Teaching Online

Are you ready?

- Online unit management
- Checklist for start of semester
- Support
- Communication issues
Introduction

The semester is about to start:

- Are you ready to teach online?
- Is your online unit ready to be accessed by students?
- Are the students ready to learn online?
- What strategies do you have for this approach?
- Have you thought about how to introduce students to this method of learning?

This booklet looks at the practical issues of preparing for the start of semester as well as the issues associated with online teaching and learning. These notes introduce you to the Macquarie University Online Teaching Facility (MUOTF), which forms the interface between the student and WebCT and other online teaching technologies.

Please contact CFL staff in Educational Development or Training and Support to raise questions, solve any immediate problems and to discuss some of the broader issues in online learning.

Topics and issues covered in this booklet include:

- review of responsibilities - staff and students
- the Macquarie University Online Teaching Facility (MUOTF)
- myWebCT and Course Functions
- checklist for the start of semester
- resetting your unit and the WebCT tools
- support and resources for staff and students
- communication issues.

Practical outcomes

These notes should enable you to:

- have your unit ready to start the semester
- have a better understanding of what your implementation strategy will be
- know where to find support and resources
- be better able to answer student concerns
- know who and where to go to for assistance for yourself and for students
- be more confident in using WebCT as a teaching tool.
Review of responsibilities

Once CFL has handed over the online unit, the responsibility for management of the unit, including modifying and updating of content, as well as student administration rests with the unit convenor.

Ongoing support is provided by way of documentation, training and workshops, regular MUOTF messages, MUOTF email support, and from the team of Educational Developers in CFL. Details of CFL support services are available from the web site at <http://www.cfl.mq.edu.au/support/workshops.htm>.

The online unit

Copyright

The unit convenor is responsible for all aspects of the online material. This includes copyright clearance. For more information on copyright refer to the Macquarie University Copyright Unit web site at <http://www.copyright.mq.edu.au>.

Content responsibility

Ensure that your material is available on time, that all links are working and that you are able to make minor editorial changes if necessary.

Inform others

The library, teaching and administrative staff in your department and possibly others, may need to know of your online unit, how it can be accessed and various other details (e.g. any special software requirements).

Student information

If you are storing marks and/or other student information using the WebCT Manage Students function, make sure you make regular copies.

University calendar entry

The public page URL is the internet address for your unit. This is the URL that should be given to students to access the unit and the one that you should add to the Macquarie University online calendar. Online calendar entries should be checked and updated via the University Handbook website at <http://www.dbcentral.mq.edu.au/courses/url.asp>. The public page URL is also used in the MUOTF List of Units at <http://online.mq.edu.au/aml/unit_list.html>, this can be checked and updated from your myWebCT page via [Course Functions].

Students

The unit convenor is responsible for ensuring that students can access and use the online unit effectively. For more information on this refer to the Support section of these notes.
Student confidentiality

It is important to maintain student confidentiality. Be particularly careful with communication facilities:

- these should be treated as confidential to students enrolled in the unit
- as convenor you should announce any visitors (non-participant guest accounts)
- any demonstration of online student activity for example, to other staff or at conferences and seminars, must preserve student anonymity.

Inform students that all activity is logged

Every access to the MUOTF server is logged and you have access to some of this information. You must tell students this as well as advising them about what use you will make of the information. Refer students to the following information on confidentiality and include the statement in printed course materials. It can be found from the link on the Online Teaching Facility web site <http://online.mq.edu.au/> or at <http://online.mq.edu.au/uw/conf.html>.

Confidentiality

The password-protected component of your unit's website is hosted on the Macquarie University Online Teaching Facility (MUOTF). The facility is run by the Centre for Flexible Learning (CFL). Part of the Centre's role is to assist teachers in identifying the needs of students so that course units and teaching resources can be developed in ways that allow students better access to teaching materials and more effective ways of learning and communicating.

MUOTF automatically collects two types of information:

1. **Server Usage Information**
   The server logs have information on who accesses the site, the location from which the site is accessed, the time and duration of access, and what material is accessed. This information on individuals is available only to CFL specified staff, Deans and Heads of Department, and is used for identifying reported access difficulties, improving server performance and tracing any breaches of security. CFL also uses the information for statistical analysis of access times and locations, and for analysis of other patterns of use. In addition, some summarised information may be available to your convenor, but only after the examination period. In all cases confidentiality is maintained and no information about individuals is released.

