By upgrading to the Q2 2018 release of Learn, we will benefit from an environment that is easier to use, more responsive on mobile devices, higher quality, and more powerful – which means happier, more successful educators and students.

The following release highlights were delivered in the Q2 2018 and Q4 2017 releases.

**User Experience**

*Record audio and video feedback for students (Q2 2018)* – Instructors and graders can increase student engagement by creating a personalized audio or video feedback recording by clicking on the microphone icon in the Content Editor. Students can easily access the recording without the need of a browser plug-in. This feedback functionality is supported in the following areas: Assignment, Test, graded Discussion, graded Wiki, graded Blog, graded Journal, and within a manual grade column. Recordings are stored in the cloud and do not utilize hosting storage allocation or local storage.

More information: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Grade/Grading_Tasks/Assign_Grades#add-feedback-recording

*Brand color configuration (Q2 2018)* – To align more closely with your institution’s brand, brand configuration options are now supported when using the Learn 2016 theme. This includes brand color configuration, system color palettes, and navigation settings such as tab placement and frame height.

*Course menu color support (Q2 2018)* – Course colors can now be customized. Instructors and course designers can configure the course colors in the course control panel when using the Learn 2016 theme. The course menu will present in these colors in both desktop and mobile web browsers.

*Greater responsiveness on mobile devices (Q4 2017 & Q2 2018)* – Instructors and students alike will enjoy an improved mobile experience as each release has introduced responsiveness to additional areas of Learn when using the Learn 2016 theme. In the Q4 2017 release, system and course level navigation, Blogs and Journals were optimized for mobile devices. In the Q2 2018 release, Tests and the Learning Modules tool are now optimized for web browsers on mobile devices.

*Additional accessibility enhancements (Q4 2017)* – ARIA landmarks have been incorporated in the course menu and the content area to better define the page structure and assist users with screen readers in navigating page elements. Additionally, the first-time user overlay has been removed to improve accessibility for users.

*Chemistry notation support (Q4 2017)* The math editor found in the Content Editor now includes tools specific to chemistry, like an embedded periodic table of elements.

**Efficiency**

*Course availability status (Q4 2017)*
From the main course view, instructors and other privileged users can now easily see the availability of the course to students and quickly change the availability, saving both time and effort.

*Discussion board “replies to me” (Q4 2017)* Keeping up with large discussion board forums is made easier by giving users a “New Reply” count and filter so unread replies to their posts can be easily identified and read.
LTI improved launch experience (Q4 2017) LTI links now open in a lightbox within the course, rather than directing users to a new window or tab, creating a more seamless workflow for students.

Assessment & Grading

Attendance tracking (Q2 2018) – Instructors can now easily track attendance. For each class meeting, instructors can mark whether a student is present, late, absent, or excused. The attendance records appear in a single column next to other grades in the gradebook. On the Attendance page, profile pictures appear so instructors can easily identify students.

More information: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Administrator/Hosting/Tools_Management/Attendance

Grade center enhancements (Q2 2018) When using the Learn 2016 theme, instructors will now be able to view full titles of Grade Center columns making it easier to distinguish between similarly-titled items. They can also view as many columns as the size of their window will allow and enter Grade Center full-screen mode to make the most of their desktop experience.

Additional attempts in anonymous grading (Q2 2018) – To better support anonymized assessment practice, instructors can now grant additional assignment attempts to students as needed while still maintaining the full anonymity of the process.

Clear multiple-choice selection (Q2 2018) Students are now able to clear a selection from multiple-choice questions. This feature is beneficial when negative points are associated with incorrect answer choices.

Delete multiple gradebook columns (Q4 2017) – Instructors can now delete multiple gradebook columns at once making managing the gradebook even easier. When deleted, manual and calculated columns are removed completely; columns associated with gradable items are cleared of attempt and grade data, but remain in the Grade Center.

Grade display standardization (Q4 2017) To provide greater consistency, all gradebook columns and My Grades now support up to five decimal points, are not rounded, and are consistent for all display types (score, percentage, letter grade).