

# AI in Blackboard

■ Tools to Support Learning





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# Introduction



**Blackboard** now offers a range of AI-powered tools to support teaching and learning through its AI Design Assistant. These tools help instructors create engaging learning materials, activities, and authentic assessments.

**At all steps** in the creation process, you can adjust the complexity of content and customise everything that the AI Design Assistant generates.

**This booklet** briefly explores the various AI-supported features available now in Blackboard.

# 1. Course Structure Suggestions

If you need help designing your course and don't know where to start, the AI Design Assistant can guide you through building the course's structure. The AI Design Assistant draws insights from your course's title and description to generate learning modules.

Learning modules can support a course objective, concept, or theme. Learning modules help you organise your content and guide how your students navigate a topic. Watch the video below to see how to get started. More information can also be found on [this web page](#).



**If your course is empty of content, you can select Auto-Generate Modules.**

If you already have content in your course, Auto-Generate Modules is an option in the Create Item menu.

## 2. Auto-Generate Discussion Topics

Generates discussion prompts based on course context. Customisable by cognitive level and complexity.

There are several ways to customise the AI Design Assistant's discussion suggestions. You can enter a description (limited to 2000 characters) to narrow the focus of the discussions. You can also choose the desired cognitive level from:

- Apply
- Analyze
- Evaluate
- Create

Moving a slider makes it possible to adjust the complexity of the discussion's focus.

Optionally, you can select which course items you'd like the AI Design Assistant to focus on to provide discussion context. Find out more via the video below or through [this web page](#).



# 3. Journal Generation

It is possible to use the AI Assistant to generate Journal topics. Using AI capabilities, the AI Assistant provides suggestions for topics based on your chosen course context.

You can again inform the AI suggestions by selecting particular cognitive levels, including Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, Create and 'Inspire me' (a mix of the cognitive levels). There is also the option to edit the content further to customise the journal as required.

Just as with the AI Assistant for discussions, a slider makes it possible to adjust the complexity of the discussion's focus.

Find out more through [this web page](#).

The video below provides a short overview of Journals in Blackboard from the student's perspective.

**Blackboard** 

**Journals**  
**Student**

# 4. Generating Marking Rubrics

Marking rubrics offer a structured framework to assess student work. Rubrics can help ensure both fairness and consistency in grading. Moreover, rubrics give students clear directives to meet desired learning outcomes.

However, creating marking rubrics can take a lot of time. The AI Design Assistant creates rubrics by drawing insights from the course context. There are several ways to customise the rubrics that the AI Design Assistant generates. You can:

- Enter a description (limited to 2000 characters) to narrow the focus of the rubric
- Select the rubric type: percentage, percentage range, points, or point range
- Adjust the complexity of the rubric
- Define the number of columns and rows
- Select the arrow beside Advanced options to change the output language

Once you've finalised your settings, select Generate. If the rubric meets your needs, select Continue to edit the rubric.

Find out more through [this web page](#). Watch the video below for an overview of the creation of marking rubric using the AI Design Assistant.

**Blackboard** 

AI Rubric  
Generation  
Instructor

# 5. Authentic Assessment Ideas

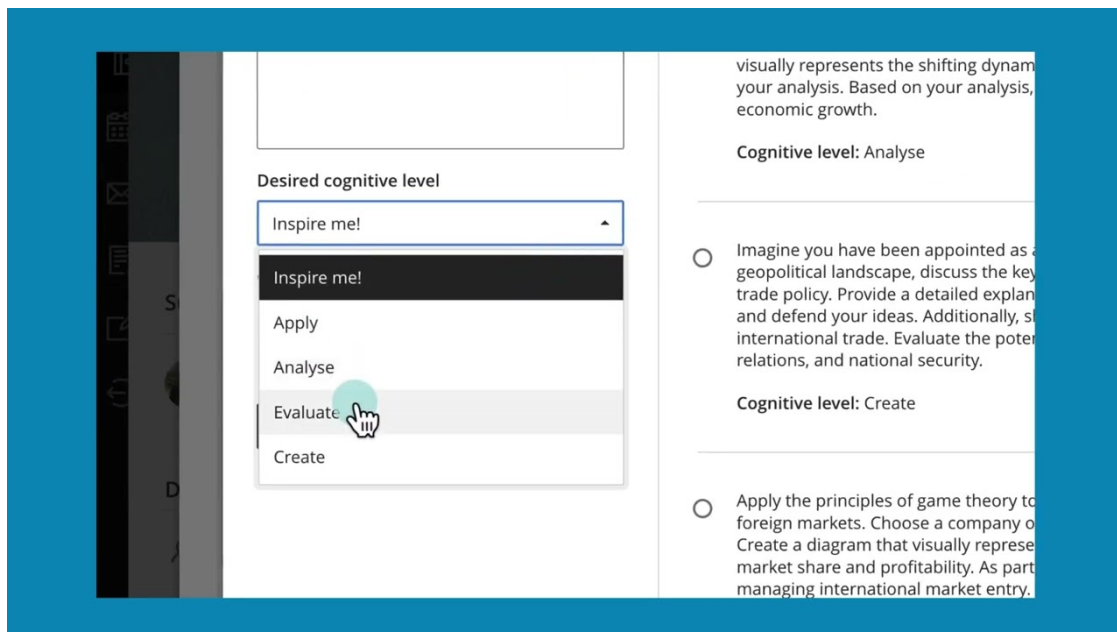
The AI Assistant can help to develop ideas for authentic assessment tasks.