   Deans and Heads of Department are responsible for aspects of security relating to IT within their area of responsibility. Some recent events suggest that it is essential to allow them access to the Online Teaching Facility.

2. **General Unit Management Information**
   The software your unit is using tracks information about how you use the teaching material. This information is available to your convenor and includes your first and last log in, how much of the course material you have looked at, how many discussion messages you have posted and read, and whether you have read your mail. It is important to note that your convenor cannot read your personal mail or annotations.

If you have concerns about confidentiality, contact your unit convenor or CFL:

Manager – Online Learning Systems
Phone: 9850 7852
Email: ols.manager@cfl.mq.edu.au
Remind students to logout

Remind students to logout of WebCT or to close all browser windows when they have finished using the WebCT unit. This is particularly important for students who access WebCT from public or shared computers. If they don’t logout any other person using that computer can continue to use their account. This means they can use the student's mail, discussion postings and course tools.

Staff

The unit convenor is responsible for ensuring other staff members involved with teaching or administering the online unit are competent in using WebCT and are kept informed of all relevant information and events.

The convenor should:

- ensure all relevant teaching staff are familiar with the site, how it is to be used and the content and communications management procedures
- encourage attendance at CFL’s training and support sessions
- ensure all staff involved with the unit are aware of the support and help provided for staff and students
- ensure relevant MUOTF messages are forwarded
- make other teaching staff aware of copyright and student confidentiality issues.
Online unit management

Most of the administration of your online unit can now be done from your myWebCT page or from the Manage Course function within the relevant unit.

myWebCT

From your myWebCT page you can:

- access Course Functions to
  - confirm/amend your personal details
  - create and manage guest accounts
  - manage automatic student enrolments
  - confirm/amend the unit details
- change your password using Password Settings
- set up and manage communication notifications.

myWebCT: Course Functions

To access Course Functions go to your myWebCT page, click on the [Course Functions] link at the top of the page – just below your name. A list of the available functions appears in a frame on the left-hand side of the page:

- Personal details
- Guest accounts
- Backups
- Courses.

Course Functions: Personal details

Confirmation of your personal details is required to keep administration of online units up to date. This ensures that CFL knows who is responsible for an online unit and who to contact if there are problems or questions related to the unit. The email address is also used to inform convenors of any planned disruptions to MUOTF (e.g. for system upgrades), new or changed features, support sessions and training, and to make other announcements directly related to MUOTF.

To add or update your personal details, from your myWebCT page, click [Course Functions] at the top of the page – just below your name:

- in the left frame under Personal details click [Update personal details]
- this opens the Update personal details page in the frame on the right
- check your details and make any necessary amendments
- click [Update details]
- a message will appear at the top of the page to indicate if the details have been updated.

There is also a table on this page that advises you of the units you currently have access to and the level and status of your access.
Keep your details up to date

Details should be updated whenever they change to ensure that MUOTF has the most current information. Details must be either updated or checked and confirmed at least once each year. If this is not done, the unit is disabled and then removed.

For help with any of these functions please email MUOTF support on muotf@laurel.ocs.mq.edu.au

Course Functions: Guest accounts

The Guest accounts function allows you to manage accounts on an individual basis. This could include for example, adding a guest lecturer or tutor or creating a test student account for staff to use. As a general rule it is better to manage student enrolments using the automatic student enrolment process – this will be covered in the next section.

To see all accounts in a particular unit use the WebCT Manage Course function. It is important to monitor the status of all accounts and to remove any accounts that are no longer required, e.g. a guest account that is no longer active, at the end of the teaching period. This can also be done via the WebCT Manage Course function.

Create a guest account

To create a guest account, from your myWebCT page, click [Course Functions] at the top of the page – just below your name:

- under Guest accounts click [Create a guest account]
- this opens the Create a guest account page in the right frame
- complete the details of the guest account
  - the guest username must start with a lowercase letter and end with a single digit
  - it must contain only lowercase letters and underscores e.g. "jsmith2", "j_smith2", “jsmith_2”
- enter the reason for creating the account
- click [Create guest account]
- a message will appear at the top of the page to advise that the account has been successfully created and the allocated password, and you will be sent an email with the details of the account you have created. You should notify the user of their username and password.

Note: creating a guest account will not add the guest account to a unit; you must add the guest account to the relevant unit(s) after the account has been created. This can be done via the WebCT Manage Course function and will be discussed later.

