

Social Presence

You need to be active in your course so that students know you are there, listening to them and guiding them. In an online environment we call this having social presence.

▶ Social Presence Video



Direct URL:

<https://youtu.be/OaZBBDKvSMc?list=PLontYaReEU1tzu1T5gfiX-JQA5nBc3isN>

Video Description: This tutorial explains the features students and instructors use in the Blackboard Learn 9.1 calendar.

+ Social Presence Instructions

Social Tools

It is nice to give your course a personal touch in terms of look and feel using some of the features within Blackboard, but above all your students will appreciate your personal presence. You need to be active in your course so that students know you are there, listening to them and guiding them. In an online environment we call this having *social presence*. You can achieve social presence in a number of ways such as:

- Telling students something about yourself and letting them know how to contact you by using the *Contacts tool*.
- Using the *Announcements tool* to welcome students to the course and keeping them updated with events, tasks and changes.
- Using Email to communicate with students on an individual or Group basis.
- Making use of the *Course Calendar* to give students reminders and keep them on track.
- Using the *Retention Centre* to provide focused attention to students who need it most.

There are other more complex communication tools for more interactive communication and collaboration such as Discussion Boards and social media tools such as Blogs and Wikis that you may like to explore once you familiar with working in Blackboard.

Contacts

Using the Contacts tool you can provide students with your contact information as well as some personal details and a photo. You can also create a folder to organise profiles for your teaching assistants and guest lecturers.

- Select *Tools* in the control panel followed by *Contacts*
- Select *Create Contact* and insert your profile information

Note: Under Options you can add a photo and a personal web site - the photo should be 150 x 150 pixels or it will be distorted.

Viewing Contacts

A Tool Link needs to be created in the Course Menu in order to view any Contact that you have added.

- In the Course Menu, click the (+) button followed by *Tool Link*.
- Name the menu item.
- Select *Contacts* as the Tool Type.
- Check *Available to Users* and select *Submit*.

Note: Contact Information will appear at the bottom of the Course Menu.

Announcements







The Announcements tool is useful for welcoming students to your course. It can be used to communicate essential information such as assignment due dates, exam schedules, and reminders about classes. It can also be used to give encouragement and updates such as special readings or topical videos. You can control the order of the announcements and the time they are displayed. Announcements will appear in Blackboard and be automatically sent by email to all of your students. To add an announcement:

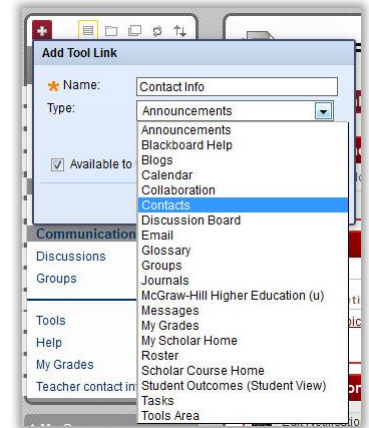
- Select *Announcements* in the Course Tools area of the Control Panel
- Select *Create Announcement* & enter a Subject and Message.
- Select *Date Restricted* (if required) and add dates (with boxes checked) followed by *Submit*.

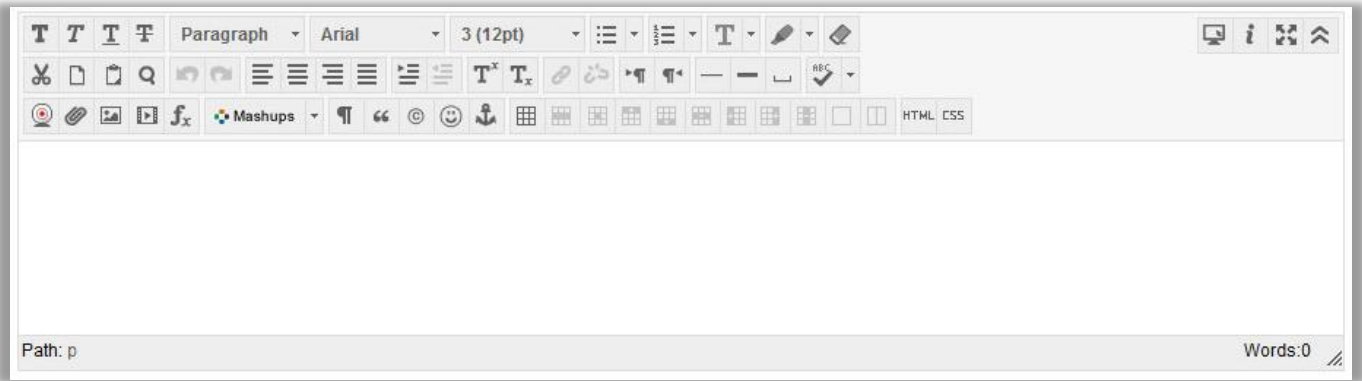
Note: You can see the headline of your post listed in the My Announcements block.

Content Editor

When you create something in Blackboard such as Announcements you will very often have to use the content editor. Features include:

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|
|  | Preview | Allows you to preview any text you have inserted |
|  | Help | Provides Hints and Tips |
|  | Full Screen | View the editor in Full Screen mode |
|  | Show less | Show only the basic editing tools in the toolbar |
|  | Video Everywhere | This feature controls the user's webcam. Instructors and students can record video and upload it directly to YouTube . Previously recorded videos can also be used |
|  | Maths Editor | WIRIS provides the maths formula editing capabilities. It is based on JavaScript thereby removing dependency on Java. It works on all the major platforms |





Send Email

A useful feature of Announcements is that all Announcements will go to all course users' external Email, so even if a student did not log into Blackboard there will be a notification. You can also use the Send Email tool to communicate with enrolled members of your course in various ways. This is especially convenient if you have large number of students as there is no need to create special email lists.

