

General Information about the BLE

Introduction

This document provides information on navigating to, logging in and retrieving information from the BLE (Bloomsbury Learning Environment). Following the guidance within will enable you to login to the BLE navigate within courses and use the most commonly used tools.

Note that not all Birkbeck courses use the BLE, and those that do may not use all the features mentioned in this handout.

What is a VLE?

VLE stands for **V**irtual **L**earning **E**nvironment. Different courses will use a VLE in different ways, most commonly as a central point of storage for documents – for example lecture notes and reading lists – of use to all students on a course. Some courses use more involved features such as discussion boards, electronic submission of assignments and quizzes to either reinforce learning or for assessment.

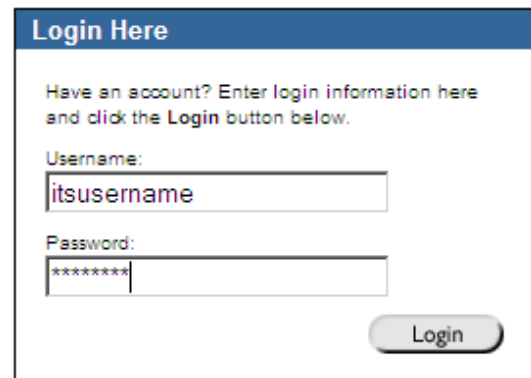
Logging in to the BLE

You will need

- An ITS username and password (see Getting help section)
- A computer with a connection to the internet, whether at home, work or in College using ITS workstation rooms or the computers in the library
- A web browser such as Internet Explorer or Firefox

The BLE can be accessed by going directly to www.ble.ac.uk in your web browser, or following the links to that site from the ITS or Birkbeck home pages. Enter your username and password (remember it is case-sensitive) in the relevant boxes and click login.

To add the BLE's home page to your favourites, press CTRL + D



The screenshot shows a login interface titled "Login Here". It includes a prompt: "Have an account? Enter login information here and click the Login button below." Below this are two input fields: "Username:" with the text "itsusername" and "Password:" with masked characters "*****". A "Login" button is located at the bottom right of the form.

Getting help

If you have problems with your password, see www.bbk.ac.uk/its or contact the helpdesk, its-helpdesk@bbk.ac.uk, 020 76316543

If modules are missing from the BLE, contact your course administrator in the first instance to check you have been enrolled correctly.

For general help with using the BLE see the rest of this leaflet or click on the Support tab within the site.

Browsing your modules

Once logged in, your screen will be similar to that shown below. Your courses will be shown in a list – click on the link to see that course's materials.

Hot Links

- [Outlook Web Access](#)
- [Staff Intranet](#)
- [Events @ BBK](#)
- [CLPD](#)
- [Library Home](#)
- [Library Catalogue](#)
- [e-Learning](#)
- [ITS](#)

Welcome to Blackboard - Birkbeck's Virtual Learning Environment.

If you have any questions, please e-mail blackboard@bbk.ac.uk.

My Announcements

No system announcements have been posted in the last 7 days.
No course announcements have been posted in the last 7 days.

My Courses

The links on the left will be different within each module, but you will typically see;

Course materials	downloadable documents such as lecture notes
Announcements	course-wide messages are archived here

And may also see

Assignments	assignment details and a form for submitting your work electronically will appear here if your lecturer chooses to use this facility
Course information	general information about the course
Email	Blackboard-specific email
Discussion board	to discuss related topics with people on your course
Staff information	details of staff involved in teaching the course

As you browse the contents of a module, a breadcrumb trail will appear above the contents of each page, as shown

[BIRKBECK STUDENT ORIENTATION \(BBK ITST002N\)](#) > [STUDENT ORIENTATION](#) > [ABOUT DISCUSSIONS](#)

About Discussions

Use the links therein or the Back button on your web browser to go back to previously-visited pages.

Use the Home tab at any time to return to the BLE's front page, so as to switch to a different course or follow one of the links to the Library, Intranet or ITS home pages.



