

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

The screenshot displays a Blackboard Ultra course interface. At the top, the course ID 'CRIT101_ULTRA' and the title 'Blackboard Ultra Demonstration Course (CRIT101: Critical Thinking - A Practical Introduction)' are visible. Below the title is a navigation bar with tabs for 'Content', 'Calendar', 'Announcements', 'Discussions', 'Gradebook', 'Messages', and 'Groups'. A large, colorful grid of abstract, cubist-style illustrations serves as a background for the main content area. On the left side, there is a sidebar with sections: 'Organisation Staff' featuring Robert Farmer as the 'ORGANISATION LEADER'; 'Details & Actions' with links for 'Class register' (View everyone in your organisation), 'Progress Tracking' (On), 'Class Collaborate' (Join session), and 'Books & Tools' (View organisation & institution tools). The main content area is titled 'Organisation Content' and contains two items: 'Welcome - begin here.' with a sub-heading 'What is CRIT101? why am I enrolled on it? and what should I do with it?' and 'About this module' with a sub-heading 'Welcome to your module. In here you will find important information about your module, including the module'. A 'Not started' indicator is visible below the first item.

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.

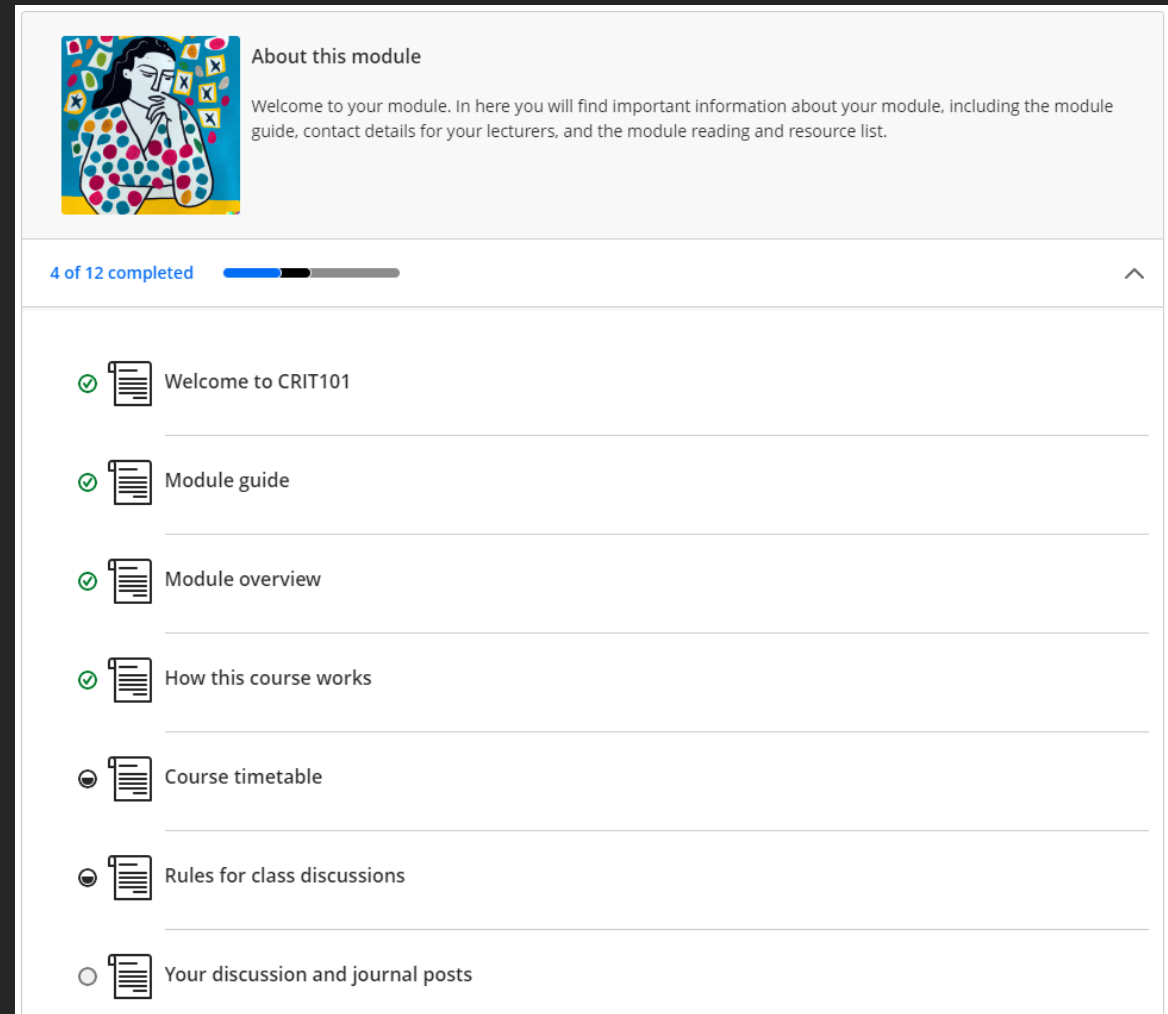
CRIT101 – Key Design Principles

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.



