

# Telfer Guide to Online Teaching



# TELFER GUIDE TO ONLINE TEACHING

A list of resources to design an online course in response to the transition to remote teaching in the fall 2020.

MDIAS



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# CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Part I. Planning Online Teaching	
1. Planning Online Teaching	5
Part II. Engaging Students Online	
2. Engaging Students Online	13
Part III. Online Assessment Strategies	
3. Assessment Strategies	19
Part IV. Online Course Design Considerations	
4. Telfer Brightspace course Templates	25
Appendix	31



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# Welcome to the Telfer Guide to Online Teaching!

The purpose of this open resource is to provide resources on various topics related to online teaching to support the transition to remote teaching at the Telfer School of Management. The content is searchable and is divided in 4 parts with chapters that can be accessed from the table of content on the left hand-side menu.

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## Part 1: Planning Online Teaching

This part provides the 10 important considerations when planning an online course, with a particular focus on a blended learning approach to help you carefully combine synchronous and asynchronous teaching modalities. The other strategies are based on lessons learned from the past year of remote teaching, namely student and teaching team workload, the importance of establishing a teaching presence online, and implementing inclusive teaching practices to support student wellbeing.

## Part 2: Engaging Students Online

This part provides key strategies for engaging students **during** live lectures (synchronous teaching), **before** and **after** (asynchronous teaching) live lectures. Some of the strategies are easier to implement than others, but allocating time for practice with a colleague or your teaching assistant(s) is advised.

## Part 3: Online Assessment Strategies

This part focuses on two assessment tools available on Brightspace, Quizzes and Assignments to assess student learning online. Alternative assessment methods are also considered.

## Part 4: Online Course Design Considerations

This part introduces the Telfer Brightspace course template that can be imported into your own course. By adopting this online course template, you will help create consistency between online courses and simplify access to important elements of a course on Brightspace, the University of Ottawa's learning management system.

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PART I

# PLANNING ONLINE TEACHING



1.

# PLANNING ONLINE TEACHING

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As you are preparing to teach online this winter, there are decisions that you will need to make about what material to keep in your virtual classes (synchronously), what materials students can learn by themselves (asynchronously), and what material to cut out. Here are two questions to ask yourself:

1. What are the things that work best **synchronously** and **asynchronously**?
2. How can you leverage asynchronous learning to help you conduct more effective synchronous sessions?

You may refer back to the following Synchronous vs Asynchronous Balancing Act's article that provides useful strategies to start thinking about the mix of synchronous and asynchronous teaching, and how they can support each other.

There are various approaches that can be considered when moving online. Below are **10 important considerations** when planning your online course.

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## 1. Finding the right balance between synchronous and asynchronous teaching

Probably the most important element to consider when transitioning to online teaching: finding the right balance between synchronous and asynchronous teaching. As the first question points out, there are certain things that work better synchronously, and others that could be done asynchronously to support a live session.

Synchronous teaching works best for the following:

- Exchanges of perspectives among your students.
- Students learning from each other.
- Interactions or group work that you facilitate.

- Situations where you provide feedback and guidelines to students.

Asynchronous learning works best for the following:

- Students developing a common foundation before class (e.g. basic concepts, ideas).
- Students learning the material by themselves at their own pace. This is useful if prior knowledge of the material varies a lot across students.
- Students spending time reflecting on the material.

## Using a Blended Learning Approach

To answer the second question, it is helpful to approach asynchronous teaching as a mean to support what is done during a live session. This approach involves mixing synchronous and asynchronous components to help students achieve the learning goals. This mixing is often referred to as a **blended learning** approach.

Blended learning requires **careful planning** of synchronous and asynchronous components, so that they complete each other. It is important to clearly indicate to students how synchronous or asynchronous components complete each other, to make sure they are relevant and meaningful to students. Make sure there is alignment between the learning objectives, the instructional strategies (what you teach), the learning activities and the assessment methods.

