brightspace
by D2L

Getting Started with Release Conditions

Instructor Guide

Contents

Document change history

This version of the document replaces all previous versions. The following table describes the most recent changes to this document.

Revision Date	Summary of Changes
December 1, 2016	Initial release.

What are Release Conditions?

Release conditions allow you to create a custom learning path through the materials in your course. When you attach a release condition to an item, users cannot see that item until they meet the associated condition. For example, you could attach a release condition to the second topic in your course's content area that would hide that topic until users viewed the topic before it. Or you could create a condition that required users to view a content topic before gaining access to a quiz, or one that required them to post to a discussion topic before they could see a content module.

Release conditions can also be added to intelligent agents to create email notifications for users. Intelligent agents monitor org units to find activities that matches criteria you set for login activity, course activity, or release conditions. For example, you could create an intelligent agent that sends a reminder email to users who have not yet completed a required quiz or assignment in the course. This scenario is ideal for using release conditions with the *not* operator.

If you attach multiple conditions to an item, users must meet all conditions before they can access the item. For example, you could require users to visit the first three content topics in a unit before gaining access to an associated quiz.

Once a user meets a release condition, the condition is cleared for that user and cannot be reset. For example, if you attach a release condition to a discussion topic requiring users to achieve more than 60% on a quiz before they can access that topic, and one of your participants receives 72% on the quiz but you adjust their grade to 55% they will be able to access the topic because they did meet the requirement at some point.

You can access release conditions for any of the following course items:

- Awards - badges and certificates can be automatically awarded based on release condition criteria.

- Checklist - checklists can be controlled by setting the *All Conditions must be met* or *Any condition must be met* options.

- Content modules and topics, Quizzes, grade items and categories, Discussion forums and topics, Assignments, Intelligent Agents, Announcements items, and Surveys can be restricted until the learner completes a task or achievement.

- Custom widgets can be set so that they run when a specific existing condition has been met by specific roles in the current org unit. You should not set any release conditions on the learner role; rather, you can set release conditions on content or grade items.

Release condition types

Condition Type	Description
Awards - Awards	The user must have earned a specific award in order to fulfill the release condition
Checklist - Completed checklist	The user must complete all items on the selected checklist in order to fulfill the release condition
Checklist - Incomplete checklist	The user must not complete one or more items on the selected checklist in order to fulfill the release condition
Checklist - Completed checklist item	The user must complete a specific item on the selected checklist in order to fulfill the release condition
Checklist - Incomplete checklist item	The user must not complete the specific item on the selected checklist to fulfill the release condition
Classlist - Group enrollment	The user must be enrolled in a specific group in order to fulfill the release condition
Classlist - Org unit enrollment	The user must be enrolled in a specific org unit in order to fulfill the release condition
Classlist - Section enrollment	The user must be enrolled in a specific section in order to fulfill the release condition
Classlist - Role in current org unit	The user must either: • be enrolled as a specific role • not be enrolled as a specific role in order to fulfill the release condition
Classlist - Date of enrollment in current org unit	The user must be enrolled in the current org unit for a specified number of days in order to fulfill the release condition
Competencies - Competency achieved	The user must complete a specific competency in order to fulfill the release condition

Condition Type	Description
Competencies - Competency not yet achieved	The user must not complete a specific competency in order to fulfill the release condition
Competencies - Learning objective achieved	The user must complete a specific learning objective in order to fulfill the release condition
Competencies - Learning objective not yet achieved	The user must not complete a specific learning objective in order to fulfill the release conditions
Competencies - Score on associated rubric	The user must achieve a specified Score and Threshold level on a learning objective, based on an associated rubric, in order to fulfill the release condition
Content - visited content topic	The user must visit a specific content topic in order to fulfill the release condition
Content - Not visited content topic	The user must not visit the specified content topic in order to fulfill the release condition. Depending on your organization's security configurations, especially if the d2l.Tools.ManageFiles.UseContentRestrictedSecurity configuration variable is set to ON, users may not be able to access specified content topics at all when this release condition is set
Content - Visited all content topics	The user must visit all content topics in the course offering in order to fulfill the release condition
Discussions - Posts authored in topic	The user must author a specified number and type of posts in a designated module or topic in order to fulfill the release condition
Discussions - No posts authored in topic	The user must not author any number or type of post in a designated module or topic in order to fulfill the release condition
Discussions - Score on associated rubric	The user must achieve a specified Score and Threshold level on a discussion module or topic, based on an associated rubric, in order to fulfill the release condition
Assignments - Submission to Assignment submission folder	The user must make a submission to a specified assignment submissions folder in order to fulfill the release condition
Assignments - No submission to Assignment submission folder	The user must not make a submission to a specified assignment submissions folder in order to fulfill the release condition