The image shows a screenshot of a course page titled 'About this module'. It features a colorful illustration of a woman thinking, surrounded by icons of books and 'X' marks. Below the illustration is a progress bar showing '4 of 12 completed' with a blue bar and an upward arrow. A list of course components follows, each with a document icon and a status indicator (checkmark or circle):

- ✓ Welcome to CRIT101
- ✓ Module guide
- ✓ Module overview
- ✓ How this course works
- Course timetable
- Rules for class discussions
- Your discussion and journal posts










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.

4 of 12 completed 

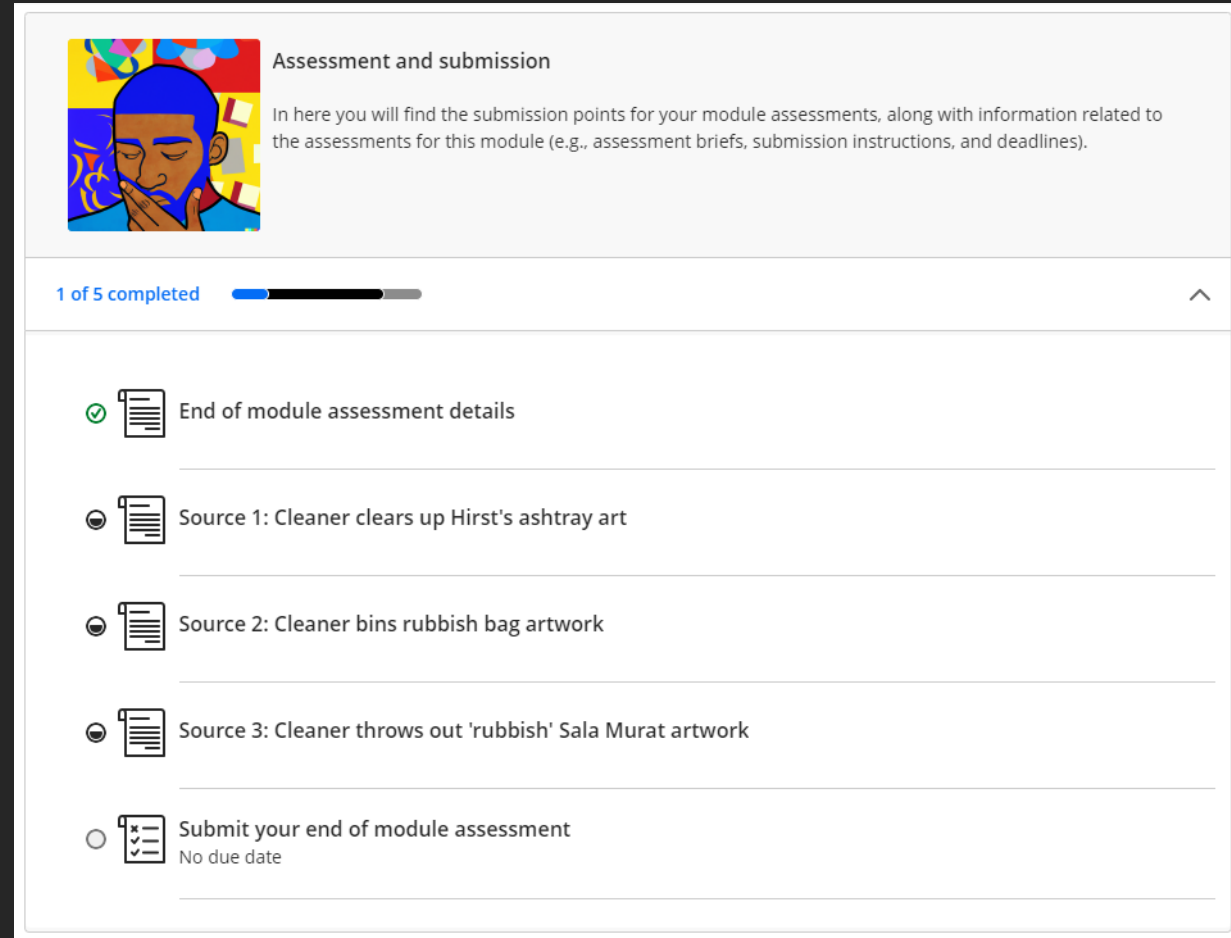


-  Welcome to CRIT101
-  Module guide
-  Module overview
-  How this course works
-  Course timetable
-  Rules for class discussions
-  Your discussion and journal posts

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.