Reset a guest password

To reset a guest password, from your myWebCT page, click [Course Functions] at the top of the page:

- under Guest accounts click [Reset a guest password]
- this opens the Reset a guest password page in the right frame
- enter the guest’s WebCT username
- enter a new password
  - it is recommended that you don't use anything like the username, the person’s phone number, any word in any dictionary etc
  - use a combination of letters, numbers and punctuation, including mIxEd CaSe!
- click [Reset guest password]
- a message will appear to advise that the password has been successfully reset.
Course Functions: Backups

On the Course Functions page, under the heading Backups, click [Backup courses]. On the Course Backup Listing page there will be a list of the online units you have designer access to, and any backup files in these units. Use the Actions in the menu on the right hand side to manage your course backups.

For help with any of these functions please email MUOTF support on muotf@laurel.ocs.mq.edu.au

Course Functions: Courses

On the Course Functions page, under the heading Courses, there will be a list of all the online units in which you have designer access. You should check and confirm the [Details] and [Students] each year or semester that the online unit is used.

Courses: Activate this course/Details

From the Course Functions page:

- under Courses find the relevant unit code and click the [Details] link underneath it.
- this will open the Unit details for ‘UNITCODE’ page in the frame on the right.

Note: There are two options on this page, you can either confirm all details as correct (if applicable) or amend and update details in each section individually.

To confirm all details as correct:

- check all the details
- scroll to the bottom of the page
- click [The above detail are correct - activate unit]
- a thank you message will appear to advise that the details have been updated successfully.

To amend and update individual sections make the necessary changes and be sure to save them as you go by clicking the relevant [Update] button.

- Contact details

  - check that the details shown are for the correct contacts
  - the people designated as Convenor and Second contact will receive all MUOTF notifications
  - to change a contact enter their username – the specific details associated with a username can be changed using the Personal Details function
  - click [Update contact details]
  - a message will appear to advise that the contact information has been updated

Note: This does not change the name that appears as the ‘Instructor’ for the unit on students’ myWebCT pages and that is associated with Discussion postings. You will need to change the Instructor’s name in WebCT using the Course Settings function – this is discussed later in this section.

- Unit title and department

  - amend details as necessary (these changes are made manually so changes will not take effect immediately)
  - click [Update unit title and department]
  - a message will appear to advise that the details have been forwarded for manual updating
• **Public page URL**
  - enter the public page URL here — this is the URL that will appear in the MUOTF *List of units* (it should also be the one that you give to students and enter in the Macquarie University online calendar). Refer to page 18 for examples.
  - click [Update public page URL]
  - a message will appear to advise that the details have been updated

• **CFL access**
  - determine the level of access to be granted to CFL staff (you will need to choose the highest level of access they require)
  - click [Update CFL access]
  - a message will appear to advise that the access details have been updated.

*Note:* You must save any changed to details as you go by clicking the relevant [Update] button — if you make changes and then click [The above details are correct] they will not be recorded.

**Courses: Students**

This function allows you to automatically enrol students in your unit. Automatic enrolment allows you to manage student accounts using enrolment information updated regularly by the Registrar's Office.

The advantages of automatic enrolments are:

- password changes can be made by the IT Help Desk (more detail of this service is provided in the section on *Support*)
- when a password is changed in one MUOTF unit, the new password is applied to all MUOTF units to which the student has been added through automatic enrolment
- the facilities provided on the MUOTF website <http://online.mq.edu.au> are available to students (central login, identifying access problems)
- a class list and the enrolment status of students are updated.
- student accounts can be automatically removed
- students will have the same username and initial password as the standard Macquarie ones issued at enrolment. Please note that students now have to use their Student ID Number as their username and their myMQ Portal password.

From your *myWebCT* page, click [Course Functions] at the top of the page — a list of the available functions appears in a frame on the left-hand side of the page. Find the heading *Courses* and the relevant unit code. Click [Students] beneath it.

This will open the *Automatic enrolment status for ‘UNITCODE’* page in the frame on the right. The first sentence on the page will tell you if automatic enrolment is turned on or off. If it is turned off, click [Turn it on].

