

Brightspace HTML Templates Guide (v3.0)

D2L Learning and Creative Services

2/18/2020

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Introduction

This document is intended to be a work aid for course instructors using the Brightspace HTML Templates (version 3.0) to create HTML content topics. These templates were designed to help non-developers create clean yet professional content pages using the Brightspace Editor.

To the extent possible under law, D2L has waived all copyright and related or neighboring rights to the available templates. You can use these files in a single course, or for the whole organization through **Shared Files**, depending on your permissions.

Get Started

Step 1. Deploy a Template Package to your Learning Environment

To add a template package to your Brightspace:

1. Save the template package (Brightspace\_HTML\_Template\_v3.zip) to your PC.
2. Login to your Brightspace environment and do one of the following:
* To share the templates across the organization, navigate to **Shared Files**.
* To use the templates in a specific course, navigate to **Manage Files** from within the course you would like to leverage the template in.
1. At the root level of the file tree, select **Upload**.
2. Select the template package zip file and click **Upload**.
3. Select the down arrow next to the zip file name and **Unzip** the file.

Step 2. Enable HTML Templates in Course Content

### **Working with the Content tool**

It’s good practice to set a folder where your course will draw its templates from. This saves time from browsing to the same folder repeatedly.

1. Go to the **Content** tool within the course where you would like to leverage the template in.
2. Click  Settings in the Content tool.
3. Select the Enable HTML Templates check box.
4. Click Change Path, then select the template folder that you have uploaded (Brightspace\_HTML\_Template)
5. Click Select Path.
6. Click Save.

### **Working with the Lessons tool**

For the Lessons tool, you will need an administrator to enable the HTML Templates and the template default folder in the Config Variable Browser.

1. From the **Admin Tools** menu, click **Config Variable Browser**.
2. Navigate to the variable ***d2l.Tools.Content.EnableHTMLTemplates***
	1. This specifies if the HTML templates are available when creating content topics and can be by the site administrator set for individual courses.
	2. The variable can be found by searching for *d2l.Tools.Content.EnableHTMLTemplates* using the ‘Search All Variables’ box
	3. Alternatively, navigate to *Tools > Content > TemplatePath*
3. Click **Add Value** to add a new value
4. You can either input the Org Unit ID directly or search for the appropriate Org Unit using **Select Org Unit**
5. The **Value** will need to be set to ‘on’ to enable access to the HTML Templates.
6. Navigate to the variable ***d2l.Tools.Content.TemplatePath***
	1. This specifies the directory containing HTML templates. The site administrator sets the path for the directory and puts all the template files in there. The instructor then sees a drop-down list in the Lessons tool with all of the HTML templates.
	2. The variable can be found by searching for *d2l.Tools.Content.TemplatePath* using the ‘Search All Variables’ box
	3. Alternatively, navigate to *Tools > Content > EnableHTMLTemplate*
7. Click **Add Value** to add a new value
8. You can either input the Org Unit ID directly or search for the appropriate Org Unit using **Select Org Unit**
9. The **Value** will need to be set to the folder you saved the HTML Templates in.
	1. For example, if you saved the Brightspace\_HTML\_Template to the HTML-Template-Library in ‘shared’ you would set the path to */shared/ HTML-Template-Library/Brightspace\_HTML\_Template/*.

**Note**: It is recommended to avoid copying and pasting the Template path in the Config Variable Browser due to issues with text formatting.

1. Click **Save** the new value will be listed for the Org Unit

Step 3. Apply a HTML Template to a New Content Topic

### **Which Template Page to Use**

This template package comes with several purpose-built topic types, such as Course Introduction, Module Introduction, Meet Your Facilitator, Basic page, Video Lecture, and Conclusion pages.

* **The Blank page** is an empty page with a banner image
* **The Course Introduction page** features a full-screen image for visual impact, and a clean area for course description.
* **The Module Introduction page** features a prominent banner image across the top and a numbered list can be used to list a module’s learning objectives. This makes it ideal as the first page of a module in a course.
* **The Meet Your Facilitator page** can serve as a dedicated space to present facilitator’s expertise, experience and personality.
* **The Basic page** is a general-purpose layout.
* **The Video Lecture page** is a great way to present video content, while accompanying it with supporting context, explanations and activities.
* **The Conclusion page** makes an excellent page to conclude each module. Using a consistent layout for conclusions will help signal to course participants that they have reached the end some portion of the course content.
* **The Elements page** includes samples of some commonly used page elements which you can copy to other pages.
* **The Image editing page** illustrates the different ways images can be used.
* **The Accordion page** includes samples of interactive Accordions which you can copy to other pages.
* **The Tab page** includes samples of interactive Tabs which you can copy to other pages.