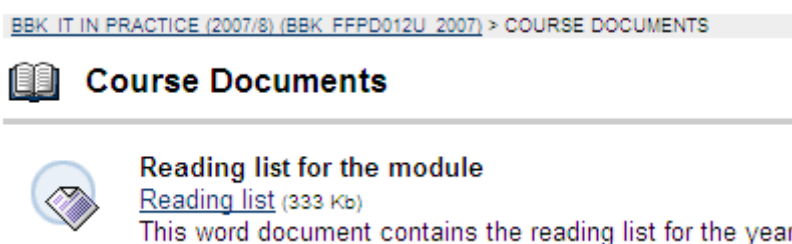
For a guide to other BLE tools that may be present within your module, see the Support tab (as shown above) or read the information in the BLE Student Orientation module, to which you may enrol yourself using the instructions later in this leaflet.

Downloading files to your computer

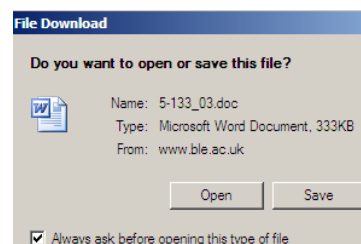
Many files within the BLE will be available for you to keep a copy, either on your own computer, on a memory stick or within the My Documents folder on Birkbeck's computers. The instructions below assume you are using Internet Explorer to access the internet.

Documents for download are most likely to be in the Course Documents area.

- Click on the blue link underneath the title – in the example, that is the line “Reading list”. The numbers in brackets after the link show the size of the file

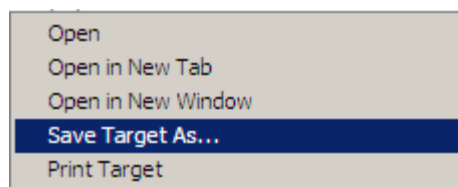


- Internet explorer may ask if you want to open or save the file (as shown, right). If so, choose Save
- Use the drop-down menu to choose where to save the file – usually ‘My documents’ – and click Save



Trouble-shooting

- If Internet Explorer automatically opens the document, return to the Course Documents page
- Right-click on the same link
- Choose Save Target As
- Use the drop-down menu to choose where to save the file – usually ‘My documents’ – and click Save




Some content within the BLE may be published as a series of web pages. These may only be downloaded page-by-page, using File-Save As for each one within Internet Explorer.

Submitting assignments

Your lecturer will tell you if you should be submitting assignments through the BLE – it is not used for all courses, and may not be for all assignments within a course.

- Click on the Assignments link within the course module
- Click on the link to the particular assignment
- Fill in the Comments field if necessary – it is optional
- Click on Browse and find the document that contains your assignment on your computer or memory stick
- Click Submit to send the file to your lecturer

[BBK IT IN PRACTICE \(2007/8\) \(BBK_FF0012U_2007\)](#) > [ASSIGNMENTS](#) > [UPLOAD ASSIGNMENT: FIRST ASSIGNMENT](#)

 **Upload Assignment: First assignment**

1 Assignment Information

Name First assignment

Instructions Your first essay is due on the x November and should be submitted via this screen. Essay titles are contained within the course handbook - available for download from the Course Documents section if you cannot find your copy.

2 Assignment Materials

Comments

Attach local file

Currently Attached Files:

3 Submit

Click **Save** to stop working and continue working later. Click **Submit** to finish. Click **Cancel** to quit without saving changes.

Self-enrolled courses

Only a small number of courses are available for you to enrol yourself on. At present these are limited to

IT Fitness

introductory-level instruction in the use of Microsoft Office and general advice on Computing at Birkbeck

Avoiding Plagiarism Student Orientation

how to avoid plagiarism
general information on using the BLE

Course Catalog

 [Birkbeck Self Enrolled Courses](#)

Follow the link to Birkbeck Self Enrolled Courses from the BLE home page once you have logged in, then click on the button for the appropriate course.