Customise your module structure

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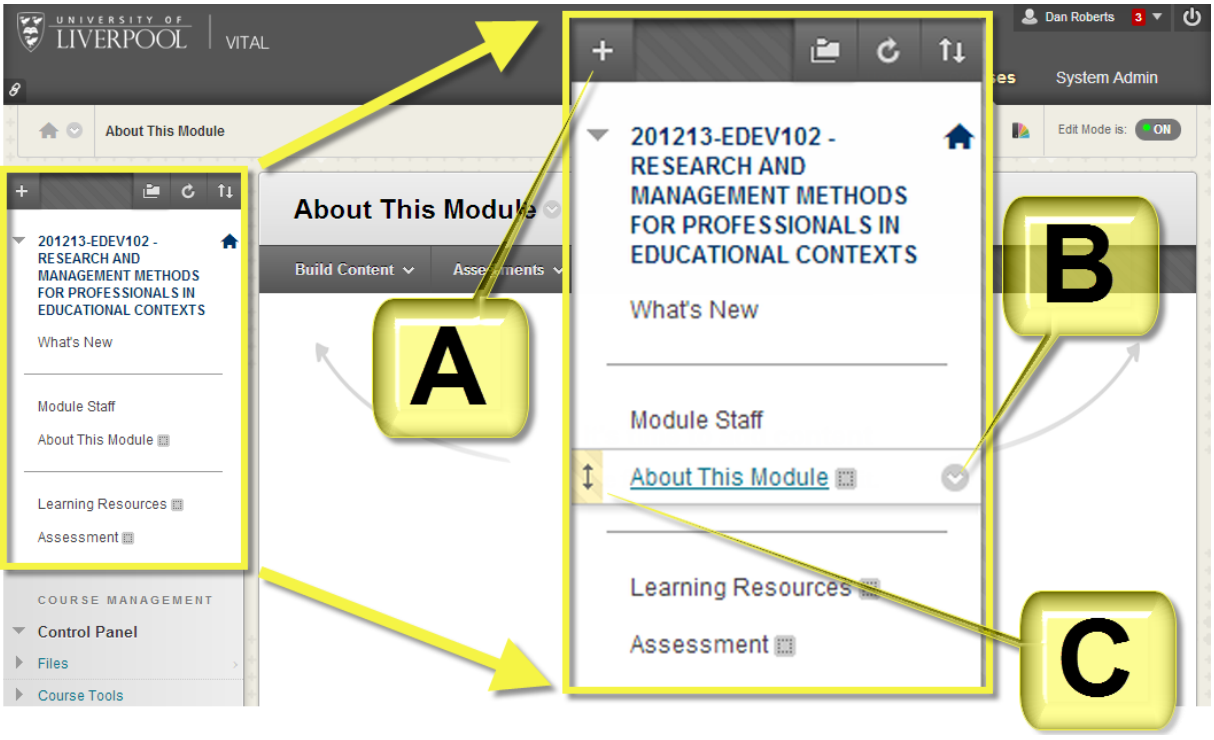
Overview

All empty modules in VITAL are set up with the default template basic structure which you can add to and edit by:

- adding new sections for content
- re-ordering and editing the module menu and adding dividers and sub-headers
- adding links to external sites, items in the module and specific tools (e.g. the discussion board) to the module menu.



All of these modifications are carried out directly on the module menu (highlighted above left on a typical module page and enlarged to the right).

The enlargement above right shows three main aspects of the module menu.

- Hovering over this white cross (**A**) reveals a drop down menu of options for creating new sections, dividers, links etc on the module menu.
- Hovering the mouse pointer by a menu item will reveal a downward arrow icon (**B**) which when clicked display a popup menu of editing options for that section/item.

