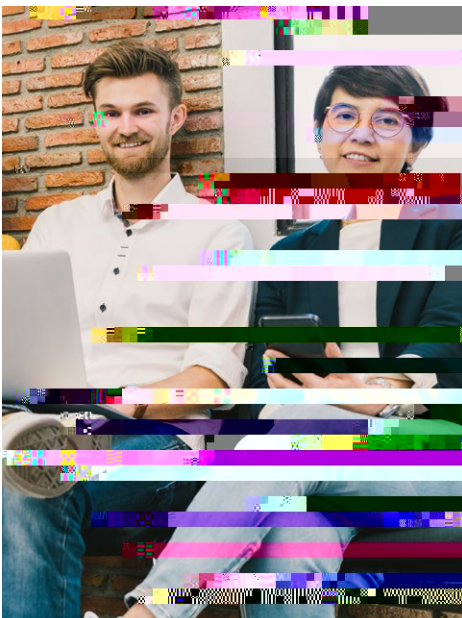# Blackboard®

The latest releases for Blackboard Learn 9.1 (the Original experience for managed and self-hosted institutions) have delivered many new features and enhancements that significantly improve:

- User experience including engagement, mobility and accessibility

- Efficiency and ease of use

- Assessment and grading

- Quality and infrastructure

By upgrading from the Q4 2016 release to the Q2 2018 release of Learn, your institution will benefit from an environment that is easier to use, more responsive on mobile devices, higher quality, and more powerful – which means happier, more successful educators and students.

The following release highlights were delivered in the Q2 2018, Q4 2017 and Q2 2017 releases.

User Experience

Record audio and video feedback for students (Q2 2018) – Instructors and graders can increase student engagement by creating a personalized audio or video feedback recording by clicking on the microphone icon in the Content Editor. Students can easily access the recording without the need of a browser plug-in. This feedback functionality is supported in the following areas: Assignment, Test, graded Discussion, graded Wiki, graded Blog, graded Journal, and within a manual grade column. Recordings are stored in the cloud and do not utilize hosting storage allocation or local storage.

Brand color configuration (Q2 2018) – To align more closely with your institution's brandtheme. The course menu will present in these colors in both d

and mobile web browsers.

Greater responsiveness on mobile devices (Q2 2017, Q4 2017 & Q2 2018) – Instructors and students alike will enjoy an improved mobile experience as each release has introduced responsiveness

Delete multiple gradebook columns
(Q4 2017) – Instructors can now delete multiple gradebook columns at once making managing the gradebook even easier. When deleted, manual and calculated columns are removed completely; columns associated with gradable items are cleared of attempt and grade data, but remain in the Grade Center.

Grade display standardization (Q4 2017) To provide greater consistency, all gradebook columns and My Grades now support up to five decimal points, are not rounded, and are consistent for all display types (score, percentage, letter grade).

Submission receipts enhancement (Q2 2017) Students can receive a notification email for each assignment attempt with information about the submission including attached files. Students can also access receipts at any time on the My Grades page.

Outcomes Assessment: evidence sampling by demographic (Q2 2017) – When collecting and sampling previously-submitted student assignments for a secondary program evaluation process, assignments can now be sampled by student demographic information. Assessment coordinators can sample by the education level field or institution roles. Sampling by institution roles allows Boolean AND/OR selection for enhanced search.

Quality & Infrastructure

We are fully committed to delivering strong product quality and providing a stable, reliable experience for educators, students, and administrators. In these releases, we have:

- Updated the technology that Learn runs on to ensure a stable and secure product, including JAVA, Tomcat, SCORM engine, ActiveMQ, and more
- Made changes to simplify Learn upgrades and make them more reliable, including:
  - Continuing improvements to the new installer
  - Reducing code dependency issues that were found in prior maintenance processes to improve stability
  - Improving the maintenance process so that more requested fixes can be delivered more quickly to currently supported versions
  - Reducing downtime for upgrades and server startups
- Enhanced the password reset functionality, so the password reset URL sent through email now expires in 15 minutes for greater security
- Introduced support for Caliper Analytics for self-hosted institutions – a standard from IMS Global for exchanging activity data for analytics purposes (already available for managed-hosted institutions)
- Added new REST APIs as well as enhancements to previously-released web services
- Addressed the top client-reported issues that were a ecting the largest number of users

For more details on the contents of each release, see the Release Notes on help.blackboard.com. Visit the Blackboard Community site to join other institutions in the Upgrade Club. Plus, provide your product suggestions and vote on ideas for our upcoming releases in the Blackboard Idea Exchange.