crime Fiction 201.', 'Navigating Crime Fiction 201', 'Crime Fiction Unit Guide', 'Topic 1: Introducing the Genre', 'Assessment', and 'Crime Fiction 201 - Constructive Alignment Exemplar'.

Link

With

Content Competencies Discussions Dropbox Grades Quizzes

Site Design Accelerator

This tool contains a list of tasks that promote effective site design and streamline the process of site creation. Source: Desire2Learn



Why would you use the Site Design Accelerator tool?

Opportunities

1. To use the in-built 'checklist' of recommendations when building your unit site.
2. To set up and automate some site administration tools.
3. To configure your site communication spaces.
4. To use the suggestions for creating a 'welcoming' site.

TIP:





- ✓ The **Site Design Accelerator** is advisory rather than functional.
- ✓ You can also build your site by using **Manage Content**, **Site Builder** or **Instructional Design Wizard**.

Example

Portion of the Site Design Accelerator Tool

Analyse and Design your Site Structure

Start designing your site. For a new site we recommend the following tasks:

- 
[Review site offering information](#)
 Review your site offering information to ensure the site name and code, semester, language, offering date and default colour schemes are appropriately defined.
- 
[Plan your site using the Instructional Design Wizard](#)
 The Instructional Design Wizard helps you align learning objectives with effective learning activities and assessments, and measures learners' success with those objectives.
- 
[Configure your grade book settings using the Grades Setup Wizard](#)
 The Grades Setup Wizard progresses through a series of set up options that configure your grade items and categories. The wizard also helps you control how grades appear to learners.
- 
[Create groups workspaces for your activities](#)
 Segment your class into appropriately-sized groups to facilitate activities for your site.



Content Instructional Design Wizard Site Builder

Site Structure

D2L gives you the capability to build your unit site by effective use of the html editor, allowing you to reduce much of the hierarchical structure inherent in Blackboard.



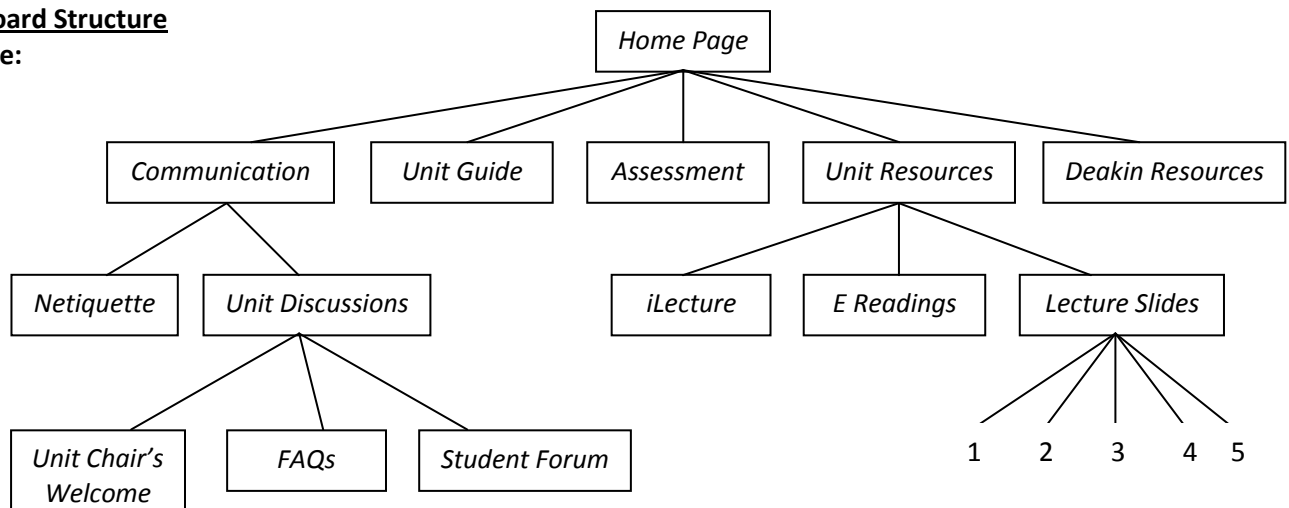
Why would you do anything different in Desire2Learn than you did in Blackboard?

