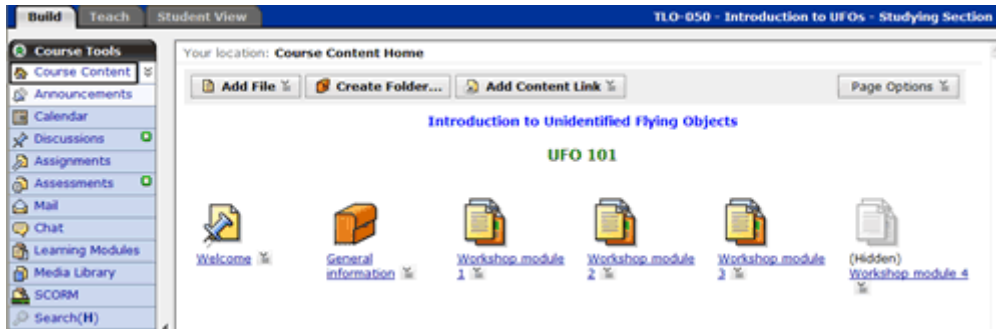


# Setting up the home page

## Step-by-step guide for designers

For Blackboard Vista 4.x

The course content home page is the first page students see when they access your online course. You can provide students with easy access to course content and tools by adding them to the home page.

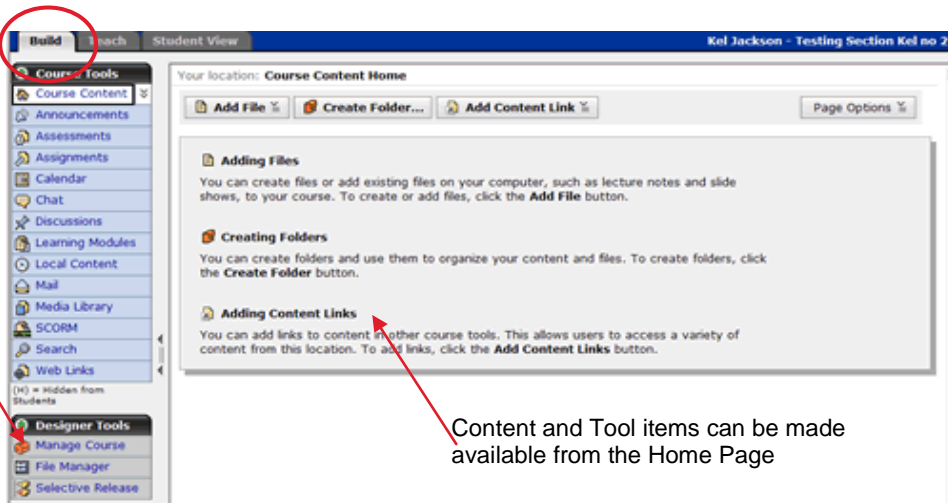


When you access a course for the first time as a designer, the main home page screen and **Course Tools** menu is empty. You can choose which tools you will make available to students and instructors on all pages they access and which content and tools to make available from the home page specifically.

This resource deals with organising the home page. It assumes you have taken the 'quick start' option with regard to course tools, and have a listing of course tools under the **Course Tools** menu. The **Course Content home page** will look like this.

Use the Build view when setting up your home page

Tools can be made available from within Manage Course




Content and Tool items can be made available from the Home Page

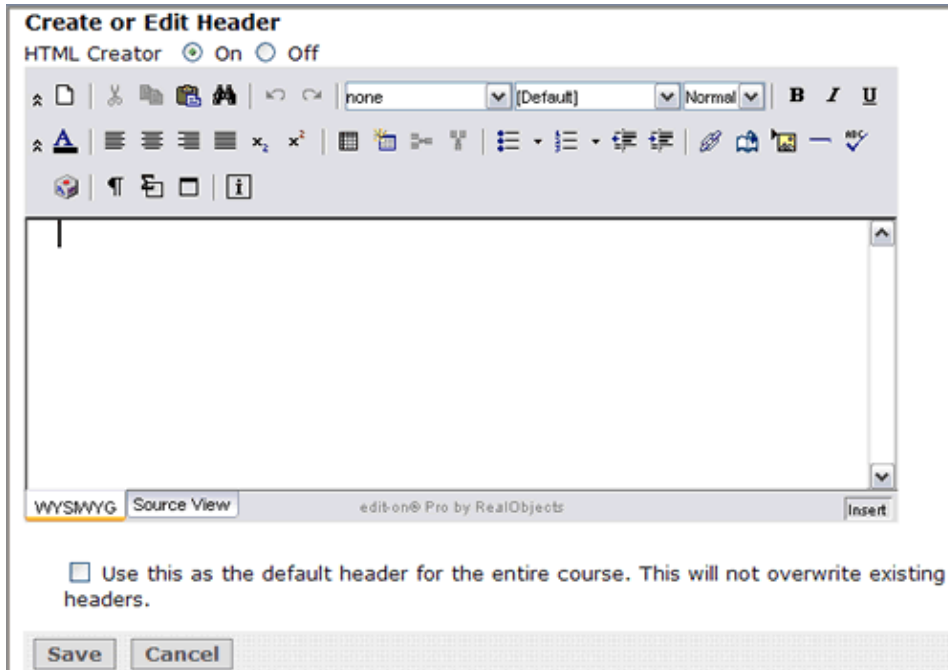
The home page is divided into three sections: the main content area of the page (currently occupied by the grey text box describing action options), a header (title) area and a footer area.

