

## VITAL navigation basics

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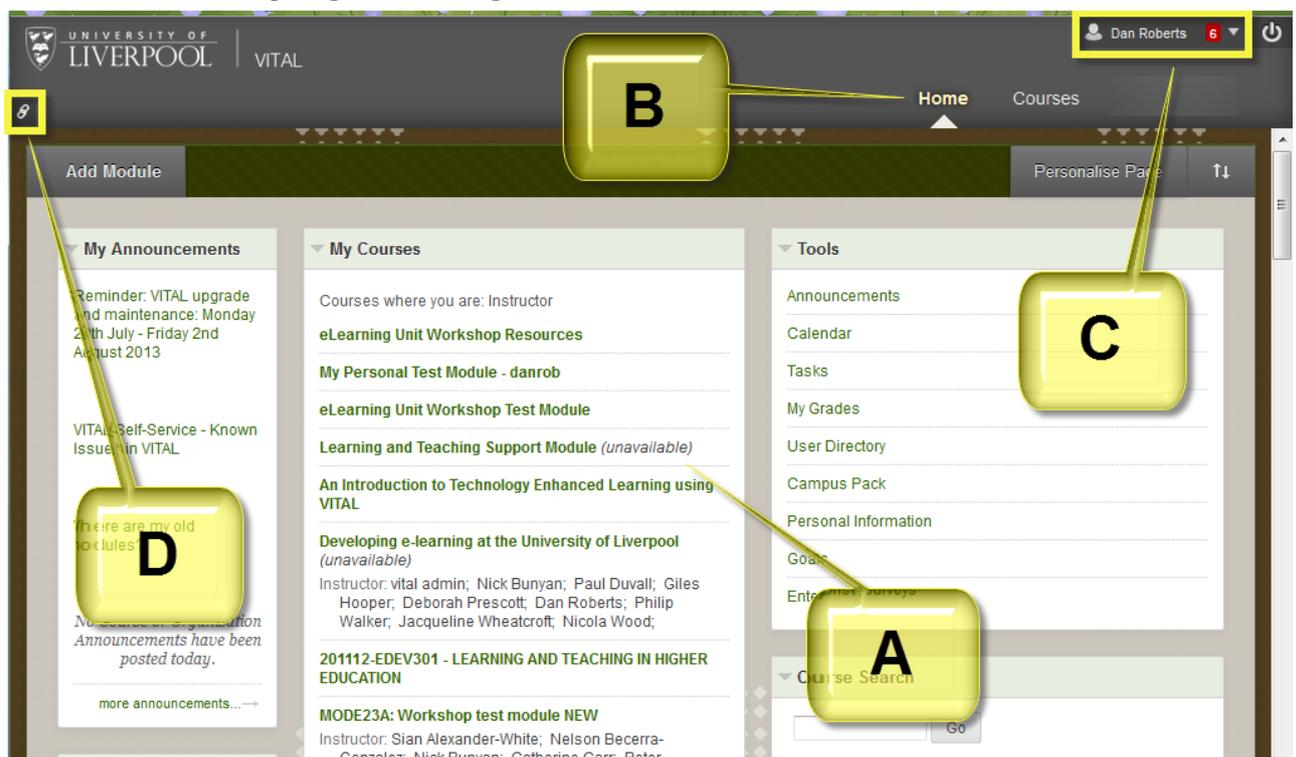
### Overview

The guide shows you quickly how to find your way around the VITAL homepage and a standard module, including:

- What's on the VITAL home page - find and access your modules and My Blackboard.
- How to use the main sections and navigation facilities in a module
- How to find tools for creating and editing content

This [linked guide shows you how to customise your homepage](#), including your list of modules.

## VITAL homepage navigation



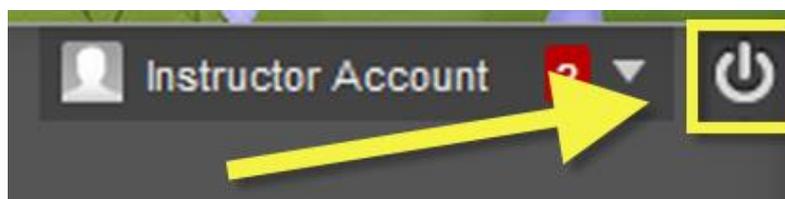
The screenshot shows the VITAL homepage interface with the following callouts:

- A**: Points to the 'Course Search' field in the 'Tools' section.
- B**: Points to the 'Home' and 'Courses' navigation tabs in the top header.
- C**: Points to the 'Tools' section, which includes links for Announcements, Calendar, Tasks, My Grades, User Directory, Campus Pack, Personal Information, and Goals.
- D**: Points to the 'My Announcements' section, which displays a reminder about a VITAL upgrade and maintenance on Monday 20th July - Friday 2nd August 2013.