Opportunities

1. To renew your units and the way you teach them.
2. To 'clean out' some ageing content/activities/resources.
3. To use the D2L architecture to align your learning objectives/outcomes, learning activities and assessments.
4. To improve site navigation by use of the **html editor** and **Quicklinks**.
5. To take advantage of the greater range of tools available to support your teaching.

Blackboard Structure

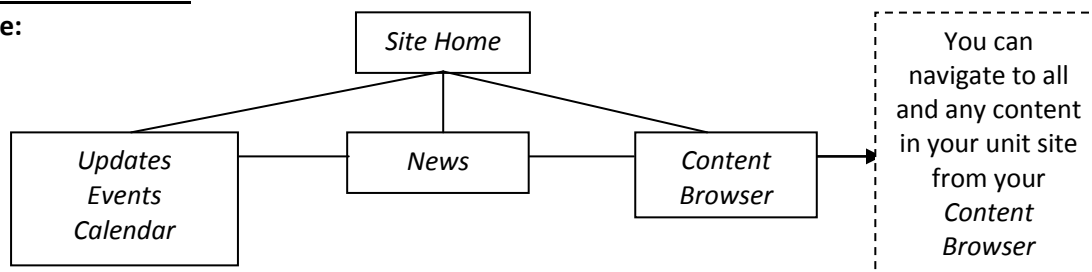
Example:



The hierarchical structure of Blackboard influences site design by leading to several levels of folders and files. In this example, this would mean that a student wishing to access the *Student Forum* needs to navigate down three layers of folders and files from the *Home Page*. To then navigate to the *Lecture Slides* for example, could seem quite convoluted to the student.

Desire2Learn Structure

Example:



The structure of Desire2Learn is much 'flatter' and allows for horizontal linkages, thus creating less 'clutter'. In this example, a student arrives at the unit site and can instantly read any *News* (e.g. unit chair's welcome, announcements, directions) and be directed to a specific area of the site by a *Quicklink* built into the *News* (e.g. a discussion forum, unit resources, lecture slides) or by simply using the *Content Browser* which will take the student directly to all of the unit site content.



Surveys

The **Surveys** tool creates surveys which allow you to monitor unit trends and opinions and assess student satisfaction. Source: Desire2Learn Guide, 2009.



Why would you use the Surveys tool?

