# Problems using Blackboard with Internet Explorer 7

some common issues and how to get round them

Visual Text Box Editor

This is the formatting toolbar which appears when typing in Announcements or Items within course content areas. With Internet Explorer 7 you may find that the formatting and content controls will appear, but the text box itself does not, so you can't type in any text.
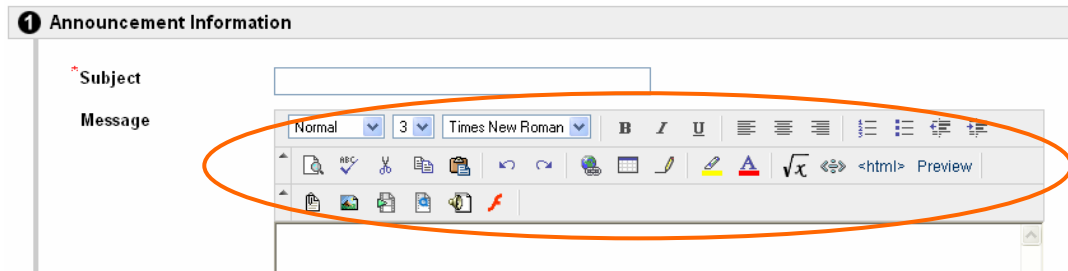
Solution: Add Blackboard to your list of trusted sites

- Login to TVU Online / Blackboard and navigate to a page that uses the Visual Text Box Editor (e.g. Discussion Board, Announcements)

- Determine if TVU Online is in the list of Trusted Sites:

  if it is, a green check mark will appear in the Status Bar with the label, Trusted Sites.
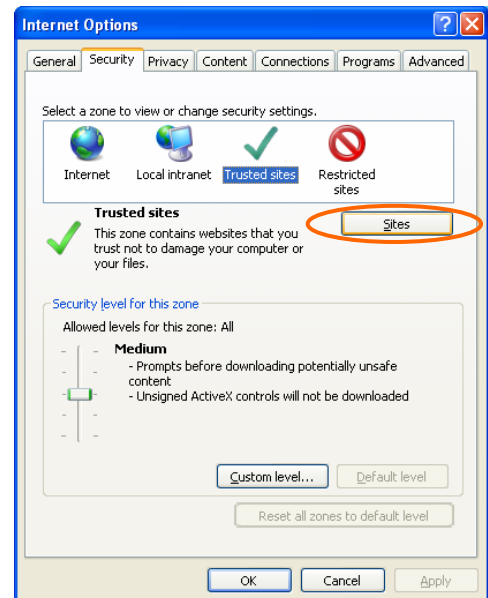
  if you see Restricted Sites (a red circle icon) or Internet (a globe icon), then TVU Online must be added to the list of Trusted Sites.

- Double-click the Status Bar where the ![Internet icon] icon appears. The Internet Security Properties box will open.

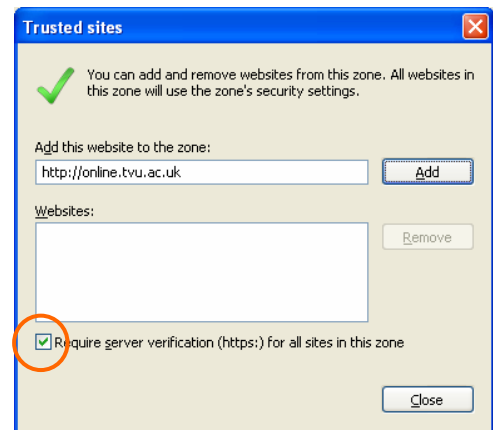 *alternatively, go to Tools – Internet Options then choose the Security tab.*
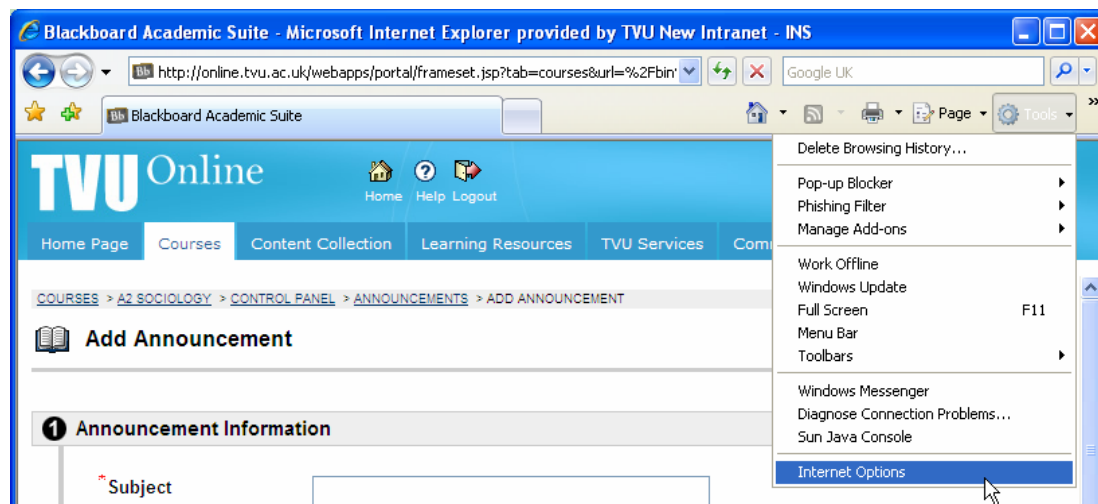
- Click on the Trusted Sites icon, then click Sites.