**Date settings**

To set or change the dates for automatic enrolment of student accounts into your online unit, under *Date settings for this course*, click [Edit dates]:

- on the *Update dates for ‘UNITCODE’* page — work through each setting to specify dates to enrol and enable accounts, and what will happen once students are no longer enrolled:
  - enrol students in the online unit (specify date)
  - enable access to the online unit (on the same date as above or specify a date)
  - disable access to the online unit (the unit will appear on students’ *myWebCT* pages but access to the unit is denied, student tracking details and results are retained in the unit)
- leave alone (students continue to have access until the setting is changed)
- delete student accounts from the unit (students no longer have access and all records are removed)

  • when all details are correct click [Update these dates]. A message will advise that the enrolment unit has been added successfully.

**Add enrolment unit**

To specify which students will be enrolled, by unit code and mode from the student information system, under *Enrolment units for ‘UNITCODE’*, click [Add enrolment unit]:

  • enter the unit code that you want to enrol students from and click [Choose modes]
    - if this is not the unit you wish to enrol from then click [Choose another unit]
    - if this is the right unit then select the modes by clicking in the check box next to the mode(s)
    - The enrolment code is followed by a definition and the campus where the unit is offered
    - e.g. EXTSHFYR (External Second Half Year Students - North Ryde Campus)
  • click [Select these modes]
  • this opens the *Add an enrolment unit for ‘UNITCODE’* page – work through each setting to
    - confirm the unit to enrol from
    - confirm the mode of enrolment
    - click [Update] if either of the selected settings need to be changed

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**myWebCT: Password Settings**

Secure passwords should be used for all accounts. It is recommended that you don't use anything like your name, your phone number, any word in any dictionary or your car registration number. Use a combination of letters, numbers and punctuation, including mIxEd CaSe!

**Changing your password**

From your *myWebCT* page:

  • click [Password Settings] at the top of the page – about half way across
  • the *Change Password* page opens
    - enter your new password
    - confirm your new password
    - click [Update password]
  • a message will advise that your password has been changed
  • click [myWebCT] to login with your new password.

Your students should be referred to IT Help in the Library for password changes or other access problems. You can no longer change student passwords through *Manage Course* in your unit.

**myWebCT: Discussions and Mail Notification**

The *Discussions and Mail Notification* utility, available from your *myWebCT* page, helps you to monitor the *Discussions* and *Mail* in your online unit. The utility allows you to have email notifications sent to you when there are new postings/messages. This saves you having to log in frequently just to check for messages.
To set up or change *Discussions and Mail Notification*, from your *myWebCT* page:

- click [Discussions and Mail Notification] at the bottom of the page under *Personal Bookmarks*
- the first sentence on the new page will tell you if notification is turned on or off—if it is turned off then click [Turn it on]
- you can set notifications as follows:
  - both tools in a given unit by clicking the unit code
  - each tool individually for a given unit by clicking the link under the relevant unit and tool
- clicking on one of these links will allow you to set or modify the day(s) and time(s) for your notification or delete an existing setting
- once you have made the desired settings click [Add/Update setting]
- a message will appear to indicate if the notification has been added successfully
- from this page you can also enter or amend your email address and, if applicable, addresses for all staff who may require notification (separate multiple email addresses with commas)
- click [Update] – a message will appear to advise that the notification has been added successfully.

This completes settings and changes that are made from your *myWebCT* page. All other settings are now undertaken through WebCT’s *Manage Course* function within a specific unit.

For help with any of these functions please email MUOTF support on muotf@laurel.ocs.mq.edu.au

### WebCT: Manage Course

To access *Manage Course*, from your *myWebCT* page, click on your unit’s name. Click the *Control Panel* button on the top left-hand side of the screen, then click [Manage Course]. On the *Manage Course* page you have the following links:

- Manage Students
- Manage Teaching Assistants
- Track Students
- Track Pages
- Backup Course (see checklist and following pages for details)
- Share Designer Access (primary designer only)
- Reset Course (see checklist and following pages for details)
- Import Content
- Export Content

### Manage students

The *Manage Students* function is where you can see a list of all student accounts (including guest accounts) that have been added to your unit. From here you can view, sort, deny access, edit or delete individual or all accounts and associated data.

- from *Manage Course* click [Manage Students] to view a list of students in the unit
- if you see the *Show Update Log* screen, click [Continue].
- choose an action from the drop-down menus and click [Go]
- click the title of a column to sort the list on that data
- click on a user name to deny access to or delete an individual account, or change the password.
Adding a guest account

A guest username must first be created from myWebCT:

- choose [Course functions] → [Guest accounts] → [Create a guest account]
- create the guest account
- return to myWebCT.

