Developing active, accessible, inclusive, mobile-friendly Ultra courses

CRIT101 – Our Ultra Exemplar Course.

- In order to help staff make the transition from Original to Ultra and to understand what a good Ultra course might look like, we created an exemplar Ultra course called CRIT101 and enrolled all our staff on it.

- As Ultra has developed and progressed, we've updated CRIT101 to take account of new features.

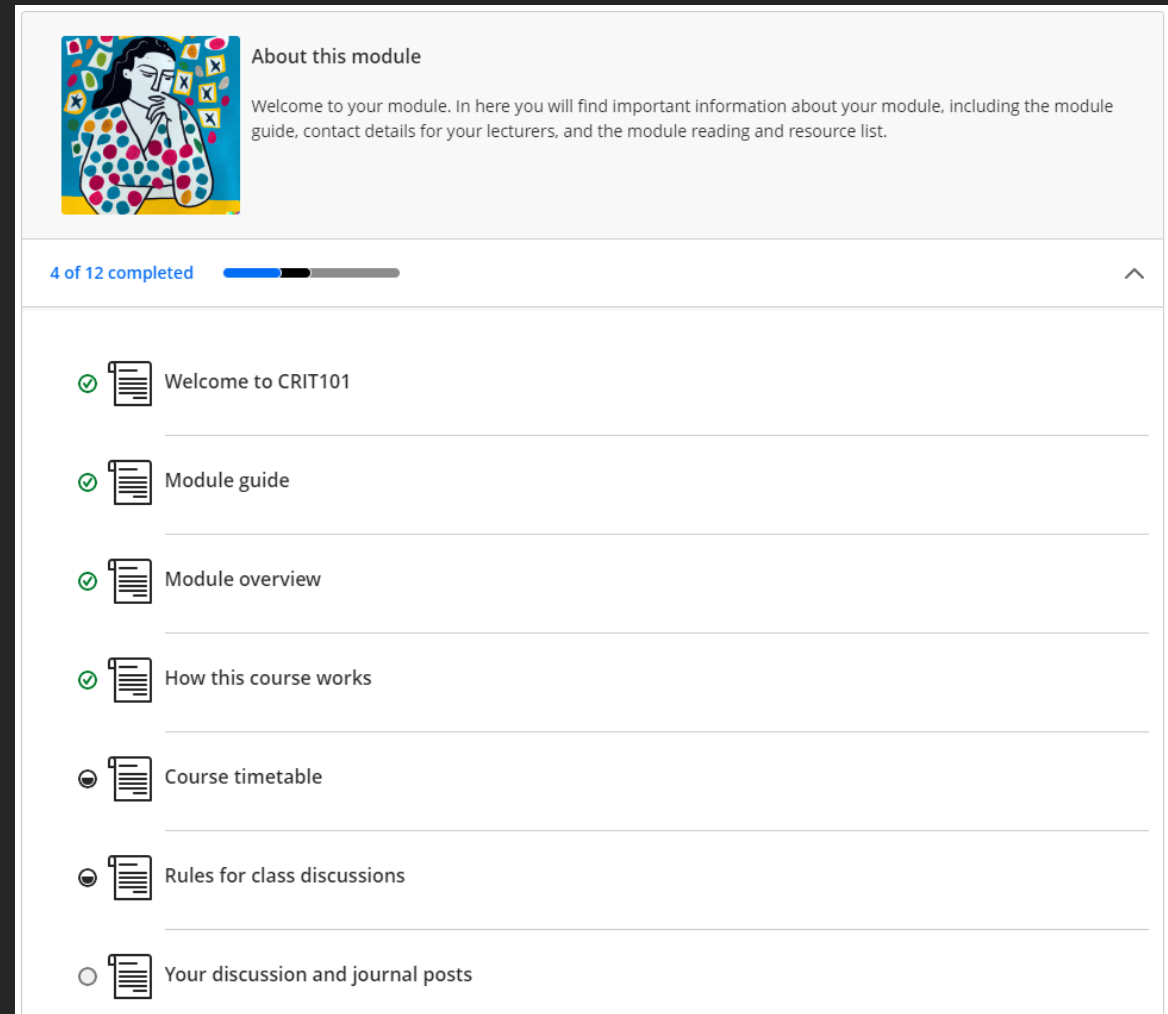- CRIT101 won an Anthology ECP award in 2023.

