



BCA INTRODUCTION TO ONLINE LEARNING – getting started in eLearning

Introduction to eLearning

An online learning management system (LMS), called eLearning, will be the main communication tool used by unit coordinators. The package used for most BCA units is called Blackboard. Online unit sites contain study materials, submission facilities for assessment, solutions to exercises, student/student and student/coordinator interaction via communication tools (Discussions), and video presentations in some sites.

This document shows you how to access Blackboard and contains a quick unit site guide and directions for help and advice.

The BCA eLearning facility

The BCA eLearning site is accessed through the University of Sydney (USyd) server, via the eLearning project team (called Sydney eLearning) and Information & Communications Technology (ICT). You will see a USyd logo on the top left-hand-side of online pages. However, the BCA eLearning facility is independent of the policies and procedures of that particular university. This facility applies equally to all BCA consortium universities.

Logging on to eLearning

1. **Open a browser**
2. **Go to the eLearning page, at:**
<http://elearning.sydney.edu.au>

3. **Do a Browser Check**

We strongly advise that you do a Browser Check as some functions will not work properly unless your browser is correctly configured. (For example, if you have installed a pop-up blocker, you will need to turn it off while using the eLearning system.)

See *Pop up Blockers* and *Tweak you Browser* here:

<http://sydney.edu.au/elearning/student/index.shtml>

You will also find *Login Help* and *eLearning Software* advice at this site.

Note: See "Troubleshooting" on page 6 for information about firewalls.

5. **Enter you Username and Password**

Before the start of semester, students will receive an email from the BCA coordinating office entitled, *BCA - eLearning instructions*. This will include information about usernames and how to access passwords.

6. **The log-in procedure will take you to the *My Units of Study* page**

if, at the start of semester you experience difficulty logging on OR, once you have logged on to the *My eLearning Sites* page, you don't find the units that you have enrolled in (by the start of semester); OR you find units that you have not enrolled in, please contact the BCA coordinating office at bca@ctc.usyd.edu.au. (Note EPI, SVA and BIF do not use BCA eLearning facilities.)

Note about changing enrolments: If you change your unit choices at your home university, it's important to also notify the BCA coordinating office so that these changes can be updated in your eLearning profile.

Further information about help can be found on page 6

The My Units of Study page

The cover page displays your unit sites. You should find site links to your chosen units.

The screenshot shows the 'My Units of Study' page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the University of Sydney logo and user information (Erica Jobling). Below this is a secondary navigation bar with tabs for 'My Units of Study', 'Staff', and 'Students'. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Tools:** A sidebar menu with links to Announcements, Calendar, Tasks, My Grades, Send Email, User Directory, Personal Information, and Address Book.
- Blackboard Learn Units of Study:** A list of units for the current semester (2011 Semester 1 - BCA - CLB, DMC, HHS, LCD, MBB) with instructor names.
- My Announcements:** A section showing no announcements have been posted in the last 7 days.
- My Calendar:** A section showing no calendar events have been posted for the next 7 days.
- My Communities:** A section showing the user is not currently participating in any organizations.

If units you have enrolled in for the current semester don't appear, or if you find additional units, please contact the BCA coordinating office bca@ctc.usyd.edu.au.

There are 3 tabs on at the top of all pages within unit sites. If you are in a unit site, the *My Units of Study* tab will take you back to the cover page. The *Staff* and *Students* tabs take you to resources pages. The *Students* page contains Blackboard and Sydney eLearning support.

The unit Home page

This page will show announcements and details of recently added content.