Condition Type	Description
Assignments - Receive feedback on Assignment submission	The user must receive feedback on a submission to a specified assignment submissions folder in order to fulfill the release condition
Assignments - Score on associated rubric	The user must achieve a specified Score and Threshold level on an assignment submissions folder submission, based on an associated rubric, in order to fulfill the release condition
Grades - Grade value on a grade item	The user must achieve a specified grade value on a grade item in order to fulfill the release condition
Grades - No grade received	The user must not receive a specified grade value on a grade item in order to fulfill the release condition
Grades - Score on associated rubric	The user must achieve a specified Score and Threshold level on a grade item, based on an associated rubric, in order to fulfill the release condition
Quizzes - Score on a quiz	The user must achieve a specified score on a quiz in order to fulfill the release condition
Quizzes - Completed quiz attempt	The user must achieve a specified number of attempts of a quiz in order to fulfill the release condition
Quizzes - Score on selected questions	When a quiz has a learning objective with associated questions and an assessment method attached to it, the user must achieve a specified grade value on the learning objective in order to fulfill the release condition
Quizzes - Score on associated rubric	The user must achieve a specified Score and Threshold level on a quiz, based on an associated rubric, in order to fulfill the release condition
Quizzes - No completed quiz attempt	The user must not complete any attempt on a quiz in order to fulfill the release condition
Surveys - Completed survey attempt	The user must achieve a specified number of attempts of a survey in order to fulfill the release condition
Surveys - No completed survey attempt	The user must not complete any attempt on a survey in order to fulfill the release condition

Setting up permissions and configuration variables for release conditions

Setting up Content permissions

To use release conditions with Content, you must set the following permissions:

Setting	Allow users to	Users will see	Also required	Applicable org unit types
View Content that is Not Released	View content that has a release condition, date restriction, or is hidden	A topic link that cannot be accessed by users without this permission until a specific availability date	View Course Content Manage Content (only to view content that has a release condition)	Any
Attach/Remove Release Conditions on Modules and Topics	Restrict the visibility of topics or modules based on required conditions	Release condition options in the Restrictions area while editing a topic or module	View Course Content Manage Content Create and Edit Modules and Topics View Content that is Not Released	Any

Setting up Announcements permissions

To use release conditions with Announcements, you must set the following permissions:

Setting	Allow users to	Users will see	Also required	Applicable org unit types
Attach/Remove Release Conditions on Announcements	Add release conditions to Announcements items and remove existing conditions	The Additional Release Conditions section when creating or editing an Announcements item	See Announcements Add/Edit/Delete Announcements	Any
Override Release Conditions on Announcements	See Announcements items even if they do not meet the release conditions	Announcements items in the Announcements widget and on the Announcements search page even if release conditions are not met	See Announcements	Any

Setting up Discussions permissions

To use release conditions with Discussions, you must set the following permissions:

Setting	Allow users to	Users will see	Also required	Applicable org unit types
Create and Add Release Conditions on Forums and Topics	Add release conditions to forums and topics and remove existing release conditions	The Release Conditions area of the Restrictions tab on the Edit Forum or Edit Topic page	Access to Discussions Manage Discussions	Any

Setting up Homepages permissions

To use release conditions with Homepages, you must set the following permissions:

Setting	Allow users to	Users will see	Also required	Applicable org unit types
Override Release Conditions on Widgets	Override the release conditions set for a widget	Widgets with release conditions are visible on the homepage even if they do not have the permissions; however, they cannot create or add new release conditions.		Any

Setting up Quizzes permissions

To use release conditions with Quizzes, you must set the following permissions:

Setting	Allow users to	Users will see	Also required	Applicable org unit types
See Conditionally Release Quizzes	See quizzes even if release conditions are not met	Conditionally released quizzes	See the Quizzes Tool (Should not have View Quiz Setup)	Any
Attach/Remove Release Conditions on Quizzes	Add release conditions to quizzes and remove existing conditions	The Additional Release Conditions area in the Restrictions tab when editing a quiz	See the Quizzes Tool View Quiz Setup Create Quizzes or Edit Quiz Properties	Any

Setting up Surveys permissions

To use release conditions with Surveys, you must set the following permissions:

Setting	Allow users to	Users will see	Also required	Applicable org unit types
See Conditionally Release Surveys	See surveys even if release conditions are not met	Conditionally released surveys in the list of surveys	See the Surveys Tool (Not applicable when you have Manage Surveys)	Any
Attach/Remove Release Conditions on Surveys	Add release conditions to surveys and remove existing conditions	The Additional Release Conditions section on the Restrictions tab	See the Surveys Tool Manage the Surveys Tool Edit Surveys Properties or Can Create Surveys	Any

Best practices for creating release conditions

- **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 (for example, accessing a content topic before it is finished).

