

University of Greenwich **Moodle Baseline**

Academic & Learning Enhancement Team

Information and Library Services

University of Greenwich

This document establishes baseline expectations for a consistent and high-quality digital learning environment, serving as a guide for designing Moodle Pages. It outlines 7 key areas, allowing for prioritisation with the help of a content table. Each section includes Essential and Recommended practices; while incorporating Essential practices is expected, Recommended practices are for reference and not mandatory. This ensures Moodle course content is well-organised and interaction within our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is enhanced, providing a predictable and intuitive experience for all users.

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1. Navigation and Course Orientation

This is crucial for guiding students seamlessly through their course. It organises the course and content in clear structure. This clarity boosts engagement, reduces confusion, and supports effective learning, ensuring students can easily navigate their studies.

Content Category	Practices
1.1 Course Organisation Useful Links: Moodle IT and Library Services University of Greenwich	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the “Get Started” section, include a section to explain participation requirements and the layout of the page.• Set up a course image for easy recognition.• Include Moodle sidebar blocks, such as Panopto, Digital Student Centre, Upcoming events, and Recent activity. These essential blocks have been added to the Moodle template, please double-check before releasing.• Organise topics, sections, activities, tasks in a clear structure. Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider using the “Grid” or an alternative course format if your course content follows a non-linear progression. This can create more logical and engaging layouts, thereby improving the user experience for mobile users.• Consider adding more Moodle sidebar blocks to enhance engagement based on your course design, <i>e.g. Level Up XP, latest badges</i> for gamification design.• Consider placing the content in an activity, <i>e.g. “Page”</i>, if you have long texts on the homepage. This can reduce the overall length and amount of scrolling required.
1.2 Content Organisation Useful Links: Activity completion - MoodleDocs Examples and Downloads H5P Documentation H5P	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add meaningful headings/titles, sub-headings/sub-titles, and introductory descriptions, to each topic/section/sub-section. If it's weekly format course, add week numbers and dates for easy navigation.• Number and label all resources and activities clearly.• Add word counts and time estimates to resources, <i>e.g. “Task 1.1 - Active Learning (10 min)”</i>.• Add navigation texts to guide students from one task/section to the next.• Enable completion settings (<i>e.g. Completion tracking, Activity Completion</i>) for the course resources and activities to enable students and Moodle to footprint tracking. Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider using H5P and HTML editor to add more interactive content to help the structure, <i>e.g. Accordion</i> for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) design.

2. Introduction

This is the gateway for students, outlining the course objectives, structure, and expectations. A clear and concise Introduction sets the stage for the learning journey, enhancing student engagement and providing the necessary context for them to navigate the course effectively and align their efforts with the learning outcomes.

Content Category	Practices
2.1 Course Overview Useful Links: Module Handbook Documents University of Greenwich	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the “Get Started” section, include an engaging introduction to the course, including learning objectives and a brief module overview in the Moodle course’s homepage opening/welcome section. In the “Get Started” section, include a link to the up-to-date Module Handbook, detailing what information it contains, how it should be used, and clearly state the learning outcomes at the beginning of the course. Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider adding external and internal hyperlinks to department website and other frequently used website/resources in this course.
2.2 Learning Activities Introduction	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the “Get Started” section, include the outline of learning activities, clearly stating the learning objectives, assessment methods, and instructional materials. Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider providing a brief weekly plan that details required readings, online activities, and preparation time to assist students in effectively managing their workload. Consider adding brief “ice-breaker” activities at the beginning of the course.
2.3 Team Introduction	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the “Communicate and Support Information” section, include a section to display staff contact information, introduce the teaching team, and office hours. Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider adding an introductory video filmed with Panopto, particularly if the module is delivered via distance or Hyflex. Consider Upload staff Moodle profile pictures and encourage students to upload their profile pictures.

Content Category	Practices
2.4 Support Services Information Useful Links: Academic skills University of Greenwich Support University of Greenwich Advice (greenwichsu.co.uk)	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the “Communicate and Support Information” section, to make students aware of all available support services, including links of academic skills support, digital skills, and wellbeing services. Please note these essential links have been added to the Moodle template, please double-check before releasing. Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider adding a FAQs section to provide self-help guides and resources, reducing the need for direct contact. This can be designed by H5P’s Accordion or Moodle’s Book activity.