From the relevant unit:

- choose [Manage Course] from the Control Panel (in the left-hand navigation bar or from the drop-down menu)
- under Manage Students click [Add or import student]
- under the heading Import From Global Database, type the Username (WebCT ID) for the guest account you just created then click [Add]
- a table will appear including the guest account details.

Manage Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants (TAs) have access to, and can make changes to, student submissions (assignments, quizzes, presentations) and records, they can post Mail and Discussions messages, and they can view but not alter content.

You can use the Manage Teaching Assistants function to add TAs to, and remove TAs from the unit, and list the TAs with access to the unit. If you wish to add someone to your unit as a TA and they do not already have a Username (WebCT ID), you will need to create a guest account as described previously. If they already have a username they can simply be added clicking [Add or import teaching assistant] and following the instructions.

You should remove these accounts from the unit when access is no longer required.

Track students

Track students allows you identify which students have logged in to the unit and when, the last access date, the number of “hits” (accessing particular pages) for a given student, as well as the number of Discussions messages read and posted. The access times are reported in various daily groupings. If you are interested in detailed and summarised usage statistics for research purposes, please email MUOTF support on <muotf@laurel.ocs.mq.edu.au> to discuss your needs.

Track pages

Track pages allows you to track how students are progressing through the course material. You can see the course pages that students are accessing, how many times the pages have been visited, and the amount of time spent on each page. Note: The Track Pages tool can only track pages contained in a content module. Single pages added outside of a content module are not included.
WebCT: Course Settings

Course settings allows you to change the following aspects which apply to the general functionality of the online unit:

- set the Instructor’s name
- show or hide the Course Menu
- turn Equation Editor on or off
- show or hide the Designer links
- edit the Course Menu
- create or edit your Welcome Page
- modify icon styles and colours
- configure the Course News

Instructor’s Name

The name entered here for the Instructor is the name that will be listed under the unit name in myWebCT, and will appear as the author in Discussions and Mail for anyone that has access as the Primary Designer or as a Shared Designer. Shared designers who wish to communicate with students using their own name should use an alternative (guest) account.

For help with any of these functions please email MUOTF support on muotf@laurel.ocs.mq.edu.au
Checklist for the start of semester

These procedures are discussed in detail on the following pages.

☐ Have you checked the browser settings on all computers that you access the unit from (at work, home)?
☐ Have you checked the unit to see how a student will see it?
☐ Have you made a backup of the unit?

*Note:* Backups are made daily on the MUOTF server, however you can make your own backups via WebCT [a maximum of two (2) backups per unit]. You might want to do this before making any major changes to the unit.

☐ Discussions
  - Have you removed old messages from the *Discussions* tool? (applies to previously used units only)
    *Note:* in WebCT 4.1 topics are retained when *Discussions* is reset
  - Have you posted a welcome message?
  - Have you added required topics?

☐ Mail
  - Have you cleared old email from the *Mail* tool?
  - Have you created folders?
  - Have you sent any necessary bulk email?

☐ Calendar
  - Have you reset the *Calendar* tool?
  - Have you added new *Calendar* entries?

☐ Student Presentations
  - Have you created student groups?

☐ Chat
  - Have you renamed *Chat* rooms?

☐ Have you updated your public page(s)?
☐ Have you personalised the Instructor’s name?

  - This can be done using *Course Settings*.

☐ Have you linked your *iLectures* in your unit?

  - Instructions found on this page <http://online.mq.edu.au/docs/ilecture/ilecture_link.html>
Browser settings

In any browser you use to access your site, you should check the browser configuration using the WebCT Browser Tuneup – click [Check Browser] in the myWebCT page and follow the link to the Browser Tuneup, or go to <http://www.webct.com/tuneup/>.

Checking what the student will see

To change between the student view and the designer view, click the View tab or the Designer Options tab. To see a true student view, for example to preview quizzes, you will need to log in as a student not a designer. To do this you need to create a guest account for yourself, with a different username. You will need to create the guest account using Course Functions (Note: Don’t use your name for the login on this student account as there can be confusion with your designer account for Mail. Call the account something simple like e.g. 'stutest1' or 'sguest9').

Once the guest account is created, add the account from within the relevant unit using Manage Course.

To view the unit as a student:

- if you have more than one browser installed on your computer (e.g. Netscape and Internet Explorer) you can open both and log in to your unit using the student account in one and your designer account in the other, OR
- you can open two copies of Internet Explorer and log in using the student account in one and your designer account in the other
  Note: you must actually launch the browser twice (not just open a new window) to be able to log in with two different accounts.