All existing HTML files in the template folder are available as templates when you create new HTML documents.

### **Create a Content Topic in the Content tool**

1. In a module, click **Create a File** from the **Upload/Create** context button.
2. **Select a Document Template** from the drop-down list if you have a defined template directory or click **Browse for a Template** if you do not have a defined template directory. You can search for templates located in other folders or on your computer.
3. Add content to your content file.

### **Create a Content Topic in the Lessons tool**

1. In a Unit, click **Create New** and select **HTML Document**.
2. **Select a Document Template** from the drop-down list if you have a defined template directory or click **Browse for a Template** if you do not have a defined template directory. You can search for templates located in other folders or on your computer. Note: The drop-down list appears next to the page title textbox as a downward facing arrow.
3. Add content to your content file.

**Note**: Applying the template to an existing page will overwrite the content and you will lose your work. Click Cancel to discard the changes.

Working with Templates

You can use the Brightspace Editor to make quick and easy changes without needing any prior knowledge of HTML/CSS. Enter your content and use the available controls to apply formatting to your text. Detailed instructions are included on each page.

## Copy Text

When writing content, it is a great practice to first write content in a document, such as Microsoft Word. It allows stakeholders to easily collaborate and track changes to content. It also allows you to spot spelling and grammar errors early on.

When pasting text from a Word document into the Brightspace Editor, however, some of the document’s text styling will copy over. This will clash with the styles that are carefully crafted for this template. You can use **Ctrl+Shift+V** (**Cmd+Shift+V** on Mac) to paste copied text as unformatted text to Brightspace Editor.

## Heading Structure

When adding content to pages, it is important to pay attention to its heading structure. Proper heading structure is especially important for learners with disabilities, as assistive technologies (like screen readers) rely on headings for navigation.

The Brightspace Editor provides format options for 6 heading levels, Paragraph style, and a few additional options. To create a heading, select your text, and choose the appropriate heading format from the **Format** list.

## Image Editing

Images can be added to any of your pages to create visual interest and help break up text-heavy courses.

**Inline image editing**: the Brightspace Editor now (after February 2018/10.7.10 release) has advanced image editing features, including resizing, flipping, rotating, and adjusting brightness, sharpness and color.

The Brightspace Editor also provides **Align Left**, **Align Right** and **Align Full** functions to place an image in particular location.

## Replace Image

Several of the template files come with image placeholders. To replace the image:

1. Select **Edit HTML** from the context drop-down beside the topic’s title.
2. Once you can edit the topic, select the image and delete it. Do not move your cursor.
3. Click the  **Insert Image** icon
4. Select the source for your image.
5. Click the **Choose Destination** button to save it to the folder you want.

## Replace Videos

The Video Lecture page includes an embeded YouTube video, which can scale in any browser or mobile devices.

To replace the video:

1. Select **Edit HTML** from the context drop-down beside the topic’s title.
2. Delete the video and leave the cursor in place. To do so,
	* click on the video and pause it
	* carefully click the area preceding (left of) the video within the colored video container
	* hit the Delete key
3. Click the  **Insert Stuff** icon
4. Do one of the following:
	* Select **YouTube**, search for your YouTube video; or
	* Select **Enter Embed Code**, paste in the YouTube video embed code
5. Click the **Insert** button

**Known issue**: it is difficult to replace the video in certain browsers. If you are comfortable with HTML code, it is easier to search and replace the iframe code in the HTML Source Editor.

Working with Components

Some commonly used page components are available from the [HTML Templates Version 3 Course on the Brightspace Learning Center](https://community.desire2learn.com/d2l/le/content/14263/Home).

A sample package also be downloaded and imported into a Course Offering on your Brightspace instance that Content Creators and Instructors using the templates can access.

The package can be imported directly into a Brightspace Course using the Import/Export/Copy Components Tool. Please watch the [Brightspace Tutorial Video: Import/Export/Copy Components - Import Components – Instructor](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hhA98JMI3c) for more instructions on using this Tool.

## Copying Components

You can copy one, or more, of the specific components and paste them on other pages, then add your own content. It is advised to have the Components page open in another browser so you can easily copy content into your new topic page.

