

Everything on Blackboard is based on the “course” as a unit. Students and staff are enrolled on courses. A course might be based on a module code (e.g. ENG101 – first year English) or can be based on a course instance (e.g. 1BA1 – all first year BA general students). Anybody who is an instructor on a course can create an announcement, which is then seen (on Blackboard and by email) by everybody enrolled on that course. This is how staff can target a particular cohort of students. But we don’t have any “course” that corresponds to “all final years” for example.

A single announcement can be made in multiple courses using the [Qwickly tool](#).

Otherwise, Blackboard system administrators can create a system announcement – which is then visible to ALL Blackboard users (on Blackboard – we don’t spam the entire university with email). Such an announcement will appear on the main Blackboard login page and students using the BbStudent app will get a notification on their smartphone.

Because space is limited on the login page, we have developed a policy to decide what can appear there – and what gets highest priority. Students won’t scroll down a list of notices – so in general only the top announcement will be effective. For that reason, we limit system announcements to just 1 or 2 at any time.

The policy is that system announcements should be relevant to the MAJORITY of users (staff and students) and are prioritised as follows:

1. Any system notices (e.g. schedule downtime, unavailability of a technical tool) related to Blackboard
2. A limited number of Academic Admin notices (e.g. availability of exam timetables, registration notices)
3. NUIG news, from Friday evening to Monday lunchtime, every week.
4. Notices for students that are teaching & learning related, including study skills, wellness, but could also be about upcoming events related to ALIVE, Careers etc (as long as they are relevant to the majority)
5. Other notices are considered on a case-by-case basis, without creating any expectations for future such events

Any requests for system notices should be sent by email to blackboard@nuigalway.ie. We recommend, where possible, that a suitable image is provided. The notice can link to a web page with further information.