## Adding headers and footers

Headers and footers can contain text and images. For example, you could add a logo and the name of your course to the header, and contact details or copyright information to the footer.

## Setting up the home page

1. Click on **Page Options** (to the right of the Add Content buttons) and select either **Edit Header** or **Edit Footer** from the drop-down list that appears.
2. Click in the text area, then type and format the text for your header or footer (using the menu in the grey area of the HTML Creator window). Insert images by clicking on the **Insert Image** icon .



3. Click **Save** to save your header or footer and return to the Home Page.
4. If you need to make changes to the header and footer later, click on the **Page Options** button again.

## Adding content

You can add content that is already prepared (e.g. html pages of lecture notes or assignments), and you can create new content to add to the course (e.g. create a quiz or discussion topic).

### To add a file

Click on the **Add File** button and browse to the file, or create a new one. (You can browse to a file already uploaded to the course, a file in another **MyLO** course you have access to, or to a file on your computer).

### To add a folder

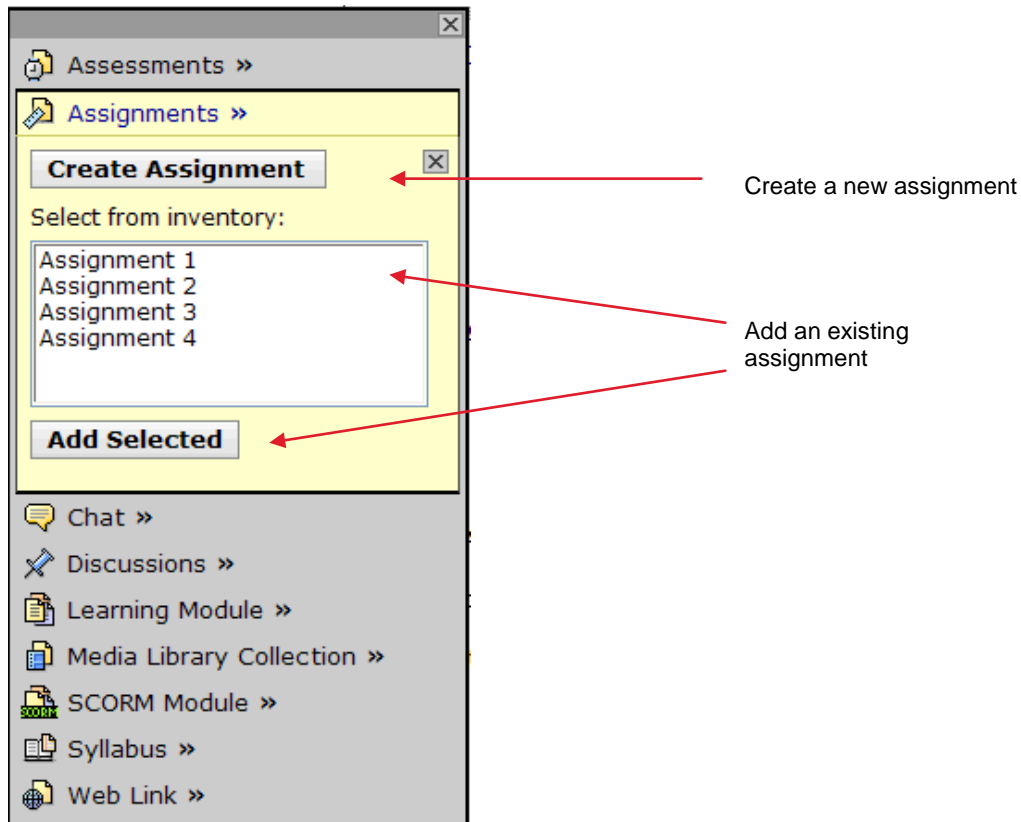
Click on **Create Folder** – A folder is an organiser to house items linked by theme – e.g. series of lecture notes, administrative information, activities etc.

