

Groups and Differentiation Tags

For TLSE Teams

Please sign in to Canvas while we wait to get started!

Agenda

- Comparing Canvas Groups and Blackboard Groups
- Creating Manual Groups
- Creating Random or Auto-Enrol Groups
- Creating Self-Enrol Groups
- Importing Groups and Members (For Large Cohorts)
- Group Assignments
- Differentiation Tags
- Creating Differentiation Tags and Using them to 'Assign To'

Canvas vs Blackboard Groups

Canvas vs Blackboard Groups

Blackboard 'Groups'

Can be used for collaborative work if desired

Allows creation of an optional group space for discussions, file sharing, and assignments.

Visibility (to students) can be toggled on or off

Can serve administrative functions (e.g. adaptive release) to control access to content

**Can be used for collaborative work
OR administrative functions**

Canvas 'Groups'

Specifically tailored to collaborative work

Provides a dedicated group space for discussions, file sharing, projects etc

Visibility **cannot** be toggled – students will always know if they are enrolled in a group

Not suitable for administrative functions – groups cannot be used for 'Assign To' functionality

**Primary use is for student collaboration - cannot
be used for controlled release of content or
assignments**

Canvas Functionality and Use Cases

Groups

Collaboration Purposes e.g. groupwork

Always visible/findable for group members

Example: Students working together to create a group presentation

Differentiation Tags

Administrative Purposes e.g. extra time

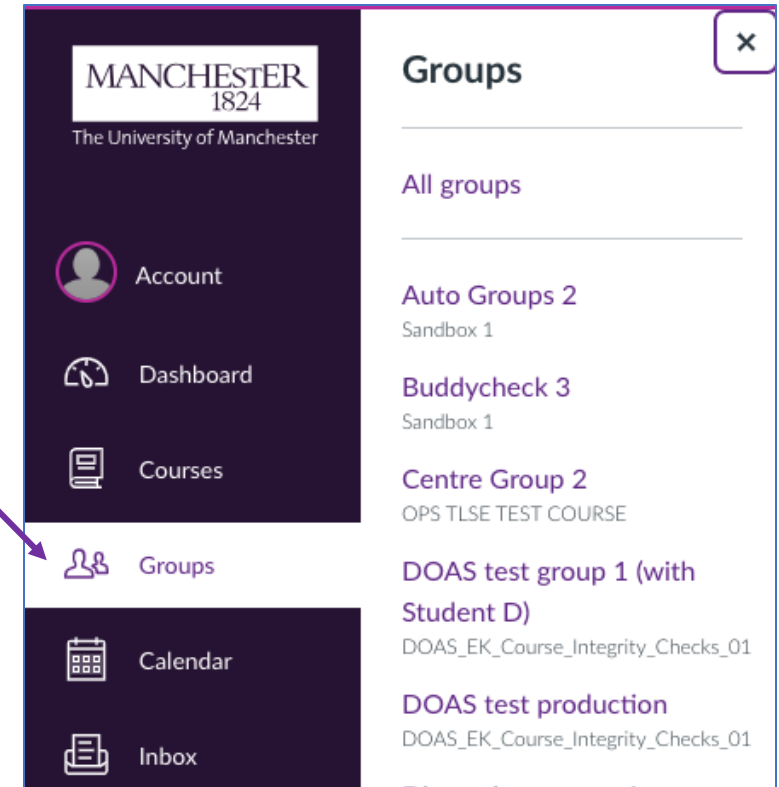
Never visible to students

Example: Used to give DASS students extended assignment deadlines using 'Assign To'

Canvas Course Groups – Overview

Canvas Course Groups - Overview

- **Course groups are created from the People page** within a given course.
- **All groups must belong to a group set** - unlike Blackboard, you cannot create a group without one.
- **Within a group set, each student can only be in one group.**
- **When created, each group has access to its own "mini course" space accessible via the Groups tab**, where group members can collaborate using tools like Discussions, Pages, and Files.
- **Students can see the names of people in other groups in their course***, but cannot access other group spaces
- **Instructors can view and interact with any group**, regardless of membership.
- **Groups can be used to distribute group assignments** — ideal for projects, peer reviews, discussions etc.
- *when the *People* page is made visible to students