1. Once you have logged-in to VITAL the first page you see is **your home page**. There are three key navigational elements on your home page.
  - A. **My Courses** list. This is the main point from which you access your modules and is a list of links to all of the modules on which you are enrolled, grouping them by your status on the module (“Courses where you are: Instructor/Course Builder/Student”).
  - B. **Home** and **Courses** links. These appear in this position across all pages in VITAL. **My Homepage** returns you to your VITAL home page. **Courses** is a page only listing your modules.
  - C. **My Blackboard** global navigation area. Clicking this area where your name appears opens a menu containing useful cross-modular information, summarised below. See the ‘How to’ guide [My Blackboard - Global Navigation](#) for full details.
    - Module alerts/notifications (set and check what module events generate alert - announcements, assignment submitted, etc).
    - Read the latest posts from Discussion Boards, Journals, etc. across modules.
    - Retention Centre view - check which students have missed deadlines, not accessed VITAL, across your modules etc.
    - Access VITAL Self-Service (includes FAQs, Known Issues, Enrolment problems, etc).

The number in red seen next to your name indicates the number of alerts in the Retention Centre.

There is a **Logout** button next to **My Blackboard**. This is useful if you are working remotely and have logged-in directly to VITAL (rather than via the Digital University staff site): it ends your VITAL session, logs you out of the VITAL system and returns you to the login page.

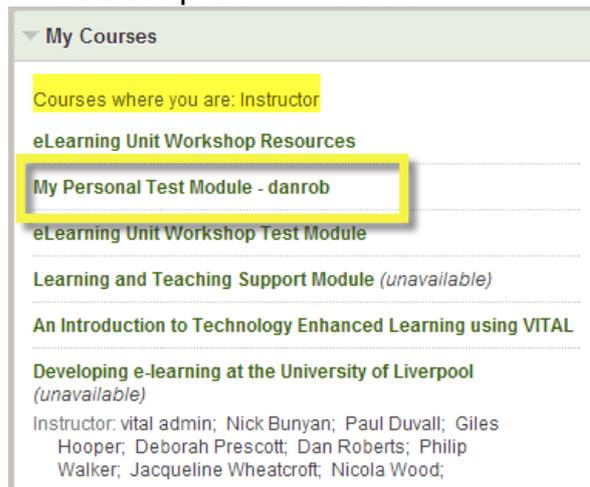


2. The homepage is customisable - you can drag and drop the information panels around, add to or remove panels, and change colour schemes. See the How to guide [Managing your homepage](#) for details.
3. There is also a Quick Links feature (D) which is useful particularly for sighted, keyboard-only users, and tells you which keyboard shortcuts are available on the current page, and lists all the main page sections as links.

4. The **Tools** panel includes a mix of tools for staff and students, including one of the places where students can access their grades **My Grades**. For staff there is the **Quickly** set of tools which allow an announcement to be sent to more than one module.