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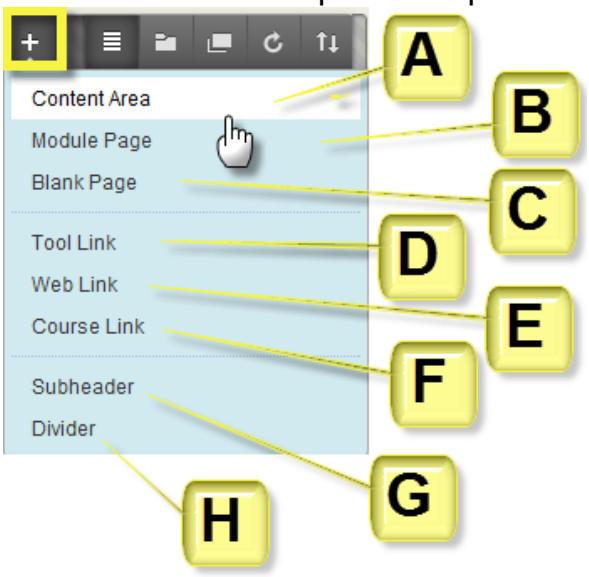
- Hovering the mouse pointer by a menu item also reveals a two-way arrow (**C**) which indicates that the item can be dragged and dropped to reorder the module menu.

Students will see the module menu exactly as you create it. Where there is no content in a section students will not see that link on their view of the menu. (Empty sections are indicated to you by a grey, dotted-line icon next to the link as shown below.)

You can also choose to hide a menu link and its associated content from the students and if this is the case you will see the icon below next to the link title.

Creating new menu items in a module menu

1. Hovering the mouse over the white cross icon will expand the 'Add' menu of options for creating new structural items in your module menu, as shown here. Each option is explained below.



2. Every new menu item you create you will be asked whether to make it available to view by students. The default setting is **no** and you need to check the **Available to Users** box to make it visible at this point. (You can also choose to **Show** the link at a later point – see below.)

A. Add Content Area – every module has a ready-made Content Area called **Learning Resources** for adding content items to the module for your students (you can edit this title to make it more relevant). To create further content areas (e.g. to group content by week, by teaching staff, by subject etc.) use this **Add Content Area** link.

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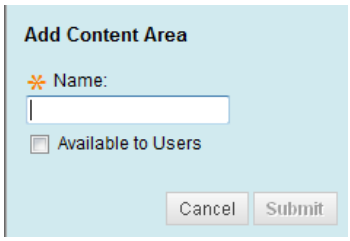
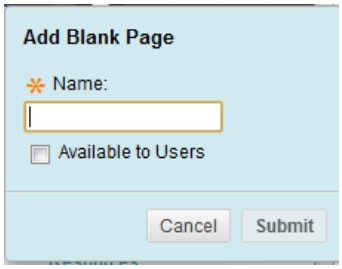


You will be prompted for a name. Click **Submit** to add the menu link to your module menu. This links to the new page where you can add content items.

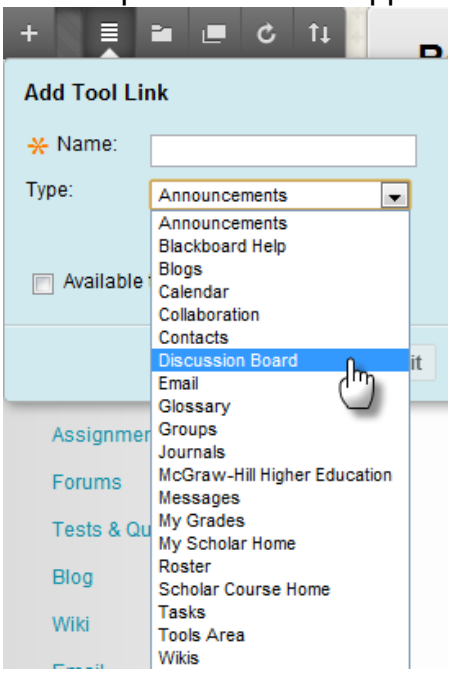
B. Add Module Page – this does not add much to what the default module and My Blackboard menu already do.

C. Add Blank Page – creates a link to effectively a blank web page in your module that you can build using the standard VITAL text editor.



You will be taken to the **Blank Page** creation page to set this up with the content you require.

D. Add Tool Link –creates a direct link from the module menu to a specific VITAL tool, so that your students can quickly access it, if it is a major part of your module, such as the Discussion Board, for example.
You are prompted to give the tool link a **Name** and to choose one tool from the complete list which appears in a drop down menu.