3. Communication and Interaction

This is key to building a vibrant learning community. It establishes clear communication channels and interactive forums, enhancing student engagement and collaboration. This section supports a connected and active learning environment, where students can easily interact, exchange ideas, and seek feedback, enriching their overall learning experience.

Content Category	Practices
3.1 Welcome Message	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include a personal message to students on the homepage, establishing a welcoming atmosphere. Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider making a short welcome video by Panopto and Adobe Premiere Rush to establish connection with students.
3.2 Microsoft Teams Useful Links: Moodle and Teams integration guidance IT and Library Services University of Greenwich	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activate the Microsoft Teams group linked to your Moodle course if available to ongoing communication. Please note Moodle is still the main platform to upload learning notes and materials. Please put file materials and resources in Moodle instead of Microsoft Teams. Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider using the Teams group to post topics to encourage students’ communication and collaboration, as this aligns with their social media usage habits. The Teams group can easily access the Moodle course site. Please note announcements should be mainly put

Content Category	Practices
	through Moodle's Announcement, as announcements will be sent directly to students' inboxes.
3.3 Engagement Useful Links: Forum activity - MoodleDocs	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include the Forum activities to offer opportunities for questions and discussions. Clearly outline the purpose of each communication channel and discussion forum. Remember to monitor the forums and provide feedback, <i>e.g. help forum, announcement forum, discussion forum etc.</i> Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering using and organising Teams Group's Posts and Channels as forums to share feedback, files, and posts to engage students.

4. Learning Resources and Activities

This enriches student engagement through diverse materials and interactive tasks. It caters to various learning preferences, fosters active participation, and deepens understanding, thereby enhancing the overall learning experience.

Content Category	Practices
4.1 Lecture Materials Useful Links: Welcome to your Library Service - General Library Guide - LibGuides at University of Greenwich Panopto - Remote working IT and Library Services University of Greenwich Panopto Tutorial Videos Course: Panopto Training Essentials (gre.ac.uk)	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the "Get Started" section, compile reading lists (Reading List template is attached in the Moodle template) into a single document version. Before uploading to Moodle, use the UoG online service and send this document to your academic librarian for review, rather than uploading individual papers. Provide clear links to online teaching events. Put Lecture Capture recordings in the Panopto module folder instead of My Folder. Add Lecture Capture recordings by Panopto links. Ensure all the resources are set to be visible and accessible. Use meaningful file names and provide clear descriptions for lecture materials. Be mindful of file and video sizes, opting for internal or external links (<i>e.g., YouTube, Panopto</i>) and considering different file formats for accessibility. Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider using Panopto Interactive Video Quizzing or H5P Interactive Video/Presentation to design the lecturer

Content Category	Practices
	capture recordings to improve the interactivity and engagement.
4.2 Learning Activities Useful Links: Activities - MoodleDocs	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose appropriate Moodle activities, e.g., <i>Forum for discussion, Quiz for knowledge checks, and Glossary for vocabulary building.</i> Use meaningful file names and provide clear descriptions for learning activities. Plan your online session links in Moodle in advance and provide guidance for students to participate. Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider enabling activity completion for students to track their own learning. Consider add tags to activities. Consider using H5P to design interactive and engaging learning activities, e.g. <i>Branching Scenario, Course Presentation, Game Map etc.</i>
4.3 External Resources Useful Links: Media embedding - MoodleDocs	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed link to external resources like case studies and multimedia. Use embedded HTML or URL link to embed videos in Moodle. Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider using HTML editor in Moodle to customise the settings of the multimedia resources.

5. Assessment and Feedback

This outlines clear criteria and methods for assignments, coursework, exam, and feedback, guiding students through their learning achievements. This section ensures assessments are fair, transparent, and aligned with learning objectives, providing students with valuable insights into their development and areas for improvement.

Content Category	Practices
5.1 Assessment and Feedback Outline Useful Links: Assessment and Feedback Policy 	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the “Assessment and Coursework Submission Guidance” section, please offer a clear, accessible overview of module assessments, including points, types, weightings, and due dates.