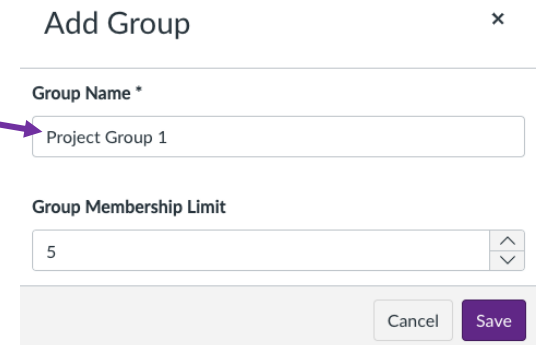
Creating Manual Groups

Where you want to assign specific students to specific groups (small scale)

E.g. To manually assign 15 students to their chosen group project

Activity 1: Creating Manual Groups

1. Navigate to your Sandbox, and from the course navigation menu, open 'People'
2. Click the +Group Set button to create your group set
3. Give your group set a meaningful name
4. For manual groups, self sign-up isn't required
5. Choose to 'create groups later' (i.e. manually) and save
6. To create your individual groups within the group set, click the '+Group' button
7. In the dialog box, specify your group name – this will be visible to the students/group members and so naming should be relevant!
8. Set your group membership limit (or leave blank for no limit)

A screenshot of the 'Add Group' dialog box. It has a title bar 'Add Group' with a close button 'x'. The first section is 'Group Name *' with a text input field containing 'Project Group 1'. The second section is 'Group Membership Limit' with a numeric input field containing '5' and up/down arrows. At the bottom are 'Cancel' and 'Save' buttons.

Add Group ×

Group Name *

Project Group 1

Group Membership Limit

5

Cancel Save

Activity 1: Creating Manual Groups

To add students to the group, you would drag and drop their names across from the unassigned students list one at a time.

The search box allows you to filter for specific users in the course, if working with a long list.

Unassigned Students (6)

⋮ Anna Burton

⋮ Kate Hilton

⋮ FEAT-S Student A

⋮ FEAT-S Student B

⋮ FEAT-S Student C

⋮ FEAT-S Student D

Groups (1)

▼ Manual Group 1

0 students

⋮

There are currently no students in this group. Add a student to get started.

Random or Auto-Enrol Groups

Where it doesn't matter which students end up in which group

E.g. to facilitate an assessed course discussion

Activity 2: Random or Auto-Enrol Groups

1. As previous, create your group set and give it a meaningful name (e.g. Discussion Group)
2. Self-sign up is not required here as students will be automatically assigned their group
3. Group structure – how do you want to divide up your students? *Imagine a course with 80 total students...*

Split students by number of groups

Group Structure

8

☐ Require group members to be in the same section

Specify your number of groups, and automatically split the students between them

E.g. I want to create 8 random groups.
= 8 groups each containing 10 students

Split number of students per group

Group Structure

5

☐ Require group members to be in the same section

Specify how many students you want in each random group

E.g. I want 5 students per group
= 16 groups each containing 5 students

Activity 2: Random/Auto Groups

Once saved, your students will be split as per your settings

Everyone

Auto Groups

Manual Group Set

Uploaded Groups

+ Group set

+ Import

+ Group

Unassigned Students (0)

Search users

There are currently no students in this group.
Add a student to get started.

Groups (3)

▶ Auto Groups 1

2 students

▼ Auto Groups 2 |

2 students

FEAT-S Student B

FEAT-S Student D

▶ Auto Groups 3

2 students

Self-Enrol Groups

Where you want to allow students to choose their own groups

E.g. To allow students to pick their own project topic from a given list

Self-Enrol Groups

- Here, students can choose and enrol in their own groups — often based around a topic, discussion, or task.
- This setup allows students to move between groups freely, ***until you lock the group set***. We recommend setting a deadline for sign up, at which point the groups become locked.
- Students access self-sign-up groups via the People page in the course. If the People page is hidden or unavailable, they won't be able to join a group.

Activity 3: Creating Self-Enrol Groups

1. As previous, create your group set and give it a meaningful name. NB: these names are carried into the actual group names that students will see
2. Here, self sign-up IS required and should be switched on
3. Specify your group structure
4. Decide whether to automatically assign a group leader – this can be done manually later if required
5. Save to create your groups within the course

Create Group Set

Group Set Name*

Enter Group Set Name

Self sign-up ?

