

itslearning Quick Start guide

Welcome to SDU's learning platform, based on itslearning.

You have at least one course in here, your personal sandbox course. Furthermore, you can see your courses that are active in itslearning

Why Instructions for using itslearning?

- Well, because in order to fully exploit the possibilities in itslearning you should be aware of how to structure your course in a good way, and how to take advantage of the functionality in a good way. In the Instructions we guide you towards how to do that.
- And because your students' biggest wish is that all of their courses are build up in a similar way, so that they can easily find what they have to read and do in order to be prepared for your next class

Don't worry, you still have your freedom to teach in the way you like 😊

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1. Structure your course

The itslearning *Plans* page gives you the possibility to structure your course in *Topics* under which you can set up a number of *Plans*. A plan can cover a suitable period of time or different teaching elements.

The first thing to do when structuring your course is to consider what *Topics* you have in your course. A *Topic* could for instance equal a course theme, a course module or a course week. Note that the first *Topic* 'General Course Information' is pre-added.

When you create a *Topic*, a folder with the same name is automatically created under the *Resources* tab. The files and learning activities that you create in a plan will go into this folder.

It is useful to know that your classes are automatically transferred into the *Calendar* as *Events*, therefore it is **important to schedule every plan**. When you schedule a plan for a timeframe which overlaps a calendar event, the *Plan* and the *Event* automatically connect. Students can thus access the plan content directly from the *Calendar Event*.

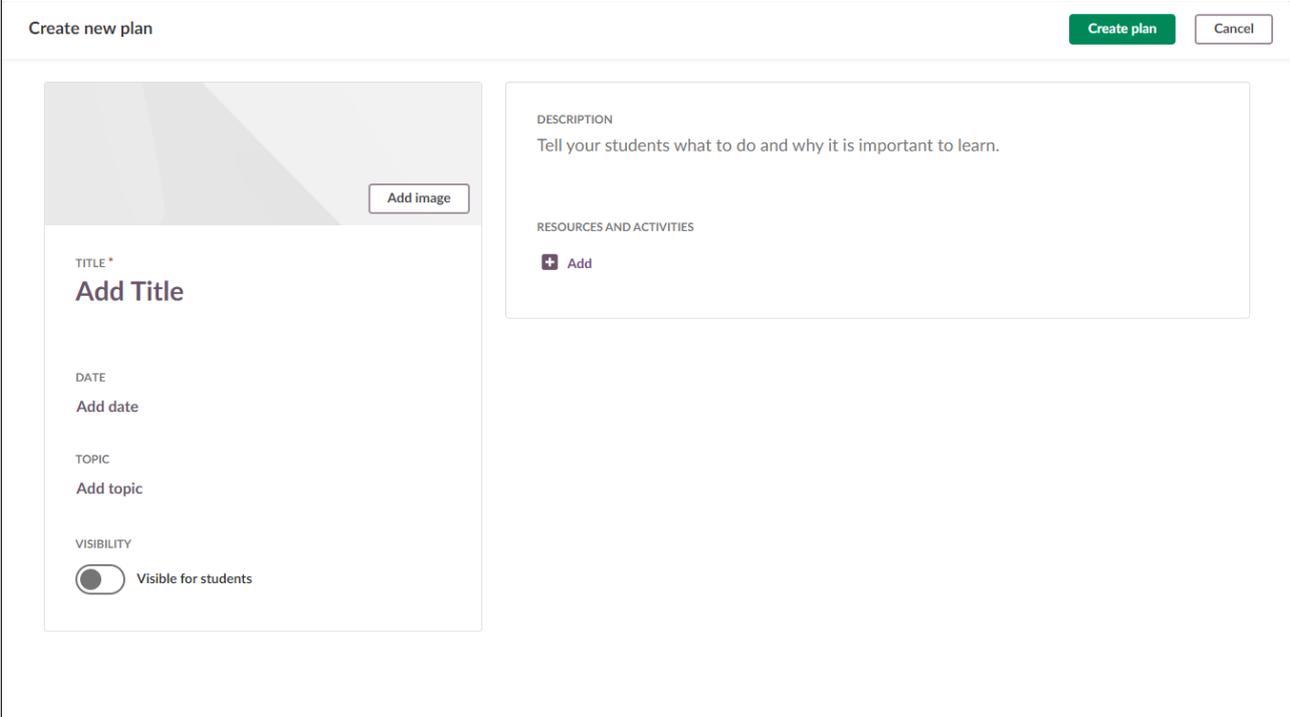
When you add dates to your *Plan*, your *Plan* will also appear in the students' overall *Plan* across courses they participate in - "*Calendar -> Plans*".

