Releasing Course Content

The Release Course Content feature in D2L allows faculty to create a custom course path by releasing Topics or course content under specific conditions. Content can be released based on course availability date, group membership, quiz grades, quiz completion, survey completion, and checklist completion. Once created, conditions can be deleted or modified.

Instructors can put release conditions on the following items:

- Checklists
- Content modules and topics
- Custom widgets
- Discussion forums and topics
- Dropbox folders
- Grade items and categories
- Online rooms
- News items
- Quizzes
- Surveys

Understanding Release Conditions

Availability Date
Allows faculty to release content during a specified time period.

Group Enrollment
Allows faculty to release content only to specific groups of students.

Quiz Scores or Completion
Allows faculty to release content only to students who have completed a specified quiz in the course or to students who have obtained your chosen minimum or maximum quiz score.

Survey Completion or Attempt
Allows faculty to release content only to students who have completed a specified survey in your course and/or release content to students who have attempted but not necessarily completed a survey.

Checklist or Checklist Item Completion
Allows faculty to release content only to students who have completed a specified checklist in the course.

Releasing Content Based on Availability Date

If the release conditions are set on the module, all topics within that module are affected.

1. From the Course Home page click on the **Content** link in the red Navigation bar under the **Course Elements** drop-down menu. The Manage Content pane appears.

2. For the desired Module or Topic click on **Edit** 🖉 under the drop-down menu beside the Module or Topic. The Edit pane appears.

3. Click on the Restrictions tab. The Availability and Release Conditions options appear.

4. To set a Start Date:
    1. Click on the checkbox next to Has Start Date
    2. Using the Has Start Date pull-down menus select the desired starting date and time.
5. To set a date an End Date:
    1. Select Has End Date
    2. Using the Has Start Date pull-down menus select the desired starting date and time.
6. If desired, click on the Display in Schedule checkbox to display the release date of the item on the Calendar.
7. Click on the **Save and Close** button to save and return to the Manage Content pane, or click **Save** to save, but stay on the same page.

Special considerations

Content – All Content Topics Visited

This condition requires users to visit all modules within your course. You cannot specify only a single module. If you want to create a condition that would make a tool available only after a

user has completed a specific module, create a condition using the Content Topic Visited option and require that they visit the last topic within the applicable content module.

Discussions – Discussion Messages Authored in Topic

If messages posted to the selected topic require approval, this condition is only satisfied once messages are approved.

Reusing release conditions

If you've already created a condition and want to apply the same condition to another item, you can quickly select the condition from a list of existing conditions in your course using the Attach Existing button. This saves you entering the criteria a second time. When you attach an existing condition from another item to a second item, the two conditions are not associated in any way. If you change the condition on either item or remove the condition from either item it has no effect on the other.

Attach an existing condition

1. Go to the edit page for the desired item and locate the release conditions area.
2. Click on the **Attach Existing** button.
3. Select the condition. Tip: To narrow the list of conditions, choose the tool the condition is based on from the "View Conditions for:" list.
4. Click on the **Attach** button.
5. Click on the **Save** button, if applicable.

Adding Additional Release Conditions

This section explains how to release content to students based on the various release conditions described in the Releasing Content Based on Availability Date section.

1. From the Course Home page click on the **Content** link in the red Navigation bar. The Manage Content pane appears.
2. For the desired Module or Topic click on **Edit** 🖉 under the drop-down menu beside the Module or Topic. The Edit pane appears.
3. Under Release Conditions click on the **Create and Attach** button. The Create a New Release Condition dialog box appears.
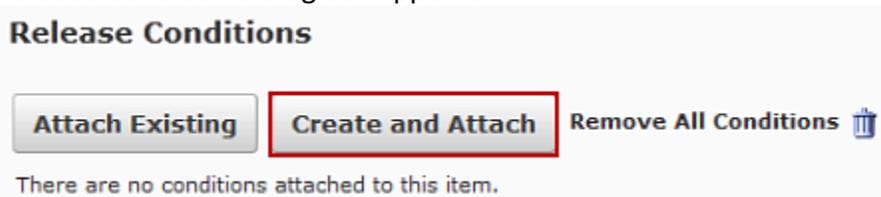
4. From the Condition Type pull-down menu select the desired condition.
5. From the new pull-down list that appears select the name of the group, quiz, survey, or checklist
    Some of the conditions require you to enter additional values (e.g., if you are releasing content based on a minimum or maximum quiz grade, in the Minimum Grade or Maximum Grade text box, type the desired grade as a percent).
6. Click on the **Create** button.
7. In the Edit dialog box click on the **Save** button.

