

Creating Accessible Content with The Blackboard Ultra Content Editor

Purpose

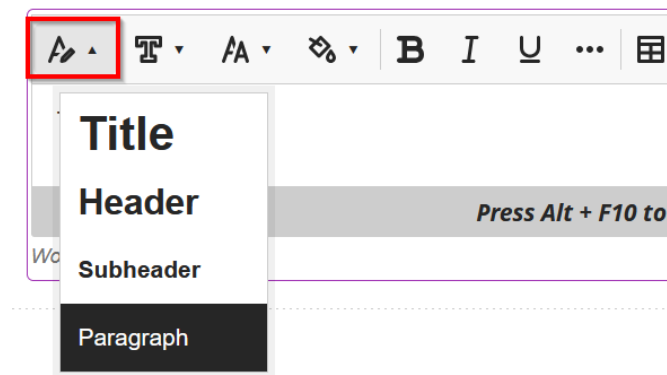
These instructions explain how to use the **Blackboard Ultra Content Editor** to create accessible content that meets digital accessibility best practices and supports all learners, including those using assistive technologies.

Accessing the Content Editor

1. Open your course in **Blackboard Ultra**.
2. Navigate to the area where you want to add content (Document, Announcement, Assignment instructions, Test question, or Discussion).
3. Select **Add Content** or click inside an existing item to open the **Content Editor**.

Use Headings for Structure

Headings create a clear content structure, improve readability, and allow screen reader users to navigate content efficiently.



How to apply headings:

1. Select the text you want to format.
2. Choose the **Styles** dropdown in the editor toolbar.
3. Select the appropriate heading level:
 - **Heading 1** – Page or document title (use only once)
 - **Heading 2** – Main sections
 - **Heading 3** – Subsections

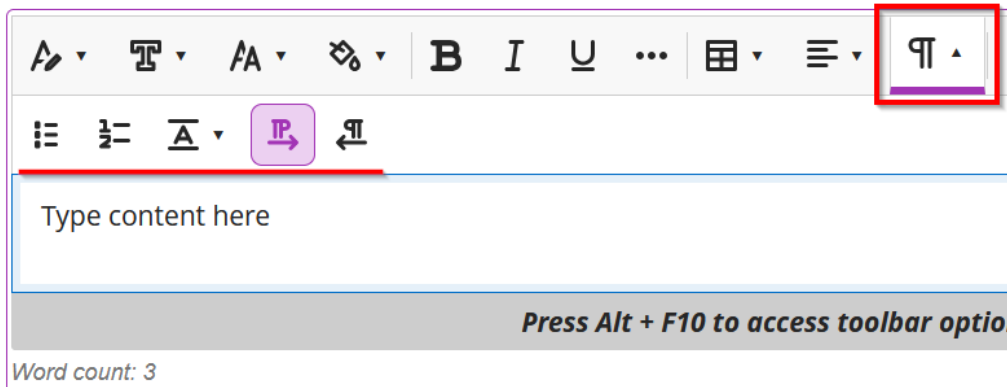
Best practices:

- Do not skip heading levels (e.g., Heading 2 directly to Heading 4).

- Do not use bold text alone to represent headings.

Use Lists Correctly

Properly formatted lists help screen readers identify related items.

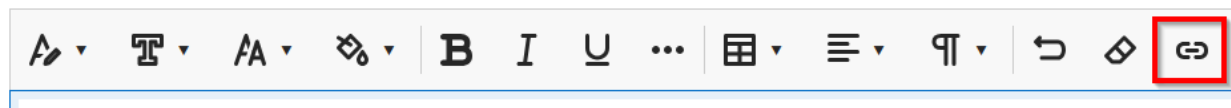


How to create lists:

- Use the **Bulleted List** or **Numbered List** icons in the toolbar.
- Avoid typing hyphens or numbers manually.

Write Meaningful Link Text

Links should clearly describe their destination without relying on surrounding context.