## Accessing a VITAL module

1. From the homepage, click on the required module title link from the **My Courses** panel.



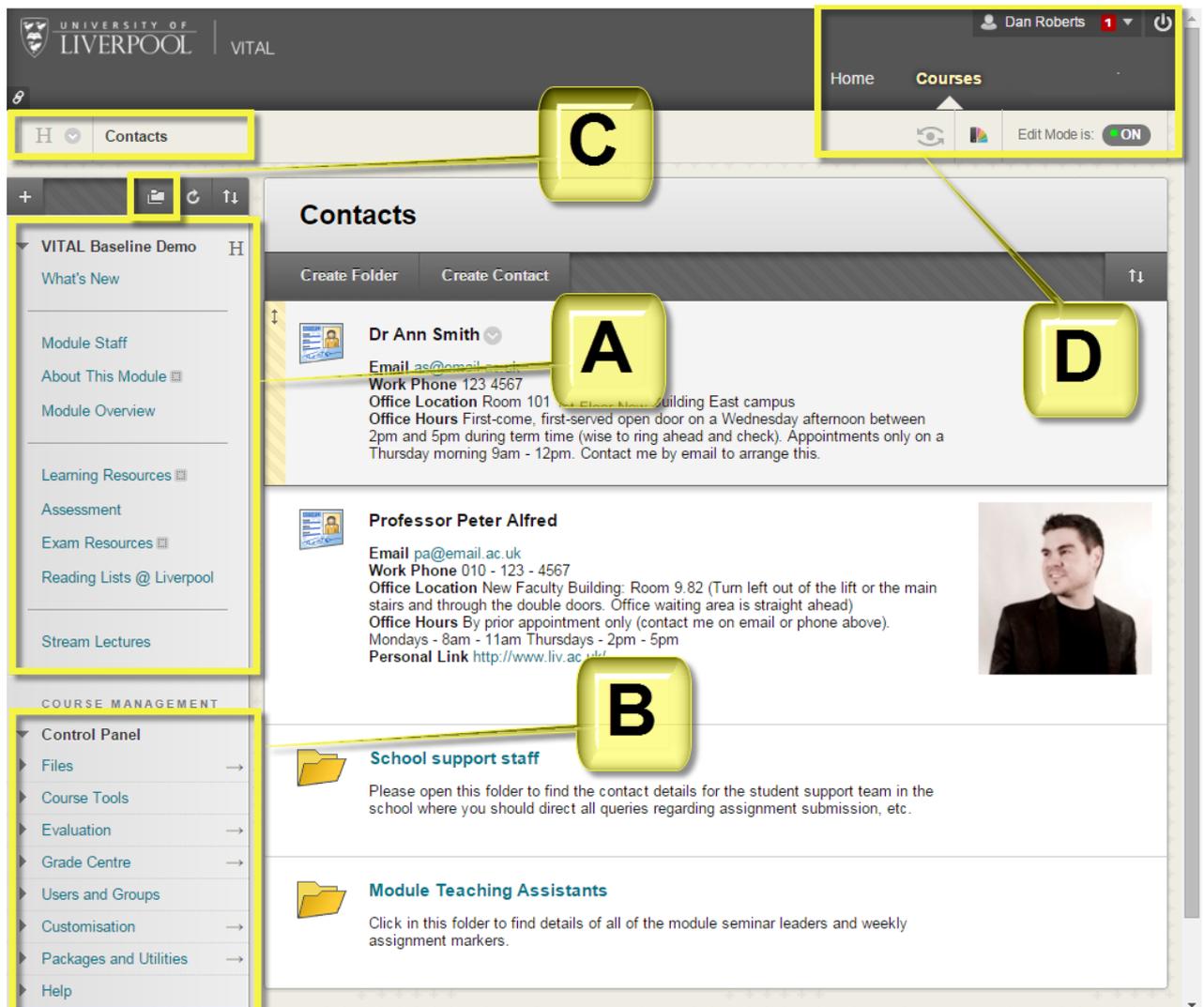
If a module title is labelled '*Unavailable*' this means that it is not currently accessible to students (i.e. it has been deliberately hidden, usually by a module instructor).

## Navigating around a VITAL module

All VITAL modules have a similar, basic structure before content and learning and teaching tools have been added by you. There are three principal areas of the page from which you navigate around individual modules and their management functions (see screenshot below).

- A. **Module menu.** This menu is what the students see and shows the structure of your module. The module code and title is at the top of this. The menu is fully editable from here, i.e. add/remove sections, rename sections and reorganise the order. Each link in this menu is a section in your module to which you add your module content which appears on the main body of the page. Click through the links to access the sections of the module. See the 'How to' guide [Customise your module structure](#) for more detail.
- B. **Control Panel menu.** The Control Panel contains the tools you use for managing many aspects of a module, such as the Grade Centre, as well as some of the content creation tools. It is an expanding/collapsing menu

system - each section of the Control Panel contains a submenu which is expanded by clicking the submenu title.



- C. **Breadcrumb trail.** This trail menu grows and shrinks as you navigate up and down the levels of the module, showing the path you took to get to your current page. Each element of the trail is clickable to navigate back to that page or section.



**Entry Point icon.** Clicking this H icon takes you to the first page of your module you see when you click to access the module from your home page.



**Course-to-course navigation.** A drop-down list of recently-visited other modules. You can quickly go to one of these modules from here.



