

LearnJCU Layouts

Guidelines for subject designers

Learning Modules



Great for grouping and sequencing learning materials.

Folders



Suited to a broad range of subject sites across multiple disciplines.

Ultra Documents



For subjects sites with light to moderate learning content.

Content Heavy



Managing higher levels of learning resources and activities.



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Background

The design elements, principles and rationales included in this resource are based on Australian and international evidence-informed best practice guidelines. These guidelines foster student access, engagement, learning and experience, and contribute to quality of online learning.

The following frameworks and evidence-based literature have informed this resource:

- Technology Enhanced Learning Accreditation Standards ([TELAS](#));
- Quality Matters ([QM](#)) Higher Education Rubric;
- Opportunity through online learning: Improving student access, participation and success in higher education (National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE)) – these are [Ten National Guidelines](#) for improving student outcomes in online learning;
- [Threshold Standards](#) for Online Learning Environments (Australasian Council on Open, Distance and e-Learning (ACODE));
- Guidance note: [Technology-enhanced learning](#) (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA))



Learning Modules

For delivery of sequenced learning materials designed for step-by-step completion



When to use the Learning Modules Layout

Some subject matter is best presented in a strict sequence with students fully covering one topic before moving to the next. However, it should be noted that forced sequencing can be turned off in Learning Modules and students can still navigate through the module with the next and back button.

Learning Modules are visually distinct from folders and can be a vehicle to have students engage with learning resources and learning activities in this manner.

Use Learning Modules where your learning design goals are:

- Keeping students on track
- Mastering certain concepts before progression
- Scaffolded learning
- Learning Modules can be used as a stand-alone organizing principle or may be mixed with the other layouts presented here.



Layout

Subject Content

About this Subject Visible to students
Introductory Video | Subject Outline | Contact Information

Questions Visible to students
Ask any general questions about the subject or assessment.

Assessments Visible to students
About Submitting Assignments | Draft Submission - SafeAssign Originality Report | Assessment Items

Reading Resources Visible to students
About Readings at JCU | Full Readings List | Your Library

Do you need help? Visible to students
Common Help Topics | Study Skills | Referencing | Academic Integrity | AccessAbility | Wellbeing | Career Planning | Special Consideration | Computer/IT

Week 1 - Topic (use sentence case) Visible to students
Welcome to the subject we start by introducing you to the [topic] and provide context in how the [topic] is applied to everyday activities.

Week 2 - [Topic] Visible to students
This topic explores your past experience with the subject matter and poses key questions for this discipline.

Subject element

- Welcome video
- Subject outline
- Contact information
- Navigation instructions
- Communication channels
- Feedback information

An invitation for students to ask general questions about the subject or assessment.

- How to submit assignments
- SafeAssign draft submission
- Assessment items

Reading resources required regularly, for example: Readings, glossaries etc.

Common help topics, such as learning support and other student services.

Here, we use Learning Modules instead of folders.

Learning activities, including content, are sequentially and consistently arranged by units of time, for example:

- Week 1
- Week 2...

Other suitable units include:

- Topics
- Modules, for online subjects
- Days, for block subjects.

Rationale

Introducing the teaching staff establishes the teacher presence. Students must be informed about when and how they will receive feedback. Articulate participation expectations and provide some guidance around navigating the subject site. Note: the subject outline requires frequent access.

A prominent general discussion forum invites discussion around frequently asked questions, reducing transaction time for both staff and students. Enables student-teacher and student-student interaction.

Assessment drives learning. Students will seek this information early and often. Include assessment descriptions, criteria, submission requirements and enable SafeAssign.

Reading resources are required for multiple learning activities and are best made readily accessible.

Integrating services available to the student provides scaffolding for graduate capabilities and normalises support-seeking behaviour.







Students usually prefer content organised in a chronological weekly folder order; they say this helps them in locating content at the time needed.