First, select a Component you’d like to use in a new content topic. If the page is in edit mode you can click and drag your cursor over the element and be sure to highlight from ‘START COPY’ to ‘END COPY’, highlighting everything in between.

Return to your new content topic and paste the element into place.

This will paste the element inline with the rest of the content.

Continue to copy in all components. When all components are in place, the last step is to delete every instance of the words “START COPY” and “END COPY”.

**Note**: It’s recommended to delete every instance of “START COPY” and “END COPY” last, after all of the new components have been pasted in place for ease of use and to maintain the layout and overall functionality.

Alternatively, you can use the Copy Code button to get a code snippet. This can be copied into a page by using the Insert Stuff tool:

* Select Insert Stuff from the Editor Menu:
* Choose Enter Embed Code
* Paste the Code snippet and follow the steps to insert the code

**Note**: As the look and feel of the components are controlled by the HTML Template only plain text will appear in the preview before you add the code snippet.

## Available Components

The following Components are available to use with the template:

### **Typography Components**

* **Heading Levels**
Heading levels help to organize content and create hierarchical relationships between pieces of content.
* **Paragraph text**
Paragraph text is plain text that should be used for the majority of your content.
* **Lead text (.lead)**Lead text is used to begin a new page of content or section of content.
* **Blockquote**Regular blockquotes are useful to call attention to simple quotations that you want to stand apart from regular paragraph text but aren’t necessarily the focus of the entire section of content.
* **Links**3 link formats are provided: Internal, External and Download.
* **Lists**3 list formats are provided: Unordered, Ordered, Ordered: Large

### **Static Components**

* **Callouts**
A callout allows you to insert a unique piece of content within the regular content. Two Callout formats are provided: Standard and Icon.
* **Figures**
All non-decorative images and figures (including, tables and charts) should include a caption explaining the relevance of the item and including source information wherever appropriate.
* **Images**
Images can be added to any of your pages to create visual interest and help break up text-heavy courses. This section illustrates the different ways images can be used.
* **Jumbotron**Jumbotrons are useful for disrupting the flow of content to direct the learner attention to an important fact, statistic, or concept.
* **Two Column Panels**
Two column panels are useful for displaying two pieces of closely linked but separate content, for example, two cases exploring the same law or two examples of applying the same principles.
* **Tables**Tables are a convenient way to organize content and demonstrate the relationship between multiple pieces of content.
* **Video Embed**
Whenever possible, videos should be embedded in the content, rather than linked to

### **Dynamic Components**

* **Accordion**
Accordions are useful when you need to present learners with a list of items. Multiple Accordions can be added one after the other to create a set. Accordions have been provided in Groups of 2, Groups of 3, Groups of 4, Groups of 5 and Groups of 6.
* **Tabs**Tabs are useful for elaborating on an idea that has set structures or categories of sub-information, particularly, if you have a collection of pieces of content that all have the same set structures. Tabs have been provided in Groups of 2, Groups of 3 and Groups of 4.

More Help with the HTML Templates

If you need additional information on how the Brightspace Editor functions, check Brightspace Help: [**Brightspace Editor**](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/le/-/all/le_intro.htm).

## Accessibility Checker

To ensure your content is accessible to all learners, and conforms WCAG 2.0 standards, it is a good idea to run the [Brightspace Accessibility Checker](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/le/html_editor/instructor/use_accessibility_checker.htm?Highlight=accessibility%20checker) on each page you created.

## Modifying the Styles

For advanced users, you can modify the CSS file or HTML files to update the appearance, content or structure of your sample documents.

A file (custom.css) has been included for clients familiar with creating and editing CSS, who want to customize the templates.

**Note**: we strongly recommend making edits in your offline text editor, such as Visual Studio Code, Brackets or Sublime. Fully test everything works as intended before override the template directory.

## How to Delete Templates

If your template files are stored in your organization’s shared files area, we recommend you do not delete any of the template files.

If your template files are stored within your course’s file structure, you can delete them as you would with any other course files.

About D2L

D2L is the software leader that makes learning experiences better. The company’s cloud-based platform is easy to use, flexible, and smart. With Brightspace, organizations can personalize the experience for every learner to deliver real results. The company is a world leader in learning analytics: its platform predicts learner performance so that organizations can take action in real-time to keep learners on track. Brightspace is used by learners in higher education, K-12, and the enterprise sector, including the Fortune 1000. D2L has operations in the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, Brazil, and Singapore.

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