Note: Blackboard keeps no record of sent emails and will not recognize files or email addresses with spaces or special characters. You will have a record in your own email (outside of Blackboard) as you will receive a copy of your communications.

- In *Course Tools* select *Send Email*
- Select the type of *Recipient Group*. For example, All Users or Single/Select Users

Note: For Select Users or Select Groups, select the recipients in the Items to Select box and click the right-pointing arrow to move them into the Selected Items box.

- Insert a *Subject* and *Message* and select *Submit*

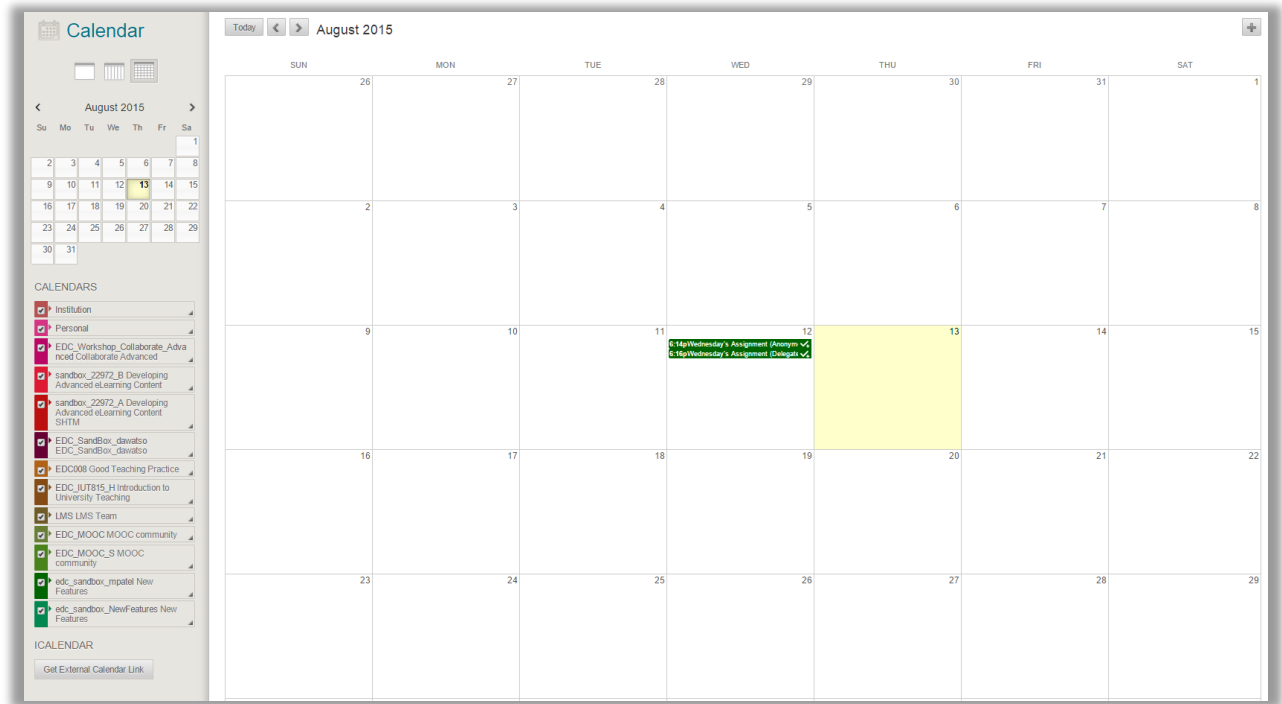
Course Calendar

Students can consult the calendar to see any events which the Instructor may have added, such as reminders of course meetings and due dates for assignments. It also allows you to plan out activities for an entire semester before the first classroom sessions. Users can select views (month, week, day) and enable color-coded events to differentiate courses or personal items.

Adding an Event to a Course Calendar

- Select *Course Calendar* in the *Course Tools* area of the Control Panel
- Select a *Calendar view* (Day, Week, Month, or Year)
- Click (+) in the top right corner to *Create New Event*.
- Give your event a name and select which Course Calendar (Course Name) to add it to
- Insert event dates and event description and select *Submit*

Note: The Event Name will appear as a link on the Course Calendar.



Create Event

New Event Name...

Calendar:
EDC_SandBox_dawatso EDC_SandBox_dawatso

Starts: 08/13/2015 12:00 PM Ends: 08/13/2015 12:30 PM

All Day Repeat

Event Description:

Cancel Save

Generate iCal URL

Use this URL for importing your selected calendar content into other calendar applications. This is a private address for this calendar. Don't share this address with others unless you want them to see all the events on this calendar.

<https://learn.polyu.edu.hk/webapps/calendar/calendarFeed/90699360e9c1427f8dedd5eed2c6895d/learn.ics>

Cancel Re-generate

Calendar items can also be exported via an iCal feed to Microsoft Outlook, Google or other 3rd party calendars. To do this:

- Select *Get External Calendar Link* to generate an iCal URL - Copy the iCal URL
- Open Microsoft Outlook
- Go to *Open Calendar* and select *From Internet*
- Paste the iCal URL.

Note: This will create a new calendar (e.g. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University). Open the new calendar. Any updates in Blackboard will automatically be updated in the 3rd party calendars.