To inform the AI Assistant, you can enter a description or keywords to help define the prompt the AI will use to generate the suggested assessment tasks.

As with the AI Assistant with discussions and journals, you can select the cognitive level, based on Bloom's Taxonomy, for the assignment suggestion (Apply, Analyse, Evaluate, create and Inspire Me). Again, the complexity of the output can be changed using a slider, and it is possible to select the output language).

Alternatively, you can select specific course items (materials) that you would like the AI Design Assistant to use to provide context for the assignment suggestions.

For more details, watch the video below and/or [see this web page](#).

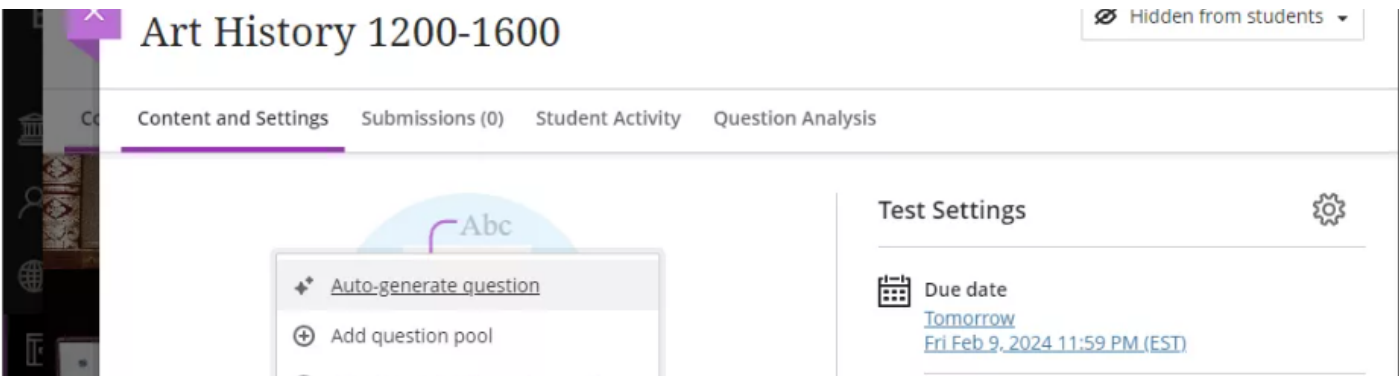




# 6. Test Question Generation

Creating test questions can take a significant amount of time. The AI Design Assistant can offer suggestions for test questions for both formative and summative assessments. Test questions are generated based on the course context or context that you select.

Select Auto-generate question from the new question menu in the test creation panel. You can reach the new question menu by pressing the plus button.



The AI Design Assistant can create the following types of question: Essay, Fill in the blank, Matching, Multiple choice and True/False. For more details, watch the video below and/or [see this web page.](#)

