VITAL Baseline 2017-18

Overview

The VITAL Baseline specifies some simple, key information and content that students most want to see in all VITAL modules. The VITAL Baseline is not intended to replace or limit existing good practice and creative, innovative use of VITAL and this should be considered when applying the Baseline.

The VITAL Baseline for 2017-18 is:

Module staff details	All staff teaching on the module should be listed in the Module Staff section to include name, contact email, office location, office hours (where appropriate) and an image is recommended.
Module Overview page	Every module menu includes by default a link to the automated **Module Overview** page. Electronic module specifications need to be accurate as information is taken from these for this page.
Reading List	Every module menu includes by default a link to the Reading Lists @ Liverpool area for that module. Modules should include a reading list.
Learning Resources	Modules should include resources for lectures and teaching where appropriate and which exist in an electronic format, such as lecture PowerPoints and handouts, in a suitable, easily-navigable structure.
Exam Resources	Modules should contain appropriate resources, preparation and advice for students on any exam element of the module, which could include but is not restricted to: past exam papers, samples of MCQs, types of question that can be expected, sample answers, marking criteria.
General coursework and exam feedback	An overall perspective of the cohort's performance in exams and in coursework should be offered through the relevant VITAL module.

Your school or department may have already developed a standard module template that meets this Baseline. Your module(s) may already meet the Baseline in ways other than those detailed below. The Baseline is flexible in its application. This guide describes some of the simplest recommended ways available to meet the Baseline.

A. What to do first

The default, empty module template incudes links and module sections that will help you meet the VITAL Baseline. If any are missing go to the section at the end of this guide on restoring them. Remember, you do not have to rebuild your module's content every year, use the **Course Copy** to move last year's content to this year's module. See this guide for full details.

B. Next steps - meeting the VITAL Baseline

1. Module staff details

In the **Module Staff** section of the module, list each member of staff teaching on the module by clicking on the **Create Contact** button and include the following details:

- contact name (**Title**, **First Name**, **Last Name**)
- **Email**
- **Office Location**
- **Office Hours** (if appropriate)
- An **Image** (recommended) can be uploaded in the **Options** section and should be no larger than 150 x 150 pixels otherwise they can distort.
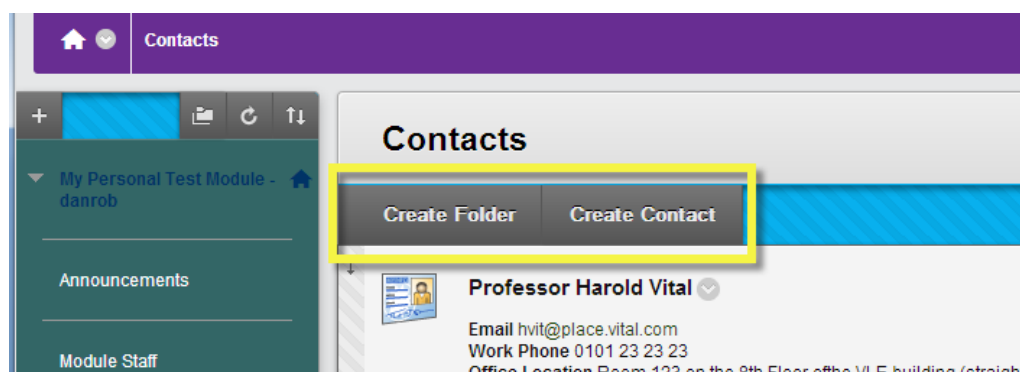
Use the **Create Folder** facility if you want to organise categories of staff associated with the module. **NB** create your folder structures before you create your contact entries as the individual entries cannot be moved/copied around once created.

2. Module Overview page

The **Module Overview** takes key information automatically from the module's electronic specification and presents it clearly to students. The link to this page is automatically included on the module menu. The fields displayed are: Module Title and Module Code; Module Co-ordinator*; Aims; Learning Outcomes; Syllabus; Teaching and Learning Strategy; Assessment Requirements; Contact Hours. (*Module Co-ordinator is a clickable link which creates an email prefilled with the co-ordinator's email address and with the module ID as the subject.)

The **Module Overview** page will always reflect the latest version of the electronic module specification so save you the need to update important module details in two systems. If you use the **About this module** section check for duplication with the **Module Overview** page. If there is additional module information you wish to show you could re-use the **About this module** section renaming it to something more descriptive if you prefer.