The screenshot shows the 'unit Home page' for '2012 - Semester 1 - BCA - CLB Clinical Biostatistics (CLB)'. The page features a navigation sidebar on the left with links to 'Clinical Biostatistics (CLB)', 'Unit Coordinators', 'Study Guide', 'Unit Content', 'Discussions', 'BCA Student Resources', and 'My Grades'. The main content area includes:

- BCA Online:** Logo for the Biostatistics Collaboration of Australia.
- Clinical Biostatistics (CLB):** Unit title and description.
- My Announcements:** A section showing no course announcements have been posted in the last 7 days.
- Blackboard Learn Student Support:** A section providing links to a Blackboard Student guide, Video Tutorials, Test Online, Discussion Board thread, and assignment submission.
- Copyright Notice:** A section with copyright information for 2011/2012, University of Sydney, and links to the University copyright policy and Sydney eLearning helpdesk.
- What's New:** A section with 'Edit Notification Settings' and a 'Discussion Board (114)' link.
- To Do:** A section with 'Edit Notification Settings', 'What's Past Due' (All Items (0)), and 'What's Due' (Select Date: 25/01/2012, Go).

The bar on the left is the navigation menu.

This contains links to folders and tools for the major online study items in your unit.

A basic structure has been established so that navigation is essentially the same across BCA sites. The blue bars are buttons that will take you to folders, tools (eg Discussions) or external websites.

The navigation menu

The screenshot shows a navigation menu for '2012 - Semester 1 - BCA - CLB'. The menu items are: Clinical Biostatistics (CLB), Unit Coordinators, Study Guide, Unit Content, Discussions, BCA Student Resources, and My Grades. Callout boxes provide the following descriptions:

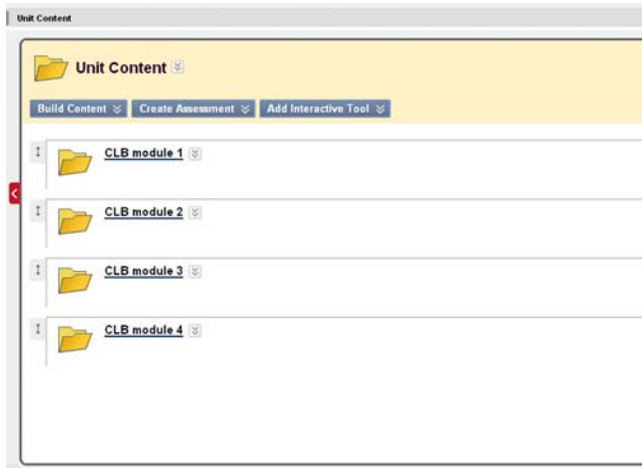
- Clinical Biostatistics (CLB)**: Unit entry page: Takes you to the **Home page**
- Unit Content**: Main content area: Contains unit materials by module: documents and videos and links to Discussions and assessment items for each module
- BCA Student Resources**: Link to (external) BCA website/Resources for Current Students NB: use browser "back" key to re-enter Blackboard site
- My Grades**: Your personal record of results

Depending on what is open and/or how the view has been created, you may lose the file trail or the tabs at the top of the page. If you get lost, clicking on the *Unit title* (entry page) will take you back to the home page. If you can't find this, you will be in another window. Go back to the main page by closing windows in your browser.

The file trail is shown in grey bar at the top of the page.



The *Unit Content* folder



Tools for communication and assessment

Discussions

A number of topic areas (called *forums* in Blackboard) will be available, in which you can add to existing discussion threads or create new ones. In *Unit Content*, the unit coordinator may have created forum links, per module.

Discussions are an important part of distance delivery and you are encouraged to participate. Your coordinator will tell you how these will be run in your unit.

Guidelines for using Discussions can be found at <http://ondemand.blackboard.com/students.htm>

Note: Copying and Pasting from Microsoft Word

Please do not copy from Microsoft Word and paste into your LMS site as this will introduce hidden code from Word which can cause issues in Blackboard. If you need to copy from Word, then paste into a text editor (e.g. Notepad or TextEdit) and then copy from the text editor to remove the hidden Word code.

Assessment

In module folders, clicking on the links for assessment items will take you to the relevant assessment page where you can download your exercise/ assignment/ exam and, once completed, submit it on the same page.

