

# Student Quick Start Guide to Blackboard

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## 1. Getting Started with Blackboard

Blackboard is a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). A virtual learning environment is a web-based application designed to facilitate lecturers in the management of modules for their students, especially by helping lecturers and learners with course administration. They are used to supplement face-to-face lectures and tutorials.

Blackboard is the VLE in use at NUI Galway. It allows students to download lecture notes, reading lists, assessment information and other course-related material from their Blackboard sites. It also contains functions that enable students to interact via class announcements, email, discussion boards. It's easy to upload any materials (e.g. Word files, PowerPoint slides, PDFs, etc) and to create simple quizzes, arrange for electronic submission of course work by students, establish online discussion areas, etc. Not all academic staff will use Blackboard to support their face-to-face teaching.

### 1.1 Logging in

Students can access Blackboard by going to <https://nuigalway.blackboard.com> and logging in using their CASS username (Student ID in the format 0000123) and password.

The screenshot shows the Blackboard login interface for NUI Galway. At the top left is the NUI Galway logo with the text 'NUI Galway OÉ Gaillimh'. To its right is the 'Blackboard' logo. Below these is a login section titled 'Have an account?'. It contains the instruction 'Please enter your credentials and click the Login button below.' followed by two input fields: 'Username:' and 'Password:'. The 'Username' field is highlighted in yellow and has a red callout box pointing to it with the text 'Enter your 8-digit Student ID here (e.g. 11234567)'. The 'Password' field is also highlighted in yellow and has a red callout box pointing to it with the text 'Enter your CASS password here'. Below the password field is a blue 'Login' button. To the right of the login form, there is a link for 'Students: You courses within module with NI' and a link for 'Accessibility I http://access.b'.

#### What if I have no courses after I log in?

You will automatically see any modules on which you are registered after you log in. Some may be listed as “unavailable”. This simply means that your lecturer isn't using Blackboard for this course, or hasn't made it available to students yet.

#### What if I cannot log in?

If you cannot log in, please check that you have registered for the current academic session with the university. If you are not a registered student in the current year, you will be unable to access Blackboard. Blackboard is integrated with the Student Records System (Quercus). Each evening the

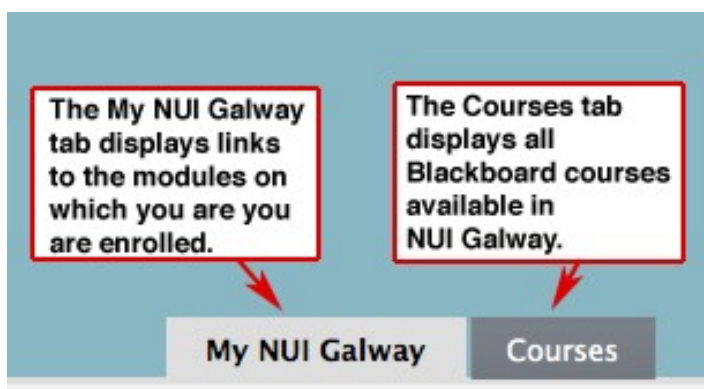
Student Records System sends data to Blackboard enrolling all registered students on their corresponding Blackboard courses. After this time, registered students will be able to log in to Blackboard and access the system.

If you cannot log in, please check that:

1. You have the correct username and password. To log in you will need your correct Student ID number (eight digits) and the password you would use to access your NUI Galway email and all computers on campus. If you do not know this information, contact the User Support Centre in ISS (servicedesk@nuigalway.ie or 091 495777)
2. You have registered for the current academic year with Admissions. All information concerning registration for the academic session 2011-2012 is posted on the Registration Website at [www.nuigalway.ie/registration](http://www.nuigalway.ie/registration)

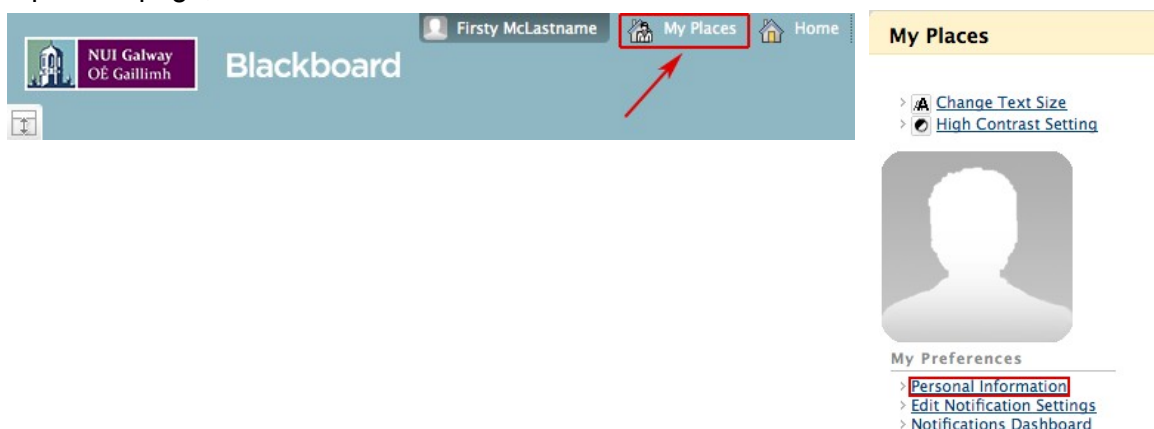
## 1.2 Navigating inside Blackboard

After logging in there are two tabs on the Blackboard system. Take some time to explore these areas.



