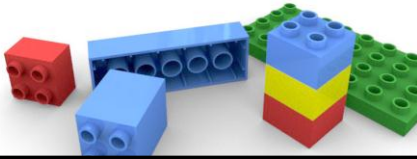# Building blocks and BlackBoard

Simon Booth
Joe Currie
Andy Hulme
Susi Peacock

Overview

- What is a building block?
- Why building blocks (at QMU)
- Examples of building blocks
  - QMU
  - Stirling
- Support from BlackBoard for building blocks
- Issues with building blocks
- LTI and building blocks

What is a building block?

- WebCT parlance – "power link"
- Building blocks provide additional functionality not contained in the core Blackboard product
- Typically used for 3rd party vendors such as Adobe Connect and Google (Bboogle)

Building blocks at QMU

- Commercial software products
  - Turnitin (iParadigms)
  - ePortfolio (PebblePad)
  - Adobe Connect
- Open-source applications
  - Student view
  - ASTRO
- Demo – Link Checker

Why building blocks (The Hub@QM)

- Added functionality
- Seamless learning environment for staff and students
- Reduced admin overhead
- Use BlackBoard as launch point – strengthens role of BlackBoard
- More potential for expansion

Building blocks at Stirling

Commercial
- Campus Pack
- Turnitin

Open Source
Group Viewer
AutioSignon

Local:
Module/Update
Notifications -> RSS (under development)

Engagement with building blocks?

BlackBoard support for building blocks

- Hosted
- Non-hosted

Issues

- Who is responsible?
- Limitations eg roles and Turnitin – less functionality
- Upgrades to BB – see Malcolm Murray's sign-up sheet
- Upgrades to building blocks
- Documentation – i.e. turning point

LTI and Building Blocks

- LTI – universal compared with building blocks which are propertiary
- Building blocks tighter integration with host environment
- So:
  - something to work with BB, Moodle, D2L then use LTI
  - Something with closer integration building block

- ceLTIc project - http://www.celtic-project.org

Further information

- Building block repositories:
  - Blackboard - http://www.blackboard.com/Partnerships/Extensions.aspx
  - Other - https://sites.google.com/site/bbplugins/Pluginsb
- Oscelot
  - http://projects.oscelot.org/gf/