CRIT101 – Key Design Principles

1. Clear instructions.

2. Clear structure.

3. Accessible and inclusive.

4. Mobile friendly.

5. Plenty for students to do in the course.

1. Clear instructions

'About this module' includes:

- Welcome to CRIT101 – course tour video.
- Module guide - aims, learning objectives, assessment info.
- Module overview – snapshot of the module.
- How this course works – explanation of pedagogical strategy.
- + more.

About this module

Welcome to your module. In here you will find important information about your module, including the module guide, contact details for your lecturers, and the module reading and resource list.
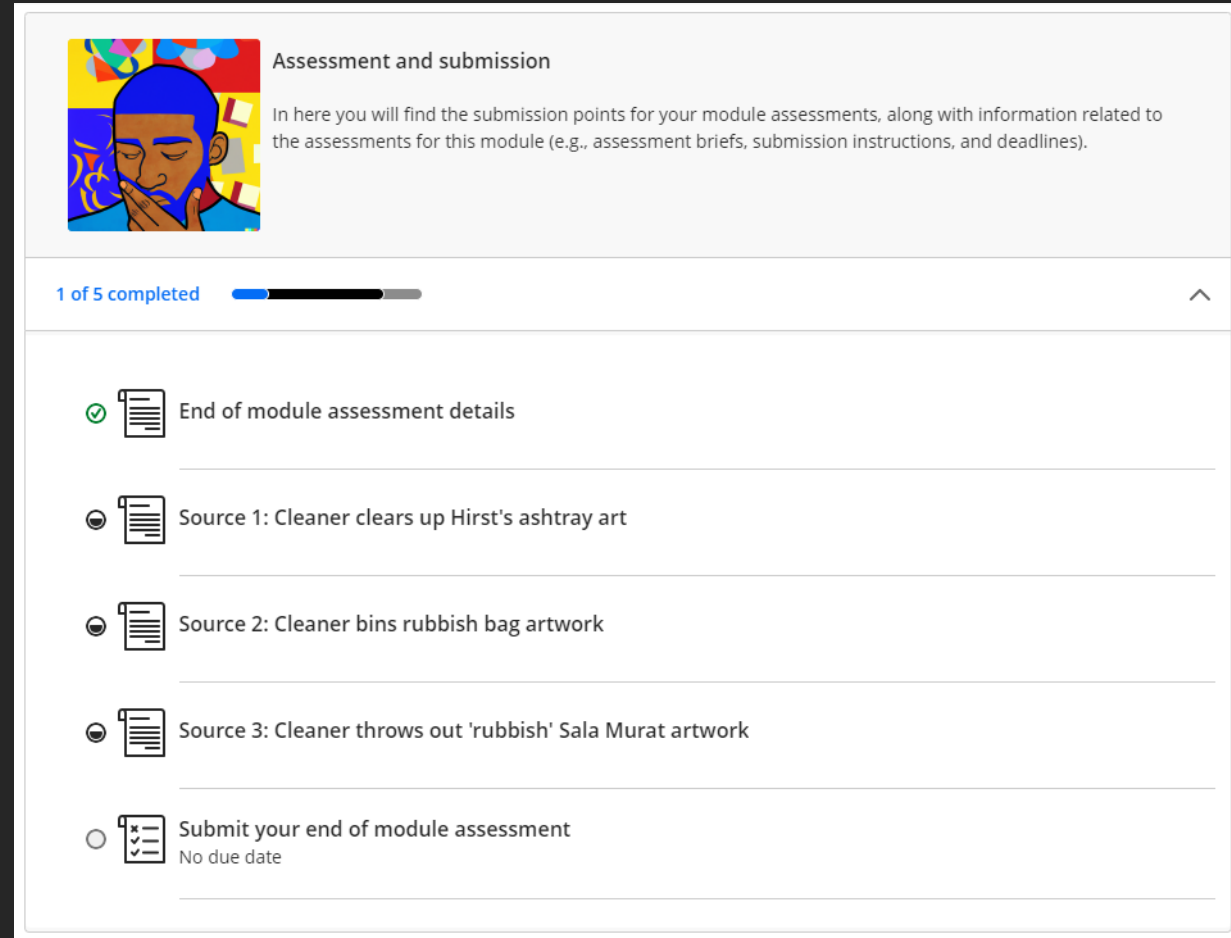
✓ Welcome to CRIT101

✓ Module guide

✓ Module overview

✓ How this course works

◑ Course timetable

◑ Rules for class discussions

○ Your discussion and journal posts

1. Clear instructions

'Assessment and submission' includes:

- End of module assessment details – full details for students about the EMA, including an alternative 'choose your own brief' assessment option.