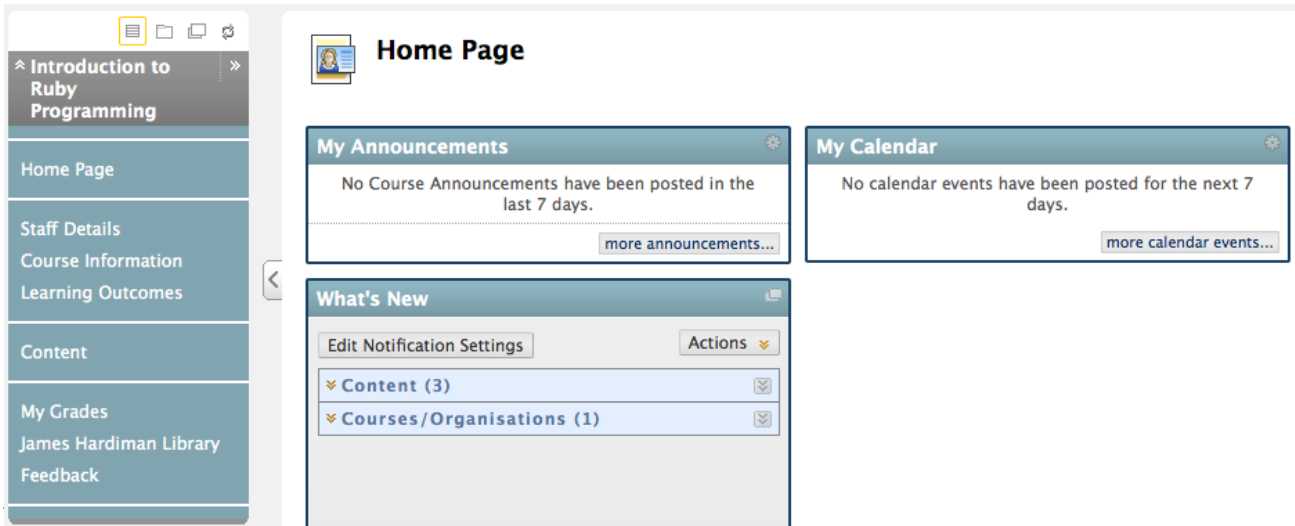
### Modifying your Personal Information

After logging in for the first time, you may wish to update your email address under the Personal Information setting, and set your preferred language option. To access this, click My Places at the Top of the page, then click Personal Information.



### 1.3 Navigating inside a Course Site

In every Blackboard course there will be similar menu items, which may or may not be modified by the course instructor. Some of these **may not** appear, depending on how your lecturer has chosen to configure their course.



**Home Page:** A course overview for students, encompassing Announcements, Calendar items and Notifications.

**Staff Details:** Provides background and contact information on Instructors and Teaching Assistants.

**Course Information:** A content area for module information.

**Learning Outcomes:** What a learner should understand and be able to do after taking this module.

**Content:** A content area for Lecture Notes, Assignments, multimedia files and Learning Units.

**My Grades:** A link for students to access their course grades.

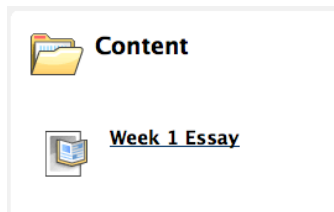
**James Hardiman Library:** A direct link to the campus library website.

**Feedback:** A place for your lecturer to place surveys, course feedback forms, etc.

## 2. Completing an Assignment

In this section you'll see how to navigate to an assignment, how to upload completed assignment files from your computer, and how to submit the assignment to your instructor.

1. To access an assignment, click on the appropriate link in the Course Menu on the left.
2. Click the name of the assignment you wish to complete (e.g. "Week 1 Essay")



3. On the Assignment page, type your comments in the text box and click Browse My Computer to attach your assignment submission.

**1. Assignment Information**

Name:	Week 1 Essay
Instructions	You are previewing the assignment – your submission will not be saved.
Due Date	
Points Possible	0

**2. Assignment Materials**

Submission

Text Editor is: ON

Normal 3 Arial B I U abc x<sub>2</sub> x<sup>2</sup>

Enter any comments you wish your lecturer to see.

Path: body

Attach File   Attach any assignment files

Comments

4. In the Choose file dialog box, select your file and click the Open button.
5. If you still need to make changes to your assignment, use the Save as Draft button. Choose the Submit button only when you are ready to turn in the assignment. When the receipt is displayed, click the OK button.

NOTE: After Submitting, you will not be able to remove or edit the assignment until and unless your instructor has cleared your initial attempt from the grade book.