## Examples of a mix of synchronous and asynchronous teaching

**Short video lectures.** You can create short pre-recorded video lectures and upload them into Brightspace. Students can view the videos by themselves at their own pace before a live lecture.

- **An online module.** You can create a module composed of readings, short video clips, lecture notes to help students prepare for a live session. Students can complete a short quiz after the live session on Brightspace.
- **A case study.** Students individually engage with the material on Brightspace in advance, to prepare for a group activity that will be conducted during a live session.

All these examples can allow you to maximize the time spent during a live lecture, or reduce it. You can use the live lectures to:

- Further engage with students through activities (individual or in groups) with the same instructional time;
- Focus more on student engagement with time-reduced instruction.

**Note:** You may also decide to replace an entire live session by an online module (asynchronous), and have a mix of synchronous and asynchronous with relatively equal weighting (e.g. Week 1 synchronous, Week 2 asynchronous, etc.).

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## 2. Save time in course design and course organization

You may want to consider using a course template, a pre-created Brightspace course that can save you time in the design and organization of your course.

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## 3. Simplicity and Consistency: Create a Predictable Rhythm

Regardless of the format of your course, you may want to consider organizing and structuring your course into a predictable rhythm. This rhythm will help your students organize their time and can add predictability to your course.

Structure and organize your content using **Modules** and **sub-modules** to make the content easy to access (consider the number of clicks it takes to get somewhere or access a certain document). Provide a consistent structure for the course and a consistent module sequence to lay out your course. Consistency will make it easier to think about what to develop and add to your course.

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## 4. Consider Student Workload

When combining synchronous and asynchronous teaching, there is a risk of adding too much content online.

We call this the course-and-a-half syndrome. Consider the time needed to complete the readings, learning activities and assessments. You may want to consider reducing the time of synchronous teaching.

The following document “Ensuring Appropriate Student Workload in Online Courses” (pdf) will help you determine the a well-balanced workload.

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## 5. Consider Teaching Team workload

It is important to think about the time that you will spend developing your course, particularly the asynchronous content. Creating pre-recorded videos, learning activities and assessments online take time. If you are planning to have discussions online, how will you monitor the discussions? Planning the live lectures also requires time and practice to familiarize yourself with the web-conferencing tool options. If you are planning to use the chat, who will monitor it and answer student questions? How will you manage group work (e.g. using Breakout Rooms, Channels)?

## 6. Select the appropriate technology

There are various tools that can be used to support synchronous (Zoom, MS Teams, Adobe Connect) and asynchronous teaching (Brightspace), and student engagement. Here are some tips on how to select learning technology.

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## 7. Think about your role online

This brings back to the concept of teaching presence. Everything you do online is about setting up a presence, communicating with students, facilitating discussions (synchronously or asynchronously), providing feedback, answering questions, etc.

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## 8. Establish a clear communication strategy

This is an important if not the most important aspect of online teaching. What can be expected from you? What is the best way to reach out to you? How quickly will you respond? You may want to consider setting up

virtual office hours, and use various communication tools (e.g. email, announcements, discussions). Make sure to clearly indicate your strategy to the students early in the course.

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## 9. Give opportunities for practice

Consider frequent low-stakes assessments over high-stakes exams, giving students more opportunities to practice and demonstrate their learning. Give frequent feedback to students on their learning, and offer opportunities to receive feedback in return. Consult the Mid-course feedback survey that you can then adapt to your course needs (Word document).

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## 10. Implement inclusive teaching practices that support student wellbeing.

Implement inclusive teaching practices that support student wellbeing. An example can be the adoption of a **code of conduct** for synchronous sessions, so as to establish a reassuring learning environment for all the students.





PART II

# ENGAGING STUDENTS ONLINE



2.