Layout

Week 1 - Topic (use sentence case) ← ▾
Welcome to the subject we start by introducing you to the [topic] and provide context in how the [topic] is applied to everyday activities.

Week 2 - [Topic] ▴
This topic explores your past experience with the subject matter and poses key questions for this discipline.

-  **2.0 [Topic] overview** ←
-  **2.1 [Topic] lecture**
-  **2.2 [Topic] study notes**
Content isn't available
-  **2.3 Discuss [topic]**
Content isn't available
-  **2.4 Check your understanding**
Due date: 15/06/2022 12:00 am
Content isn't available
-  **2.5 [Topic] review**
Content isn't available

Week 3 - [Topic] ▾
In this topic we...

Subject element

Module titles flag partial and full completion of the sequence.

Descriptions prime student expectations of the module content.

Content can include all standard content types. When viewed, content appears with a green tick.

The locked icon displays when forced sequencing is turned on.

Rationale

Students receive feedback on overall progress at a glance.

Students can read ahead to gauge module content and how it fits into the learning sequence.

Students can visualise progress within a module.

This feature reinforces the sequential nature of this mode of learning.



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Folders

Suited to a broad range of subject sites across multiple disciplines



When to use the Folder Layout

The Folder Subject Layout represents the most typical format for LearnJCU subject design. It contains a mix of folders, files, documents, web link, readings and lecture recordings.

This template suits subjects with a light to moderate amount of learning resources and activities. It can be applied to an arrangement of learning resources based on weeks or topics.

All educational approaches can be accommodated for, such as:

- project-based learning
- case-based learning
- scenario-based learning

When students are interacting with the online environment the key to a great experience is consistency. Deploying the Folders Layout across an entire course or year-level provides a foundation to achieve a consistent student experience.



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Layout

Subject Content ...

About this Subject ...

- Visible to students
- Introductory Video | Subject Outline | Contact Information

Questions ...

- Visible to students
- Ask any general questions about the subject or assessment.

Assessments ...

- Visible to students
- About Submitting Assignments | Draft Submission - SafeAssign Originality Report | Assessment Items

Reading Resources ...

- Visible to students
- About Readings at JCU | Full Readings List | Your Library

Do you need help? ...

- Visible to students
- Common Help Topics | Study Skills | Referencing | Academic Integrity | AccessAbility | Wellbeing | Career Planning | Special Consideration | Computer/IT

Week 1 - Topic (use sentence case) ...

- Visible to students

Week 2 - Topic ...

- Visible to students

Week 13 - Topic ...

- Visible to students

Subject element

- Welcome video
- Subject outline
- Contact information
- Navigation instructions
- Communication channels
- Feedback information

An invitation for students to ask general questions about the subject or assessment.

- How to submit assignments
- SafeAssign draft submission
- Assessment items

Reading resources required regularly, for example: Readings, glossaries etc.

Common help topics, such as learning support and other student services.

Learning activities, including content, are sequentially and consistently arranged by units of time, for example:

- Week 1
- Week 2
- Week 3 ...

- Other suitable units include:
- Topic
 - Module, for online subjects
 - Day, for block subjects.

Rationale

Introducing the teaching staff establishes the teacher presence. Students must be informed about when and how they will receive feedback. Articulate participation expectations and provide some guidance around navigating the subject site. Note: the subject outline requires frequent access.

A prominent general discussion forum invites discussion around frequently asked questions, reducing transaction time for both staff and students. Enables student-teacher and student-student interaction.

Assessment drives learning. Students will seek this information early and often. Include assessment descriptions, criteria, submission requirements and enable SafeAssign.

Reading resources are required for multiple learning activities and are best made readily accessible.

Integrating services available to the student provides scaffolding for graduate capabilities and normalises support-seeking behaviour.

Students usually prefer content organised in a chronological weekly folder order; they say this helps them in locating content at the time needed.