Assessment and submission

In here you will find the submission points for your module assessments, along with information related to the assessments for this module (e.g., assessment briefs, submission instructions, and deadlines).

1 of 5 completed 

-  End of module assessment details
-  Source 1: Cleaner clears up Hirst's ashtray art
-  Source 2: Cleaner bins rubbish bag artwork
-  Source 3: Cleaner throws out 'rubbish' Sala Murat artwork
-  Submit your end of module assessment
No due date

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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2. Clear structure

Course structure

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

	<p>Week 1: What is critical thinking?</p> <p>This first week will take you through the basics of critical thinking ... no prior knowledge required.</p>
Not started ▼	
	<p>Week 2: Constructing arguments</p> <p>In week 2 we'll start looking at how arguments work, and how to put them together.</p>
Not started ▼	
	<p>Week 3: Exploring arguments in more depth</p> <p>In week 3 we'll look at more complex arguments, and will learn more about where arguments go wrong.</p>
Not started ▼	



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.

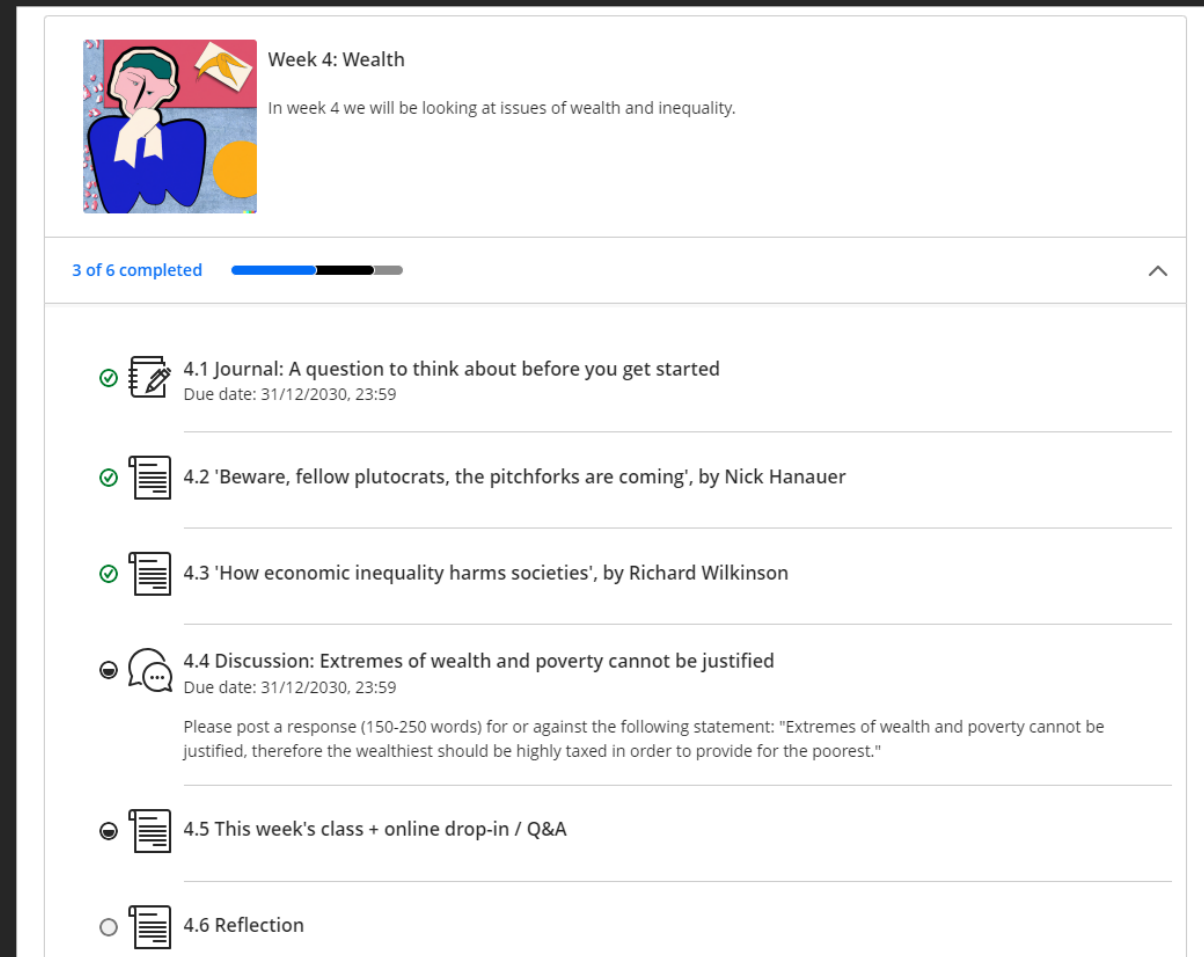
Not started



2. Clear structure

Learning module structure

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



