

The VITAL Baseline

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 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 new, automated Module Overview page. Module specifications in Programme Planner need to be accurate as information is taken from here for this page.
Reading Lists @ Liverpool link	Modules should include a reading list. Reading Lists @ Liverpool is a tool for creating online reading lists. A link can be made from the module menu to its Reading Lists @ Liverpool 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. Every module has by default a section called 'Exam Resources' which can be used for this purpose and can 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 module.

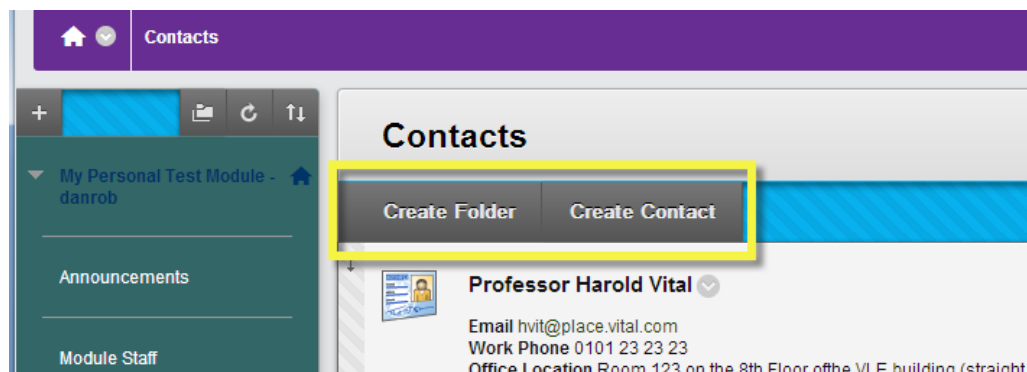
Your school or department may have already developed a standard module template that meets this Baseline. Your module(s) may already meet the Baseline in ways other than those detailed below. This guide describes some of the simplest recommended ways available to meet the Baseline.

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 around once created.

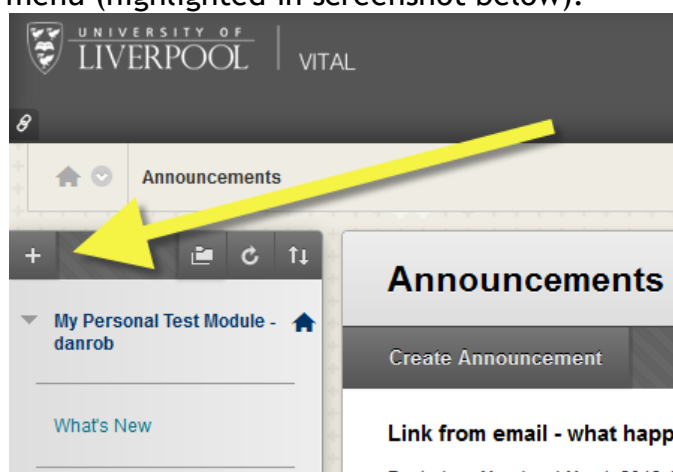
2. Module Overview page

Every module menu by default contains a link called **Module Overview**. Clicking on this opens an automated page which takes key information from the module's electronic specification in Programme Planner and presents it clearly to students. There is nothing extra to do other than checking that the link is 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.)

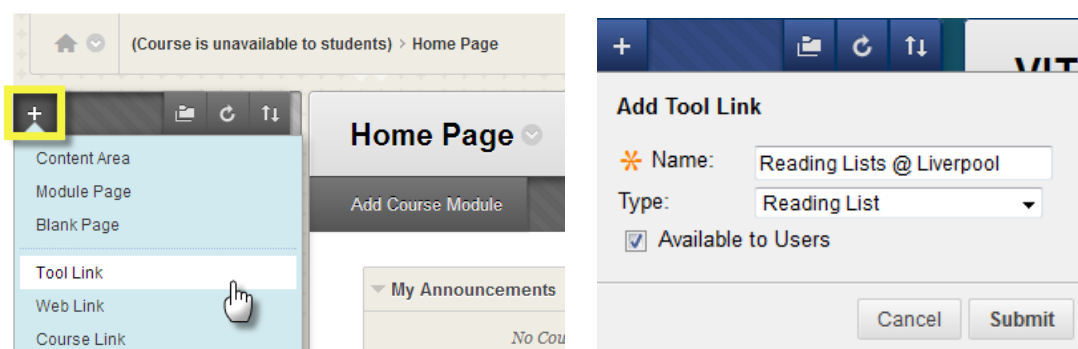
3. Reading Lists @ Liverpool

Every module should include a reading list. Where you have set up a Reading Lists @ Liverpool online list for your module you can make a link to it from the module menu following the steps below. When students click on the link the Reading Lists @ Liverpool list for this module opens in a new window.

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 select the **Tool Link** option (left hand screenshot below). In the **Add Tool Link** dialogue box (right hand screenshot below) in the **Name** field type Reading Lists @ Liverpool. From the **Type** dropdown menu select **Reading List**. Check the **Available to Users** box. Click **Submit**.



The link is created at the bottom of the module menu and you can drag and drop it to the position on the module menu you require.

For full information on setting up and 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) (<http://libguides.liv.ac.uk/readinglists/academics>).