## ENGAGING STUDENTS ONLINE

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There are various ways to engage students online in both synchronous and asynchronous environments using different approaches. In the following section, we focus on two types of engagement:

- **Engagement with the content** through pre-recorded videos and sharing of course materials, and;
  - **Engagement between students and with the instructor.** You can use various learning technologies to help you engage students in meaningful ways.
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### Student Engagement during Synchronous Lectures

#### Planning your live lectures

Teaching in real-time is not the same as teaching in the classroom, the pace is slower and everything takes more time (e.g. to get an answer from a student in the chat or through the microphone, or to display a poll question, etc.). Below are strategies that can help you plan a synchronous lecture:

- Create a lesson plan for each lecture, where you include the time that students will spend answering questions in the chat, or in group discussions (breakout rooms).
- Practice in advance (at least once), so that you can familiarize yourself with the web-conferencing platform, using the screen share (different options are available, Desktop, Windows or Applications), switching between different presentation modes (e.g. **gallery view**, **speaker view**), and explore the tools that will be needed to conduct various activities, especially the question poll, whiteboard, breakout rooms or the annotations. Teaching online allows for practice more easily than if you were to teach in the classroom. Use this to make adjustments to your lessons where needed.
- Provide well-defined transitions between activities and discussions, and allow sufficient time between those transitions (e.g. between screen sharing and breakout rooms).
- Watch your pace and allocate time for short pauses during the live lectures. Some students may not be able to process the information at the same rate as in the classroom, they may benefit from short pauses between activities. Use the **Gallery View** on Zoom to keep your students in front of you; you can

display up to 49 video thumbnails on one screen, and can move from screen to screen to see more students.

Source: *Best Practices: Online Pedagogy*, Teach remotely, Harvard University (2020). Available at: <https://teachremotely.harvard.edu/best-practices>

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## Engaging Students

During a synchronous lecture, you can use different strategies to engage students:

1. **Welcome the participants.** An important thing is to set a welcoming tone in your course, by welcoming students when they enter a synchronous session, giving them a chance to introduce themselves to their classmates (e.g. using the chat room or the microphone).
2. **Share screens.** You can share your computer screen to share documents and other resources with students to keep them engaged with the content.
3. **Raise hand/Reactions.** Remind students to use the Raise Hand feature when they want to ask a question or when you open up a conversation to students. You or your TA can monitor the raised hands and let students speak alternatively.
  - **Note:** In the new version of Zoom (version 5.4.6 or later) participants have now access to the **Reactions** in the meeting controls, they can raise their hand or provide quick feedback using emojis.
4. **Microphone.** Allocate time during a lecture for direct interactions with students and have them use their microphone. This is a way for you to pause and actively engage the participants. You can ask 2-3 students to use their microphone, which can also help create a sense of community in your course.
5. **Chat.** The chat tool can be used to allow students to ask questions, and you can then allocate some time to answer them (e.g. every 10 minutes). You could also have a TA help monitor the chat (for large classes).
6. **Annotation tools.** You can create collaborative tasks where students can annotate on a shared screen as a viewer. When you share your screen, you can ask students to annotate a PowerPoint slide and submit their responses using the text option. You can then monitor the annotations and drag them on the screen using the select option. The annotations can then be saved as an image. You can also use the Whiteboard, where you and the students can annotate on. Repeating this strategy will also encourage

them and the rest of the class to participate even more.

7. **Question polls.** You can use question polls to assess where students are in their learning. In Zoom, you can ask multiple-choice and/or multiple-answer questions, gather student responses in real-time, and share/discuss the results. Questions polls can also be used to get feedback from students at the end of a class (e.g. minute paper, muddiest point), to see what was the most interesting part of the session, what they found most challenging, or what still needs to be answered. Question polls can be made anonymous.
8. **Breakout rooms.** You can put students in groups manually or randomly and have them work in groups during a lecture (option available on Zoom and MS Teams). Students can share their screen, webcam, use their microphone and chat with each other.
  - Ensure to provide clear instructions when using breakout rooms, to make sure they all contribute to their group.
  - You can also assign a time for breakout rooms with a countdown, to better keep track of time during a lecture.