☒ Allow self sign-up

☐ Require group members to be in the same section

Create groups now

Group Structure

8

Limit group members to (leave blank for no limit)

4

Leadership ?

☐ Automatically assign a student group leader

☒ Set first student to join as group leader

☐ Set a random student as group leader

Cancel

Save

Activity 3: Self-Enrol Groups

Student view of self-enrol groups pre-registration

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[Announcements](#)
[Assignments](#)
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Everyone
Groups

Self-Enrol Groups 1 Self-Enrol Groups	0 students	Join
Self-Enrol Groups 2 Self-Enrol Groups	0 students	Join
Self-Enrol Groups 3 Self-Enrol Groups	0 students	Join
Self-Enrol Groups 4 Self-Enrol Groups	0 students	Join
Self-Enrol Groups 5 Self-Enrol Groups	0 students	Join

Activity 3: Self-Enrol Groups

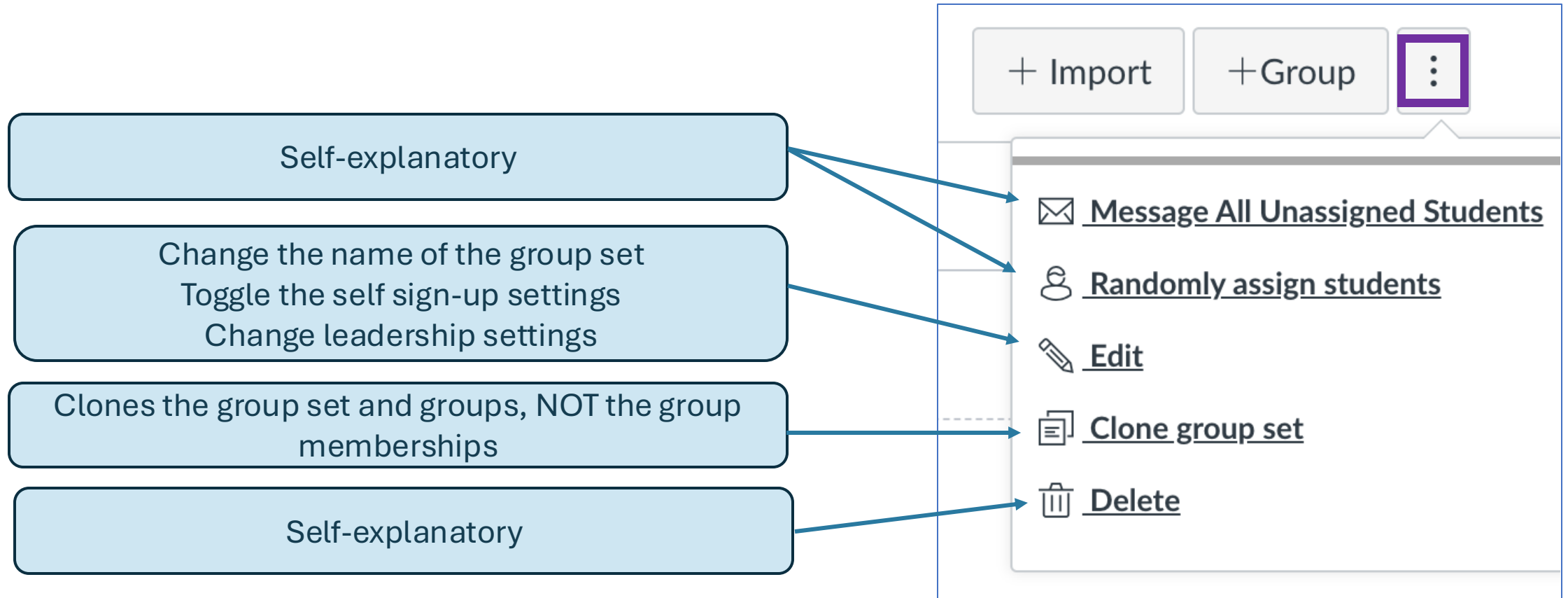
Student view of self-enrol groups post-registration

