What is in this video?

In this video we’re going to quickly cover how ECU students can access their learning materials and use collaborative tools to prepare for online learning.

You can find more useful information about the technology requirements in the learning online flyer, available on Blackboard.

How do I access my learning materials online?

Your lecturers will place your learning materials into ECU’s learning management system which is called Blackboard and can be found in the ECU Student Portal.

Where can I find Blackboard and what can I do with it?

From the main ECU website in the top right corner, click on the button: Student Portal. Enter your ECU login details. On the left side in the Student Portal page in the easy logins area, click on Blackboard.

Once you log into Blackboard you will see the landing page with a number of features:

- The global navigation contains the user menu and the My Blackboard menu. The user menu provides access to your courses as well as the home and help links.
- My Blackboard shows you course communication, due dates and more.
- Any important announcements will be found here.
- On the left is where you will find your enrolled units and also community sites

When you click on a unit you will find a menu on the left side to help you navigate your unit. This is where you can access your learning materials, discussion boards, and assignment information and submission.

For help and access to a range of instructional videos and support materials about using Blackboard and Blackboard tools please go to the Student Support link in the global navigation.

What is Blackboard Collaborate?

There are a number of ways to engage and stay connected while learning online. Your lecturers will conduct tutorials and workshops using Blackboard Collaborate. Before we start it is important to know that using Google Chrome™ with Collaborate will provide the best virtual experience. It would also be useful to have access to a microphone and a webcam, but it is not essential for participation.

Where can I find Blackboard Collaborate and what can I do with it?

Your lecturer will create a link in your Blackboard unit to access the Collaborate session. When you join a session your microphone and webcam will be automatically turned off. Click on the share audio and share video icons to turn these tools on.

To ask or answer a question or get the moderator’s attention, you can Raise your hand.

To chat with fellow participants and your moderator, open the Chat from the panel to the right.

Your lecturer may make you a captioner during a session. You will see an alert letting you know you are the captioner and when you can start typing. Other attendees can view what is being typed in real time.
You can view the recordings of your session from the menu in the Blackboard Collaborate Sessions’ page. You may be able to download recordings if your lecturer has allowed participants to do so.

It is important that you check your announcements daily for information on changes to your lecture, tutorials and workshops.

What is Microsoft Teams?

Microsoft Teams is a video conferencing tool that lets you chat instantly and share files.

Your lecturers may run tutorials and workshops using Microsoft Teams as an alternative to or in combination with Blackboard Collaborate. Teams is also an excellent tool to use for group assignments and online communication with your peers.

Where can I find Microsoft Teams and what can I do with it?

From your Student Portal click on My ECU Email and open Outlook on your browser or you can open the Outlook app if you have it. On the top left corner, open the App Launcher menu and click on Teams. You can use Teams in your browser, or you can download the desktop app from the bottom left corner.

Key features include:

- Group conversation threads which are accessible to groups of people. You can share files with members of a Team, if you share Microsoft Office documents you can edit those documents with your teammates in real time.
- Private chat lets you send messages to specific people which are not visible to others, as well as private audio and video calls so you can have face-to-face communication with people online.
- Meetings can be scheduled ahead of time with audio and video communication options. Live captions are also available only on the desktop app and can be turned on from the More actions’ menu.

Student Learning Support Resources

If you require study skills support, you can access Study Essentials from the global navigation in Blackboard or from the Library homepage.

Study Essentials provides a range of content that can help you develop your study skills. Digital Essentials contains a range of modules to help enhance your digital skills including SLIDE (Student Learning in a Digital Environment) which introduces you to the key systems and digital technologies at ECU and more information on how to access your learning online.

Student Learning Support Services

- For support in study skills and academic writing please contact your Learning Adviser.
- For support in research and referencing please contact your Librarian.
- For technical support please contact IT services.

Key Points

It is important to remember that access to Blackboard, Blackboard Collaborate and Microsoft Teams is crucial to your online studies as it is where you will find your learning materials and assessments, and where you can communicate and collaborate with your lecturer, tutors and peers online.