

# 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.



JAMES COOK  
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Guidelines for subject designers

## 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



### Learning Modules Layout

Learning Modules provide a visually distinct container perfect for organising your topics. They are a great vehicle to have students engage with learning resources and learning activities sequenced within a weekly topic.

The Learning Modules are bordered, you can add an image, and there is space for a description or instructions. It also shows students their progress by indicating how many items they have viewed and how many they need to view in total.

Use Learning Modules to:

- Organise your content by weekly topics
- Make your learning resources stand out and provide a visual outline
- Demonstrate a sequential learning path
- Show students the progress they are making.



## Layout

### Subject Content

○ **About this Subject** Q

Introductory Video | Subject Outline | Contact Information

---

○ **Questions**

Ask any general questions about the subject or assessment.

---

○ **Assessments** v

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

---

○ **Reading Resources** v

About Readings at JCU | Full Readings List | Your Library

---

○ **Do you need help?**

Common Help Topics (2024) | Support | Special Consideration | AccessAbility | Wellbeing | Academic Integrity | Study Skills | Referencing | Technical Help | Career Advice

## 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. Which partitions the learning materials for that week in a sequential order.

- 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.

The learning module also looks distinctive on the subject content page. It has a border, you can add an image, and there is space for a description or instructions. It also shows students how much of the module they have completed.



**Week 1: Introduction to data reporting**

Understanding the role of data reporting in decision-making. Types of data reports: operational, analytical, executive, and more. Overview of the data reporting process.

1 of 7 started



**Week 2: Fundamentals of data visualisation**



## Layout

**Week 1: Introduction to data reporting**  
Understanding the role of data reporting in decision-making. Types of data reports: operational, analytical, executive, and more. Overview of the data reporting process.

✓ Completed | 3 of 3 completed

**Week 2: Fundamentals of data visualisation**  
Importance of visual representation in data reporting. Types of data visualizations: charts, graphs, maps, and infographics. Principles of effective data visualization: accuracy, clarity, relevance, and aesthetics.

Continue | 2 of 6 completed

- 2.1. Get your brain in the game
- 2.2. Weekly outline
- 2.3. Lecture recording
- 2.4. Activity - A data report
- 2.5. Quiz - Check understanding  
No due date  
Content isn't available
- 2.6. Weekly wrap up  
Content isn't available

## Subject element

Images for distinction and engagement of Learning Modules.

Progress bars flag partial and full completion of a Learning Module.

Descriptions prime student expectations of the module content.

Content can include all standard content types. Showing students their progress as they move through the content.

The icons displayed help the student navigate through the content.

## Rationale

Students can see an immediate visual distinction between topics through representative thumbnail images.

Students receive feedback on overall at-a-glance progress.

Students can read ahead to gauge module content and how it fits into the overall subject.

Students can visualise progress within a module.

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

# LearnJCU Layouts

Guidelines for subject designers

## 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

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**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

Guidelines for subject designers

## 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

**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

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**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.

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

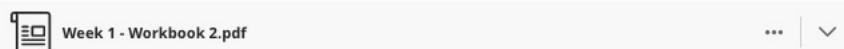
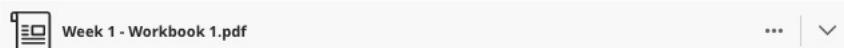
In this video, Sharon Long, Learning Environments Support Officer, introduces you to the 2022 JCU Subject Template to walk you through the items available and how you can apply to your subject site.



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.

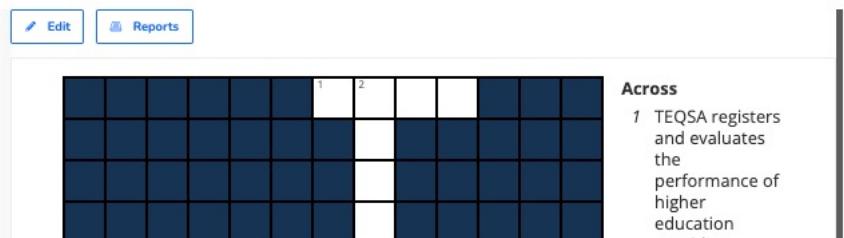


### Apply

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.



## 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.

# LearnJCU Layouts

Guidelines for subject designers

## 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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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## Layout

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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

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

## 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.

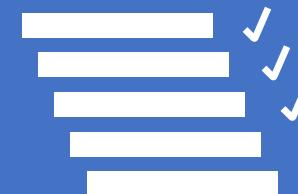
Student interaction data will not come up in Learning Analytics for content items below the second level i.e., the folder 'Tutorial resources' is in the second level and content under this folder is in level 3

# 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.

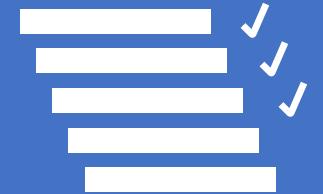
Dot points of what students can expect next week and any pre-work they need to complete.

# 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
<b>1. Coherence</b>	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.
<b>2. Signaling</b>	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?
<b>3. Redundancy</b>	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.
<b>4. Spatial Continuity</b>	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.
<b>5. Temporal Continuity</b>	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.
<b>6. Segmenting</b>	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?
<b>7. Pre-training</b>	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.
<b>8. Modality</b>	Have you limited the amount of unnecessary text on screen? It is easier for learners to understand your content when you have audio/images.
<b>9. Multimedia</b>	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.
<b>10. Personalisation</b>	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'.
<b>11. Voice</b>	Have you used your own voice? Have you used high quality audio software? Students like to listen to your voice – establishes teacher presence.
<b>12. Image</b>	Does your digital object contain a range of visual cues which compliment your audio?