- The URL for TVU Online (`http://online.tvu.ac.uk`) should appear under Add this website to the zone. If not, enter the URL manually.

- Un-tick Require Server Verification (https:) for all sites in this zone.

- Click Add, then Close.

- Click OK on the Internet Security Properties box.

- Refresh the page.

- A message will appear in the Internet Explorer Information Bar (yellow band near top of the screen):
  "This website wants to run the following add-on: 'Microsoft (R) Dynamic HTML Editing Control' from 'Microsoft Corporation'. If you trust the website and the add-on and want to allow it to run, click here..."

- Click the message and select Run ActiveX Control from the context menu.

- Click Run in the Security Warning box.

- The Visual Text Box Editor is now configured to operate correctly.

Alternative options
1. *Use Firefox*
   The Visual Text Box Editor does not work with this browser, but you can type in your message without formatting.

2. *Disable the Visual Text Box Editor in Blackboard:*
   Again, this will mean that you no longer have the option to format your text, but you can type in plain text.

   On the Home Page tab, go to the Tools panel and click on Personal Information
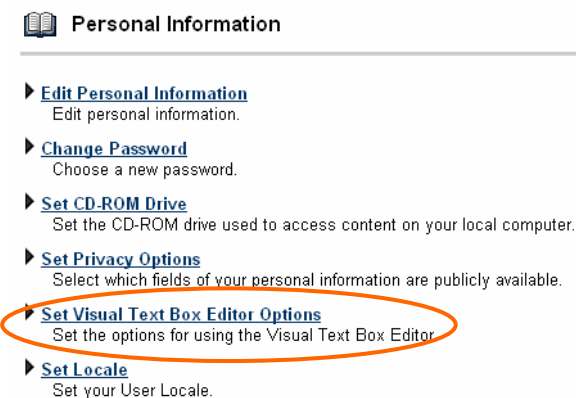
   On the next screen choose Set Visual Text Box Editor Options

   then set as Unavailable. You may have to log out of Blackboard and back in again for this to take effect.