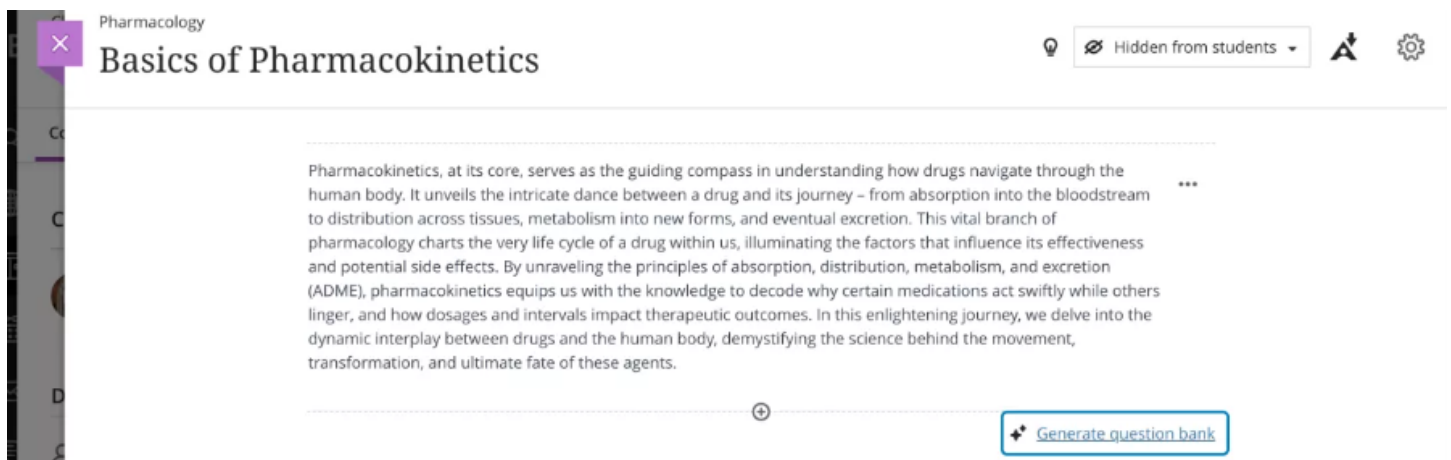


# 7. Question Bank Generation from Ultra Documents

Blackboard Ultra has its own built-in document feature. Blackboard documents are very accessible alternatives to Word or PDF files. Ultra Documents blend text and media components, enriching content presentation. Please see the [“Create Ultra Documents”](#) topic to learn more about how to create Ultra Documents.

Question Banks are sets of questions you can use across multiple assessments. The AI Design Assistant can build question banks based on an Ultra Document. Please see the [“Question Banks”](#) topic to learn more about how to create and edit Question Banks.

To Generate a Question Bank, select that option in an Ultra Document (see below)



Again, it is possible to refine the context for the AI Assistant to use when generating a question bank. This includes being able to enter a description, adjusting the complexity of questions, and selecting the number of questions. You can select from these question types: Essay, Fill in the blank, Matching, Multiple Choice and True/False.

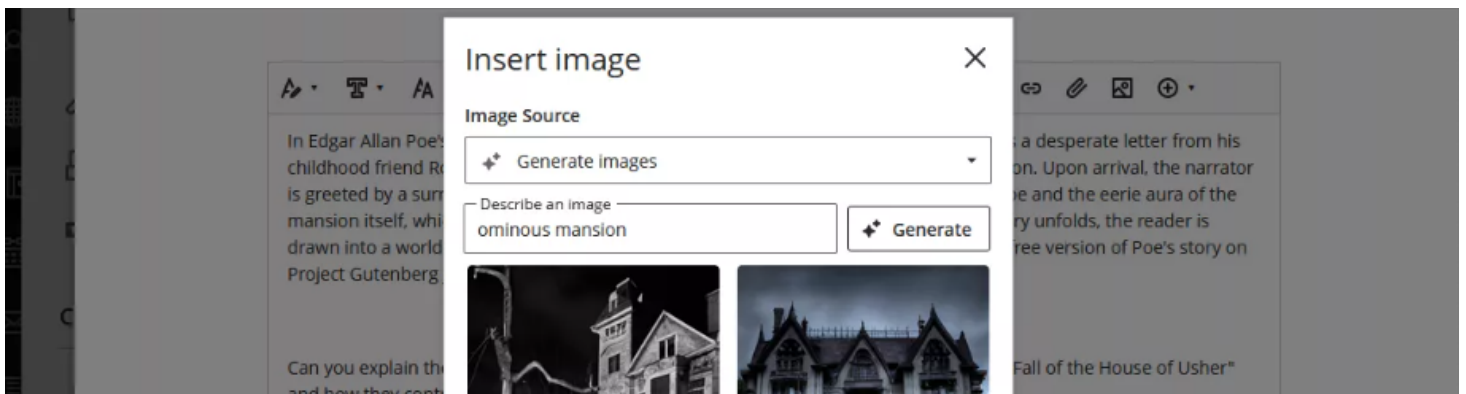
For more information [please see this web page](#).

# 8. Insert or Generate Images

You can directly insert AI-Generated or stock images into a Blackboard Ultra Document via the text editor by using the 'Image' button.



Alternatively, you can generate an image to insert into a document using the AI Design Assistant. Enter a description for your image and then select Generate.



After you've chosen an image to insert, select **Next**. You can now customise how the image appears in the text.

For further details see [this web page](#).

# 9. AI Conversations

You can create AI Conversations around a topic or scenario to engage your students. **AI Conversations include Socratic questioning and role-play exercises.** Students can explore and reflect on their thoughts or role-play situations related to their learning or career path. We'll include other conversation types as we gather user feedback and insights.

There are two elements to the AI Conversation activity:

- 1. AI Conversation** – This encourages students to think critically about the topic that the instructor designs.
- 2. Reflection question** – This part of the process asks students to share their thoughts on the activity. The reflection question also allows the student to flag any bias or errors from the AI as part of a Trustworthy AI Approach. Reflection can help students understand the responsible use of AI services.

For more details, watch the video below and/or take a look at [this web page](#).

**Blackboard** 

AI Conversation  
Tool

# Additional Resources

[Blackboard's Trustworthy AI Principles](#)

[Blackboard Learn AI Design Assistant](#)

[Learning Innovation and Digital Engagement \(LIDE\) Colleague Development Opportunities](#)

If you would like a 1:1 Introductory Session to use the AI Design Assistant in Blackboard, please email to [blackboard-support@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:blackboard-support@westminster.ac.uk), and one of the Learning Innovation and Digital Engagement (LIDE) Team will get back to you.

