Blogs and Wikis

A Blog, is a website that is designed to be updated frequently with new entries. It is essentially an online journal. The entries in a Blog are usually displayed in reverse-chronological order (most-recent first).

A Wiki is a simple online database that allows users to easily create, edit and link basic web pages. Wikis are often used to create collaborative websites and are increasingly being used for knowledge management.

**Note:** When creating a link to an external website in a blog or wiki it MUST open in a new window. Under copyright rules do not display external content within the RMIT Blackboard frame.

Topics
- Enabling the blog and wiki tools
- Navigating to a blog or wiki

**BLOGS**
- Add a Blog
- Using a Blog

**WIKIS**
- Add a Wiki
- Using a Wiki

**EXTERNAL LINKS**
- Creating an external link to open in a new window in a blog or wiki

Enabling the blog and wiki tools

1. Open your Blackboard course.
2. Select **Control Panel** from the left menu to display the Control Panel.
3. Select **Manage Tools** from the Course Options block.
4 Click on the **Content Type Availability** option.

5 Select the **Blog** and **Wiki** options (near the bottom of the list) on the Content Type Availability screen, then click **Submit**.

6 Click **OK** on the Receipt screen and then **OK** on the Manage Tools screen.
Navigating to wikis and blogs

7 Select the content area where the wiki or blog has been created from the left menu (eg. Assignments).

8 Browse the list of wikis and blogs in that content area.

9 Click on View for the wiki or blog you select (eg. Assignment 2—Sources of Renewable Energy).
**BLOGS - Add a blog**

1. Open your Blackboard course and select an area to place the blog.
2. Click on the **Edit View** link `EDIT VIEW` on the top right corner of the screen.
3. Select **blog** from the Select drop down menu, on the menu bar, then click **Go**.

4. Enter the blog Information:
   - **Blog Name** eg. Work experience journaling.
   - **Description** eg. Your experiences of your work experience this semester
   - **Make the blog available** – Yes
   - **Select the blog type** – Either Group Blog that all members and instructors can view or Private Journal so members are unable to view each other’s entries, but instructors can view all entries in the blog
   - **Allow blog members to view Instructor’s entries** – Defaults to Yes.
   - **Select the value to use to reference users in the blog** – Person Name and User Name gives their first and last name and userid.

   - **Text direction for blog content** – usually runs from left to right.
5. Under **Member Settings** select who you want to be as a member of the blog, remembering that you have already selected the Private Journal option so members will not be able to see other members blogs.

Consider if you want students to permanently delete blog entries and determine if you need to set date and time restrictions for the blog.

- **Blog members:**
  - All course members
  - Specific groups and course members

- **Course Groups**
  - Grape
  - Apple
  - MIT
  - Orange

- **Individual Course Members**
  - Agnihotri, Bhavika
  - Blackman, Chris
  - Bradmore, Russell
  - Collins, Fay Lani
  - Connolly, Mark
  - D’Souza, Jason
  - Epstein, Jeremy
  - McKeown, Owen
  - Nevin, Daniel
  - Nguyen, Guan Minh

- **Selected Members**

- **Allow students to permanently delete blog entries**

- **Allow members to export their blog entries**

- **Allow members of the blog to:**
  - View Comments
  - Write Comments

- **Set date and time restrictions for editing the blog.**
  - Allow Edits After: May 26, 2008
  - Allow Edits Until: May 26, 2008
6 Create Grade Book Entry allows you to set up a corresponding Gradebook entry for your blog. Refer to “Blackboard staff how to guide – Gradebook” for more details on using Gradebook.

- **Create a Grade Book entry for this blog** – select if you want a Grade Book entry
- **Entry Name** – use a meaningful name for the blog
- **Category** – usually blog
- **Points Possible** – indicate the points possible.
- **Display grades to students** – decide if they are to be displayed to the students or not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Create Grade Book Entry</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☑ Create a Grade Book entry for this blog</td>
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<tr>
<td>If selected, specify the settings for the gradebook item:</td>
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7 Click **OK** once you have completed entering the information on this screen.