Removing Additional Release Conditions

1. From the Course Home page click on the **Content** link. The Manage Content pane appears.
2. For the appropriate topic or module click on the **Edit** icon. The Edit dialog box appears.
3. Select the Restrictions tab
4. In the Release Conditions section for the condition you want to remove click on the **Remove** button OR to remove all conditions, click on the **Remove All Conditions** button. The condition(s) are grayed-out indicating that it(they) will be deleted when the page is saved.
5. Click on the **Save** button.

Best practices for creating release conditions - From D2L Created Materials

Set up conditions before users access the course

Create all of your course materials and set up your release conditions before the course opens to users. This gives you a chance to check for mistakes in the conditions or for circular, contradictory, or unnecessary conditions. If you add new release conditions after users have accessed the course, users might be confused by resources disappearing. Since conditions cannot be reset, you also risk having users meet conditions before your resources are ready (e.g., accessing a content topic before it is finished).

Avoid unnecessary conditions

Each condition you associate with a tool takes additional time for Learning Environment to process. Using as few conditions as possible to set up a learning path minimizes the amount of time that users spend waiting for pages to load.

For example, say for your second week of class you have set up a content topic, a quiz, and a Dropbox folder. You want to require users to read the topic before taking the quiz, and you want them to read the topic and attempt the quiz before submitting the week's assignment to

the Dropbox folder. On the Dropbox folder, you only need to attach the condition that users attempt the quiz; you know they must read the content topic before they can take the quiz, so there's no reason to add this condition to the Dropbox folder as well.

Avoid circular references

A circular reference makes it impossible for users to satisfy a set of conditions. For example, if you set the condition that users must view a content topic before they can access a Dropbox folder, and then set a condition that they must submit a file to the Dropbox folder before they can access the content topic, you have a circular reference. Users can't satisfy either condition without satisfying the other one first.

Circular references are more likely to occur with long chains of conditions. For example, a content topic that depends on a quiz that depends on a Dropbox folder that depends on a checklist that depends on the content topic.

Avoid impossible conditions

Ensure that your conditions are not impossible for users to satisfy. For example, a condition that users must achieve greater than 100% on a grade item would be impossible (unless bonus marks are available for the item). If users are unable to satisfy a condition, they are unable to access the content or tools to which the condition is attached.

Avoid contradictory conditions

Contradictory conditions occur when two or more conditions that cancel each other out are associated with an item. For example, the conditions "User must achieve greater than 49.9% on Grade Item 1" and "User must achieve less than 50% on Grade Item 1" are contradictory. Users could not satisfy both conditions at the same time; they would not be able to see the item associated with these conditions.

Example release condition scenarios

Scenario 1:

 Release content based on learning ability and course performance. Instructors can include additional content in the course specifically for users who need extra help and release this content to users who score below a specified threshold on a quiz or grade item. Alternatively, instructors could release a special Dropbox assignment to course users who attain a high score.

Scenario 2:

Release content in stages to reveal content topics to users only after they have read prior content, attach release conditions on the later topics or modules that require users to view earlier topics. This can provide a clear path through the material and prevent users from becoming overwhelmed by a large table of contents at the start of the course.

Scenario 3:

Release content based on enrollment date. If the course has rolling enrollment, so students can begin and complete the course at various times, instructors can set course materials and assessments to become available relative to a users' enrollment date. This allows you to provide a structured path through the course for every user regardless of their enrollment date.

Scenario 4:

Customize content for groups within a course. If the course has group projects and each group must be provided different instructions or resources, instructors can create separate content topics or modules for each project and attach release conditions based on group enrollment. Group members working on one project will see content related to their work without being distracted by content not relevant to them.

Scenario 5:

Use a checklist to organize activities. Instructors can create a checklist that lists the activities users should complete throughout the course. For example, a checklist for the first week might include reading the course's introductory content, posting a message to an introductory discussion topic, and submitting a list of learning goals to a Dropbox folder. You can set release conditions based on users checking off items from their checklist. For example, you might release a news item on your course's homepage once users check off that they have completed the first week's activities.