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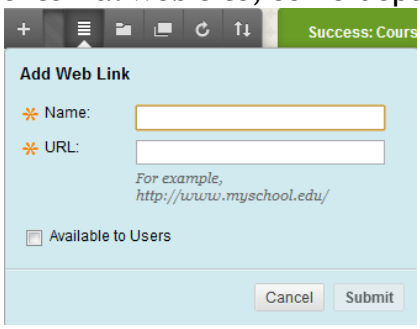
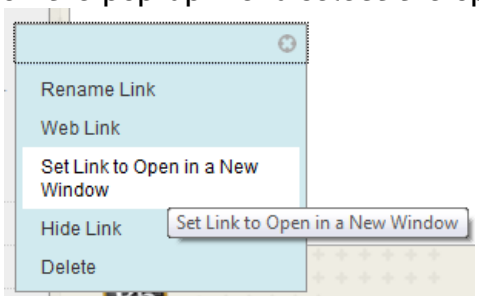
E. Add Web Link – this creates a direct link from the module menu to an external web site, some departmental web pages for instance.



You will be prompted for a name for the link and you will also need to know the URL (copy and paste the address from the browser address bar) as there is no browse facility here.

Tip. You need to set the webpage to display in a new window. Hover your mouse pointer by the item in the menu, click the downward arrow icon, and on the pop-up menu select the option 'Set Link to Open in a New Window'.



F. Create Course Link –creates a link from the module menu to a specific section or content item within the module. This might be used for a quick link for students to an important module assessment for example.

You will be prompted for a **Name** for the link and the location of where you want to link to in your module. Click on the **Browse** button to open a directory of all the sections and items in your module, as shown in the example below. You can open and close sections to find an item as you would with Windows Explorer.

Click on the section or item you require and click **Submit** to create the link.

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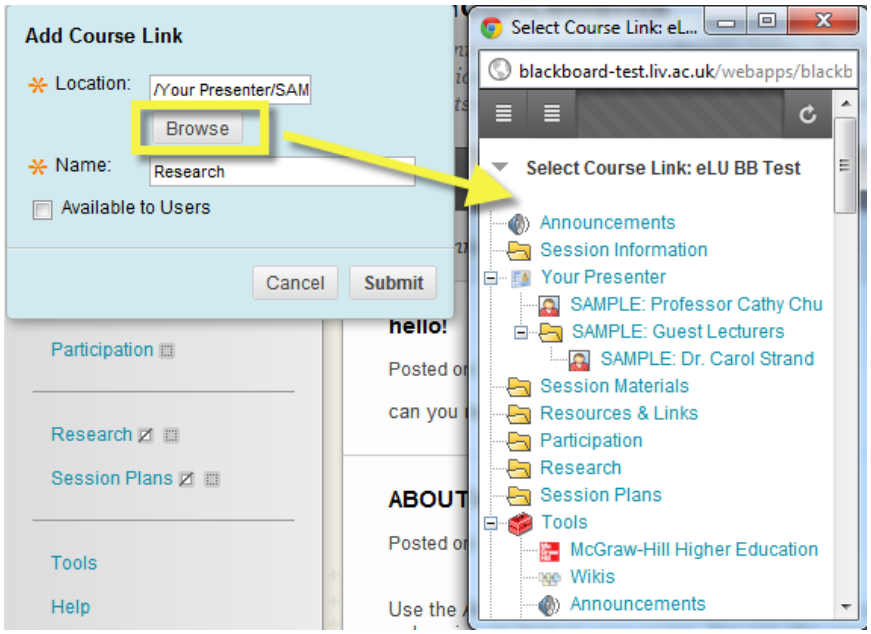
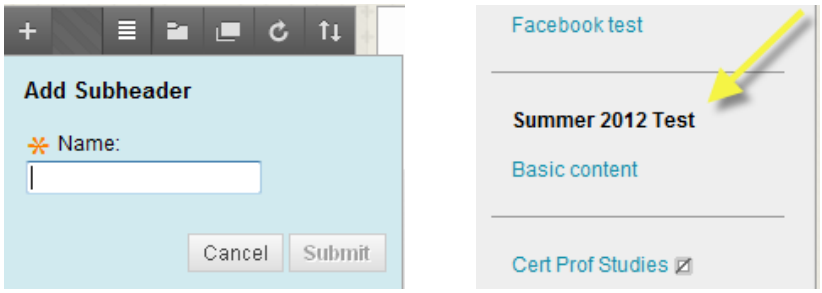
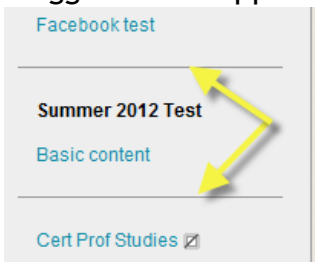