### To add a particular tool item

To add a particular tool item – e.g. assessment item, assignment, discussion topic etc., click **Add Content Link**. Select the appropriate tool type from the drop-down list (e.g.

## Setting up the home page

Assignments). The link expands to display a list of existing components of this type, and relevant actions.



**Note:** You can only add items/components of tools you have specified for your course. If you wish to add a tool not yet listed, go to the **Designer Tools** menu, click **Manage Course**, then select **Tools**. The **Tools** screen opens. Select the tool(s) desired by selecting their check boxes.

For each item type you will have the option to:

- create new content (in this example an assignment) or
- add existing content by selecting the item and clicking **Add Selected**.



An icon linking to the assignment will now appear on the Home Page.

Assignment 2

**Note:** By default, Assignments and Assessments are not automatically visible to students when they are added to your page. (For example, a quiz must have at least one question to be shown; an assignment must be assigned to individuals or groups). An item invisible to students will be tagged as 'hidden' when displayed in Build or Teach tab. You can show/hide these items by clicking on the *ActionLinks* icon next to the title of the item on-screen and toggling the **Show Item/Hide Item** option in the drop-down list that appears.

## Customising the page display

You can change/customise the layout of links/icons and background colour, and add a background image.

Click on **Page Options** and select **Customize Page Display** from the drop-down list that appears. The following screen appears.







## Setting up the home page

Your location: **Course Content Home**

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**Customize Page Display: Course Content Home**

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Layout Templates	Layout Preview
<input type="radio"/>  Layout 1	Columns: 6
<input type="radio"/>  Layout 2	Icon/Text: Icon and Text
<input type="radio"/>  Layout 3	Icon Placement: Above
<input type="radio"/>  Layout 4	Alignment: Centered
<input type="radio"/>  Layout 5	Table Width: Wide
<input checked="" type="radio"/>  <b>Custom Layout</b>	

Change all existing folders to these settings.  
 Set default to these settings for all new folders.

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**Background Image**

Tile the image

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**Background Color**

## Layout

### Preset layouts

Select one of the five pre-set layouts by clicking the appropriate radio button. (Specific layout settings appear in grey under the **Layout Preview** area. Layout 1 is the default setting).

### Custom layout

Select the **Custom Layout** radio button and then use the pull-down menus under **Layout Preview** to make your custom settings.

If you would like organising folders to have the same layout as the Home Page, select the check box.


## Background image

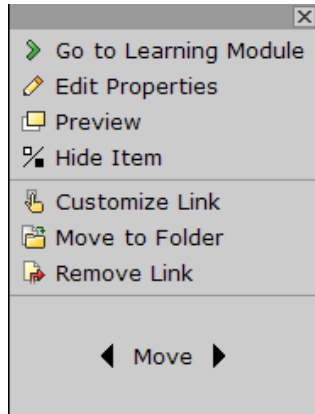
You can have a single background image or an image repeated in 'tile' format.