**Note:** you can also use pre-assigned breakout rooms should you want to keep the same breakout rooms from one class to another. The **self-select** option is also available in the most recent Zoom version, which allows students to choose and enter a breakout by themselves. Make sure to ask students to update to the most recent version of Zoom.

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## Student Engagement Before or After Synchronous Lectures

On Brightspace, you can engage students using the following strategies:

1. **Discussions (asynchronous).** On Brightspace, you could create an Introduce Yourself discussion where you ask students to share a picture of their hometown or something that characterizes their daily routine during Covid-19. You could share something about you as well, to create a sense of community online. You can have Q&A discussions where students can ask questions about the course in general (e.g. assignments, access to technology, course navigation etc.), and discussions on specific topics or themes. You can have class discussions or group discussions.
2. **Announcements and emails.** It is important to keep frequent communication with students, to keep them engaged with you and the course, and make sure they are not falling behind. Keep them on track!

Announcements every week using categories (or tags) of topics will help students anticipate what to expect from you (e.g. Welcome to Week 1, Assignments, Team Project, etc.).

3. **Create summary discussion posts or short video clips.** You can summarize the key themes and ideas that have emerged in the discussions or during a synchronous session (on the chat room). This allows you to keep students on track and acknowledge their contributions.

PART III

# ONLINE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES





3.

## ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

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There are two main assessment tools available on Brightspace to assess student learning online: Quizzes and Assignments.

### Online Exams using Quizzes

You can create online exams using quizzes on Brightspace to evaluate student learning frequently (e.g. using short quizzes), or for MidTerm and Final exams. A variety of question types exist, Multiple Choice, Multi-Select, True or False, Written Response, Short Answer, Fill in the Blanks, Arithmetic, etc.

### Designing quiz questions

Spend time designing your quiz questions carefully, by making sure that the questions are aligned with the learning objectives, and achievable in a timely manner.

You can use different types of questions, the most commonly used are Multiple-Choice, Multiple-Select and Short Answer, as they are automatically graded. These questions can be referred as “**well-structured problems**” (Cormier, 2021); they come with a clearly defined question, clear inputs and well-defined answers (e.g. Multiple-Choice, Multi-Select), and are automatically graded or come with a clear rubric. Other types of questions such as Written response could be considered, they require more time to answer, and the student answers will defer from one student to another. They are referred as “**ill-structured problems**”; they are questions that may be difficult to formulate, or that have different answers possible, and answers deferring from one student to another. They will need to be manually graded, but they can help deal with exam cheating. They can be associated to ‘real-life problems’.

**Note:** If you are planning having an equal distribution of multiple-choice and written answer questions in your online exam, you could consider creating two separate assessments. A quiz to grade the multiple-choice or multiple-select questions, and an assignment for the written responses that require more time to complete and that students can submit as a separate file (Word or pdf).

The following quiz features can help maintain exam integrity by reducing cheating:

- **Shuffle** the order of questions at the quiz level. If your quiz contains sections, you can shuffle the sections, the questions within any section, or both.
- **Question pool** to randomly select questions from a question library.
- **Section** where you can shuffle the questions within a section (or group of questions).

**Note:** consider making small changes to the questions and/or answers from term to term, to avoid cheating issues, or have recourse to question libraries with random selection of questions.

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## Randomizing the quiz questions

Randomizing questions in a quiz ensures that each student will receive a unique set of questions, which is a strategy that can help reduce cheating. You can shuffle all the quiz questions, but you can also use a question pool to randomly select questions from a question library (# out of), or create a section to shuffle the questions only within that section.

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## How to proceed with Quizzes?

There are three main steps to follow when creating a quiz on Brightspace.

### In the quiz **Properties**, you need to:

- Enter the quiz name
- Add/Edit questions (where you can create questions one by one or from a question pool)
- Define the number of questions per page (with the option of preventing students from moving backwards through pages). Leave empty if you want to display all the questions on the same page, or if questions are linked to one another.
- Shuffle the questions at the quiz level (or within sections or using question pools)
- Add a description (shown before quiz availability) and/or an introduction (shown at quiz

commencement).

