

## Essential Student Skills: An introduction to Brightspace

### Introduction

Brightspace is UHI's Learning Environment (LE). You can access Brightspace from any device which has access to the internet. However, in order for Brightspace to operate fully the device must have certain features.



The sections below will help you to check that Brightspace works on your computer and/or mobile device, and also offer a wide variety of links to guidance materials.

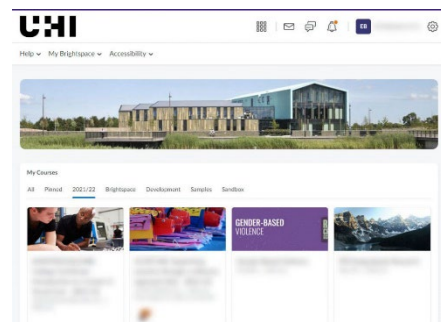
**Note:** The final section on this page relates to an app called Pulse which is made by Brightspace. You should download it in order to stay on top of anything that happens in your courses on Brightspace.

### System check

Activity: Check that Brightspace works on your computer

If you are going to use Brightspace at home, you should check that your home laptop or PC can run Brightspace properly. Go to the [Brightspace System Check](#). This page will tell you whether you have all of the relevant features installed to run Brightspace properly.

Once you have checked Brightspace runs properly on your PC, login to [Brightspace](#).

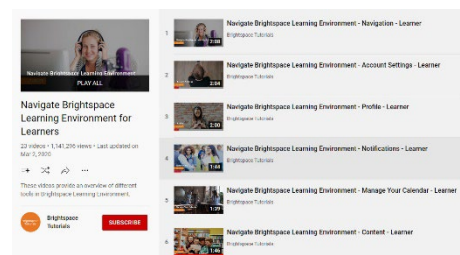


*Brightspace homepage*

**Note:** All students will be able to access Brightspace once they have been enrolled on their units/modules. If you try to login and cannot, please contact your course leader.

### Brightspace videos

Brightspace have a Youtube channel, Brightspace tutorials. They have a number of videos to assist you get to grips with the software. Click on the 'playlist' called [Navigate Brightspace Learning Environment for Learners](#). This contains a number of two-minute long videos aimed to help students navigate the interface.



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Listed below you will find selected videos from this resource that you may find useful (video length in minutes and seconds):

- Grades: [View grades and feedback](#) (1:33)
- Lessons: [How to navigate lessons](#) (1:03)
- Navigation: [Navigating Brightspace](#) (1:47)
- Quizzes: [How to take a quiz](#) (2:58)
- View course material: [Viewing course material](#) (1:46)
- Your own device: [How to add Brightspace to your own device](#) (2:02)

*Brightspace tutorial videos (listed on YouTube)*

## Brightspace articles

### Brightspace community

The Brightspace learning community has a selection of useful articles for students to assist you with becoming familiar with the most useful functions of the software. To read these articles, register at [Brightspace community](#).

Then click on 'Higher Ed/ Postsecondary', then click on 'Learners'. You may then search by topic, such as 'Get started' or 'Course Orientation', using the left hand menu.



*Brightspace Community homepage*

Each topic breaks down into further sub-topics, many of which include helpful illustrations.

### Articles:

Selected articles from this resource that you may find useful:

- [Navigate Brightspace and find your course](#)
- [Course homepage](#)
- [Submit and manage assignments](#)
- [Communicate with others using Discussions](#)

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### Pulse

Brightspace has a mobile app: [Pulse](#) which can be installed on either [Android](#) or [Mac devices](#).

Pulse is designed to help you with time/course management, keeping you notified about any changes/additions to your course.

It also provides a seamless login to the full Brightspace learning environment.

#### An app that students love

Brightspace Pulse makes it fun and easy for learners to stay connected and on top of coursework. With a visual to show upcoming activities, learners can use Brightspace Pulse to better manage their time during the week. They can track upcoming assignments, access course content, stay on top of notifications for new discussion posts, be notified of upcoming quizzes, access grades, and view their course activity feed.

It's easy to stay informed and up to date with app notifications for new content and upcoming due dates, an activity feed of course announcements, and active discussions that the student is following. Students can also review non-HTML course content off-line, allowing them to study anywhere, anytime.

We connected with students on campuses to find out what matters to them the most, and we designed Brightspace Pulse with a growth mindset to reduce anxiety and build confidence by providing friendly feedback and messages.



*Pulse advert*

### Brightspace tours

The sections below are designed to show you more about the UHI Brightspace interface. Click on the titles to access interactive content.