To **rename a module menu link**:
- Hover over the link you wish to rename and click the downward arrow icon. On the menu that pops up select **Rename Link**, type in your new name for the link on the module menu and click the green tick next to it.
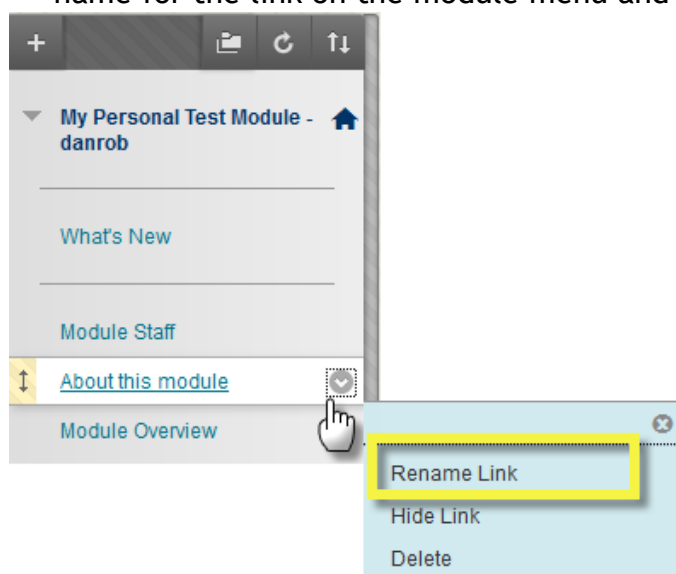
NB. it is better to use the **Hide Link** facility to remove a section of content from student view rather than **Delete**. **Delete** removes the link and **all of the content in that associated section,** there is currently no Undo in VITAL!

3. Reading Lists @ Liverpool

For full information on using Reading Lists @ Liverpool for your module reading lists please contact your Liaison Librarian and/or see this guidance site (http://libguides.liv.ac.uk/readinglists/academics). Even if you do not use this tool your module should still include a reading list.

4. Learning Resources

Upload learning resources to easily navigable structures. Every empty VITAL module includes a default **Learning Resources** content area where electronic resources for lectures and extended learning activities can be uploaded. You can create more content areas like this on the module menu for organising content into easily navigable structures, for example, theme, lecturer, and/or week (see the examples below). You can also create content folders within content areas to organise your material further but be careful about burying content too deeply in complicated folder structures – two levels from the module menu is a sensible limit.

Plan and create these structures in the module before uploading and building content as moving content items and files around sections of VITAL modules is time-consuming.

As a note video content should not be uploaded directly to VITAL modules, use instead stream.liv.ac.uk to host and stream video content if the video content copyright is yours. Consult your liaison librarian first about copyright of video content and what you are permitted to do with this.

If any person becomes aware that any defamatory, inaccurate or copyright infringing material is included within VITAL or any other reason why it would be expedient for the University to remove the materials whilst an investigation is undertaken by the HoD, they must contact the University Computing Services Department immediately.

Course Copy – don't forget, you do not have to rebuild your module content every year. Use the Course Copy process to copy over what you need from previous versions of the module. See this full guide for details.