**Module menu pop-out.** Clicking this icon opens your module menu in a new window. You can expand it to see all of the folders and items in the module, and use a Control + F search to look for a keyword.

D. In this area of the module you will find:

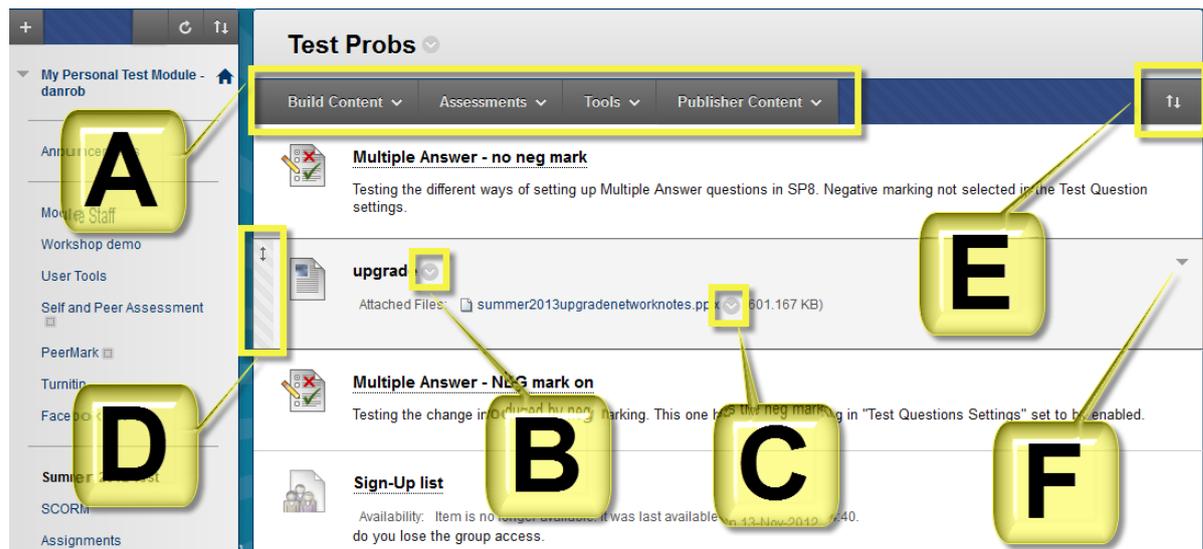
- **My Blackboard:** an always-available menu containing useful cross-modular information and tools like VITAL Self-Service, notifications and their settings, and the Retention Centre (see above).
- **Home link:** returns you to your main VITAL home page.
- **Courses link:** links to a page with a list of all your modules.
- **Logout button.**
- **Student Preview button.** Acts as a full test mode from student's point of view. Creates a dummy test student account for you so you can try out tests, assignments and so on.
- **Design theme icon.** Choose from a selection of simple design schemes for your module.
- **Edit mode switch** (see below)

## Adding and editing content - overview

1. To create, re-order and edit content in a module you need to have the **Edit Mode** button (upper-right of page) set **ON**. With the **Edit Mode** set **OFF** you see the module content from the student view.



2. **Menu Links.** Each link on your module menu is to a section of the module that can contain content. The module menu has a default, simple structure which you can change. Some menu links are to a tool like the Announcements which do a specific job. Others are to empty content areas where you can upload and create content and interactive tools.
3. **Dropdown menus.** In the screenshot below, **(A)** is a set of dropdown menus in a Content Area from which you can upload and build different kinds of content, from uploading a PowerPoint, to setting up a Discussion Board, to creating an assignment for students to submit their work to.
4. **Contextual editing menus.** To edit any content item on a page hover the mouse pointer over the item and a small downward arrow icon appears **(B)** near the item's title (right hand side). Click this to open a pop-up menu of options, including **Edit**. This icon will appear next to anything that can be edited when you hover the mouse pointer over it, and will bring up a contextual menu of options specific to that item when clicked.



5. **Update uploaded files.** If you have attached a file using the Attachments facility when you created the item, you will see that each of these has a menu of options available through a clickable downward arrow icon (C) the most useful of which is the 'file overwrite' function.
6. **Drag and drop items.** When you hover over an item you will also see a striped bar appear on the left hand side (D). This means you can click the item to drag and drop it to a different position on the list. There is also a keyboard accessible re-ordering facility (E) if drag and drop does not suit you.
7. This small arrow (F) hides from your view the part of that item that you entered via the text editor.