- Assessment advice.

- Info about what to submit – range of possible options.

- Assessment marking rubric.

1. Clear instructions

Discussions / Journals

- Clear prompts / discussion questions.
- Due dates.
- Suggested word counts
- Marking rubrics.

Blackboard Ultra Demonstration Course (CRIT101: Critical Thinking - A Practical Introduction)

4.1 Journal: A question to think about before you get started

4.2 'Beware, fellow plutoc... →

Journal Prompt

Some people are extremely rich and some people are extremely poor. What, if anything, is wrong with this?

Before you move on, note down your response (approx. 100 words) to this question in your journal.

Entries

5 ▼ items per page

Type an entry

Details & Information

📅 Due date
31/12/2030, 23:59 (GMT)

▦ Marking rubric
This item is marked with a rubric

Marking

Maximum Mark | 100 maximum points

Blackboard Ultra Demonstration Course (CRIT101: Critical Thinking - A Practical Introduction)

4.4 Discussion: Extremes of wealth and poverty cannot be justified

← 4.3 'How economic inequ...   4.5 This week's class + on... →

Discussion Topic

Please post a response (150-250 words) for or against the following statement: **"Extremes of wealth and poverty cannot be justified, therefore the wealthiest should be highly taxed in order to provide for the poorest."**

Responses (0)

Type a response

Details & Information

📅 Due Date
31/12/2030, 23:59 (GMT)

▦ Marking rubric
This item is marked with a rubric

Marking

Maximum mark | A+

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Details & Information

Due Date
31/12/2030, 23:59 (GMT)

Marking rubric
[This item is marked with a rubric](#)

Marking

Maximum mark	A+

2. Clear structure

Course structure

- Week-by-week structure, organised into learning modules.

Week 1: What is critical thinking?

This first week will take you through the basics of critical thinking ... no prior knowledge required.

Not started

Week 2: Constructing arguments

In week 2 we'll start looking at how arguments work, and how to put them together.

Not started

Week 3: Exploring arguments in more depth

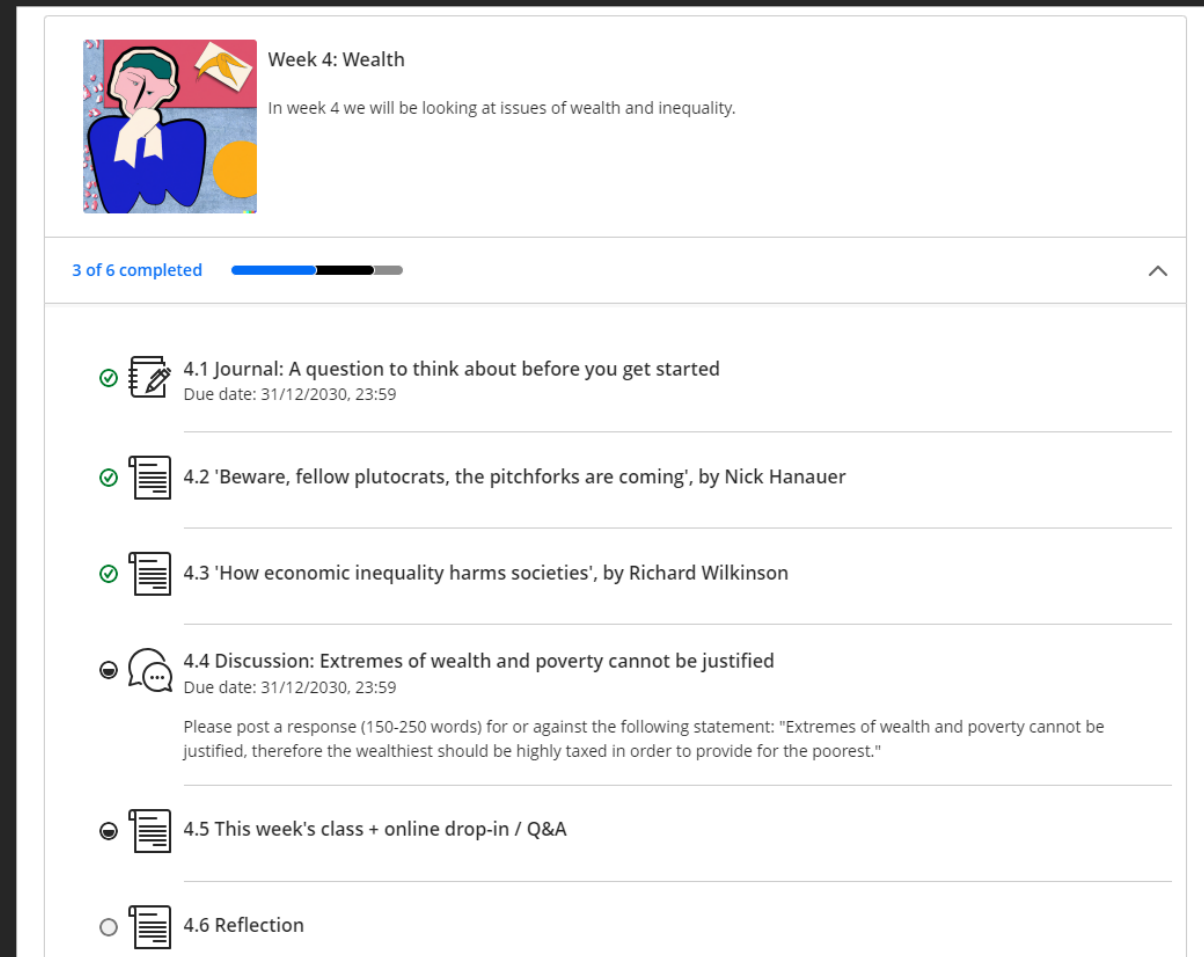In week 3 we'll look at more complex arguments, and will learn more about where arguments go wrong.

