

## Guidelines for Blackboard course creation

### Purpose for these guidelines

PolyU adopted Blackboard (Bb) as its institutional learning management system (LMS) as Learn@PolyU in the 2011-12 academic year. Although students and staff have been using Learn@PolyU for a number of years, currently there are no guidelines or policy on how Bb courses for individual subjects should be created at the institutional level, with teachers and staff able to create Bb courses with any structure and for any purpose. However, it has been recognised that there is a need to establish guidelines for managing the structure of LMS courses created for teaching and learning to enhance students' online learning experience, better manage Bb courses for a student-centred teaching approach and for effective quality assurance and quality enhancement. As such the following guidelines have been approved by LTC and will be progressively adopted.

### Guidelines for Bb course creation

The principle underlying these guidelines is that any subject component codes (e.g., lecture, seminar, tutorial, laboratory, etc.) under the same subject section codes (same student group) according to AS records should be created within the one Bb course. The effect of this will be that students of same subject section code will be enrolled in one Bb course only. Furthermore, the following guidelines for creating Bb course sites should be observed:

- To manage components (e.g. tutorials, workshops, etc.) for groups of students within the large cohort, instructors should make use of the “group function” in Bb
- ITS will create the Bb course and allocate “principal instructors” as nominated by the host Department/AS records. ITS will then enroll all students belonging to same subject section code to the Bb course for the subject component code.
- “Principal instructors” then need to enroll and allocate other relevant instructors/teaching assistants to the Bb course. In addition, they need to set up student groups for different components or group activities if needed (which can be done by uploading an excel file to the Bb site) and enroll relevant instructors/reaching assistants into any groups created.

### Example:

For example, a sample subject has only one subject code “POLY1234”, but there are two subject section codes within this subject (representing two student groups). Using the system recommended here, ITS would create two Bb courses – one for each of the two subject section codes. Under each Bb course, instructors can assign students into different small groups by using the “group function” in Bb, e.g., create 4 tutorial groups, 4 workshop groups. The same function can be used to create student groups for group projects.

However, several subject section codes (different student groups) can also be combined into one Bb course if needed (e.g., same teacher or same course materials for these sections) as long as these subject section codes belong to the same subject. So in the example above, for POLY1234, one Bb site could be created and then the group function used to allocate students into groups.

The following are not recommended:

- Within the same subject section code (same student group), having separate Bb courses for different subject components (e.g. lecture, tutorial, etc.)
- Different Bb courses created for small group projects, group discussion, group assignments or etc.