The examples below show module menus where new content areas have been created to organise material by theme and by week.
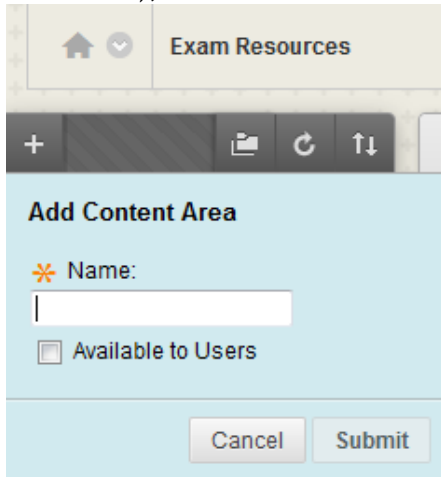
Example module menus – organising content by theme and by week
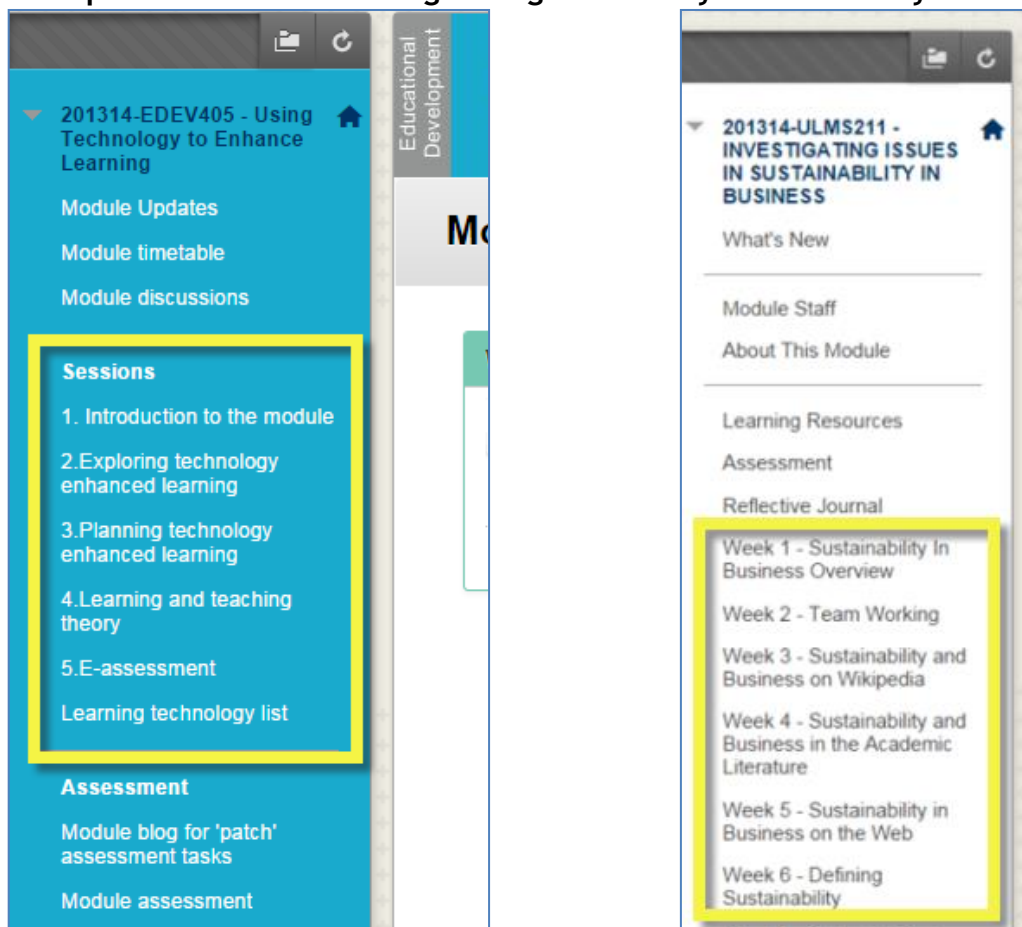
To organise content by additional content areas (as in e.g. above)

**A.** To create additional **content areas** accessed from the module menu then:

- Hover over the white cross icon in the upper left of the module menu, select **Content Area** from the menu that appears.

- In the **Name** field type the title of the section (eg Professor X's materials), then check the **Available to Users** box and click **Submit**.

- This appears at the bottom of your module menu. Drag and drop this content area to where you wish it to appear on the module menu.

B. To create **folders** within Content Areas to organise content then:

- In your content area hover over the **Build Content** button and in the **New Page** column of the menu that appears click **Content Folder**.
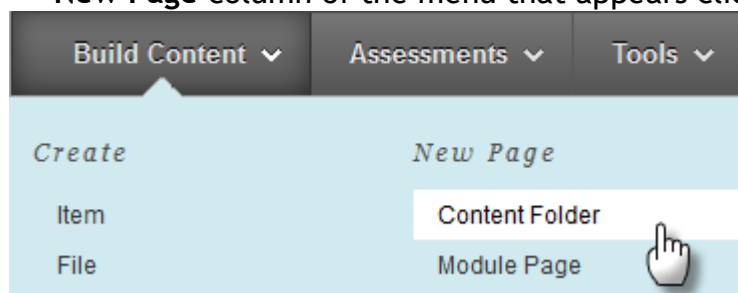
- You must give the folder a **Name**. Add a description in the **Text** area if you wish. The **Standard Options** section allows you to specify time-release of folders, useful for lecture-related materials for example. Click **Submit** to create the content folder. Click on the content folder link to open the new content area it contains.

As a note, the **Assessments** area of the default module template is a suggested area for holding assignment submission links, tests etc but this

can be utilised as suits your module best. The key is clear navigation for students.

5. Exam Resources

This content area appears by default in your module menu and should contain resources, preparation and advice for students on any exam element of the module, which could include but is not restricted to: past exam papers, samples of MCQs, types of question that can be expected, sample answers, marking criteria, i.e. whatever is most appropriate.

NB this section should **not** contain any exam timetabling information or other exam information that is held by Orbit.

