The purpose of this policy and its procedures is to outline the methods and responsibilities associated with the removal and archiving of learning materials and associated student records used within the Learning Management System for each semester.

This system is expected to contain copies/links to all Higher Education distributed teaching materials associated with each unit taught in any year or semester. The ongoing availability of such resources however requires management, and in particular, requires the regular archiving and removal of materials to ensure current units retain priority system resources. These materials also include grade book information/assessments, assignments, digital drop box files and discussion threads.

Blackboard is the core Learning Management System that Swinburne licences for its Hawthorn, Prahran and Lilydale Higher Education community. It is also used for some Open Universities Australia (OUA) units. A separate licence is currently in place for Sarawak.

**Role of Unit Conveners: ‘Just in time’ archiving**

Archiving of unit materials contained on the Learning Management System is the responsibility of each convener. It is expected that staff may use the tools available to them to archive materials (eg. Discussion Export tool created by Swinburne) at any stage of the teaching process but, regardless of this, they must create local archives (see Archive Course, p. 208 in the Blackboard 8 Instructor Manual) at the conclusion of each teaching period or semester.

**Central archiving and removal of Semester 1 and 2 units**

Information Technology Services maintains a central DVD repository of all archived units. This repository is updated through a regular archive process (‘all-sites’ archiving) prior to the commencement of each semester (see Fig 1). Once safely archived, redundant material will be removed from Blackboard in order to maintain the service at maximum efficiency.
The archive date occurs two weeks prior to the commencement of the next main semester (summer semester units do not affect archiving of semester 1 and 2 units). On these days, all previous units will be archived to DVD-ROM (2 copies made) and copies housed in two separate areas on the Hawthorn campus.

Errors in the archiving process will be noted and communicated to conveners along with advice of the consequences of removing units that did not archive correctly.

On the archive date, ITS will remove from Blackboard those units for which an archive exists.

ITS’ current practice is to replicate a unit as the basis of the next delivery of that unit. To facilitate the effective creation of new unit sites for each year and/or semester, Information Technology Services eMails a spreadsheet (~BBSites.xls) to faculties advising them of the list of units that it proposes to archive. Faculties may amend this spreadsheet as required, then return it to ITS. Where units run in exclusive semesters, faculties are free to create a site a year in advance; for example, a 2004 unit offered only in Semester 2 can be replicated and set aside for development by the faculty until its release in Semester 2, 2005.

Accurate faculty data via ~BBSites.xls is essential to the replication of new unit sites/templates. Once replicated, the scheduled removal of Blackboard units for which an archive exists may proceed. It is noted that unit sites can be created at a later date (24 hours’ notice required) from the archive DVD if required (refer to Fig 4a).

Central archiving and removal of Summer and Winter semester units

Summer and winter semester units can be more problematic with regard to advance planning but, given these units are often replicas of semester 1 or 2 units, they can also end up being a later version of those units. Consequently they may be the preferred template for the main semester 1 and/or semester 2 unit for the forthcoming year.

Given the more “just in time” need to create units that will be offered in summer and winter semesters, it may be necessary to create units from archives, or from existing semester 1 or 2 areas. As summer and winter semester units occupy less space in the
Blackboard system, ITS will negotiate the archiving and deletion of these sites with the unit convener on a case-by-case basis.

**Central archiving and removal of Year-Long units**
Units requiring year-round access (spanning semesters 1 and 2) will be centrally archived simultaneously with semester 2 units, and will be removed two weeks prior to the commencement of semester 1 of the following year. These units will not contain a semester code reference. Units used for ongoing communication or reference (eg research groups or staff intranet) will not be removed.

**Central archiving and removal of OUA/non-standard units**
Due to the variable starting and ending dates of OUA units, these and other non-standard semester units (eg short courses, Hong Kong IT units) will only be archived and removed by written agreement. It is anticipated that a greater time lag will occur in centrally archiving and removing these units given that students may still be active in such units.

**Applicable to:** Higher Education sector

**Definitions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>archive</td>
<td>one or more securely-stored computer files from which required data may be recovered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD repository</td>
<td>one or more Digital Video Discs containing data archived from unit websites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDSK</td>
<td>Blackboard Help Desk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMS</td>
<td>computer software which enables the storage and transmission of educational material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUA</td>
<td>Open Universities Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>replication</td>
<td>creation of a new unit website with properties initially identical to the original; the replica is usually then modified to faculty requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PROCEDURE**
Refer to Figs 2, 3 and 4.

**FORMS**
none
intentionally blank
obtain semester calendar from: http://www.swinburne.edu.au/studentoperations/docs/calendar/noting commencement date of forthcoming semester

from semester commencement date, set all-sites archive date and related action dates

Note: all-sites archiving is the routine batch process in which all sites are archived two weeks prior to commencement of each semester

four weeks prior to semester commencement, eMail ~BBSites.xls to faculties with instructions on its use

three weeks before semester commencement date, based on data returned through ~BBSites.xls, proceed as follows:

1. via an official eMail, advise unit owners
   • of the date on which all units will be archived;
   • that after the archive date, any change which they make to their site is excluded from the archive; and

2. begin unit creation/replication

divide from Fig 3, external process Bb administrator
check criteria
1.
2.
3.
collate archive files

remove files

burn archive to DVD

enter details in ITS CD archive

eMail COLSE to advise completion of archiving

cOLSE: Co-ordinator, On-Line Systems Enhancement

Fig 2 Blackboard ‘all-sites’ archiving
**Fig 3** Blackboard ‘all-sites’ archiving; administrator duties

**Archive/Removal Policy, Blackboard LMS units**

1. Bb administrator

   - Two weeks prior to semester commencement date, perform batch archive operation
     - Output is a collection of .zip files (one per unit)
     - Manually generate stats files
     - Perform batch removal operation
     - Transmit completed archive file to DVD burning machine
     - Any site failed to remove? (Y/N)
       - If Y, notify Bb helpdesk by eMail with log file attached

2a. to Fig 2

2b. to Fig 2
External process: advice from faculty

Note unit code and semester

Go to filing cabinet and inspect DVD labels for required unit code and semester

Recover DVD from physical storage

Search DVD contents for archive package

Filename formats of archive package, either:
- ArchiveFile_[unit code]-[year]-[semester].zip
- ExportFile_[unit code]-[year]-[semester].zip

Eg ArchiveFile_HIT5791-2004-2.zip
ExportFile_HIT5791-2004-2.zip

Fig 4a Reinstatement of unit website from DVD archive, part 1
open Bb Restore Course tool

type desired course ID code into Destination Course ID field

delete data from forums and Grade Centre

add unit owner (as Instructor) to unit

advise unit owner via phone or eMail that unit site has been restored

set unit site unavailable

end

Fig 4b Reinstatement of unit website from DVD archive, part 2
Fig 4c Reinstatement of unit website from DVD archive: advice from Faculty
RELATED MATERIAL

**Bb Archive Course tool**
Refer to Bb 6.1 Instructor Manual for instructions for use, at:
http://www.blackboard.com/docs/r6/6_1/instructor/bbls_r6_1_instructor/archive_course.htm

**~BBSites.xls spreadsheet**
Sent routinely to faculties six weeks before commencement of forthcoming semester, but available on request from Information Technology Services