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[Announcements](#)
[Assignments](#)
[Quizzes](#)
[Grades](#)
[Reading List](#)
[Discussions](#)
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[Student Support](#)
[BBC Website](#)
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Everyone
Groups

Self-Enrol Groups 1 Self-Enrol Groups Visit	1 student	Leave
FEAT-S Student A		
Self-Enrol Groups 2 Self-Enrol Groups	0 students	Switch To
Self-Enrol Groups 3 Self-Enrol Groups	0 students	Switch To
Self-Enrol Groups 4 Self-Enrol Groups	0 students	Switch To
Self-Enrol Groups 5 Self-Enrol Groups	0 students	Switch To

Editing Group Settings From a Group Set



Editing Group Settings

Edit Group Set

☐ Allow self sign-up ?

☐ Require group members to be in the same section

Maximum members per group

10

Changing this will override any individually set group limits

Leadership

☐ Automatically assign a student group leader

☒ Set first student to join as group leader

☐ Set a random student as group leader

Cancel

Save

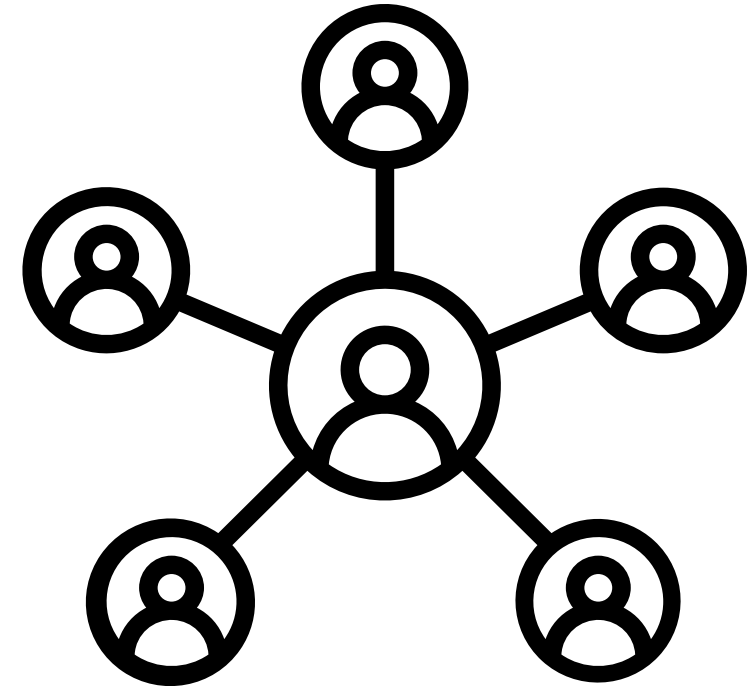
Group Leaders – What Are They?

- Can change the name of their group
- Can add or remove group members

No notification process for group leaders – they are not specifically informed

Has no bearing on group assignment submission (i.e. if a group leader is specified, anyone within the group can still submit within their group)

Group leaders can be changed as and when required by an instructor from the groups area



- Leadership ?
- ☒ Automatically assign a student group leader
 - ☐ Set first student to join as group leader
 - ☐ Set a random student as group leader

Auto-Assign

Groups (2)

▼ Manual Group 1

FEAT-S Student A

FEAT-S Student B

► Manual Group 2

Remove

Set as Leader

Move To...

Manual Assign

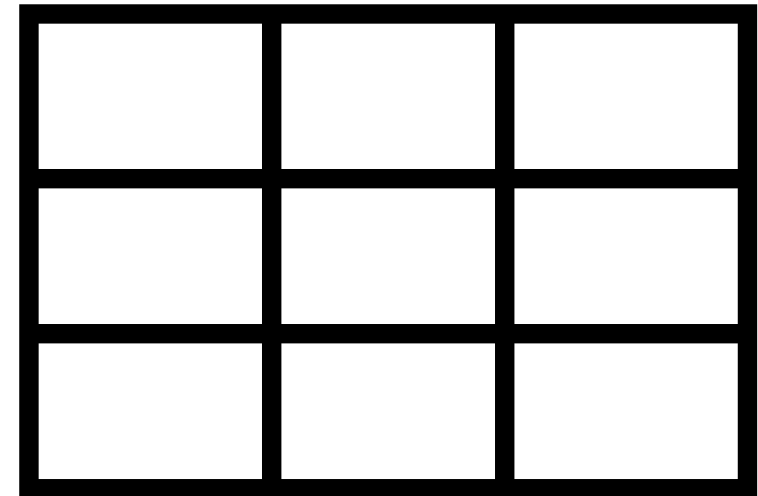
Importing Groups and Members

Where you want to assign students to specific groups (on a larger scale) - but this can be used on a smaller scale too