It is also strongly recommended that critical information about non-examination assessments (i.e. non-Orbit held assessment information) particularly deadlines, is included in your module(s). Clear guidance on these along with specific assessment criteria where relevant is good practice especially if you are managing these other assessments through VITAL. The **Assessments** area (which all modules contain by default) is the suggested section for this; you may already using this section to take in work from students, run online tests and so on.

6. General coursework and exam feedback

This is not a separate section but rather left to you to decide where would be best placed to offer via VITAL an overall perspective of the cohort's performance in exams and in coursework. This could be offered as a content item, an announcement text, a recorded audio or video file as examples.

7. Further resources

You are also enrolled on a self-directed module in VITAL called **VITAL help for staff** (check your list of modules on your VITAL homepage). This contains a section **The VITAL Baseline module standard** with more detailed guidance on each element of the Baseline and building modules generally.

The Liverpool Guild of Students report, 'Making the Most of IT' which details the research carried by the Guild out into student technology enhanced learning needs can be read here. The VITAL Baseline incorporates the recommendations from this report and was developed in full consultation with the Guild.

## 8. How to restore missing sections and links

If you find any of the default Baseline sections missing from the module menu, namely:
- **Module Overview**
- **Reading Lists @ Liverpool**
- **Exam Resources**

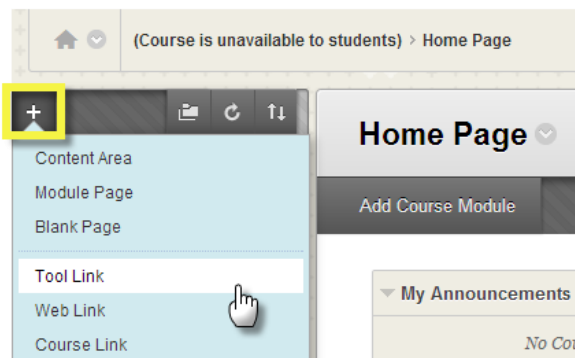then you can follow these steps to restore them.

- For each link you need to create first hover the mouse over the white cross in the upper left of the module menu (highlighted in screenshot below).
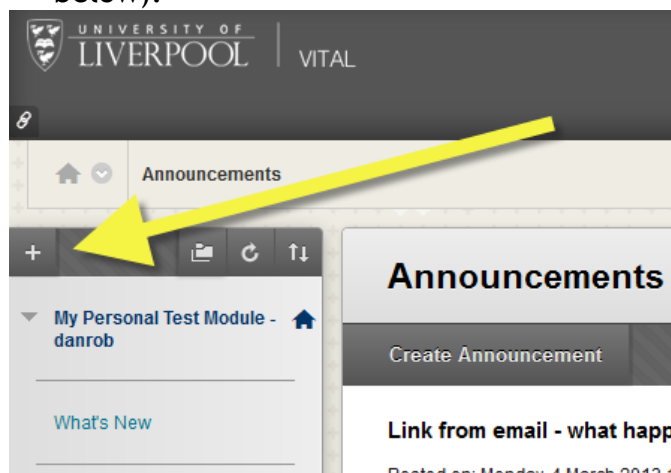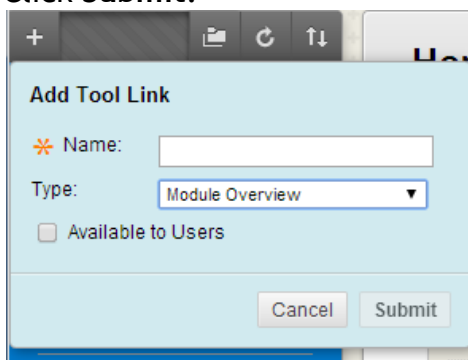

Then on the menu that pops up, to add:
Module Overview
- Select the **Tool Link** option (screenshot below).

- Another dialogue box, **Add Tool Link** appears (screenshot below). In the **Name** field type Module Overview. From the **Type** drop down menu select **Module Overview**. Check the **Available to Users** box. Click **Submit**.

- **Reading Lists @ Liverpool**
  Follow the steps as for **Module Overview** but in the **Add Tool Link** dialogue box, in the **Name** field type **Reading Lists @ Liverpool**. From the **Type** drop down menu select **Reading Lists**. Check the **Available to Users** box. Click **Submit**.

- **Exam Resources**
  After hovering over the white cross icon, select **Content Area** from the menu that appears. In the Name field type **Exam Resources**, then check the **Available to Users** box and click **Submit**.

These three links are created at the bottom of the module menu and you can drag and drop these to where you want them to appear.