The screenshot shows a learning module interface for "Week 4: Wealth". At the top left is a colorful illustration of a person in a blue suit with a white tie, holding a yellow envelope. To the right of the illustration, the text reads "Week 4: Wealth" and "In week 4 we will be looking at issues of wealth and inequality." Below this is a progress bar showing "3 of 6 completed" with a blue bar and a black bar. The main content area lists six items:

- 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





Week 4: Wealth


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


3 of 6 completed




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

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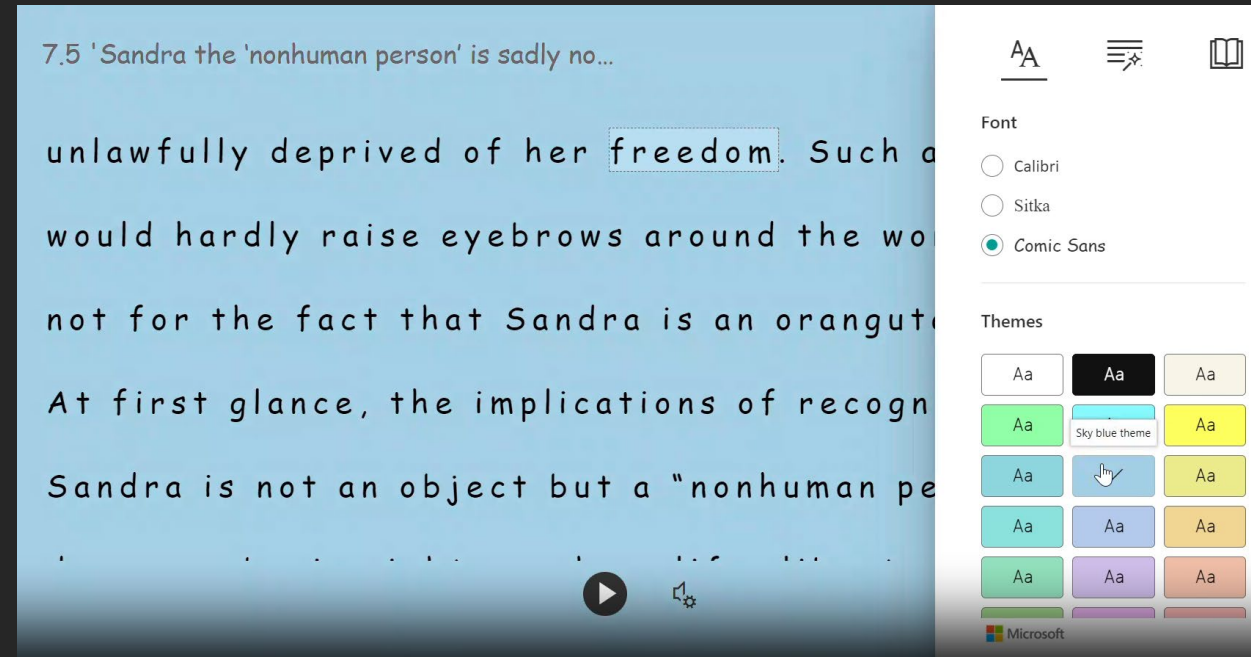
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-  4.6 Reflection

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.



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.

Document

Module guide

< Previous Next >



indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.
MARGARET MEAD

[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.

View Discussion


8.7 Discussion: Given that we would no...

< Previous Next >

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](#) [Response](#)



Module guide



Previous

Next



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8.7 Discussion: Given that we would no...



Previous

Next



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T | ... | ¶ | ↶ | ↷ | ⊕

Type a response

Word count: 0

[Save Draft](#)

Cancel

Response



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).