



# Student Guide to Canvas at UBC

## What is Canvas?

[Canvas](#)<sup>1</sup> provides a secure, online classroom for each of your courses. Your instructors may use Canvas to communicate with you, share course materials, and post activities to complete.



### WHAT WILL I USE IT FOR?

Your instructor may have you use Canvas to do any of the following:

- Read course content
- Watch and attend lectures
- Give presentations
- Submit assignments
- Participate in discussion boards
- Collaborate in groups
- Take quizzes and exams
- View your grades

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## What do I need to use Canvas?

### A supported web browser:

Canvas runs in your web browser and supports using Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or Safari. For which versions work, check the [Canvas supported browser page](#)<sup>2</sup>. Canvas will not work with Internet Explorer.

- For the best experience with a screen reader, use Firefox / JAWS (Windows) and Safari / VoiceOver (Mac).

### Tips

- You can download the [Canvas Student app](#)<sup>3</sup> on your mobile device.
- Use the app for anything **except quizzes and exams**. The small screen size does not fit the quiz layout very well, and any quizzes that say “Remotely Proctored” will *only* work on desktop and laptop computers.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://canvas.ubc.ca>

<sup>2</sup> <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10720-which-browsers-does-canvas-support>

<sup>3</sup> <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-4048>



## How do I use Canvas?

All courses at UBC have a Canvas course created at the beginning of term, and you are automatically enrolled in yours. **Log in to Canvas with your UBC CWL (Campus-Wide Login) at [canvas.ubc.ca](https://canvas.ubc.ca).**

Read on to find instructions and tips for accessing your courses, viewing course announcements, communicating with the Inbox, submitting assignments, participating in discussion boards, using groups, taking assessments, and viewing grades.

### ACCESS YOUR COURSES

After logging in, you will see your Canvas Dashboard. From the Dashboard, the Global Navigation (the menu in navy blue) is on the left. Below the announcements, you'll see a course card for each class you are enrolled in.

1. Access a course by clicking on its **card**.
2. Once you enter the course, you will see the Course Navigation on the left (to the right of the Global Navigation), with a list of links specific to that course. Click any **link** to visit that section.

#### Tips

- **To make sure you are viewing all your Canvas courses**, click Courses in the Global Navigation, then click All Courses at the bottom of the list. If you can't find your course, check that your instructor has published it.
- **You can download course content for offline viewing**, if your instructor enables it. Click Account in the Global Navigation, then click Settings. Click the "Download Course Content" button on the right-hand side to see which courses are available.

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### VIEW COURSE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Your instructor may use announcements in your course to communicate changes, upcoming events, and other important information intended for everyone in the course.

1. Click **Announcements** in the Course Navigation.
2. On the Announcements page, announcements are listed in reverse chronological order, with the newest appearing first and the oldest at the bottom.

#### Tips

- **By default, you will receive email notifications when your instructor posts an announcement.** To modify notification frequency, click Account in the Global Navigation, then click Notifications. Set immediate or daily notifications for anything you don't want to miss.



## COMMUNICATE WITH CANVAS INBOX

You can communicate with your instructor, teaching assistants, and other students in your class using the Canvas Inbox. The Inbox is like a personal email tool within Canvas.

1. Click **Inbox** in the Global Navigation.
2. Click the **compose icon** (pencil). A Compose Message window will pop up.
3. In the drop-down menu, select the **course** where you want to send your message.
4. To add individual recipients from the course to the message:
  - Search for a person by typing the name in the “To” field.
  - Or use the course roster with the Address Book icon next to the “To” field.

### Tips

- **You can directly open your Inbox in a new browser tab**, if you right-click or option-click the Inbox link. This keeps it handy while doing other tasks in Canvas.
- **Once a course has concluded, you cannot message anyone** in that course using your Inbox. However, you will still be able to see past messages exchanged in the course.

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## SUBMIT YOUR ASSIGNMENTS

As you complete your course, you may be asked to submit assignments directly in Canvas.

1. Click **Assignments** in the Course Navigation.
2. Click the **title** of an assignment from the list to open it.
3. Click **Submit Assignment** to access the submission page.
4. Click the **tab** that describes how you will submit your assignment (e.g., file, text entry, web address, etc.) and follow the prompts.
5. Click **Submit Assignment** on this page to submit your assignment.

### Tips

- **You can also access your assignments through your Dashboard** or, if enabled in your course, through the syllabus, gradebook, calendar, or modules areas.
- **Assignment file uploads are limited to 5GB** and media uploads to 500MB.
- **Instructors may set restrictions on the file types you can upload.** Make sure to check these in advance of your due date.



## PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSION BOARDS

As you complete your course, you may be asked to participate in a class discussion, either by responding to your instructor's discussion question or responding to another student's comment or thread.

1. Click **Discussions** in the Course Navigation.
2. On the Discussions page, discussions are organized with the newest discussion on top. Click the **name** of the discussion you want to participate in.
3. Click **Reply** and type or paste your response in the textbox.
  - Depending on how the instructor has set up the discussion, you can also click **Reply to** respond to an individual student's comment.
4. Click **Post Reply**.