## Background colour

1. Click on **Select Color** to set the background colour of the main frame on-screen.
2. Click **Apply**.

## Icons on the home page

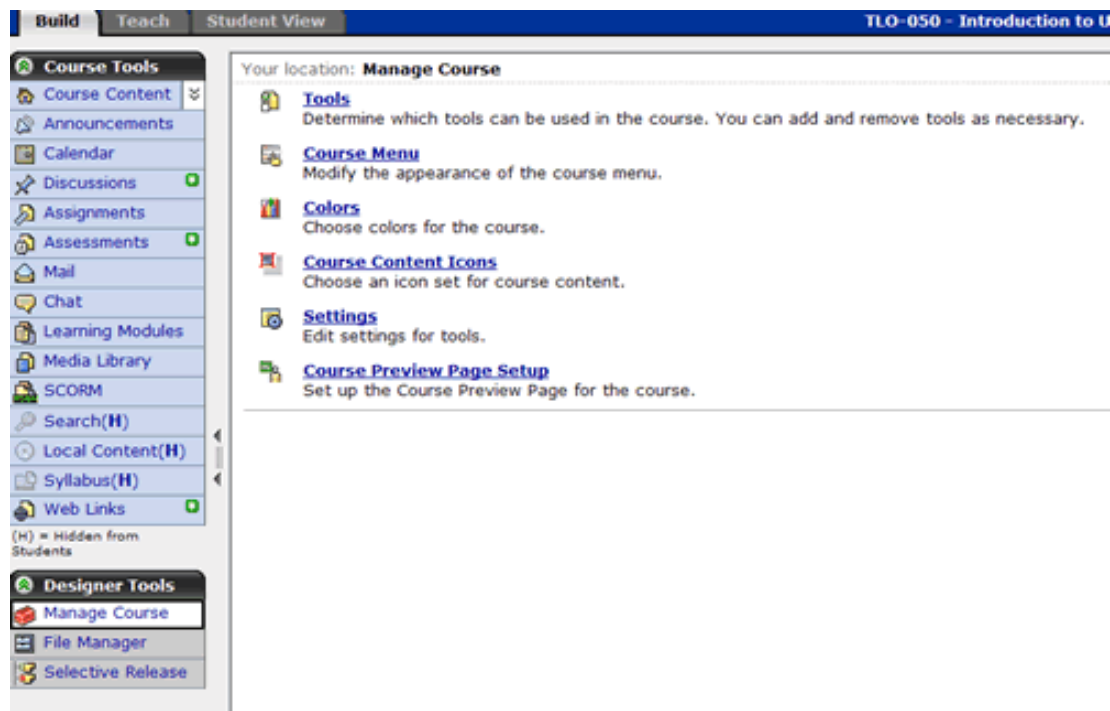
Icons on the home page link to content and tool components (e.g. an assessment). Under the **Build** tab, when you click on the *ActionLinks*  icon of one of these icons you have the following choices:



- **Go To ...** – takes you to the specific folder or tool component main page.
- **Edit Properties** – allows you to change the settings (title, visibility etc) for the folder/tool component.
- **Preview** (for tool components) – view the content as the student would see it.
- **Show Item/Hide Item** – control the visibility of the item to students.
- **Customize Link** (for tool components) – customise the title that appears on-screen with the icon (or alone), icon displayed etc.
- **Move to Folder** – allows you to shift the item to any folder you have created.
- **Remove Link** – delete the icon from the Home Page.
- **< Move >** – move the icon left or right / up or down on the Home Page.

## Using 'Manage Course' to modify pages


You can change the look of your course to students in a number of ways through **Manage Course** located under the **Designer Tools** menu. Clicking on the **Manage Course** menu item reveals the following options:



- **Tools** – your selection of tools determines the tools list presented under the **Course Tools** menu.

## Setting up the home page

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- **Course Menu** – you can choose how to display course items (as icons or text only, or both text and icon – the default view), the orientation of the **Course Tools** menu (vertical or horizontal) and the visibility of tool links. If you change the **General Settings**, make sure to click **Apply Settings**.
- **Colors** – you can change the colours of the **Course Tools** menu, tables presented, and hyperlinks on a page, etc. There are six pre-set colour sets and the ability to customise the colour of a number of components. Click **Apply** once you have made your selection(s).
- **Course Content Icons** – you can change the icon set used in the course, or the style of a particular icon. To change one icon, click on the *ActionLinks*  icon next to the icon and select **Replace Image**. Navigate to the location where the replacement image is stored (in the course, another **MyLO** course, or on your computer), select the item by clicking on its check box/radio button, and then click **OK**.
- **Settings** – other than enabling or disabling a particular tool, this option has little impact on the look of the Home Page. You can control the use of tools by students, instructors and teaching assistants as well as some aspects of the presentation of the tools to students.
- **Course Preview Page Setup** – not related to setting up the Home Page. This facility allows you to set up a single page or pages of information about the course and make it available to the general public (allowing students to find out more about the course before they enrol). The page(s) are set up in File Manager (**File Manager** >> **Public File** >> **Create File** – see the guide **Setting up a Course Preview Page**).

## Need More Information?

For more information see the following guides:

- **Managing the Course Tools Menu** – step-by-step guide
- **Creating folders** – Step-by-step guide for Designers
- **Using the File Manager** – Comprehensive guide for designers and instructors
- **Setting up a Course Preview Page** – Quick guide for designers.

### References:

Designer and Instructor Reference: Application Pack 2 for Blackboard Learning System – Vista Enterprise License (Release 4) 2006 Blackboard Inc

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