Layout

Week 2 - [Topic]
Visible to students

2.0 [Topic] overview
Visible to students

2.1 [Topic] lecture
Visible to students

2.2 [Topic] study notes
Visible to students

2.3 Discuss [topic]
Visible to students

2.4 Check your understanding
Due date: 15/06/2022 12:00 am
Visible to students

2.5 [Topic] review
Visible to students

Subject element

- An overview for each week or topic should include learning outcomes.
- Learning content recording created and published using Panopto with captions enabled.
- Accessible PDF and alternative file formats for lecture slides, study notes or other key documents.
- Discussion forum with clear purpose and directions enables asynchronous communication and interaction.
- Short quiz with automated feedback to check understanding of subject content.
- Close the week or topic by briefly reviewing what was covered, what's up next, and any reminders of upcoming assessments.

Rationale

- Provides guidance for expected student activities and indicates time required for each element. Learning activities must be aligned to subject learning outcomes. Context is provided for learning resources so students understand relevance to their learning.
- Students often desire a recording to repeatedly view and extract key points and for revision. Captions aid accessibility. Alternative formats (e.g., captions, transcripts) must be provided for multimedia.
- Slides complement a presentation. Study notes contain more guidance to scaffold learning. Use built-in accessibility checking options in Microsoft Office documents to produce accessible PDFs or use Bb Ally.
- Monitored and moderated discussions can allow students more in-depth exploration of a topic and the opportunity to view peer perspectives. Staff must be present in the forums.
- Allows student to self-monitor progress towards learning outcomes. Adding automated feedback for each question enhances student learning.
- Provides a conclusion and lets students know that they will now be moving on to the next topic.
- Numbering of items aids students in navigating through the content and provides a recommended sequence.

LearnJCU Layouts

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Ultra Documents

For subjects sites with light to moderate learning content.



When to use the Ultra Documents Layout

Ultra Documents offer a page-based format that suits a lighter volume of content. Text, images, video and files can be designed to provide context to learning resources and activities.

Use Ultra Documents when you desire a more visual method of presenting subject materials or where it is important to have text supporting and explaining images, video or learning activities.

Sequenced approaches to learning work well in the Ultra Document format:

- The 5E's (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate)
- E-tivities Framework

Ultra Documents have some limitations regarding learning analytics and with the use of Blackboard Ally accessibility tools. Check with your support team if you rely on these features.

Layout

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Do you need help? ...
Visible to students
Common Help Topics | Study Skills | Referencing | Academic Integrity | AccessAbility | Wellbeing | Career Planning | Special Consideration | Computer/IT

Week 1 - Topic (use sentence case) ...
Visible to students

Week 2 - Topic ...
Visible to students

Week 13 - Topic ...
Visible to students

Subject element

- Welcome video
- Subject outline
- Contact information
- Navigation instructions
- Communication channels
- Feedback information

An invitation for students to ask general questions about the subject or assessment.

Organising principles remain the same as the Folders Layout however Ultra Documents replace folders.

Ultra Documents open in a peek layer.

Rationale

Introducing the teaching staff establishes the teaching presence. LearnJCU site navigation helps students know where to find information. Students must be informed about when and how they will receive feedback. Articulate participation expectations. The subject outline requires frequent access.

A prominent general discussion forum invites discussion around frequently asked questions, reducing transaction time for both staff and students. Enables student-teacher and student-student interaction.

For subjects that require no folder depth Ultra Documents serve as a vehicle to present content and activities on one page.

Layout



Activate

This week you will explore themes related to developing your professional identity. Take the time to watch the following video.

Watch: 2022 JCU Subject Template

In this video, Sharon Long, Learning Environments Support Officer, introduces you to the 2022 JCU Subject Template to walk you through the items available and how you can apply to your subject site.



Video length 4mins 44secs

Learn

Download and complete the following workbooks before your practical class. Take care to complete each section with reference to your tutorial worksheets for weeks 1-4.

