

The use of Blackboard to support Obstetrics & Gynaecology Training

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic created huge challenges for trainees across the country. Within the Yorkshire & Humber Deanery we piloted the use of Blackboard to support training for all trainees. The aim was to improve access to courses and encourage pan-deanery working across a large geographical area. It formed part of the training recovery plan to ensure training opportunities were maximised during the COVID-19 pandemic.

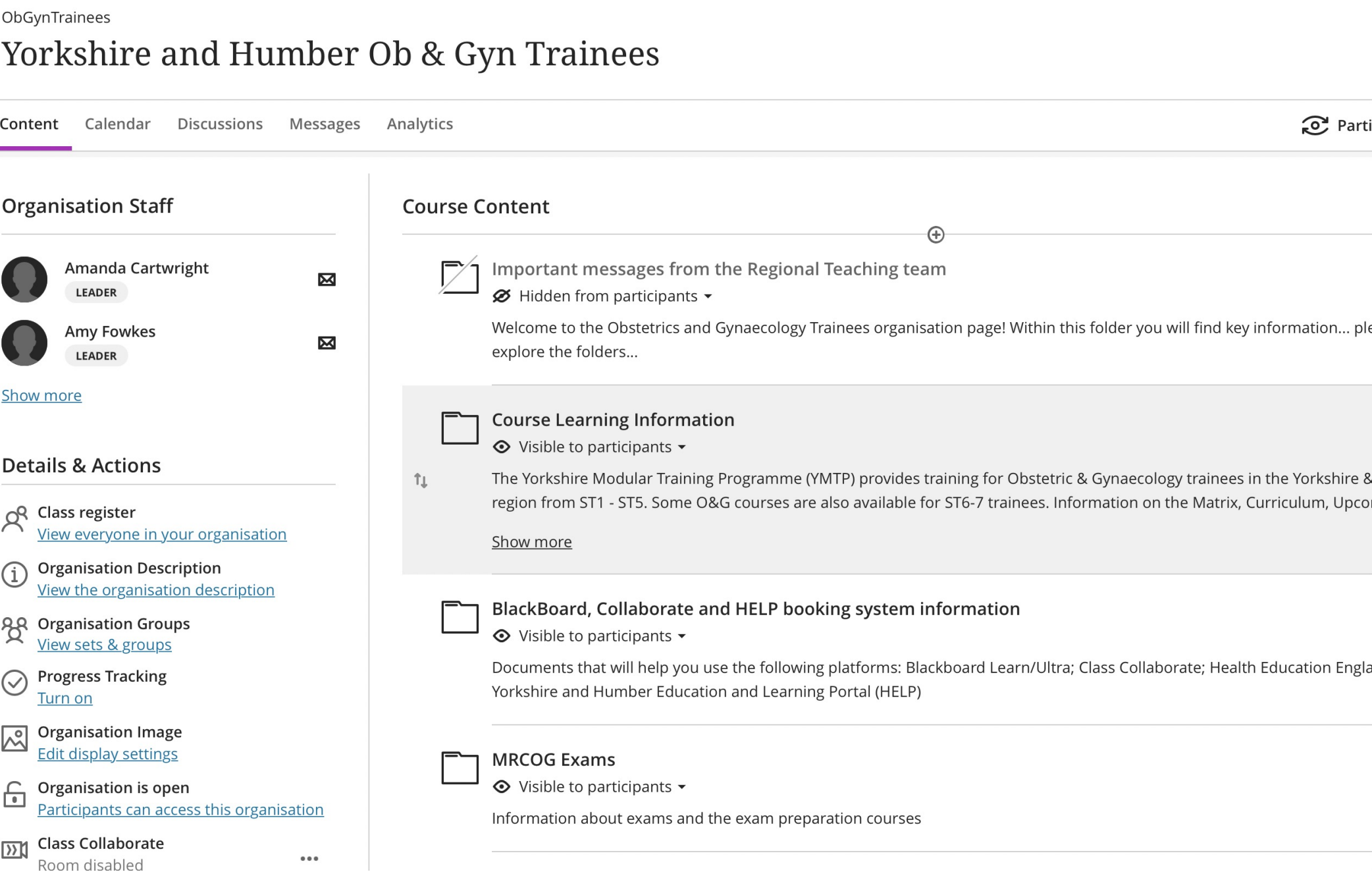
Blackboard Initiatives

- **Part 2 MRCOG Study Group** – Using Blackboard to store group presentations and files to support trainees across the deanery in preparing for this exam. Weekly sessions on Blackboard Collaborate to run virtual sessions.
- **Trainees Committee** – Using Blackboard to store minutes, agendas and project documents. Our committee meetings take place using Blackboard Collaborate
- **ARCP Feedback** – Blackboard collaborate will be used in 2023 for the first time to provide trainees with the opportunity to have a virtual meeting to receive their feedback.
- **Trainee Project Work** – We have a number of trainee sub-committee groups working on various projects from mentoring through to wellbeing. The mentoring has over 90 participants registered and this uses blackboard to link the mentee with a peer mentor. We also organised a yearly trainees conference using a pan-deanery committee through Blackboard. In this group other digital tools such as Jam Board were used to create ideas and themes for the event.