Not started

2. Clear structure

Learning module structure

- Items within learning modules sequenced and numbered to aid clarity.

Week 4: Wealth

In week 4 we will be looking at issues of wealth and inequality.

4.1 Journal: A question to think about before you get started
Due date: 31/12/2030, 23:59

4.2 'Beware, fellow plutocrats, the pitchforks are coming', by Nick Hanauer

4.3 'How economic inequality harms societies', by Richard Wilkinson

4.4 Discussion: Extremes of wealth and poverty cannot be justified
Due date: 31/12/2030, 23:59

Please post a response (150-250 words) for or against the following statement: "Extremes of wealth and poverty cannot be justified, therefore the wealthiest should be highly taxed in order to provide for the poorest."

4.5 This week's class + online drop-in / Q&A

4.6 Reflection

3. Accessible and inclusive

Course content

- All Ultra text content and uploaded documents can be customised and read aloud using Ally.

- All video content includes a transcript, so can be customised and read aloud using Ally.

- Xerte has its own accessibility tool.

7.5 'Sandra the 'nonhuman person' is sadly no…

unlawfully deprived of her freedom. Such a

would hardly raise eyebrows around the wo

not for the fact that Sandra is an orangut

At first glance, the implications of recogn

Sandra is not an object but a "nonhuman pe

Font
- Calibri
- Sitka
- Comic Sans

Themes

Microsoft
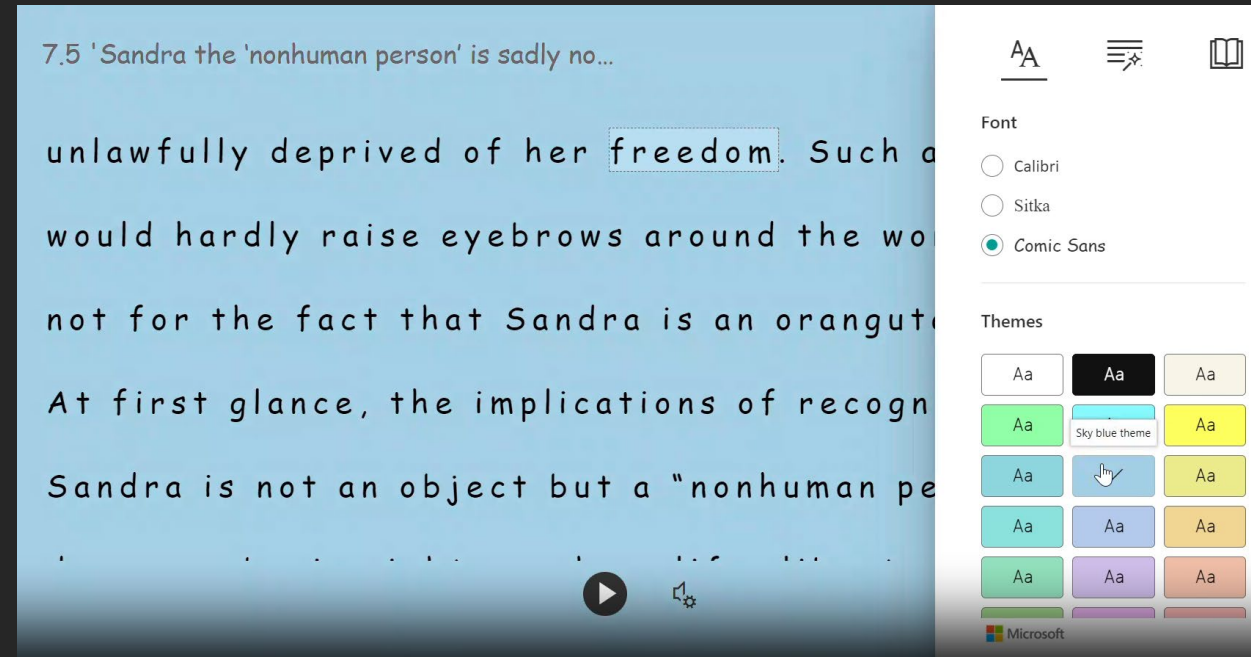
3. Accessible and inclusive

Assessments: journals and discussions

- Assessments have been designed to be inclusive, with few restrictions placed on the particular format in which students are required to respond (text, audio, video).

- The journals and discussions tool allows students to create different types of response, including written, video, and audio, and this is flagged to students in the entry 'Your discussion and journal posts' in the 'About this module' section of the course.

3. Accessible and inclusive

Assessments: EMA

• The end of module assessment also places little restriction on what to submit for the assessment, which is explained to students in the 'End of module assessment details' item in the 'Assessment and submission' area of the course.