Week 1 - Workbook 1.pdf

Week 1 - Workbook 2.pdf

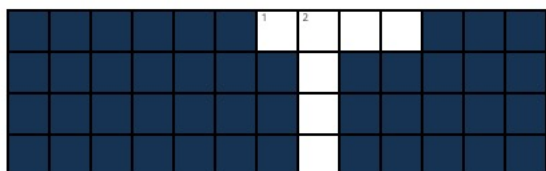
Apply

Based on the in-class discussions on the JCU Subject Template video and your completed workbooks, follow the crossword activity below to test your understanding of this week's material and guide your reflections for the first assessment.

Activity: Check Your Understanding

Check your understanding of the external regulatory framework by completing this crossword.

Edit Reports



Across

1 TEQSA registers and evaluates the performance of higher education

Subject element

Images used as banners should be relevant to the subject matter and must contain alternative text descriptions or be marked as decorative.

Header structures help to logically organise content and makes content more accessible. Use the appropriate text style (i.e., title, header, subheader, paragraph) in the content editor.

Panopto, YouTube and Vimeo content will display as a thumbnail embedded in the page content.

Files made available to download.

Interactive content for online learning activities. Made possible with third-party tools in the Content Market

Rationale

Well chosen images can highlight important aspects of the subject matter. All media added to subject sites must be accessible. Be mindful of copyright and include appropriate attributions for images.

Headers divide content into manageable segments and help to organise content and learning sequences to enhance ease of navigation and readability.

Video can increase engagement, illustrate concepts and present different perspectives. Students can view these videos 'in-line' within the Ultra document page. Alternative formats (e.g., captions, transcripts) must be provided for multimedia.

Key files situated in context reinforce links with learning outcomes and assessment. Students must have access to alternative file formats via Blackboard Ally.

Headers divide content into manageable segments and help to organise content and learning sequences to enhance ease of navigation and readability.

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Content Heavy

Managing higher levels of learning resources and activities



When to use the Content Heavy Layout

Some merged subjects, subjects with a higher ratio of material to activity or subjects with many teaching staff often require more folders to help organise content.

The Content Heavy Layout Level 1 will often use a similar approach to the Common layout Level 1. A folder is typically used to represent weekly or topic-based content. For Content Heavy subjects, sub-folders are included to organise learning material around lectures, tutorials, practicals or by guest lecturer.

In some case the use of an Ultra Document in a sub-folder can replace the functionality a 3rd level folder may have offered.

It is recommended that Content Heavy layouts use a student-centred organisation rather than teacher-centred.

Content Heavy Layouts have some limitations regarding learning analytics, as activity data is only recorded from level 1 and 2 content items. Check with your support team if you rely on this feature.



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Week 2 - Topic ...
Visible to students

Week 13 - Topic ...
Visible to students

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Layout

The screenshot shows a course layout with the following structure:

- Week 3 - Topic (Visible to students)
 - 3.1 Lecture preparation and resources (Visible to students)
 - 3.1.1 [Topic] study notes (Visible to students)
 - 3.1.2 [Topic] lecture (Visible to students)
 - 3.2 Tutorial resources (Visible to students)
 - 3.2.1 [Topic] tutorial notes (Visible to students)
 - Institutional Digital Ecosystem.pdf (Visible to students)
 - 3.2.3 [Topic] tutorial discussion (Visible to students)
 - 3.3 Review (Visible to students)

Subject element

Subfolder can organise weekly or topic material. A numbering system can still be applied

Learning resources and activities

Second-level folders can accommodate all standard content types.

Rationale

LearnJCU restricts folder-depth to two levels. Many nested folders can hinder navigation.

Second level folders allow grouping of materials by type or purpose.

Some resources are required for multiple learning activities and are best made readily accessible.