Furthermore, by adding dates to your *Plan* it will be presented on the course *Overview* page above the course announcements when it is relevant. So, you can save some announcements.

Below you can see how to choose what part of the *Plan* is shown in the *Calendar*.

2. How to set up a Plan

The *Plan* contains a number of fields, by default.



The screenshot shows the 'Create new plan' interface. At the top right, there are 'Create plan' and 'Cancel' buttons. The form is split into two columns. The left column has an 'Add image' button at the top. Below it is a 'TITLE *' field with the placeholder text 'Add Title'. Underneath are 'DATE' (Add date) and 'TOPIC' (Add topic) fields. At the bottom of the left column is a 'VISIBILITY' section with a toggle switch for 'Visible for students'. The right column has a 'DESCRIPTION' field with the text 'Tell your students what to do and why it is important to learn.' Below that is a 'RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES' section with an 'Add' button.

You need to fill in *Title*, *Date*, *Description* and *Resources and activities* as a minimum. We recommend that you also assign *Topics* to your plans, as it helps make your course more organized.

Furthermore, you can add an *Image* that conveys something about the content of the plan, but this is optional.

- **Image:** If you insert an image, the best result is achieved when the image is in the size of 600x420 pixels.
- **Title:** Use a brief, descriptive title
- **Date:** Set date here – do not write dates or week numbers in the text, then you have to do a lot of re-editing if you want to reuse the plan next year. Read your Faculty's recommendations on [Setting a time for Plans](#).
- **Topic:** The topic could be teaching format (e.g., lectures, exercise sessions, laboratory sessions), main study themes (e.g., Metabolism, Cell Cycle, Genetics, etc.), weeks in the course (e.g., Week 1, Week 2, etc.), or anything else that can help make the overview of your plans clear.
- **Description:** The description can serve as guidance on how the activities and resources in the plan are expected to be used and what is anticipated for students to learn.
- **Resources and activities:** Here you can add files and learning activities (*Assignment, Test, Task, Discussion* etc.), by uploading/creating them directly here, or linking to already added *Resources*.

Go to **Plan Settings** via  in the upper right corner of the *Plans* page.

Here you can set the *Plan fields*, and you can also set whether fields are shown on dashboards (incl. the course *Overview* page), and in the students' *Calendar*:

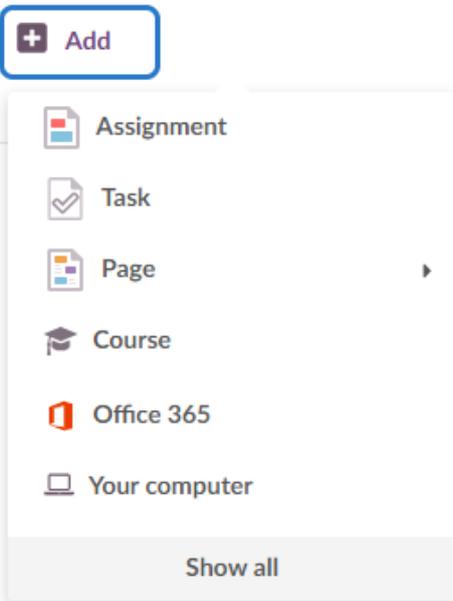
Plan fields

Title	Visible for	Show on dashboards and calendars
<input type="text" value="Plan"/>	Everyone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="text" value="Date"/>	Everyone <input type="text"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="text" value="Class hours"/>	Nobody <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="text" value="Description"/>	Everyone <input type="text"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="text" value="Learning objectives"/>	Nobody <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="text" value="Resources and activities"/>	Everyone <input type="text"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

[+ Add field](#)

It is recommended that you do not change these settings except that you can enable the *Learning objectives* field if you want to fill it in for each plan.

RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES



Now, click the *Add* link under *Resources and activities*, and you have a number of possibilities:

Assignment, incl. possibility for feedback from you, or peer review.

Task – inform the students what they should do in order to be prepared for your next lecture (Read? Reflect? Take test?)

Page – an html-page, can contain text, images, videos etc. Can be used in the same way as an item in Blackboard. You can give your students access to editing a page.

Course – here you can link to an element (*file, test* a.o.) added to the *Resources* in the course.

Office 365 – link to a file in your Onedrive or Sharepoint or upload a file to your itslearning Course.

Or, upload a file from **your computer**.