Making a backup of your unit

Backups are made centrally on the MUOTF server on a daily basis. You can, however, make your own backups via WebCT. You might want to do this before making any major changes to the unit. You are allowed make and keep a maximum of 2 backups per unit on the WebCT server, but you can of course download backup files and store them on your own computer.

WebCT backup

From the relevant unit:

- Click [Manage Course]
- Under Course Functions click [Create] Backup
- Enter a description e.g. “Backup of unit for Semester 1 2006”
- Click [Create]
- Continue through the instructions.

Saving the backup on your computer

Note that backups cannot be viewed offline, they must be restored to WebCT.

- Click [Manage Course]
- Under Course Functions click [Backup Course]
- Click on the backup you wish to download
• Select “Download” from the Backup File Functions drop-down menu, click [Go] and then follow the normal procedure for saving files.

Deleting an old backup file

• Click [Manage Course]
• Under Course Functions click [Backup Course]
• Select the backup file you wish to delete
• Select “Delete” from the Backup File Functions menu, click [Go] and confirm deletion.

Resetting your unit

The Reset Course feature in WebCT allows you to delete information from various sections of your online unit. This feature is particularly useful when you've finished teaching for the semester and want to clear out old student records and assignments.

You can reset any or all of the following items:

• Student Database
• Teaching Assistant Database
• Student Groups/Presentations
• Page Tracking Records
• Discussions
• Mail
• Calendar (both public and private entries)
• Chat logs
• Whiteboard
• Student Homepages
• Assignment tool
• Quiz tool

Important: Using Reset Course clears all data in the selected WebCT tools. See below for details on selectively clearing content in individual tools.

To reset your online unit:

• Click [Manage Course]
• Click [Reset Course]
• Select the tool(s) you would like to reset or click [Select all]
• Click [Reset] – a warning message appears
• Click [OK] and then click [Continue] to return to the Reset Course page.

Note: resetting a tool clears ALL of the information associated with that tool. Unless you have a backup of your course, you cannot retrieve this information.

Resetting Discussions

In WebCT 4.1, resetting the Discussions tool from the Reset Course page will reset message numbering but won’t remove your topics. If you want to remove topics you can do so in the Designer Options tab in the Discussions tool.

• From the Homepage click the [Discussions] icon or from the Course Menu click the [Discussions] link
• Change to the Designer Options tab
• Select the specific topic(s) you want to clear
• Under Options choose “Delete topics”
• A warning message appears. Click [OK].

You can also choose to delete all the messages in a particular topic. Note that the message numbering in Discussions will not be reset if you selectively delete messages.
If you do not want to remove all messages, for example if you have posted an introductory message under each topic, you can choose to delete specific messages only in the Designer Options tab for the topic:

- From the Homepage or the Course Menu click [Discussions]
- Click [All] or on the specific topic you wish to delete messages from
- Change to the Designer Options tab
- Select the messages you wish to delete
- Click [Delete] (this button is at the bottom of the message list)
- A warning message appears. Click [OK].

Resetting Mail

Resetting Mail from the Reset Course page will remove all messages and any folders you may have created. If you don't want to remove all of your folders, you can selectively delete messages and specific folders.

- From the Homepage or the Course Menu click [Mail]
- Select [All] or on the specific folder you want to clear
- In the Options menu on the right select [Delete folder]
- A warning message appears. Click [OK].
- OR select the relevant button to delete messages from the selected folder, all folder, or all users’ folders.
- A warning message appears. Click [OK].

Note: Selecting “Delete all course mail” will reset everybody's mail and folders, and should only be done at the end of semester.

Resetting the Calendar

You can clear public calendar entries for a specified period or clear all public and private entries at once.

From the Homepage or the Course Menu, click [Calendar]:

- Change to the Designer Options tab
- Click [Clear public entries]
- Specify a date range using the drop-down menus, click [Clear]
- A warning message appears. Click [OK]
- OR Click [Delete all from course]
- A warning message appears. Click [OK].

Public pages

MUOTF offers two types of public page in WebCT. These are accessed via URLs in the following formats:

  This page is edited from within the unit via Course settings → Create/Edit Welcome Page
- <http://online.mq.edu.au/pub/UNITCODE/>
  These pages are edited from within the unit via Manage Files, by editing the file(s) in the public directory.