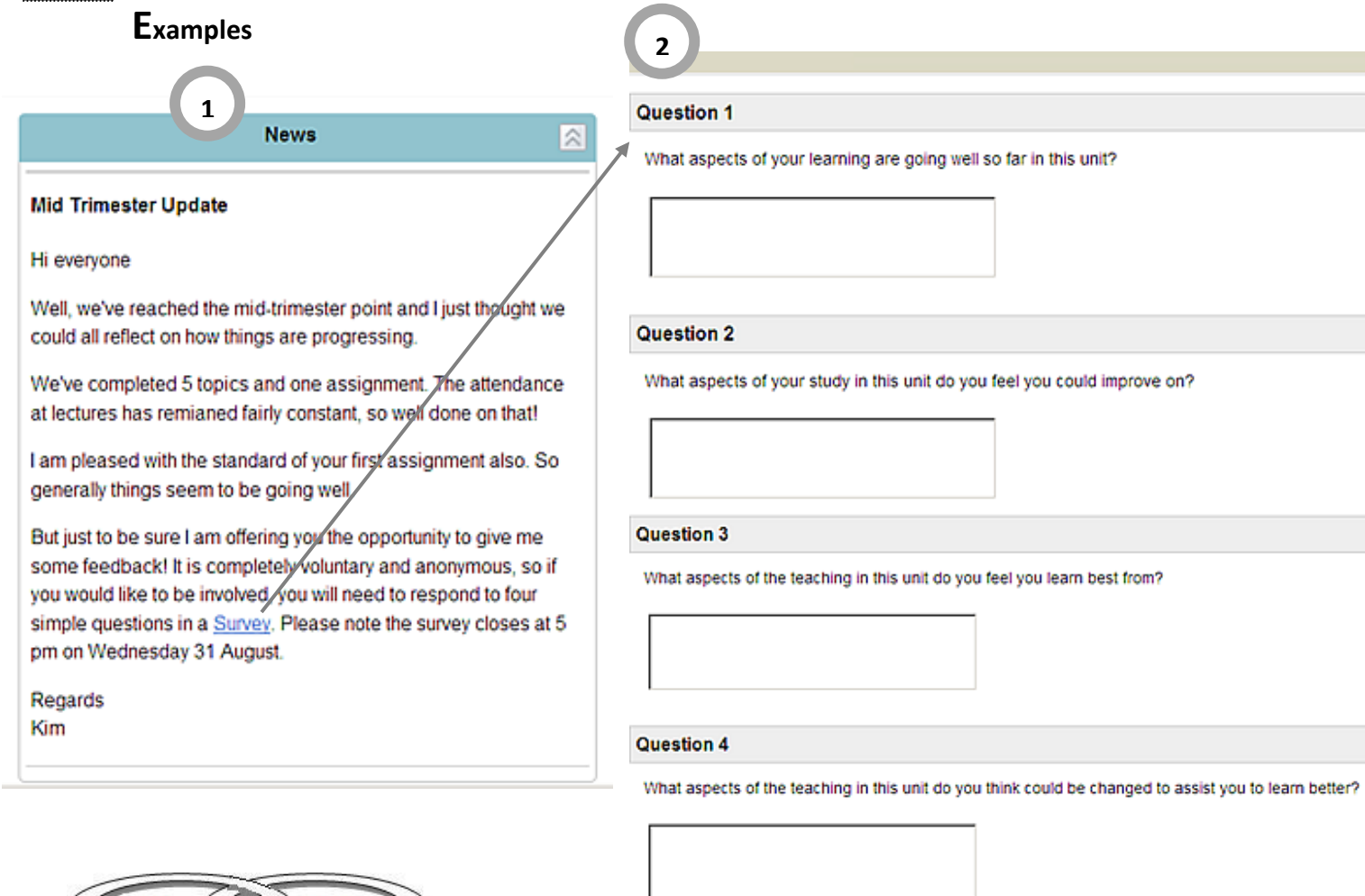
Opportunities

1. To use a survey as a learning activity for students.
2. To survey students' preferred learning styles early in trimester.
3. To search for and analyse results of a survey.
4. To use the results as the basis of a class discussion.
5. To build into a **Conditional Release** sequence.
6. To get feedback from students, with the option of anonymity if desired.
7. To give instant feedback to students who respond to the survey.
8. To access summary aggregate data from student responses.
9. To collate qualitative comments from students.

TIP:

✓ You can link your **Surveys** to your **Question Library** which you use to create **Quiz** questions.

Examples



The screenshot shows a 'News' post on the left and a 'Question Library' on the right. The 'News' post is titled 'Mid Trimester Update' and contains text about the mid-trimester point, attendance, and a survey opportunity. The 'Question Library' contains four questions, each with a text input field. An arrow points from the 'News' post to the first question in the library.

1 News

2

Question 1
What aspects of your learning are going well so far in this unit?

Question 2
What aspects of your study in this unit do you feel you could improve on?

Question 3
What aspects of the teaching in this unit do you feel you learn best from?

Question 4
What aspects of the teaching in this unit do you think could be changed to assist you to learn better?



News Quizzes