- Add a page header and/or footer.

### In the Restrictions, you can:

- set a start and end date (to make the quiz link available to students during a defined time period).
- a due date (it can be before or at the same time as the end date).
- Indicate the timing with Recommended time limit or Enforced Time Limit (you can add a grace period in case of technical issues, and prevent students from making further changes).
- Add **Special Access Students** (students who need an extra attempt or more time to complete an online exam). Special Access can also be used for students taking an online exam through Zoom, when the rest of the class is taking the exam through Respondus Monitor. Make sure to uncheck both Required to take this quiz and Required to view quiz feedback and results.

### In the Assessment tab, you will need to:

- Add grade item to create a column in the Grades tool, and allow quiz results to be automatically linked to the Grades tool.
- You can also decide to allow attempt to be set as graded immediately upon completion so that students can see their score as soon as their submit their quiz), or export grades automatically upon completion (to send auto-graded attempt scores directly to the grade book). If your quiz is entirely composed of automatically graded questions such as multiple-choice, multiple-answer questions, True-False, Fill-in-the-blank).



PART IV

# ONLINE COURSE DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS



4.

# TELFER BRIGHTSPACE COURSE TEMPLATES

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The Telfer School of Management has developed a Brightspace course template for Telfer instructors. The designs were kept simple and offer limited customization to keep consistency between courses.

By adopting this template, you will help create consistency across Telfer's online courses, making it easier for students to find important information in predictable places. The template can be imported in part or in full. Instructions on importing the template are below.

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## Getting Started

The template is organized in a Module structure, but you can rename the modules should you prefer to adopt a Weekly structure or organize the course material by Themes/Topics.

## Setting up a Home Page

The template starts with a **Home Page** that is the first page students see when they enter a course on Brightspace. It is important to carefully design the homepage to enhance the course experience. The goal is to place useful information in intuitive places to help students access relevant links and information (e.g. announcements, links to course content, course syllabus, course updates), and information on Telfer programs (Bcom, MBA, etc.).

## Course Modules

The template is organized in a **Module** structure, but you can rename the modules should you prefer to adopt a **Weekly structure** or organize the course material by **Themes/Topics**.

## About the template structure

The template is composed of an Overview page and of the following modules:

- **Course Introduction**
  - Welcome page
  - Course Schedule
  - Course Assessments
  - How to do well in the course?
  - Code of Conduct
- **Module 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6**
- **Peer Evaluation**
- **Learner Support**
  - Submodule on Learning Tools and Tutorials (Brightspace, Zoom, MS Teams)
  - Submodule on Online Exam Proctoring (Respondus Monitor, LockDown Browser and Zoom)

## Importing the course templates

You can import the whole template or parts of the template. Once you've imported the template into your course, please refer to the following section to find out how to update the content.

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## Editing the Template

### Overview Page (click to expand)

The Overview Page is the first thing students see when they click into your course. The purpose of this page is to communicate the key elements of the course and also help students navigate through the course.

Click inside the page to access the text editor. You will see editing options on top of the page (e.g. bold, italic, hyperlinks, etc.)

- Update the course introduction message. You may want to list the course objectives and how they relate to the program objectives.
- The 4 quadrants are internal links to submodules located under the Course Introduction module.



They are important elements of the syllabus.

- Update the Instructor & TA Contact information
- Update the About the Virtual Classes box to include information about your synchronous lectures.
- Click Add attachment at the bottom of the page and attach your syllabus (in pdf).
- Optional: Include any additional links under Student Resources that are relevant to the course.