Public pages can also be at other locations (e.g. your Department web server) and must be accessed and edited as appropriate.
What else do you need to think about before semester begins?

Does it all work?
By now you should have done all the final checks on the unit, including that all the links are working and that all the WebCT tools have been reset and/or are functioning properly.

For students
The responsibility for ensuring students have access to the knowledge and skills to use the system rests with the convenor and the teaching staff. Much of the information they need is available in the document *Using WebCT: Technical Information*, available at <http://online.mq.edu.au/docs/tecinf.html>. It is useful to remind students about this information and to provide them with, and direct them to, links to this information from within the online unit.

Things to think about:

- What instructions have students been given about accessing the unit?
- What information have students been given about the hardware and software they require to access the online unit?
- What instructions will students need before they engage with the content and the technology?
- What information do they need to:
  - use the communication tools?
  - access technical support?
  - to get help generally?
- You will also need to plan how you will introduce students to online learning, this could include:
  - demonstration in lectures and tutorials
  - at the on-campus/residential session (if applicable)
  - using the WebCT *Discussions* tool
  - on the unit web site (public page)
  - in printed handouts or study guides
  - and/or at training sessions.

For staff
Ensuring that you have made all the necessary arrangements with other Macquarie service providers and personnel is important too. For example the library (especially e-Reserve), the Co-op Bookshop, the Centre for Open Education (COE) etc may all need to know about your online unit and student requirements.

- What about the other staff involved?
- Are they all aware of how to use the technology, and are they ready to answer student queries?
- Do casual teaching staff and tutors know what to do?

CFL and other Macquarie University central facilities provide a number of support services for students and staff.
Support

Support for students

Ensure students know where to get help with problems. Visit the web sites listed below and select the information relevant to your particular students.

**Macquarie University Online Teaching Facility**

The Macquarie University Online Teaching Facility (MUOTF) [online.mq.edu.au](http://online.mq.edu.au) provides a central login facility for students, a list of online units, FAQs and help in identifying access and password problems. This information is also available in the document *Using WebCT: Technical Information* is available at [http://online.mq.edu.au/docs/tecinf.html](http://online.mq.edu.au/docs/tecinf.html).

This is a default link in all online units and we encourage you to direct students to it and/or distribute this information on paper.

**IT Help**

IT Help in the Library provides assistance with and information about online unit access, student email accounts, password changes for student accounts that were automatically enrolled, technical problems associated with using the Internet or instructions for using Library Services via the Internet.

- **Phone:** 02 9850 HELP or 02 9850 4357 or Freecall: 1800 063 191
- **Internet Chat:** ICQ# 32801246
- **Email:** via the “Just Ask” form at [http://www.lib.mq.edu.au/justask/](http://www.lib.mq.edu.au/justask/)
- **Face to face:** IT Help, Level 1, University Library.

**Information Technology Training Unit (ITTU)**

This support unit in the Library provides training for both information literacy and information technology skills, it offers training in face-to-face sessions and/or online and is supported by training notes that are available for download and printing from the web.

- **Website:** [http://www.library.mq.edu.au/training](http://www.library.mq.edu.au/training)
- **Location:** Level 1, Library
- **Phone:** 02 9850 7399
- **Email:** training@library.mq.edu.au

**Centre for Open Education**

The Centre provides assistance for distance, evening and part-time students.

- **Website:** [http://www.coe.mq.edu.au](http://www.coe.mq.edu.au)
- **Location:** Building X5B
- **Phone:** 02 9850 7470
- **Email:** coe@mq.edu.au
Support for staff

Support provided by WebCT

*WebCT Designer Help Index*

*WebCT Documentation Index*
http://www.webct.com/products/viewpage?name=company_documentation_index

Support provided by CFL

CFL provides a range of services in support of online teaching:

- educational design and evaluation – contact the team of Educational Developers on 9850 7690 or by email: cfl-educ@mq.edu.au
- workshops – for more information see <http://www.cfl.mq.edu.au> under [Training/support]
- technical skills
- administrative functions
- teaching and learning issues
- funding advice <http://www.cfl.mq.edu.au/setup/grants.htm>
- ongoing support
  - from the CFL Educational Developers
  - via the MUOTF mailing list
  - via MUOTF email support: muotf@laurel.ocs.mq.edu.au

Other resources

These documents are available online from MUOTF or from CFL.