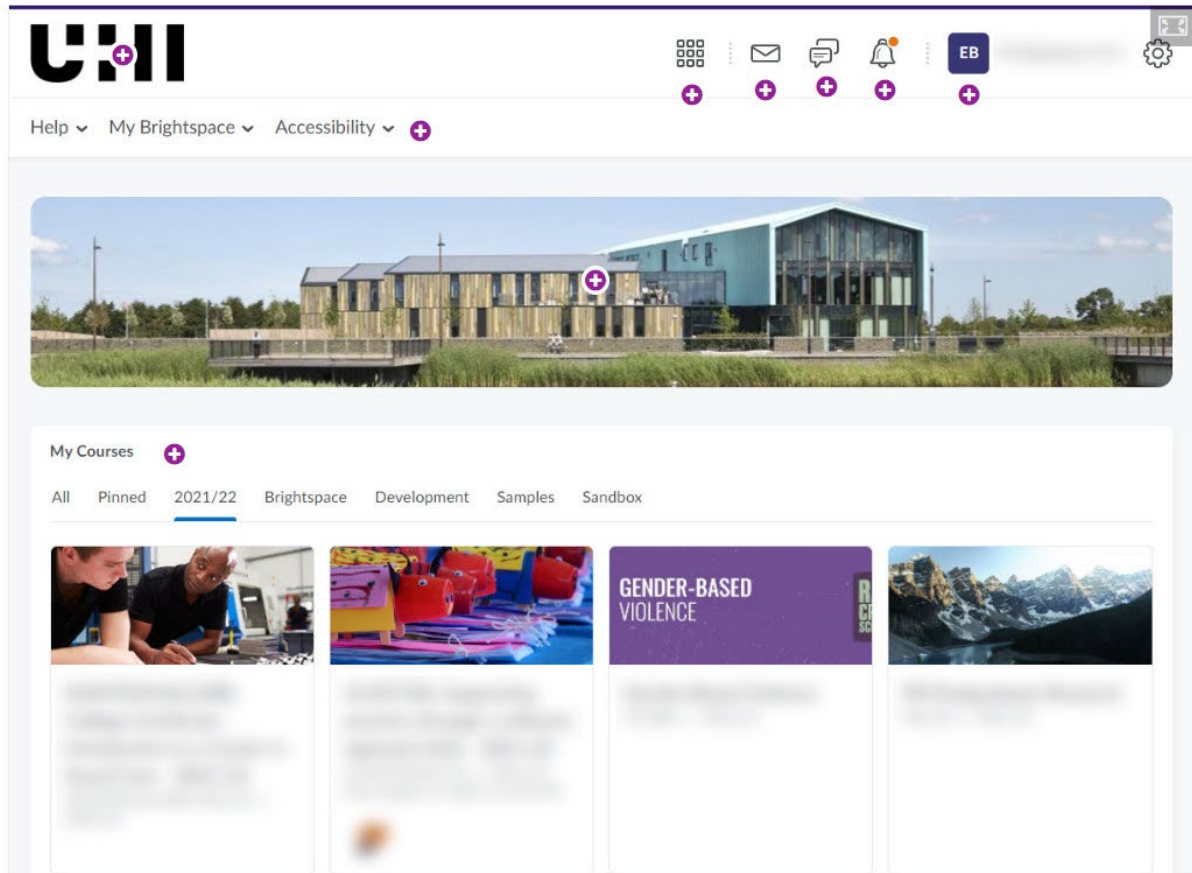
- The first relates to the **institutional homepage** (the screen you'll see after logging into the system);
- the second shows the layout of a **typical unit/module**.



The purpose here is to give you, especially those of you who do not yet have access to live units/modules, a chance to become familiar with the learning environment. The pictures you will see are clickable - click on the plus symbols to find out more details about Brightspace.

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### Institutional homepage



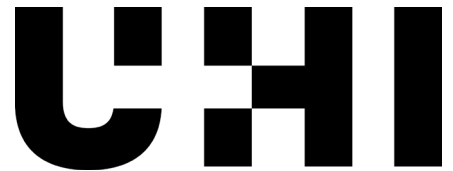
*Screenshot of institutional homepage (with active popups shown as pluses)*

Popups from left to right (starting at the top left):

**My Home:** Returns you to your overall homepage – where you can see every unit/module you have access to.

**Navbar:** This area of the screen provides you with links to course-specific tools and resources. On the institutional homepage, there are three headings: Help, My Brightspace and Accessibility.