• While there is a closed brief assessment option (the 'rubbish art assessment') students are also encouraged to propose an alternative assessment option that is more aligned with their own areas of interest.

4. Mobile friendly

By using the native Ultra tools, such as the Ultra documents, journals, and discussions, CRIT101 functions very much like a responsive website, and will work well regardless of whether students are accessing the course on a laptop, tablet, or smartphone.

Module guide

A↓

[Thoughtful, committed citizens](#) by [Visual Thinkery](#) is licenced under [CC-BY-ND](#)

1. About this module

This is a practical module in which you will be encouraged to get to grips with the fundamentals of critical thinking. During the module you will study a wide variety of arguments, will write journal entries and will take part in discussions about many different subjects, including wealth, happiness, education, drugs, food, and privacy.

In the first few weeks of the module you will be introduced to the basics of critical thinking (no prior knowledge of this subject is required), and will look at how arguments work. As the module progresses you will encounter videos and readings on a variety of subjects which will hopefully challenge you to think deeply and critically.

8.7 Discussion: Given that we would no...

Discussion Topic   ↻

Please post a response (150-250 words) for or against the following statement: **"There is a 'golden rule' which appears in almost every religious and ethical tradition - it states that one should not treat others in ways that one would not like to be treated. Therefore, given that we would not like to be killed and eaten by animals, we should not kill and eat animals."**

Responses (0)

T ▾ | ⋯ | ¶ ▾ | ↶ | 🔗 | ⊕ ▾

Type a response

Word count: 0

Save Draft   Cancel   Respond

5. Plenty for students to do in the course

Stimulus materials

- 11 Videos (weeks 1, & 3 – 10).
- 14 Short readings (weeks 2, 3, & 7 – 10).

Activities requiring a response / interaction

- 1 formative test (week 3).
- 3 interactive Xerte presentations with embedded quizzes and text response questions (weeks 1 – 3).
- 6 unassessed journals and discussions (weeks 1 – 3).
- 10 reflective activities (weeks 1 – 10).
- 14 assessed journals & post-first discussions (weeks 4 – 10).