Student interaction data will not come up in Learning Analytics for content items below the second level i.e., the folder 'Tutorial resources' is in the second level and content under this folder is in level 3



Additional LearnJCU Layout Suggestions

Guidelines for subject designers

Weekly Learning Sequence Checklist

Eight tips for a happy subject



Improve your LearnJCU site, student outcomes and marking efficiency. These eight tips will help you organize your weekly materials into one location for each week. They are designed to sign post to your students your expectations of their learning and for you to clearly deliver your content as well as teach them how to complete their up-and-coming assessment task.



1. Get your brain in the game

This activity should be short, sharp and snappy. It is a recap on the previous learning. Not designed to be labour intensive but to reignite their brains for the weeks learning activities.



2. Weekly Outline.

Outline the weekly Learning Outcomes and the expectations for the week (what students should have completed by the end of the week, what knowledge you expect them to have so far and where they should be up to with assessments).



3. Activity 1.1 (if week 1, 2.1 if week 2 etc.)

Have a maximum of 3 learning activities which are centered on your content for this week. With each activity, outline why students are learning this and how it relates to the assessments, their learning outcomes and even their professions.



4. Activity 1.2

Activities can be, watch your video and do something with it, fill out a work sheet, research something, read and report back or complete a group activity etc. Activities need to be active where students are not just passively receiving information. They are engaging in the material you are providing and then 'doing' something with it.



5. Activity 1.3

You do not have to have this activity if it is not needed. All activities should follow the guidelines in 1.1 and 1.2.



6. Weekly Wrap up.

Activity which wraps up the weeks learning. Can just be a summary if you like of what you want students to have learnt or you can ask them to perform a task to demonstrate their weekly learning.



7. Assessment

This activity is designed to both teach students your expectations of the assessment and how to do the assessment i.e., how to use certain software, how to complete the exam, it is also designed for them to work on assessments each week so if they run into trouble they will know early. This will make your marking easier and the level of their assessments higher.



8. Next Week.

Dot points of what students can expect next week and any pre-work they need to complete.

Additional LearnJCU Layout Suggestions

Guidelines for subject designers

Mayer's 12 Principles of Multimedia

Mayer, R. E. (2009). *Multimedia learning* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.



Principle	Description
1. Coherence	CUT THE FLUFF. Are the images and words you have written on the screen necessary for learner comprehension? Do they complicate your message? Have you applied the KIS (Keep It Simple) principle? Your core objective here is to be simple, clear and concise.
2. Signaling	Have you shown students what they should be paying attention to? Do not over stimulate the screen, students will not know what your main concept is. Have you highlighted the main point? Have you used arrows/other signals to show the learner concepts they need to focus on?
3. Redundancy	Do not overload your learners with narration, graphics and text. Have you only used 2? Text and narration can also overwhelm your learners so try to reduce this, if both are needed reduce the amount of text you use on screen.
4. Spatial Continuity	How much space do you have between text and your visuals? Ensure the text which compliments your visuals are close together so the learner can make quick unconscious associations.
5. Temporal Continuity	Is your audio and visuals (animation) occurring at the same time? Learners need to hear the audio at the exact same time as they see the visual.
6. Segmenting	Have you broken your Digital learning object up into segments which students can 'stop' and 'start'? Have you made it clear you are introducing a new concept?
7. Pre-training	Have you asked your students to complete some introductory work? Are your students already familiar with the key terms you will be using? Learners learn best when the content is familiar, so it is great to have a glossary of your terms or some form of introductory exercise.
8. Modality	Have you limited the amount of unnecessary text on screen? It is easier for learners to understand your content when you have audio/images.
9. Multimedia	Do you have media to compliment your words (text or audio)? Do your images compliment your words? Images help your students to associate your words to a visual and enhance understanding and memory.
10. Personalisation	Have you used a conversational and friendly voice? Have you spoken in first person? Have you spoken directly to the learner? Learners learn best when they are at ease and feel part of the learning process. So, using terms such 'as you can see'.
11. Voice	Have you used your own voice? Have you used high quality audio software? Students like to listen to your voice – establishes teacher presence.
12. Image	Does your digital object contain a range of visual cues which compliment your audio?