Viewing and printing Microsoft Office documents

When you click on a link from Blackboard to a Word or Excel document, by default the document opens within Blackboard itself.
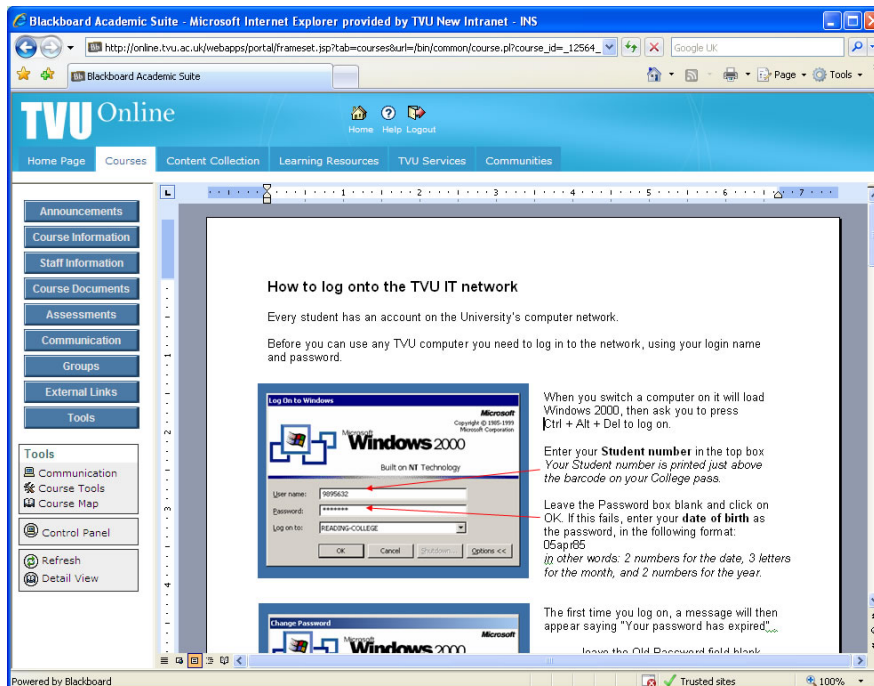

With Internet Explorer 6, you could just click the print button, and the Word document would print, without the accompanying Blackboard frame. However in Internet Explorer 7 this is likely to print out one or more blank sheets of paper.

Solutions

1. *Open document in a new window*
   Right-click on the link and select Open in New Window.

   This opens the Word document in a new Internet Explorer window – without the Blackboard frame – thus allowing you to view the file, and if you wish, print it correctly.
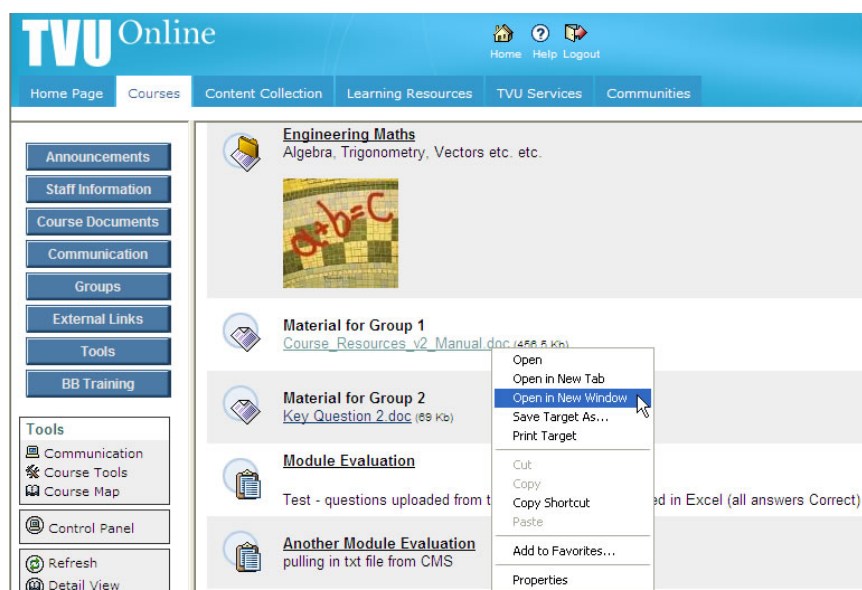
2. *Print the document without opening*
Right-click on the link and select Print Target.