- **Avoid unnecessary conditions** - Each condition you associate with a tool takes additional time for Brightspace 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, you set up a content topic, a quiz, and an assignment submissions folder for the second week of class. You want 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 work to the assignment submissions folder. For the assignment submissions folder, you only need to attach the condition that users attempt the quiz. Since users must read the content topic before they can take the quiz, it is not necessary to add this condition to the assignment submissions folder.

- **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 an assignment

submissions folder, and then set a condition that they must submit a file to the assignment submissions 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 an assignment submissions 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 the grade item is set to *Can Exceed*). 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 cannot satisfy both conditions at the same time; they would not be able to see the item associated with these conditions.

- **Release content based on learning ability and course performance** - Include additional content in your 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. Alternately, release a special survey to users who attain a high score.

- **Release content in stages** - To reveal content topics to users only after they have read prior content, attach release conditions on the subsequent 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.

- **Release content based on enrollment date** - If your course has rolling enrollment, you 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.

- **Customize content for groups within a course** - If your course has group projects and you want to provide different instructions or resources for each group, you 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.

- **Use a checklist to organize activities** - You 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 to an introductory discussion topic, and submitting a list of learning goals to assignment submissions folder. You can set release conditions based on users checking off items from their checklist. For example, you might release an Announcements item on your course's homepage once users check off that they have completed the first week's activities.

- **Use intelligent agents to monitor user activity or non-activity** - You can set up intelligent agents with release conditions using the *not* operator to intervene with students who have not completed course work. For example, create an intelligent agent that sends a reminder email to users who have not yet completed a quiz attempt or submitted an assignment to an assignment submissions folder.

How to set release conditions

You can set release conditions in the tools to which the release conditions apply. You add release conditions when you create a custom administrator widget, a custom instructor widget, a custom learner widget, or a custom widget for tool provider links. In addition, the following set of tasks provides more detailed information about adding release conditions to specific tools:

To set release conditions for an award

You can add release conditions to an award and release other content or another award to learners when they achieve the award requirement that you define.

1. Within the course, on the navbar, click **Awards**.

2. On the award, click **Edit Properties**.

3. Click **Create**.

4. From the **Condition Type** drop-down list, select the release condition.

5. Complete the associated **Condition Details**.

6. Click **Create**.

Click **Save**.

To set release conditions for a quiz

1. On the navbar, click **Quizzes**.

2. On the **Manage Quizzes** page, from the context menu of the quiz you want to add restrictions to, click **Edit**.

3. In the **Restrictions** tab, do any of the following:

   - In the **Dates and Restrictions** area, update the **Status** drop-down list, **Dates** section, and the **Additional Release Conditions** section for the quiz.

   - In the **Optional Advanced Restrictions** area, update the **Password** field.

   - In the **Optional Advanced Restrictions** area, update the **IP Restriction** field. You can add multiple IP address ranges to ensure that users can only access a quiz from IP addresses in the specified IP address ranges.

   - In the **Timing** area, set your timing options for the quiz.

   - In the **Special Access** area, select your **Type of Access** and click **Add Users to Special Access**.

Click **Save and Close**.

To set release conditions for a checklist

1. On the navbar, click 📋 **Checklist**.

2. From the context menu of the checklist for which you want to set release conditions, click 🖊 **Edit**.

3. In the **Restrictions** tab, do any of the following:

    -   Click **Attach Existing**, then select the check box for any condition you want to attach. Click **Attach**.

    -   Click **Create and Attach**, then select a **Condition Type** from the drop-down list. Complete any additional **Condition Details** that appear and click **Create**.

4. To set how accessing the checklist is controlled, from the drop-down list, select if **All conditions must be met** or **Any condition must be met**.

Click **Save and Close**.

To set release conditions for an assignment submission folder

Release conditions allow you to associate an assignment submission folder with other items in Brightspace Learning Environment. For example, you can require that users meet some criteria, such as reading a set of lecture notes in Content, before they can submit their work to an assignment submission folder. You can also make submission to the assignment submission folder a criterion for accessing another item, such as a quiz.

1. On the navbar, click 🖥 **Assignments**.

2. On the **Assignment Submission Folders** page, from the context menu of the assignment submission folder you want to set release conditions for, click 🖊 **Edit Submission Folder**.