- **Help:** Dropdown list with a wide variety of sites and resources designed to answer questions you may have about the learning environment. There are also links to the UHI Essential Student Skills resources, the Student Support area of the UHI web site, the student association HISA and a tool to check your system is fit to run Brightspace.
- **My Brightspace:** Dropdown list giving access to various non-module specific tools such as Awards and ePortfolio.
- **Accessibility:** A link to UHI's accessibility statement for Brightspace, and a link to the Disability matters area of the UHI website, which covers the various services UHI offers to students with disabilities.



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**Course selector:** Use the course selector 'waffle' to access your units/modules. For easy access, you can pin your courses to the top of the list (meaning that they will show in a particular order in the screen below).

**Messages:** Notifies you about unread mail and instant messages from instructors and fellow students.

**Subscriptions:** Notifies you about new blog posts, subscribed discussion forums, topics, and threads.

**Updates:** Notifies you about new and updated announcements, due dates, end dates, and grades related to units/modules you are enrolled in.

**Username:** Allows you to make changes to your user profile, notifications, account settings, and log out.

**Institutional banner:** Full page width image which may differ depending on your locality. The picture below is of An Lòchran, part of the UHI Inverness campus, shared by UHI, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and research and consultancy divisions from Scotland's Rural College.

**My courses:** Each tile in this area of the screen represents a unit/module you have access to. Click on a tile to open that unit/module.

**Announcements:** Non-unit/module specific announcements will be shown here. Announcements can be dismissed once read by clicking on the 'x' at the top right.

**Getting started:** The resources in this area are related to those offered in the Help menu in the navbar; Getting Started opens a module site with additional navigational information; Learner Essentials brings up a list of Brightspace videos, designed to briefly introduce you to different tools in the LE; Instructor Essentials are similar, but intended for lecturers. The 'bookmarks' function allows you to make a quick link to get back to a part of the Getting Started module.

**Calendar:** An all unit/module calendar showing scheduled sessions, due dates, etc. related to all units/modules you are enrolled in.

## Essential Student Skills: An introduction to Brightspace Module/unit page

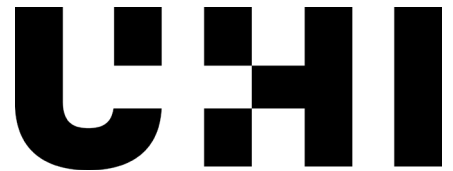
*Screenshot of module/unit homepage (with active popups shown as pluses)*

Popups from left to right (starting at the top left):

**My Home:** Returns you to your overall homepage – where you can see every unit/module you have access to.

**Navbar:** This area of the screen provides you with links to course-specific tools and resources. Within units/modules there are five headings in the navbar:

- **Content:** Takes you into the Table of Contents, where you will find the teaching content in your unit/module. The Table of Contents might have a variety of sections, like Learning Resources and Assignments, depending on how the unit/module has been set up.
- **Communication and Collaboration:** A selection of tools that relate to communication and collaboration, such as Announcements, Discussions and Virtual Classroom. Clicking on any of the items in the dropdown menu will open that tool.
- **Course Tools:** A dropdown menu that includes Assignments, Quizzes and Grades, where you will be able to see your marks and feedback.



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- **Library Resources:** The first item in this dropdown menu will take you directly into the reading list for your unit/module; other items include a link to the library homepage (includes access to the online catalogue, online journals etc.) and referencing guidance.
- **Help:** Dropdown list with a wide variety of sites and resources designed to answer questions you may have about the learning environment. There are also links to the UHI Essential Student Skills resources, the Student Support area of the UHI web site, the student association HISA and a tool to check your system is fit to run Brightspace.

**Module/unit banner:** Picture bearing the ID, name, and semester details of your unit/module.

**Course selector:** Use the course selector 'waffle' to access your units/modules. For easy access, you can pin your courses to the top of the list (meaning that they will show in a particular order in the screen below).

**Messages:** Notifies you about unread mail and instant messages from instructors and fellow students.

**Subscriptions:** Notifies you about new blog posts, subscribed discussion forums, topics, and threads.

**Updates:** Notifies you about new and updated announcements, due dates, end dates, and grades related to units/modules you are enrolled in.

**Username:** Allows you to make changes to your user profile, notifications, account settings, and log out.

**Slim Announcements:** This widget reduces the initial size of announcements to approximately 50 words. This allows for several announcements to show without leading to excessive scrolling. To get to the full text of any announcement, click on Read More; clicking X will hide it from your home screen – though you will still have access to it by clicking on Communication and Collaboration > Announcements on the navbar.

**Visual TOC:** TOC stands for Table of Contents. The tiles in this area of the screen, called 'modules' in Brightspace, take you to your course materials.