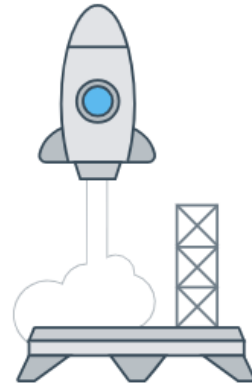
E.g. To assign 150 students to their group project allocations

Importing Groups and Members

- As previous, you need to create your group set first. No existing group set = no import option available
- Similarly to Blackboard, this option exists to help speed up the process of group creation and assigning users to groups
- Import is via a .csv template downloadable from the group set page, specific to the current configuration of that group set, groups and group members



Importing Groups and Members



Upload CSV File

Drag and drop or click to browse your computer

[Download Course Roster CSV](#)

To assign students to a group, enter group names in the "group_name" column.

[Group Import API Documentation](#)

Activity 4: Creating Groups in Bulk

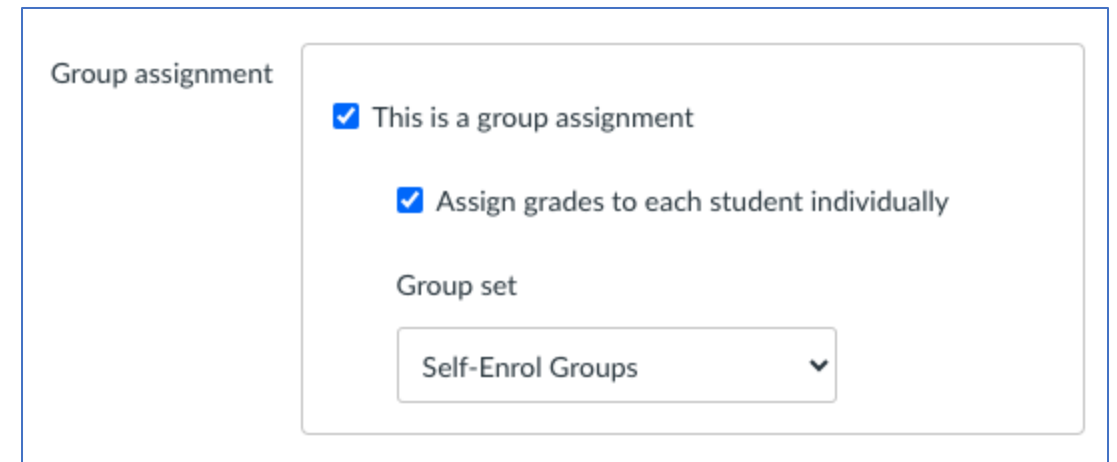
1. Navigate to the 'manual' group set that you created in Activity 1
2. Within your group set, click +Import and on the page that opens, **Download Course Roster CSV** and open the file
3. You should now see a list of the groups that you created earlier. To create additional groups, enter a group name (or names) in the group_name column, separated by row
4. When finished, save your csv file
5. Re-upload your file on the import page in Canvas and once processed, the changes you've made will pass over to the live groups

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	name	canvas_user	user_id	login_id	sections	group_name	
2						Group1	
3						Group2	
4						Group3	
5							

Group Assignments

Creating a Group Assignment

- Follow the usual steps to create an assignment – only 'online' assignment types can be assigned to groups
- Check the 'group assignment' button
- You have the option to grade the students individually, or as a whole
- Assign the relevant group set



The screenshot shows the 'Group assignment' settings panel in Canvas. It includes two checked checkboxes: 'This is a group assignment' and 'Assign grades to each student individually'. Below these is a 'Group set' dropdown menu currently set to 'Self-Enrol Groups'.