3. In the **Restrictions** tab, in the **Release Conditions** area, do one of the following:

    -   Click **Attach Existing**. From the drop-down list, select the check box for any condition you want to attach. Click **Attach**.

    -   Click **Create and Attach**, then select a **Condition Type**. Complete any additional **Condition Details** that appear and click **Create**.

4. To set how accessing the grade item or category is controlled, from the drop-down list, select if **All conditions must be met** or **Any condition must be met**.

Click **Save and Close**.

To set release conditions for a grade item

Release conditions allow you to associate grade items and grade book categories with other items in Brightspace Learning Environment. For example, you can require that users meet some other criteria, such as completing a quiz or submitting to an assignment submission folder, before a specific grade item appears in their grade book.

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Manage Grades** page, click on the grade item you want to set release conditions for.

3. In the **Restrictions** tab, in the **Release Conditions** area, do one of the following:

    - Click **Attach Existing**, then select the check box for any condition you want to attach. Click **Attach**.

    - Click **Create and Attach**, then select a **Condition Type** from the drop-down list. Complete any additional **Condition Details** that appear and click **Create**.

4. From the drop-down list, select if **All conditions must be met** or **Any condition must be met** to access the grade item or category.

Click **Save and Close**.

To set release conditions for a survey

On the Restrictions tab of the survey, you can create new, or attach existing release conditions if you want a survey to be available to users only after they fulfill other specified tasks. Examples of release conditions include completing an Assignments submission, scoring a specified grade in a particular quiz, completing a Self Assessments submission, and being enrolled in a particular section. You can also use Release Conditions to make the survey available only to a particular role. Edit and change release conditions by clicking the Remove icon or Remove All Conditions.

If you decide to make the survey available with certain release conditions, you can also use the Intelligent Agents tool to notify students that the survey is available once they've fulfilled the applicable release conditions.

To set release conditions for an announcement

1. From the **Announcements** widget menu, click **New Announcements Item**.

2. Enter a headline and content for your Announcements item.

3. If you want to hide your headline's date and time, clear the **Always show start date** check box. By default, an Announcements item start date and time appears below the headline when displayed in the Announcements widget.

4. In the **Start Date** and **End Date** fields, select the posting availability date. Announcements items publish immediately, unless you specify an alternate start date from Start Date.
    Note: Post-dated Announcements items do not display in the Announcements widget even if users have

permission to see future Announcements items. They can be found within the list of Announcements items on the Announcements page.

5. You can remove an Announcements item on a specific date by selecting the **Remove Announcements item based on end date** check box. You and administrators can still see the Announcements item after its end date, but it does not appear in the Announcements widget.

6. In the **Attachments** section, add attachments, audio recordings, and video recordings as part of your Announcements item.

7. To include additional release conditions, click **Attach Existing** or **Create and Attach**.

To continue editing the Announcements item, click **Save as Draft**. Students cannot see draft Announcements items. To release Announcements item to users, click **Publish**.

To create Intelligent Agents

1. On the navbar, click **Course Admin**.

2. Click **Intelligent Agents** > **New**.

3. On the **Agent List** page, click **New**.

4. In the **Agent Details** area, enter a name and description.

5. If you would like the agent to be active, select **Agent is enabled**.

6. In the **Agent Criteria** area, do one of the following:

    *   If you want your agent to target users' login habits, in the **Login Activity** section, enter your criteria.

    *   If you want your agent to target users' course habits, in the **Course Activity** section, enter your criteria.

    *   If you want your agent to run when a specific existing condition has been met in the **Release Conditions** area, click **Attach Existing**. Select the check box for any condition you want to attach. Click **Attach**.

    *   If you want your agent to run when a specific new condition has been met, in the **Release Conditions** area, click **Create and Attach**. Select a **Condition Type** from the drop-down list. Complete any additional **Condition Details** that appear and click **Create**.

7. In the **Agent Action** area, do the following:

    *   Select how often you want the agent to take action.

    *   If you want to schedule how frequently Brightspace Learning Environment evaluates the agent criteria, select the **Use Schedule** check box. Click **Update Schedule** and set your scheduling details.
        Note: Scheduled intelligent agents stop running and are automatically disabled if the course is inactive, over (end date passed), or deleted. You can still set up a practice run or a manual run of an intelligent agent at any time in a course with a passed end date.

- In the **Email Format** area, enter your email details.

Click **Save and Close**.