### Tips

- **If the Discussions link is not available in the Course Navigation**, you can still access any discussions from the modules or assignments areas.
- **Reply with text, links, photos, equations, and/or multimedia** using the response textbox. If your instructor allows, you may also be able to attach files.
- **Always remember there is a person behind the post** and that culture and personality influence communication style and practices.

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## USE COURSE GROUPS

You may be asked to work with other students in a group in your Canvas course. Each group will have its own private group area to work in, which contains announcements, pages, discussions, and files that are shared only within the group.

1. Click **Groups** in the Course Navigation.
2. Click the **title** of your assigned group to access your private group area.

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## SET UP YOUR OWN GROUPS

If you want to create a study group or discuss an assignment with others in your course, you may be able to set up your own student group. Like course groups, student groups have their own private area to work in, which contains announcements, pages, discussions, and files shared only within the group.

1. Click **People** in the Course Navigation.
2. Select the **Groups tab**.

### Tips

- **If the People link is not available in the Course Navigation** or if you don't see the +Group blue button, your instructor has not enabled this feature. You can ask to have it enabled.
- **Canvas student groups are covered in more detail** in the



3. Click **+Group blue button** in the upper right side of the screen.
4. Name your group.
5. To allow anyone in the course to join, select **Course Members are Free to Join** from the drop-down menu.
6. To invite only certain people, select **Membership by Invitation Only**, and invite members to the group by clicking the **checkbox** next to their name.
7. Click **Save**.

[People and Groups section](#)<sup>4</sup> of the Canvas student documentation.

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## COMPLETE CANVAS ASSESSMENTS

There are two main types of quizzes in Canvas: those that are proctored by a tool called Proctorio and those that are not.

For Proctorio quizzes, the quiz name will typically say “(Remotely Proctored)”, and you should follow the [instructions for using Proctorio](#)<sup>5</sup>.

For quizzes not proctored with Proctorio:

1. Click **Quizzes** in the Course Navigation.
2. Locate the quiz. If you see “Requires Respondus LockDown browser” next to the quiz name, you will need to install [LockDown Browser](#)<sup>6</sup> first. This browser restricts printing, copying, and accessing other websites or applications during the quiz.
3. Click the **title** of the quiz you want to take.
4. Type in an assessment code, if prompted. (Your instructor will give this code to you ahead of time, if it is needed.)

### Tips

- **Canvas will always call your assessment a “quiz”**, whether instructors assign a quiz or exam.
- **Don’t leave a timed quiz midway.** The timer will continue running while you’re gone, and the quiz will auto-submit when time runs out.
- **Take quizzes on your computer, not your phone.** The small screen size does not fit the quiz layout very well, and you may miss something important.
- **If you get bumped out in the middle of a quiz**, go back in and find your way to the question you were on by checking the question list in the sidebar.

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<sup>4</sup> [https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701-canvas-student-guide-table-of-cont#jive\\_content\\_id\\_People\\_and\\_Groups](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701-canvas-student-guide-table-of-cont#jive_content_id_People_and_Groups)

<sup>5</sup> <https://keep-teaching.ubc.ca/files/2020/03/proctorio-student-guide.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=695714529>



## VIEW YOUR GRADES

Depending on how your instructor has set up grading, you will either see grades immediately (e.g., after you take a quiz) or when the instructor manually releases the grades.

To see the grades currently available to you:

1. Click **Grades** in the Course Navigation.
2. Select the **Course**.
3. Click **Apply**.

### Tips

- **You can sort grades in different ways** using the “Arrange by” menu.
- **Note that your Canvas grade may not reflect your official grade.** Your official final grade will be posted in the UBC [Student Service Centre](#)<sup>7</sup>.

## Where can I get more support with Canvas?

### TECHNICAL SUPPORT

If you can't find your course or have trouble accessing Canvas:

- Contact the UBC [IT Service Centre Help Desk](#): 604 822 2008 or fill out the [web form](#)<sup>8</sup>

**Reach out to your instructors or teaching assistants** with any questions, too, as they often have a lot of experience with Canvas.

### Learn more

- For more how-to instructions, explore Canvas's [support documentation for students](#)<sup>9</sup>.
- Canvas is [FIPPA](#)<sup>10</sup> compliant (i.e., it follows provincial privacy policy) and its data is stored securely in Canada.
- For questions about privacy, visit the UBC Learning Technology Hub [Canvas privacy FAQ](#)<sup>11</sup>.

A Guide from UBC's Keep Teaching Website ([keepteaching.ubc.ca](https://keepteaching.ubc.ca))

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<sup>7</sup> <https://ssc.adm.ubc.ca/sscpportal/servlets/SRVSSCFramework>

<sup>8</sup> <https://web.it.ubc.ca/forms/isf/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701-canvas-student-guide-table-of-contents>

<sup>10</sup> <https://universitycounsel.ubc.ca/subject-areas/access-and-privacy-general/access-to-information/about-fip-pa>

<sup>11</sup> <https://lthub.ubc.ca/guides/canvas/privacy/>