

Creating user-friendly learning and teaching resources for BLACKBOARD



CENTRE FOR
LEARNING & TEACHING

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The following table provides a range of tips to assist you to make user-friendly learning and teaching resources.

| Resource | Access-friendly | Bandwidth-friendly | Print-friendly |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Microsoft Office 2007 and 2010 | Ensure Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint resources are compatible with the 2003 version of Microsoft Office . | Use the Compress Pictures feature to automatically reduce the file size of any embedded graphics . | Remove background images or watermarks . |
| | Provide students with instructions to enable macros if used in documents. | | |
| Word | Use a table of contents and page numbering . | Use the Compress Pictures feature to automatically reduce the file size of any embedded graphics . | Remove blank pages from documents. |
| | Use basic fonts like Arial, Times New Roman, Symbol, and Courier New. | | |
| PowerPoint | Embed sound or video files within the PowerPoint presentation. | | Remove background images from slides. |
| | Use slide numbering . | | Use a white background for slides. |
| | Use basic fonts like Arial, Times New Roman, Symbol, and Courier New. | | |
| Adobe acrobat | Ensure PDF documents are compatible with versions 8 of Acrobat Reader . | Optimise PDF resources for web access. | |
| Video | Use Lectopia to deliver video-based resources larger than 30mb or 20min in duration (p25-30). | Remove unwanted video content . | Provide a text-based alternative. |
| | Use MPEG, QuickTime, and AVI formats. | Use Microsoft Movie Maker to export video for the web | |
| | Provide a downloadable version for students. | Keep the video frame size to 640x480 pixels or smaller. | |
| | Keep the Auto Start option to No when embedding video in Blackboard (default setting). | Provide a DVD or CD copy for students in Short Loans . | |
| DVD content | Convert to MPEG, QuickTime, and AVI format . | Provide copy for students in Short Loans . | |

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|---------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Audio | Export audio recordings in an mp3 format . | Remove non essential audio content . | Provide a text-based alternative. |
| | Remove unwanted background noise . | Convert from stereo to mono for clips longer than 10 minutes. | |
| Lectopia recording | Use larger fonts for PowerPoint presentations (p.13). | Remove unwanted video content . | Provide a text-based alternative. |
| | Use a lapel microphone when presenting (p.10). | | |
| Images | Use compatible file formats including .jpg, .png, .gif, .bmp and .tif . | Use image optimisation techniques . | |
| Course readings | Use Short Loans online . | | |
| Flash | Provide a link to flash-based resources rather than embedding them into a Blackboard course site. | | |
| CD ROM | Upload suitably formatted CD-based resources as zip file package (refer to the topic heading Special Actions). | Provide a copy for students in Short Loans . | |
| Screen recordings | Upload suitably formatted screen recordings as a zip file package . | Export screen recordings using a web-friendly format (Camtasia or Captivate). | Provide a text-based alternative. |
| | Keep the screen recordings frame size below 900 pixels in width. | | |
| Web services | Ensure access to externally provided web services are free. | | |

Additional support and advice

The links and some instructions provided in this resource are designed primarily for staff using an up-to-date university configured Windows system. If the information provided on this page was not helpful due to your computer configuration or you would like additional support try the related links below.

[Teaching in the online environment](#) and [Glossary](#)
[Learning in the online environment](#) and [Glossary](#)

Alternatively for further assistance contact the IT service desk on:

1. Via phone on 4921 7000 (If your request is **URGENT**)
2. Via Service Portal at www.newcastle.edu.au/17000
 (Service Desk will aim to respond to, or refer to our team, within 1 working day)

For this method it is important that you provide the following details

Your name
 Contact number/s
 Blackboard Course name
 Blackboard Course ID number (*obtained from the Control Panel within the Course*)
 Brief overview of problem

Your Feedback

Email your feedback on this information sheet to:
ctl-ersd@newcastle.edu.au