Group assignment

☒ This is a group assignment

☒ Assign grades to each student individually

Group set

Self-Enrol Groups ▼

Assigning Different Due Dates to Each Group

Use 'Assign To' settings to differentiate due dates and/or availability times for each of your groups

Assign Access

Assign to

Self-Enrol Groups 1 X Self-Enrol Groups 2 X

Self-Enrol Groups 3 X Self-Enrol Groups 4 X

Self-Enrol Groups 5 X Self-Enrol Groups 6 X

Start typing to search... ▼

Due date **Time**

2 May 2025 14:00 Clear

Available from **Time**

Clear

Until **Time**

Clear

+ Assign to

Assign to

Self-Enrol Groups 7 X Self-Enrol Groups 8 X

Start typing to search... ▼

Due date **Time**

9 May 2025 14:00 Clear

Available from **Time**

Clear

Until **Time**

Clear

+ Assign to

Assigning Different Due Dates to Each Group

The assignment page will detail any Assign To differentiations that have been made

Group Assignment 

 Publish

 Assign to

 Edit



No additional details were added for this assignment.

Points 100

Submitting a file upload

Due	For	Available from	Until
2 May at 14:00	6 Groups	-	2 May at 14:00
9 May at 14:00	2 Groups	-	9 May at 14:00

Marking Group Assignments

When choosing to grade
students as a group

=

Markers sees one submission file
per group in Speedgrader, and
provides mark/feedback on a
single submission file

When choosing to grade
students individually

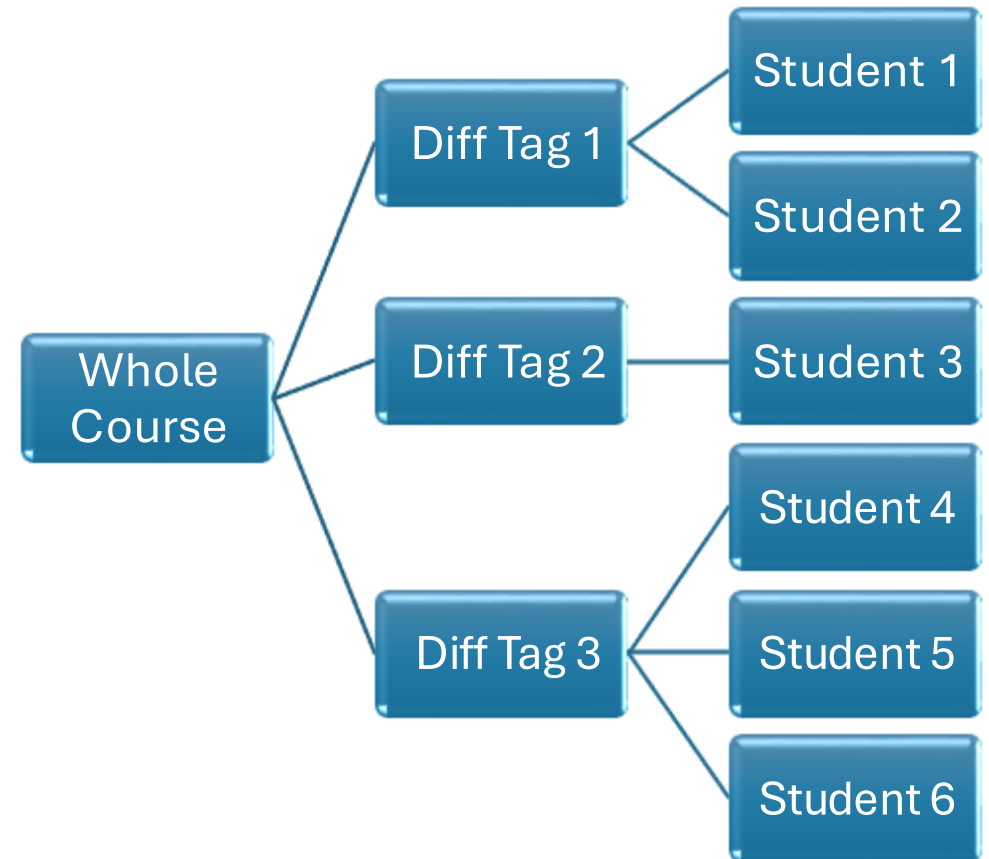
=

Marker sees the same exact
submission file against each
student in Speedgrader and
provides marks/feedback to
each student separately