Accessible example:

- Cameron University Home Page
- Cameron University Course Schedule
- Blackboard Ultra Instructor Guide

Inaccessible examples:

1. Vague or context-less links

- Click here
- Read more
- More info

2. Links that rely only on visual cues

- See the blue button
- Click the icon on the right
- Press the arrow below

3. URLs used as link text

- <https://blackboard.cameron.edu>
- www.cameron.edu

How to insert a link:

1. Highlight the descriptive text.
2. Select the **Link** icon.
3. Paste the URL and save.

Add Alternative Text to Images

Alternative (alt) text allows screen reader users to understand the purpose of images.



How to add alt text:

1. Insert an image using the **Image** icon.
2. Select the image.
3. Enter a concise description in the **Alternative Text** field.

Guidelines:

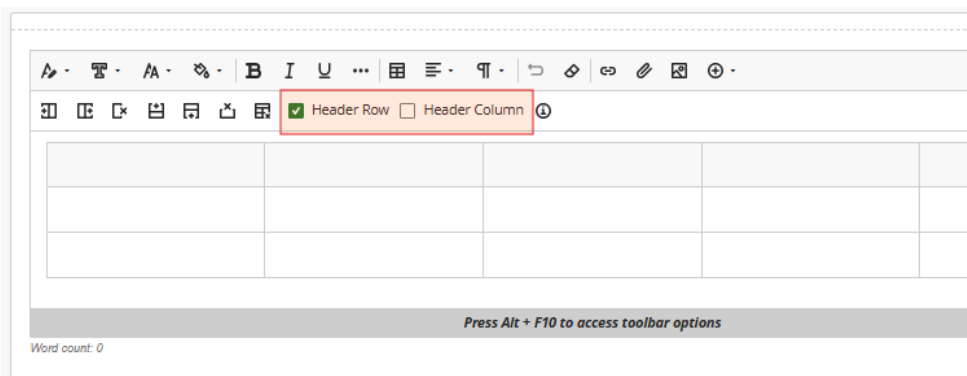
- Describe the purpose of the image, not just its appearance.
- Mark purely decorative images as decorative so they are ignored by screen readers.

Use Tables for Data Only

Tables should be used only for presenting data—not for layout.

How to create an accessible table:

1. Select the **Table** icon.
2. Insert the required rows and columns.
3. Designate the first row as **Header Row**.



Best practices:

- Keep table simple
- Avoid merged or nested cells.
- Avoid complex, multi-level headers whenever possible.

Ensure Sufficient Color Contrast

Color should never be the only way information is conveyed.

Best practices:

- Use high-contrast text and backgrounds.
- Pair color with text labels or symbols (for example, use the word “Required” instead of relying on red text alone).

Avoid Excessive Formatting

Overuse of fonts, colors, or alignment can reduce accessibility.

Recommendations:

- Use default fonts.
- Left-align text.
- Avoid underlining text unless it is a hyperlink.

Check Accessibility Before Posting

Before making content available:

- Review headings, lists, links, and images.
- Ensure instructions are clear and concise.
- Preview content using **Student Preview** to verify readability.

Ultra-Accessibility Checker (Powered by Ally)

Accessible content promotes inclusivity and meaningful engagement for all learners. Blackboard Ultra includes the **Ultra Accessibility Checker (powered by Ally)** to help you identify and fix accessibility issues.

The Ultra Accessibility Checker scans content created in the Rich Content Editor and:

- Identifies potential accessibility issues
- Explains why each issue matters
- Provides guided, quick-fix options to help you resolve issues efficiently

Using this tool makes it easier to ensure your content is accessible to everyone.

[More on Ultra Accessibility Checker \(Powered by Ally\)](#)

Additional Resources

- [Ultra-Documents](#) – Learn more about how to create dynamic Ultra documents with a mixture of text, attachments, and multimedia.
- [Watch Blackboard's tutorial on creating documents.](#)