Content Category	Practices
Documents University of Greenwich Assignment activity - MoodleDocs Restrict access settings - MoodleDocs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clear assessment criteria, descriptions, and instructions with detailed deadlines. • Include submission guidelines, grading rubric or marking guide to clearly detail exactly what is required of students, <i>e.g. file types, feedback mechanism etc.</i> • Include a generic feedback section after marking has been completed. • Use assignment settings for clarity, <i>e.g. due date, submission types, group submission settings, restrict access.</i> <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider providing students with examples or templates for assignment. • Consider creating a topic in Teams group, FAQs or forum in Moodle regarding assessment for students.
5.2 Plagiarism Prevention Useful Links: Turnitin IT and Library Services University of Greenwich Writing with authority and avoiding plagiarism Articles University of Greenwich	<p>Essential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide resources for avoiding plagiarism, along with links to relevant policies and support services. • Include clear guidelines and expectations to encourage student's academic honesty. • Using Turnitin integration to ensure the integrity of student's submission. <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider offering case studies or examples to enhance students' awareness and understanding of plagiarism.
5.3 Formative Assessments Useful Links: Quiz activity - MoodleDocs Course: Moodle Quiz Mentimeter Learning and teaching University of Greenwich	<p>Essential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give students the chance to engage in practice assessments through Moodle quiz or related activities, setting up consistent submission points across the programme. <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider using various H5P quizzes, Mentimeter or other tools to enhance engagement in formative assessment.

6. Accessibility and Copyright

This ensures content and materials in Moodle are accessible to all and comply with copyright. This focus promotes an inclusive learning environment and respects intellectual property, essential for a fair and respectful learning experience.

Content Category	Practices
6.1 Accessibility Fundamentals Useful Links: Accessibility Statement Guidance About the university University of Greenwich Scanning Service for Academics - Copyright - LibGuides at University of Greenwich We've improved our Scanning Service for Academic Staff Articles University of Greenwich	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure fonts are consistent and large enough with appropriate spacing. • Ensure clear heading/title and content structure. • Use plain and clear language. • Ensure coloured text has appropriate contrast. • Ensure links are descriptive. • Ensure multimedia content has accurate captions/transcripts and descriptive texts. • Avoid looping animations, slide transitions or other persistent movement effects. • Always add alt text descriptions for images. • Provide accessible file formats, e.g. <i>PDF, PowerPoint, Word</i>. • Ensure your page is responsible to different devices with different sizes. • Use the library scanning service to ensure the accessibility of scanned documents. Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a course-level statement, reaffirming the commitment to accessible learning for all students. This contains introduction, accessibility features, technical requirements, feedback and contact information, guidance for students, additional resource, policy, and compliance information.
6.2 Accessibility Tools Useful Links: Moodle Blackboard Ally Guidance Documents University of Greenwich Ally Quick Start for Instructors (blackboard.com) Improve accessibility with the Accessibility	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ Moodle's Ally (Accessibility Checker and Report) to ensure your course design are accessible. • Employ Accessibility Checkers to ensure your documents are accessible, e.g. <i>Microsoft PowerPoint, Word, and Adobe Acrobat</i>. Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider using external Contrast Checker for colour contrast, e.g. <i>WebAIM</i>. • Consider testing your Moodle Course with Screen readers, e.g. <i>Read aloud in Microsoft Edge</i>.

Content Category	Practices
Checker - Microsoft Support WebAIM: Contrast Checker	
6.3 Copyright Useful links: Copyright and Moodle - Copyright - LibGuides at University of Greenwich	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address copyright issues and ensure all content is legally compliant and usable within your course.

7. Implementation Tips Before Releasing

Before releasing a Moodle course, it's crucial to follow key implementation tips to ensure a smooth and effective learning experience. Pre-release checks and adjustments based on these insights can significantly enhance course quality and student satisfaction.

- Ensure that all tutors and colleagues who require access to Moodle are **enrolled** with the appropriate Moodle role.
- Ensure **Teams group** (if available) have been activated and students added to the Teams group.
- Ensure everything is **updated**.
- Ensure all headings/titles, files, and links have **meaningful** names and descriptions.
- Test all learning activities are **working as expected**, *e.g., quizzes, multimedia files*.
- Switch to **Student Role** to check the Moodle course.
- Ensure the Moodle course is **visible** for students.