Do you want to do more things? Then click *Show all*:

Resources

Folder Organise content to create a tidy course structure.	Excel Create new Excel document.	File Add files and images to your course or share them in the library.
Link Add links to your course or share them in the library.	Matlab Grader MATLAB Grader LTI SDU	Note Create notes for simple texts or information.
Page Create pages with rich-text and interactive content.	PowerPoint Create new PowerPoint presentation.	SCORM or AICC link Add links to external SCORM or AICC content.
Word Create new Word document.	Zoom Meetings Zoom Meetings	

Activities

Assignment Let participants submit answers individually or in groups.	Discussion Create a written, structured debate.	Learning path Create a progress-based sequence of resources.
LTI tool Connect tools that use the IMS Learning Tools Interoperability standard (LTI).	Registration Create events to which users can register.	Survey Collect information from a group of respondents.
Task Create self-study tasks or tasks that are not supposed to be handed in – for example, lab activities and 'show and tell' evaluations.	Test Allows you to add tests with a wide variety of question types.	

Now, you can create a *Test* or *Survey*, a *Discussion*, a Zoom meeting etc.

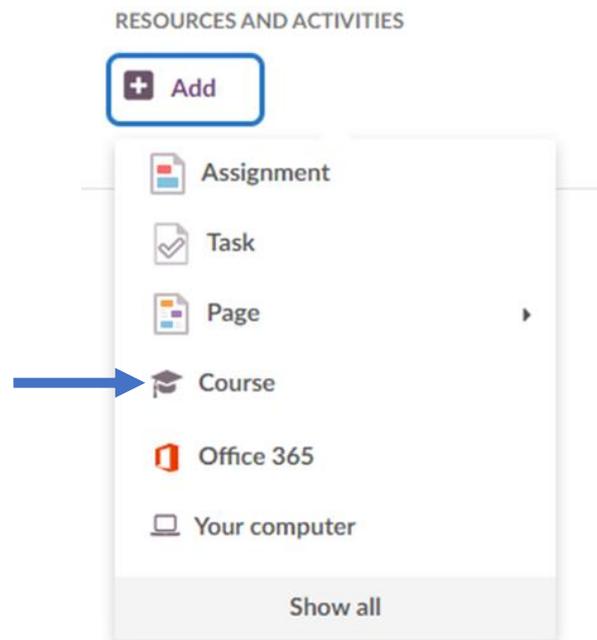
Note that you can also create a PowerPoint, Excel or Word file. When using this function, you will work online. You can give your students access to editing those files. Go find the file under the *Resources* tab, and click the permissions icon:



3. How to link between Resources and Plans

If you upload your material directly into a plan, it is automatically saved under *Resources*. However, if you already have some material under *Resources* that you want to add to a plan, you can do so via **Add -> Course**.

To link from your plan to a file, test or other element in *Resources*, choose **Add > Course**:



Tick the element that you want, and click Add to finish the operation.

4. How to communicate with your students

On the course *Overview* page, you have the **Course Stream**.

The **Announcements** in the course are at the top, ordered newer-to-older. Announcements should be used for important information of permanent interest. The number of announcements should be limited, so that older but still relevant posts can still be found.

Below the **Announcements** are the *Latest changes*, including:

- New elements (files, tasks, tests etc.), and updates to them. It is possible to mark a change to a file as minor, thereby avoiding that a post is created here.
- New threads or posts in discussions (note that this will not give a notification in the bell icon)
- Extensions/apps that are used in the course and allowed to post updates

The students get a **notification** in the itslearning App and in itslearning on their computer (bell icon) when new things are available for them, including:

- Reminder to complete a test or assignment (if the teacher has sent a reminder)
- When a grade or feedback is available
- When a teacher creates an announcement in a starred course

Teachers as well as students can use the Message system (similar to Messenger). Here, you can send individual messages to one or more of your students or start a group chat.



The Message system should be used for messages that are relevant right now, but not of permanent interest. For instance, cancellations of class or exercises.

For further information, please read the [Recommendations for using the communication channels in itslearning – for teachers](#).

Go to <https://sdunet.dk/en/itslearning> for SDU guides and tutorials:

Guides to itslearning



→ Teacher

Help getting started?
Workshops and services for

→ Administrat

itslearning - Guides - Teachers

Setting up your course

- Introduction to itslearning +
- How to access itslearning? +
- Access to automatically transferred Blackboard course materials in itslearning +
- Get your (older) course materials out of Blackboard +
- Working with course groups in itslearning +
- Copy teaching materials from a course in itslearning to a new course +
- Create a teaching plan +
- Setting a time for Plans +
- Public link/print plans +

Help getting started?
Workshops and services for teachers
READ MORE

About itslearning

- Quick Start guide
- Personal settings
- Communication in itslearning
- 'Phrase book': Blackboard vs itslearning
- Material from Blackboard to ItsLearning
- Instructions for using itslearning