Using release conditions in accessible course content

When creating accessible content, it is important to make time limits and deadlines flexible. Learners with special needs benefit when you provide readings well in advance of deadlines so that they can work ahead and prepare. Many learners need extra time to read through content multiple times. If you use release conditions to control when to release new modules of course content, make sure you give learners plenty of time to complete each component.

Scenarios for creating release conditions to increase accessibility in courses

You can use Special Access and Release Conditions to set criteria around the availability of content, which can be useful for accommodating students with other needs.

The following scenarios provide examples of when release conditions or special access can improve accessibility:

- Create groups for students with special needs and use release conditions to provide course material, tasks, and work areas that are not available to other students. This is a good option if you do not want other students to see or have access to the additional course items.

- If you are teaching a large course, you might not be aware of the individual needs of all the students enrolled in the course. Set up a checklist that learners can use to request extra resources, help, or course material in a different format. For example, for each week or major assignment, create checklist items for text-only versions of the course material, an extra help discussion forum, additional reading material, and alternative formats for multimedia material. Set release conditions for the checklist items so the requested content is automatically released. This option ensures that the majority of learners access the material as you intended, but learners needs are supported.

- Set up a survey to help you determine the learning needs of learners. Use the survey results to determine what special access rights and extra resources to provide for the learners.

- Set up quizzes, surveys, or assignment folders with time restrictions, but give special access to learners who need more time because of physical or cognitive disabilities. Alternatively, instructors creating quizzes might prefer to not set any time restrictions because they can impact the quality of answers.

How release conditions interact with tools

When adding release conditions to your courses, keep in mind the following:

- You can store release conditions in a template and maintain Quicklinks for release conditions between your grade book and other tools.

- Associations between components are not exported (for example, release conditions). The IMS Content Packaging specification, which the format for export files is based on, does not support these associations.

- To copy release conditions, you must select the Release Conditions component. Only release conditions that reference or are attached to other components are copied at the same time as the component. For example, if a quiz has a release condition that refers to a content topic, the release note is only copied if both the quiz and the content topic are copied at the same time. If you copy release conditions without selecting any other component, there is no action.

- When you turn off a tool, release conditions based on the tool are still enforced. For example, if you create a release condition that releases extra merit content when a learner participates in five surveys, and then you turn off the Survey tool, the content is not released.

Troubleshooting release conditions

A Content module I'm looking for is missing, what should I do?

The modules release conditions might not be met. Instructors can set modules to only appear once certain criteria is met by the individual learner, such as passing a quiz before new content is released for the next module. Check your syllabus as information concerning release conditions may be attached to modules. You can also contact the instructor for information about whether there is a release condition attached to the module that is missing.

A learner is getting an error message when they try to access a Content link

If a learner receives a Not Authorized message, they might have not met a release condition attached to the item they are trying to access. The learner should contact the course instructor to provide information about whether the a release condition or a date restriction applies to the item the learner is trying to access. If the instructor determines the learner should be able to access the link, the link might be broken.

Why can't I access a discussion post?

If a learner receives a Not Authorized or Internal Error message when attempting to access a discussion post, the discussion may no longer be available, or the release conditions set on the discussion are not permitting access to the discussion.

Ensure that the learner has completed the appropriate content modules in the order of activities provided by the instructor since there might be release conditions set for accessing the discussion topic. Other reasons for being unable to access discussion posts might be a result of the availability date range for the post.

Why can't learners see the content I posted

Under Release Conditions, ensure that the release conditions set on the Content module/topic are accurate.

If there are release conditions set that weren't intended, remove the release conditions by clicking the **Delete** icon.

If the start date, end date, and release conditions are set accurately, and learner still can't view the Content module / topic, then the reason the learner cannot view the Content is because they have not met the release conditions to view the modules or topics.

Why is unexpected course content displaying in Brightspace LeaP?

When you set up a course or learning path, you can add content, files, external links, and discussion posts that become available to learners from content modules, regardless of release conditions or published state. Any release, publish, and visibility conditions set in Brightspace Learning Environment do not persist in Brightspace LeaP.

I created an enrollment-based release condition and it disappeared

When you create enrollment-based release conditions, it can take up to two minutes for new conditions to take effect in Brightspace Learning Environment.

About D2L

A global leader in EdTech, D2L is the creator of Brightspace, the world's first integrated learning platform.

The company partners with thought-leading organizations to improve learning through data-driven technology that helps deliver a personalized experience to every learner, regardless of geography or ability. D2L's open and extensible platform is used by more than 1,100 clients and almost 15 million individual learners in higher education, K–12, healthcare, government, and the enterprise sector—including Fortune 1000 companies.

The company has operations in the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, Brazil, and Singapore.
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