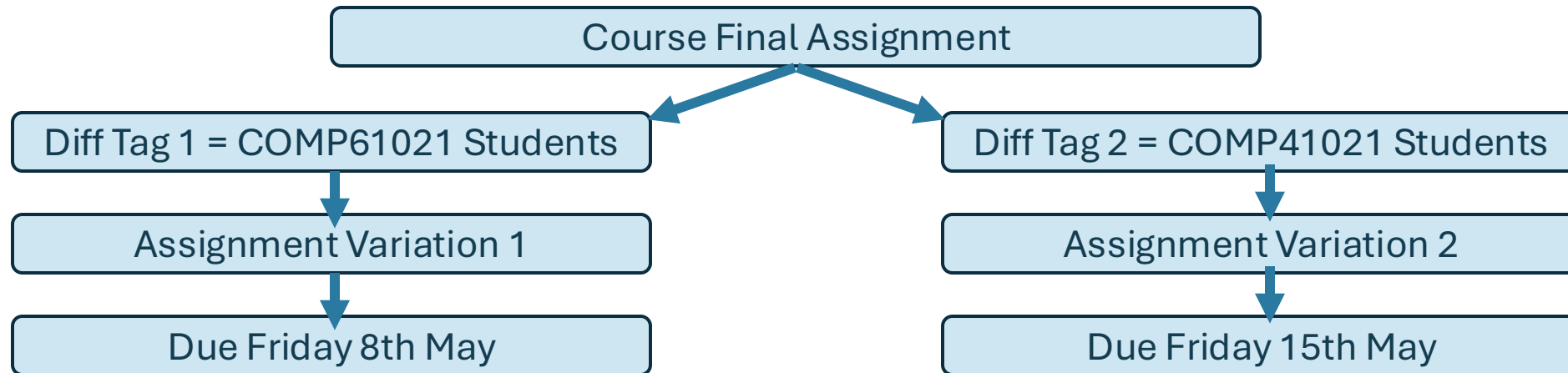
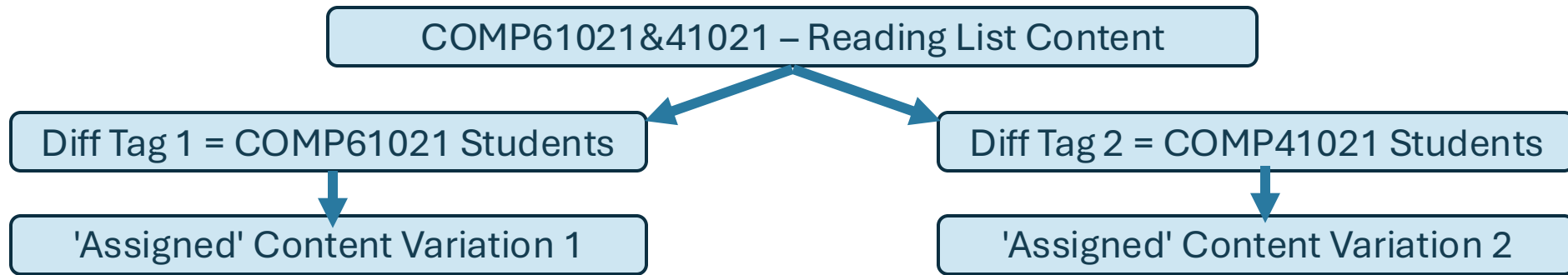
Differentiation Tags in Canvas

What are differentiation tags?

- Differentiation tags are used to subdivide students within a course space.
- They offer similar functionality to Blackboard administrative groups, such as managing:
 - Students with DASS accommodations (e.g. extra time)
 - Adaptive release of content
- Differentiation tags can be used to differentiate:
 - Assignment due dates (e.g. extensions or staggered deadlines)
 - Specific content or assessments for different cohorts (e.g. undergrads vs postgrads in the same course)