G. Create Subheader – creates a titled logical divide in the layout of your module menu. Give a name for the subheader and this will appear in a bar in the module menu as shown on the screenshot on the right. You can then add and order menu items to appear under this subheader.



H. Create Divider – creates a logical line divider in the layout of your module which does not have a subheader text attached to it. This can be dragged and dropped up and down the module menu.



Editing menu items in a module menu

The dropdown menu for each module menu item (accessed through the downward arrow icon) relates specifically to that item so the content of the menu will differ from item to item. These are top-level functions which will generally include an option to **Rename** the module menu link, **Hide** or **Show**

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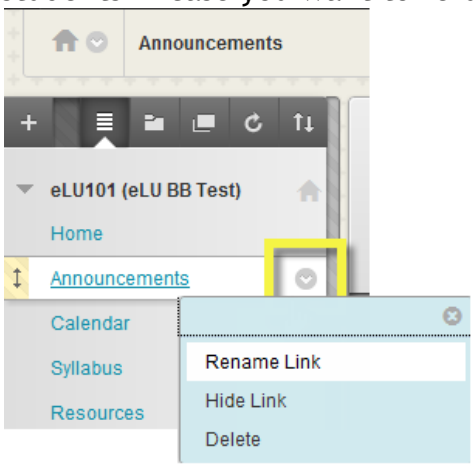
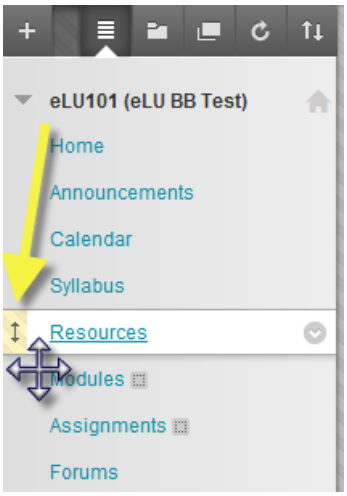
the link to the students, or **Delete** the item and all of its content altogether.

NB. Exercise caution with this **Delete** function as it will permanently remove the content as well as the module menu link for that section. There is currently no undo in VITAL and no recovery of accidentally deleted content items and module sections. It is probably better just to **Hide** item from students in case you want to re-use content at a later point.



Re-ordering items in a module menu

Module menu items can be dragged and dropped to rearrange the order of the module menu (including subheaders and dividers) by clicking on the double headed-arrow of the item you want to move and drag and drop it in the new position on the menu, as shown below.



Accessibility note. You can reorder module menu items through your keyboard by clicking the icon highlighted below to access the facility shown here. Select the item you want to move and use the up/down arrows to move it.

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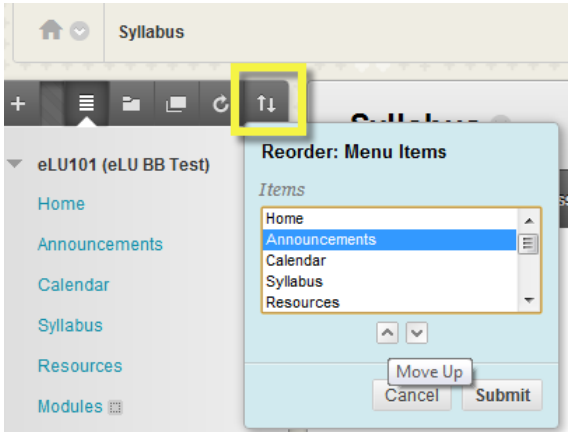

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