4. 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.

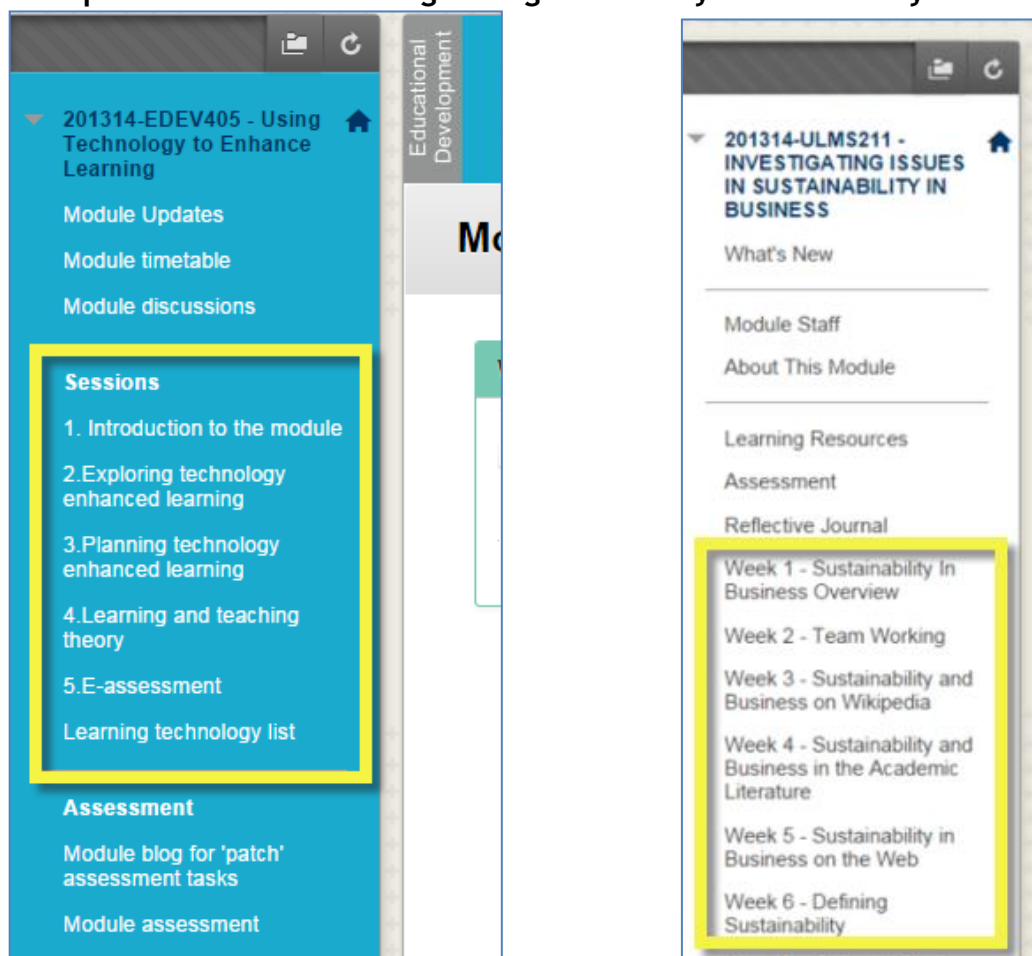
Every empty VITAL module includes a default **Learning Resources** content area where electronic resources for lectures and extended learning activities can be uploaded. You can create more content areas like this on the module menu for organising content into easily navigable structures, for example, by theme, lecturer, week (see the examples below). You can also create content folders within content areas to organise your material

similarly 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 which does not belong to you and what you are permitted to do with this.

Example module menus - organising content by theme and by week



To organise content by additional content areas

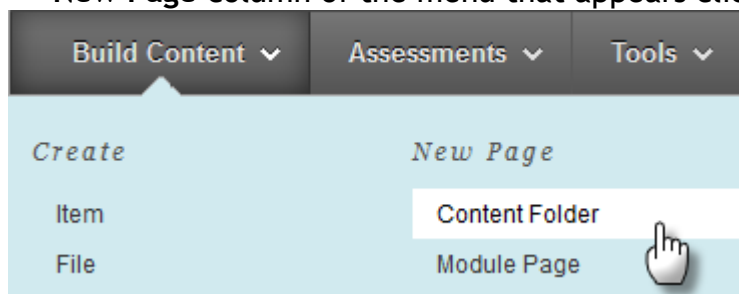
A. To create additional **content areas** accessed from the module menu, as in the examples above, then:

- 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 in your module 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 for your module.

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.

Further resources

Two videos offer an overview of how the VITAL Baseline has come about, the first giving a student perspective on why the Baseline is important for their learning and the second gives the institutional view on the Baseline and how it forms a part of the University's TEL strategy.

- Student view film: <https://stream.liv.ac.uk/qurk9zkw>
- Institutional view film: <https://stream.liv.ac.uk/5pn7ynyj>

You are also enrolled on a self-directed module in VITAL called 'VITAL Baseline and guidance' (check your list of modules on your VITAL homepage). This contains more detailed guidance, all of the resources from the workshop, and this 'How to' guide.

The VITAL Baseline is a part of the University of Liverpool's Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy which [can be read about here](#).

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.