This prints the document without opening Word.
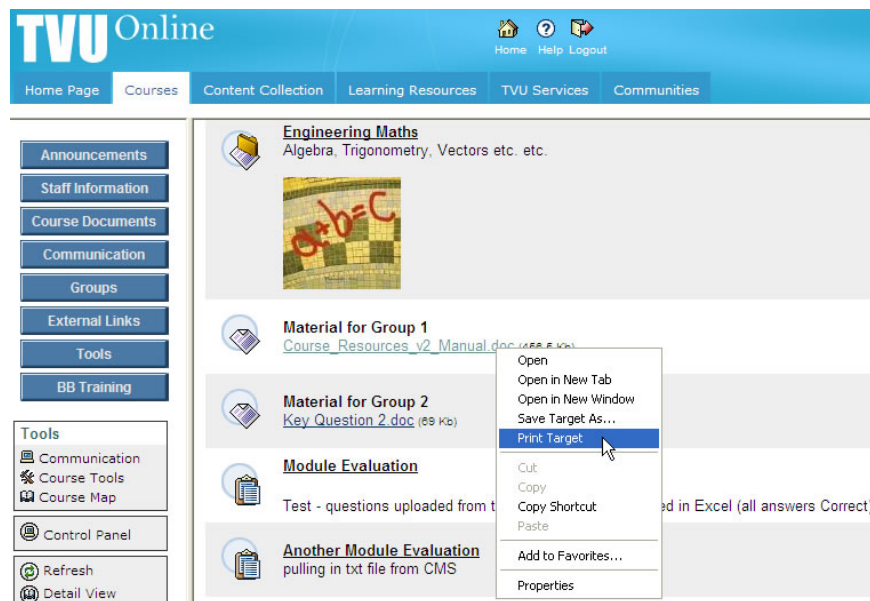
3. *Save – Open – Print*
Right-click on the link and select Save Target As – save to a local drive; open directly in MS Office; print if desired.

This is particularly useful with Excel documents, since it allows you to Print Preview and ensure that you are only going to print the pages you want.
It is of course also the appropriate course if you want to edit the document in any way.

4. *Use Firefox*
Firefox makes no attempt to integrate with MS Office – it will automatically open Word documents in Word, Excel files in Excel etc. etc.

5. *Change the settings on your PC so that MS Office files open in the appropriate Office programme*

This is a somewhat time-consuming – but one-off change – which means that whenever you open a Word document from within Internet Explorer (not just from Blackboard) the document opens in Word… and the same can be set up for Excel and Powerpoint files.

Advantages of this are: you have full Office menus available; you can be sure that you only print what you want; you can view the document full-screen.
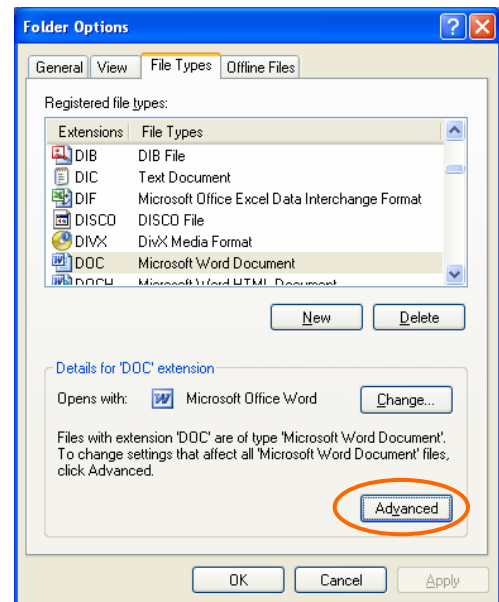
The change has to be made on the user's PC (not within Blackboard).

Open My Computer

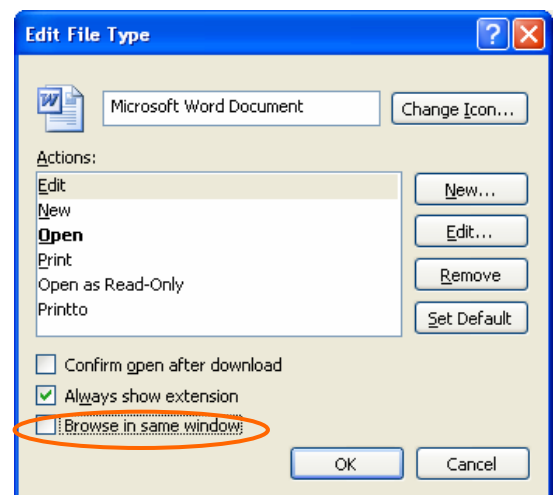On the top menu, go to Tools – Folder options

Bring forward the File Types tab and scroll down till you see
DOC Microsoft Word Document

Click on Advanced

Un-tick Browse in same window and click OK, then Close to confirm your changes.

The same process can be repeated for XLS (Excel) and PPT (PowerPoint) files.

For PDF (Acrobat) files, the same effect can be achieved through Acrobat itself:
Edit – Preferences – Internet then un-tick Display PDF in browser.