Learning Support Environment (LSE) 
BASELINE

The Newcastle University LSE Baseline sets out the minimum core requirements expected on all Units/Cases within the supported Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

The LSE Baseline ensures that the University provides students on taught programmes with a core set of materials (including programme related information and information about learning, assessment and skills for each module). It has been designed to:

- establish a degree of consistency across areas on the VLE
- provide clear guidance regarding the availability of information and teaching resources provided via the VLE
- establish a baseline on which areas can be developed and offer guidance on ways staff can move beyond the minimum expectations
1. **Baseline requirements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>How to meet requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Automated</strong></td>
<td><strong>Manual</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Units/Cases must have a VLE presence.</td>
<td>Active Units/Cases for the current academic year will be created automatically prior to each Semester within the curriculum section. Students will retain access to this content for as long as the modules are available or until they leave the University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At a school/subject level, units/cases should be organised in a consistent layout and easily navigable structure.</td>
<td>Key units/cases information and teaching materials should be presented in consistently named content areas across modules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Units/Cases Information</td>
<td>The curriculum section is automatically populated with content from the curriculum database.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Learning outcomes - The summary outline of teaching activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Details</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Module leader’s name - Module leader’s email address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading List</td>
<td>The curriculum section automatically pulls through any reading lists added to the Reading Lists Online system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Where relevant a reading list must be provided.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Materials</td>
<td>Key teaching materials should be uploaded to the module where these already exist in an electronic format. Content should be named consistently within the school/subject level module structure. Any teaching materials uploaded must conform to the University’s guidance on copyright and intellectual property. If ReCap is used to record lectures or any additional materials, and these are due to be released, the recordings should be made available to students within the VLE (these are normally made available via administrative staff).</td>
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| These may include: | * Lecture presentations  
* Lecture/seminar notes  
* Lecture/seminar handouts  
* ReCap recordings | |
| Assessment information | Assessment information is found within the Feedback and Assessment Support sections.  
Feedback section includes individualised feedback on all assessments, including scanned versions or written feedback.  
Assessment Support section includes supporting documents including: Assessment Briefing documents, summative assessment forms and seating plans.  
Data is also included in the students’ personal timetables to indicate assessment deadlines. |
| This will include: | * Details of the type, schedule of assessment  
* Information about the form of assessment for the module  
* The assessment criteria  
* The schedule for return of feedback to students  
This may also include:  
* Guidance on the University policy for the schedule of the return of feedback |
2. Implementation of LSE Baseline
The implementation of the LSE Baseline across units/cases, as well as the identification of units/cases going beyond the baseline, will be checked via the following means:

a) Feedback from students via the Student-Staff Committees, stage evaluations and National Student Survey/Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey
b) Learning and Teaching Reviews
c) Data gathered from the reporting tools within the VLE

The LSE Baseline will be reviewed annually in response to staff and student feedback, system capabilities and University policy.

3. Recommendations for Enhancement
The following recommendations are provided to outline ways in which staff can go beyond the baseline and ensure effective practice.

a) Provide students with an initial announcement or a document outlining how to orient the module and locate key materials.

b) Consider providing students with the opportunity to collaborate online within the units/cases using the Forum tools available. Students can contribute to discussions prior to, or following on from, face to face sessions, they can share drafts of their work for peer comments and can work together to build online resources to share with the cohort.

c) Consider using interactive/quiz tools to create tests as a tool to assess students on the unit/case and provide them with instant feedback. Tests can be used as a diagnostic assessment, a revision aid and as a means for students to evaluate their own progress.

d) Consider using ReCap (Personal Capture) to create additional teaching or support materials. Additional materials can be used to enable a more blended learning approach, self-directed learning or used to cover material students might need clarification on.

e) Students increasingly use mobile devices to access units/cases. To make your module more accessible on mobile devices:
   - ensure that folder names and content areas are descriptive. Avoid simply using generic terms such as ‘Lecture 1’ or ‘Week 1’ to identify a folder or item. This will improve the accessibility of your module for all learners, not just those using a mobile device.
   - avoid using symbols as these may not be supported.
   - Consider organising content so new material appears at the top. This will improve navigation and accessibility and will reduce the need for heavy scrolling.

f) It is effective practice to provide students with a summary of outcomes from May 2017
module evaluations as well as any actions resulting from them.

4. Support and Guidance

For any support requirements, please contact lse_enquiries@ltms.org.uk