

Blackboard Grade Center: Downloading Comments, and Uploading Comments Offline

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Why work offline?

Blackboard Learn allows you to download the whole Grade Center for a course, or selected columns, which can then be opened and worked on in a spreadsheet application such as Excel, and later re-uploaded into the Grade Center. This has many benefits such as:

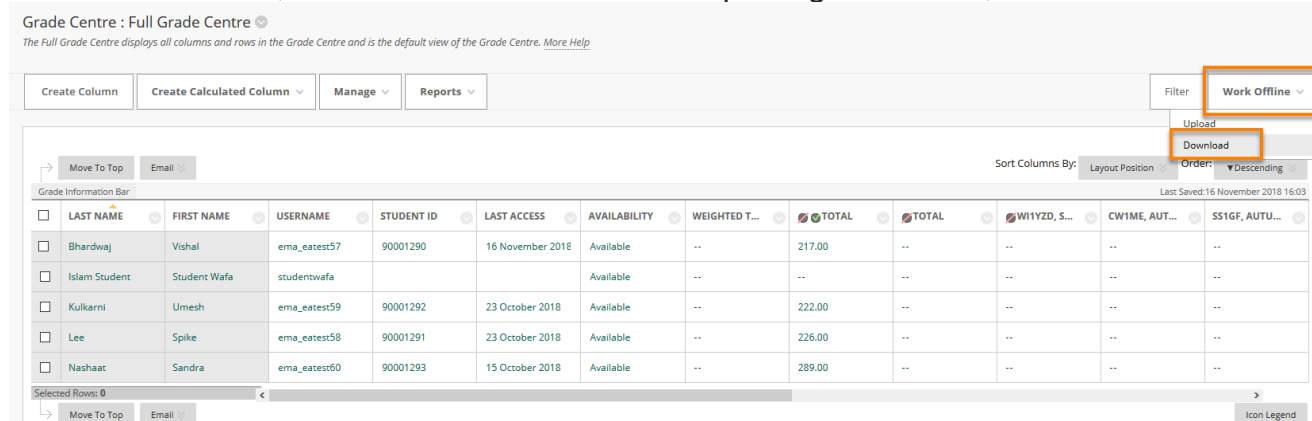
- Exporting details (names, usernames) of students who are enrolled on the course.
- Entering comments (and general feedback) for an assessment without having to be logged into Blackboard.
- Exporting test and assignment data for record-keeping purposes, or so that you can perform calculations in Excel.

Once downloaded, comments can be entered / edited offline, and later uploaded back to the Grade Center.

How to download comments from the Grade Center

NOTE: This process can also be used if there are no marks yet and you want to enter comments.

1. To download comments from the Grade Center, go to **Control Panel > Grade Center > Full Grade Center**, click on **Work Offline** in the top navigation menu, then select **Download**.



The screenshot shows the Blackboard Grade Center interface for 'Full Grade Centre'. At the top, there are navigation buttons: 'Create Column', 'Create Calculated Column', 'Manage', and 'Reports'. On the right, there is a 'Filter' button and a dropdown menu labeled 'Work Offline' which is highlighted with an orange box. Below this, there are 'Upload' and 'Download' buttons, with 'Download' also highlighted with an orange box. The main area contains a table with columns: LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, USERNAME, STUDENT ID, LAST ACCESS, AVAILABILITY, WEIGHTED T..., TOTAL, TOTAL, WI1YZD, S..., CW1ME, AUT..., and S51GF, AUTU... The table lists five students: Bhardwaj Vishal, Islam Student Student Wafa, Kulkarni Umesh, Lee Spike, and Nashaac Sandra. At the bottom, there is a 'Selected Rows: 0' indicator and a 'Move To Top' button.

2. On the page that loads, select which data you wish to download. The options are:

- **Full Grade Center**

Contains all columns and associated data.

Comments will not be included and cannot be added offline.

- **Select Grading Period**

Contains all the columns from the selected Grading Period.

Grading Periods must be created before they can be chosen.

- **Select Column**

Contains the data from one Grade Center column.

If you want to download previously-entered feedback, or want to add feedback comments offline, tick the box next to **Include comments for this Column**.

DATA

Items with Anonymous Marking enabled will not be included in the download.

Select Data to Download

Full Grade Centre

Selected Column HISAM1 Autumn Term Submission



Include Comments for this Column

User Information Only

- **User Information Only**

Contains columns with user data such as First Name, Last Name, and User Name.

3. The other options are non-essential.

4. Under **Download Location** you will normally accept the default of downloading the file to your computer.

5. Do not change the name of the file that downloads, as the file name includes useful information to identify the course and date e.g.

gc_PY2CP-16-7A_fullgc_2017-02-06-13-54-39.csv

gc_FB2EFA-15-6A_column_2016-06-06-15-32-30.xls

Working Offline

When the file has downloaded, open it in editing software such as Excel.

If the Full Grade Center has been downloaded, marks can be added or changed, and the file saved for uploading back to Blackboard.

If a single Grade Center column has been downloaded, marks and feedback comments can be added or changed, and the file saved for uploading back to Blackboard.

Do not change the name of any of the column headers in Excel, as Blackboard may not recognize it as the same field when you upload data back into the Grade Center.



Editing Comments

If you included Comments when downloading a Grade Center column (even if there were no previously-entered comments), you will see four comment-related columns in the downloaded file:

1. Grading Notes

Grade Center column comments visible only to course Instructors. These will be visible when viewing the Grade Details screen for a student submission.

2. Notes Format

Smart Text, Plain Text, or HTML.

3. Feedback to User

Feedback comments which will be visible to Students in My Grades, and under FEEDBACK TO LEARNER when viewing work submitted to a Blackboard Assignment.

4. Feedback Format

Smart Text, Plain Text, or HTML.

The format options are:

- **Smart Text:** Automatically recognises links, accepts HTML tags, and recognizes the ENTER key as a paragraph tag.
- **Plain Text:** Displays text as it is written in the text area. Plain text does not render HTML code. HTML code will appear as text.
- **HTML:** Displays text as coded by the user using Hypertext Mark-up Language (HTML) tags.

Entering comments offline - some caveats

- Links within comments to rich media, such as images or sound files, should be inserted and edited online.
- If students have made multiple attempts to a Blackboard assignment, you will not be able to upload marks or feedback for those students - this is a known issue for which there is not currently a solution.
- For columns relating to Tests and Assignments, where students have to make a submission, you cannot upload marks or feedback for students who have not submitted.



Uploading comments back into Blackboard

When editing is complete, save the file, return to the Full Grade Center in your Blackboard course, and click **Work Offline > Upload**. Browse for the file, and press **Submit**.