## Course Introduction Module

The purpose of this module is to set expectations for how the course operates. The Course Introduction module is composed of **five submodules**:

1. Welcome
2. Course Schedule
3. Course Assessments
4. How to do well in the course?
5. Code of Conduct

The description area of the **Course Introduction** module (on top of the page) provides details on the following:

- **Your pedagogical approach in the course.** Describe the mix of synchronous and asynchronous teaching in your course and how both modalities support each other.
- **Communication in the course.** Clarify what can be expected from you (e.g. Announcements, Emails, contribution to Discussions on Brightspace, or Channels on MS Teams, etc.) and the students.
- **Course organization.** There are different ways of structuring the course content, using a Module structure, Weekly structure or per Theme/Topic.

How to update the Course Introduction module (click to expand)

On the left hand-side menu, click on **Course Introduction**. Click inside the description area to access the text editor. You will see editing options on top of the page (e.g. bold, italic, hyperlinks, etc.).

- Remove the text in [square brackets] and the examples provided.
- Click the html editor icon on the bottom right-hand side corner of the page to edit the content in html (e.g. to add the embed code for an MS Stream video).
- You can also add a short course introduction with the general course or program objectives (e.g. B.Com, MBA, etc.).
- Click **Update** to save the changes.

## How to update the Welcome submodule (click to expand)

On the left hand-side menu, click on **Course Introduction**. The Welcome submodule will appear underneath. Click on Welcome.

- Click inside the description area to access the text editor. You will see editing options on top of the page (e.g. bold, italic, hyperlinks, etc.).
- Include a message or short video clip to welcome your students to the course. Remove the text in [square brackets] after.
- Add a profile picture. Use <https://crop-circle.imageonline.co/> to create circle profile pictures.
- Click the html editor icon on the bottom right-hand side corner of the page to edit the content in html (e.g. to add the embed code for an MS Stream video)

## How to update the Course Schedule submodule (click to expand)

On the left hand-side menu, click on **Course Introduction**. The How to do well in the course submodule will appear underneath. Click on How to do well in the course.

- Click inside the description area to access the text editor. You will see editing options on top of the page (e.g. bold, italic, hyperlinks, etc.).
- Online Lectures: update the information in [square brackets] to include the day and time of your

lectures, if they will be on Zoom, MS Teams or Adobe Connect, and whether the lectures will/will not be recorded.

- **Weekly Activities & Assessments:** populate the table to include the activities and assessments students are required to complete each week. Include due dates where relevant.
- Update the last updated date at the bottom of the page so students know when changes are made during the term.

## How to update the Course Assessments submodule (click to expand)

On the left hand-side menu, click on **Course Introduction**. The Course Assessments submodule will appear underneath. Click on Course Assessments.

- Click inside the description area to access the text editor. You will see editing options on top of the page (e.g. bold, italic, hyperlinks, etc.).
- Populate the table with the assessments that make up the final grade. Include how much each assessment item is worth.
- Include additional information for each assessment below the table (e.g. requirements, how to submit, due dates, online proctoring, etc.)

## How to update the How to do well in the course submodule (click to expand)

On the left hand-side menu, click on **Course Introduction**. The How to do well in the course submodule will appear underneath. Click on How to do well in the course.

- Click inside the description area to access the text editor. You will see editing options on top of the page (e.g. bold, italic, hyperlinks, etc.).
- Add any important information for students to do well in this course, an estimate of the time commitment (5 to 6 hours per week online) and prep time for virtual classes
- Add details on class participation (in synchronous sessions and outside of class hours using discussions fora, MS Teams, etc.).

- Add links or resources to support student wellbeing in your course.

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## Course Modules

**Modules** are aimed at helping students access the course materials easily and keep the course organized. Each module (e.g. Module 1, Module 2, Module 3, etc.) starts with a **Module Overview** in the description area at the top of the page, where you can:

- Add a **short description** about the module (or a short video clip).
- Add the **learning objectives** for the module.
- Add a **to-do list** for the module (e.g. activities and assessments).

You can then upload **files**, add **links**, create **pages** to share the course materials with the students (e.g. PPT slides, case studies, video recordings, handouts) from each week. You can also add links to **course activities & assessments** (e.g. Quizzes, Assignments, Discussions, etc.).

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This is where you can add appendices or other back matter.