Online and on paper

The following Quick Guides are available from the MUOTF website <http://online.mq.edu.au> in the *Quick Guides* section:

*Online participation guidelines: Netiquette*
*Quick Guide to the WebCT Discussions Tool*
*Quick Guide to the WebCT Mail Tool*
*Quick Guide to the WebCT Calendar Tool*
*Quick Guide to the WebCT Assignments Tool*
*Quick Guide to the WebCT Take Notes Tool*
*iLecture Instructions for Students*

On paper

*Facilitating online discussions: The role of the moderator*
*Teaching strategies using the bulletin board (Discussions tool)*
*Using chat in teaching*
*Key questions: Planning your online unit*

There are links to other resources on the CFL website <http://www.cfl.mq.edu.au> in the *Online units*, *Support* and *Forms and Handouts* sections.
Communication issues

Communication is one of the key elements of online teaching and learning. There may be few or no opportunities to clarify ideas in person if you are making considerable use of online facilities, so communication by way of online **Discussions, Mail** and/or **Chat** needs to be clear and concise.

Online communication can also be a time saver because you have a record of exchanges so that record keeping becomes easier. It can also mean that you can make information and clarifications available to a group of students rather than individually to many students.

Staff communication

Make sure everyone on the teaching team is informed

- Do all staff know how the technology works?
- Have you explained to staff how the technology or the new resources relate to the curriculum?
- Do your tutors and/or casual teaching staff know what to expect? Do they have their user account(s) for accessing the unit?
- If staff often access the web site from home:
  - do they have adequate hardware and software facilities?
  - do they know how much time to expect to work online?
  - will they need another phone line?
  - have they negotiated with other members of the household about use of the internet/phone line/computer?

Communicating with students

Do students know what to do first, and where to go?

- Have you set aside some core teaching time to introduce students to the material and how to use it? Will this be:
  - in lecture time?
  - in tutorial time?
  - at the on-campus session?
  - in print form?
- If you intend linking to the internet during one of your lectures in a Macquarie theatre, you could bookmark the site on the computer in the lecture theatre to reduce time spent searching for the site on the day of the demonstration.
- If you give a lecture or tutorial in a room without internet access, and you want to demonstrate web site features, you may need to prepare overheads or a PowerPoint presentation with screenshots to show what the student will actually see.
- Have you told students about the **Using WebCT: Technical Information** document?
  - Do they know what hardware and software they need?
  - Where to get any browser plugins that are required?
  - Do they know the unit web site URL (web address)?
  - Do they know their password?
  - Do they know what **myWebCT** is?
• Have you made sure students know what you expect of them e.g. which resources they must use, how and when they are to use them?
• Do you need to provide training during class time or do you know where to direct students to access more training if they need it? (Refer to the information provided in the section on Support).

Using the Discussions tool

Amongst other things the Discussions tool can be used to:

• disseminate information to the whole class and to address group concerns
• advise students about unscheduled events
• remind students about due dates, and
• clarify student concerns about assignments.

If you want students to use Discussions, they will need encouragement and support, and a model to follow:

• have an initial message waiting for students when they first log in
• give students clear guidelines about how to use Discussions within the unit, and remind them about the Quick Guide - Netiquette: Online Participation Guidelines available at <http://online.mq.edu.au/docs/neti.html>
• sometimes students may contribute to Discussions too much, or not enough – how will you deal with that?
• let students know how often you will be checking and responding to posted messages – will it be twice a day? once a day? once a week? twice a week? What should they expect?
• it is also essential that you ensure students know about the privacy and confidentiality issues associated with online units (refer to the earlier section on Student confidentiality).

Using Mail

Be aware that students may be using three types of mail:

• internal WebCT Mail (also called Private Mail)
• external ISP email accounts (e.g. Hotmail, Yahoo, or Bigpond etc)
• Macquarie email accounts.

It is efficient to encourage students to use WebCT Mail because it tends to keep your ordinary email account free for other purposes. WebCT Mail is potentially useful for sending bulk messages that have been grouped by some attribute e.g. students who failed to hand in an assignment.

You can also allow students to forward WebCT Mail to their Macquarie or external accounts. To set up this option:

• from Mail click on [Message Settings]
• under Mail Forwarding check the box next to “Allow users to forward a copy of WebCT mail to an external account”
• click [Update].

From time to time you may decide to copy a mail message and post it to Discussions to provide an answer to a question that all students would benefit from knowing. This is a great source of information for developing a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) but you must always maintain student confidentiality, so unless you have the student’s permission you must remove any identification from the mail message.