8 Click **OK** at the Receipt screen.
BLOGS - Using a blog

1. Select the area where the blog is located.
2. Click on the View link under the blog you are going to work with.

3. On the right side of the screen, under:
   - **actions**, click on **new entry** to type in entries for all the student
   - **filters**, provides the option for changing the number of entries shown at one time
   - **stats**, will record the number of entries related to this specific private blog
   - **toolbox**, provides the option to export the private blog
   - **privacy**, displays who can read private blog

The **comments link** is used to provide direct feedback to the specific student that created a post and will only be seen by that students.
4 Click on the new entry link to add a new entry to the blog for everyone to see.

5 Type in the entry for everyone to see and click on Save once you have finished.

6 Once the student has received the message, they can post a reply, to which you can add comments.

To add a comment to a students post:
- click on the Comments link under the students post
- type in the comment in the Add Comment area
- click on the Add Comment button once you have finished, then
WIKIS - Add a Wiki

1. Open your Blackboard course and select a content area.
2. Click on the Edit View link on the top right corner of the screen.
3. Select Wiki from the Select drop down menu, on the menu bar, then click Go.
4. Type in Name and Description under the Wiki Information section.
   - Make the wiki available – select Yes if you want students to have immediate access.
   - Select the value to use to reference users in the wiki – select Person Name and User Name for the student name and id.
   - Text direction for wiki content – is normally Left to Right

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Create Wiki

Wiki Information

Name

Description

Make the wiki available

Select the value to use to reference users in the wiki

Text direction for wiki content

5. Under Member Settings select either All course members or Specific groups and course members.

Under Member Settings you can also select if you want to:

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• Allow students to permanently delete wiki pages
• Allow members to export the wiki
• Allow members of the wiki to view or write comments
• Set date and time restrictions for editing the wiki.

7 Under **Non-Member Settings** you can allow non-members to view the wiki, view comments, write comments, and set date and time restrictions.

8 **Create Grade Book Entry** allows you to set up a corresponding Gradebook entry for your wiki. Refer to “Blackboard staff how to guide – Gradebook” for more details on using Gradebook.

- **Create a Grade Book entry for this wiki** – select if you want a Grade Book entry
- **Entry Name** – use a meaningful name for the wiki
- **Points Possible** – indicate the points possible.
- **Display grades to students** – decide if they are to be displayed to the students or not.

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9 Click **OK** once you have completed entering the information on this screen.

10 Click **OK** at the Receipt screen.
WIKIS - Using a Wiki

1. Open your Blackboard course and select the area where the Wiki has been added.

2. Click on the View link under the Wiki name to display the Wiki.

3. There are a number of sections and options in the right column.
   - **Page**
     - *edit* to add a contribution
     - *new* to add a new page
     - *delete* to delete entries
     - *history* of contributions
     - *print* with or without comments
   - **Page Stats**
     - *views* number of people that have viewed the page
     - *edits* number of edits to the page
     - *contributors* number of contributors to the page
     - *comments* number of comments
   - **Page contributors**
     - names of people who have contributed to the page
   - **Site navigation**
     - lists the pages
   - **Toolbox**
     - *page list* lists the pages and last modifications
     - *export site* to export data
   - **Privacy** - to check who can see the Wiki

4. To add a new page click on *new* under page in the right column.

5. Enter the **Page Name** and **page content**, then click on **Save** when completed.

6. You, or other members of the Wiki can add further pages or comments for each page.
EXTERNAL LINKS – Creating an external link to open in a new window

**Note:** All external websites MUST open in a new window. Under copyright rules do not display external content within the RMIT Blackboard frame.

To create an external link to open in a new window within a blog or wiki:

1. **At the Edit screen, click on the link icon** to insert a link.
2. **At the insert link window** type in the **URL** of the link, then click on the **Insert** button.
3. **Highlight the link**, then **right mouse click** to display a menu, then select the **Insert/edit link** option.
4. **At the Insert/edit link window**, select the **Target** drop down menu option **Open in new window (blank)**, then click on the **Update** button. This will ensure the link will open in a new window.
Further information

- Blackboard staff how to guide – Staff First Steps, Using the Online Instructors Manual
- Blackboard staff how to guide – Menu Options
- Blackboard staff how to guide - Gradebook
- Campus Pack Student and Instructor User Guide