In the *Assignment Information* section at the top of the page, you will find a link to the assessment document for downloading to your computer and, in the information box, the *Student Plagiarism: Coursework Compliance Statement*. Submission of the assessment item online will mean that you have agreed to the Compliance Statement. (Notes: - The compliance statement is generally not required for *exercises*. - When submitting online, you do NOT need to complete and send the hard copy Assignment/Assessment Cover Sheet provided in your unit materials.)

In the *Assignment Materials* and *Submit* sections, you can upload and submit your completed assessment item. You can, if you wish, add a short comment in the *Comments* box (under the *Attach file* line).

Further assignment submission details can be found in the BCA Assessment Guide, available in your hard copy materials and in BCA Student Resources: www.bca.edu.au/currentstudents.html

Further instruction about how to submit assignments online can be found at: www.bca.edu.au/currentstudents.html#assessmentguide

Getting down to work

You **will not be able to access sites until your 'student profile' has been loaded into eLearning unit sites**. Although this may be done before the start of each semester, unit sites will not be active (ie contain any materials or messages) until the start of semester, at which time a Study Guide and (at least) the first study module/s should be available. (Unit coordinators will send an initial welcome email to students and you will receive hard-copy study notes in the mail after the start of semester).

Note: Students studying Epidemiology (EPI), Survival Analysis (SVA) or Bioinformatics (BIF)

The BCA eLearning facilities are NOT used for Epidemiology (EPI) (whether delivered by distance via the University of Queensland OR by distance or on-campus at your home university), OR for SVA and BIF (which are delivered by Macquarie University). Unit coordinators for these units will advise about online facilities.

HELP

The **eLearning Helpdesk** (Sydney eLearning) provides troubleshooting and user guidance services. Contact: http://sydney.edu.au/elearning/student/trouble/email_us.php

The **Students tab in eLearning sites** contains links to Blackboard and Sydney eLearning support.

Links:

Sydney eLearning: <http://sydney.edu.au/elearning/student/index.shtml>

and

Blackboard tutorials: <http://ondemand.blackboard.com/students.htm> RECOMMENDED: Most tutorials are short video presentations in which tasks are described quickly and clearly. In some cases written guidelines (PDFs) are posted in place of videos.

Information Communication Technology (ICT at USyd) administer unikeys and passwords.
<http://sydney.edu.au/ict/switch/>

If you are unable to log on or you are unable to access the Helpdesks listed above, contact the **BCA coordinating office:** bca@ctc.usyd.edu.au 02-9562 5076

A note about firewalls

If you can't log on, your IT setup may have a firewall installed. Many institutions have these security systems in place. (You may be diverted to a non-working page or you may get a "User Authentication Failed" message.)

Try these solutions:

- Having checked that your login name and password are correct, check the address bar at the top of your browser window. If the URL (web address) has a colon and the numbers 8900 (":8900" without quotation marks) in the address, delete these and try again.
- If you still can't get in, you may have to ask your IT team or ISP (internet service provider) to give you clearance to the eLearning site.

If, after trying out the above options, things still refuse to cooperate, contact the Helpdesk at (02) 9351 6000 (you'll probably get quicker results by phoning but if you need to send an email, see http://sydney.edu.au/elearning/student/trouble/email_us.php)

Enquiries about units or courses

Enquiries about subject matter within units should be directed to unit coordinators. Contact details for coordinators are included in online unit sites, and a current list of all BCA unit coordinators is available at www.bca.edu.au/TC.html

For general academic advice about your study, contact the program coordinator at your “home” university. A current list of unit and program coordinators is available at www.bca.edu.au/universities.html

Student Resources

Student Resources are available at www.bca.edu.au/currentstudents.html

The site contains information for your coursework. It includes links to online guides, textbook and software requirements, assessment procedures, and contact details for unit and program coordinators, and consortium universities.

The site is updated regularly, however, if you notice any outdated information or have suggestions for improving the site, please contact BCA admin at bca@ctc.usyd.edu.au