# SETTING UP YOUR COURSE IN BLACKBOARD

Once every year, the new Blackboard courses are created. This process normally takes place in the week of August 1st. If your course runs more than once a year, each iteration will get its own Blackboard course. If your course has the same course ID as the previous year, the content of the last iteration will be copied to the new course(s).

## In Depth: How courses are created

The courses in Blackboard are created based on the information that is available in [CourseBase](). A course is created for each course listed per Education period. All connected people are added to the course; the role that a person is assigned in CourseBase influences that role that a person will have within the Blackboard course. If your course matches a course ID from the previous year, the content of that course will be copied; otherwise, a default course template will be used. You can prevent courses from being created on Blackboard by un-publishing the course in CourseBase.

## Preparing your course

Some of the course settings depend on last year's settings. We will advise you to check whether the settings are what you expect them to be.

- Course availability
- Enrollment settings
- Un-enroll availability and options

*Note:* if you have content that is also available to guests, students can also access the content without enrolling first.

*Note 2:* students will still be able to find your course when enrollment is disabled; to prevent your course from showing up, you should make it unavailable altogether.

### Content availability

You may not want all the content to be available when the course starts, but that does not mean you have to wait before uploading it. For this purpose, adaptive release is available. You can specify criteria that have to be met before an item is available to the students; this can be as simple as a date, but can also be more advanced. For more information, see our Adaptive release manual.

### Enrollment options

When you course is created, student enrollment is disabled. Of course, you want student to be able to access your course eventually, so you will have to change some settings when you are ready. In most cases, just changing the enrollment setting from 'Course Manager' to 'Self enrollment' will

suffice; some faculties also provide a list of students that have registered for your course through OSIRIS, so you can use this list to enroll students automatically. If this is the case, you can choose to leave self-enrollment disabled, so only registered students will be able to access your Blackboard course.

*Note:* You can also enable self-enrollment for just a limited timeframe, so students can only enroll until the first week of the course, for example.

## Tools

By default, every course has a link to the Tools section in its course menu. We encourage you to leave this link in place, as this is the only way for students to access to the un-enroll-tool. If you want to disable individual tools on this page, you can do so by clicking the 'Hide link' button next to the item.

*Note:* If you disable the Tools link, we will enable it again when students report they are unable to un-enroll from your course.

## Running your course

Now that your course is available to students, they will enroll for it; some will enroll prior to the first lecture, others will only do so after you have encouraged them to do so in one of your lectures. You can use the Blackboard course to update students on changes in your course or upcoming deadlines.

## Notifying students

If you have information for students you can provide this to them in several ways: you can place an announcement in the course or send student an e-mail through Blackboard. It is up to you to decide how information is best communicated, but we want to provide you with some advice based on our day-to-day experience. Use announcements for tips or comments on deliverables, as you would in a lecture, to remind students. Announcements have a more permanent character and students can reference them any time they visit Blackboard. It is up to the student to choose whether they want to receive a notification for a new announcement. For urgent messages, such as changes to the location of a lecture, you can use the e-mail functions in Blackboard; most students have smartphones so the message will reach them more quickly than with an announcement.

*Note:* Blackboard provides the option to e-mail all students regardless of their notification settings when you place an announcement. We discourage you to use this option; students that have set that they want to receive notifications – this is the default setting in Blackboard – will receive the message twice. If the information is urgent enough to use this option, you really should have just sent an e-mail.