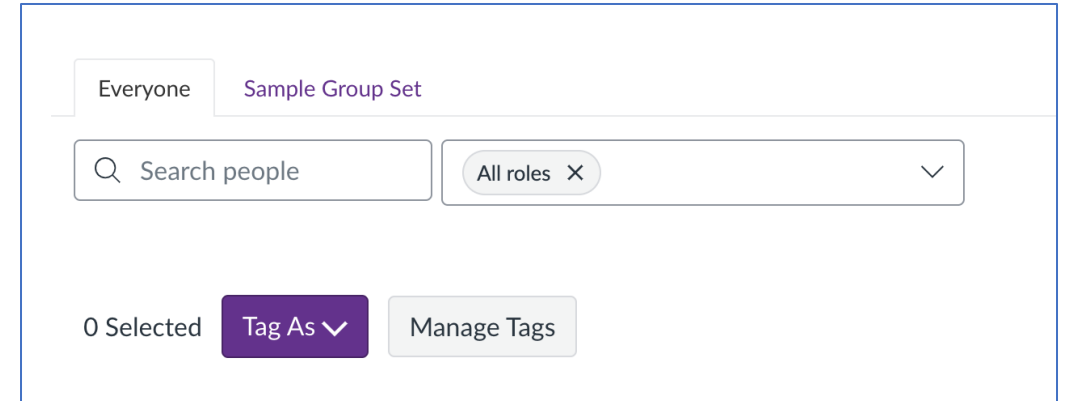


Differentiation Tags in Canvas – Use Cases



Creating Differentiation Tags and Adding Users

- Differentiation tags are created via the People page in a given course
- Tags are created, and then assigned to students
- Tags can be grouped within a tag set. This helps keep your course organised and makes it easier to manage tags over time.
- For full guidance on the creation and assignment of differentiation tags, visit our dedicated Getting Started With Canvas page.



The screenshot displays the 'People' page in Canvas. At the top, there are two tabs: 'Everyone' and 'Sample Group Set'. Below the tabs is a search bar with the placeholder text 'Search people' and a dropdown menu currently set to 'All roles'. At the bottom of the interface, it shows '0 Selected', a 'Tag As' button with a dropdown arrow, and a 'Manage Tags' button.

[Link: Getting Started with Canvas – Differentiation Tags](#)

Using Differentiation Tags to Assign To

Using Differentiation Tags to Assign To

Option 1 (for modules, general content items OR assignments)

From the options menu on the item

The screenshot displays the Canvas LMS interface. At the top, a grey header bar shows a dropdown menu for 'Sample Module' with a green checkmark, a plus sign, and a three-dot menu icon. Below this, a list of items is shown:

- Sample Page**: Represented by a document icon.
- Sample Quiz**: Represented by a rocket icon, with a date of '31 Jan' and '100 pts' below it.
- Sample File (Lorem ipsum)**: Represented by a paperclip icon.

The 'Sample Quiz' item is selected, and its options menu is open on the right. The menu includes the following options:

- Edit**: Represented by a pencil icon.
- Move contents...**: Represented by a list icon.
- Move module...**: Represented by a double-headed arrow icon.
- Assign To...**: Represented by a person icon, highlighted in purple.
- Delete**: Represented by a trash can icon.

A partial option 'Assign th' is visible at the bottom right of the menu.

Using Differentiation Tags to Assign To

Option 2 (specifically for assignments)

From the assignment 'edit' page

Moderated Grading Sections

 Published

 Assign to

 Edit

Moderate

⋮

No additional details were added for this assignment.

Points 100
Submitting a file upload
Allowed attempts 1

Due	For	Available from	Until
17 Apr at 14:00	1 Section	-	-
18 Apr at 14:00	1 Section	-	-
24 Apr at 14:00	Everyone else	-	-

Canvas Support

- **Online Guidance: Getting Started with Canvas**
Information and guides to help you get started with Canvas.
- **Drop-In Clinics: Canvas Clinic Schedule**
Drop in anytime between 10am and 3pm to get Canvas help – bring your laptop.
- **1-to-1 Virtual Consultations: Book a Consultation**
Attend a 30-minute Canvas help session with FSE eLearning via MS Teams.
- **Raise a ticket via Connect**
Use the Blackboard, Turnitin & eLearning form in Connect to raise a request or flag an issue.
- **Student Support: Introduction to Canvas for Students**
This resource provides students with guidance on using Canvas.

Feedback

Please take a few minutes to complete our feedback survey.

Thank you for your support!

Survey link:

tinyurl.com/tlsetrainingfeedback