Design

The Blackboard pilot scheme was commissioned by Health Education England within all postgraduate schools in Yorkshire & Humber. Each Head of School could then decide an implementation strategy. Within obstetrics and gynaecology, a Blackboard lead was appointed. This consisted of 1 trainee and 1 consultant. They then designed how this resource could be used and implemented this.

Figure 1: An organisation for all trainees to share important information and to publish announcements.



Methods

All trainees were given a unique log on to the blackboard system, which is a virtual learning environment. A series of organisations were created to link specific groups of trainees. Courses that were pre-existing were transferred on to the blackboard system with a specific area for each course, there were 43 different courses that made up our Yorkshire Modular Training Framework. Within the specified area trainees and trainers could review course documentation, presentations, discussion boards and any additional resources. Trainees could book onto courses using the Blackboard HELP system. Teaching sessions were designed and delivered to facilitators to encourage them to use the interactive features within blackboard such as polling, drawing and use of the chat function.

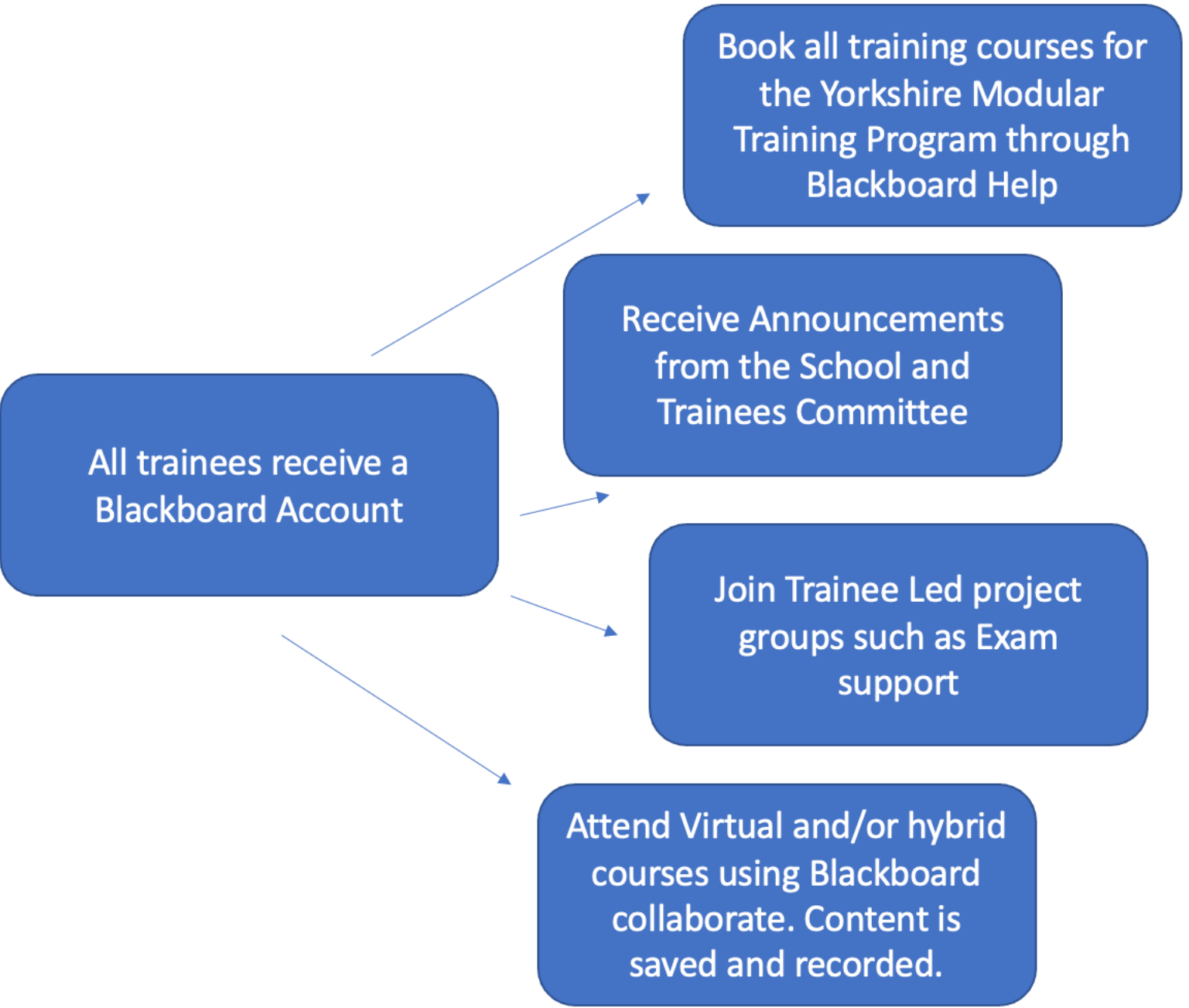
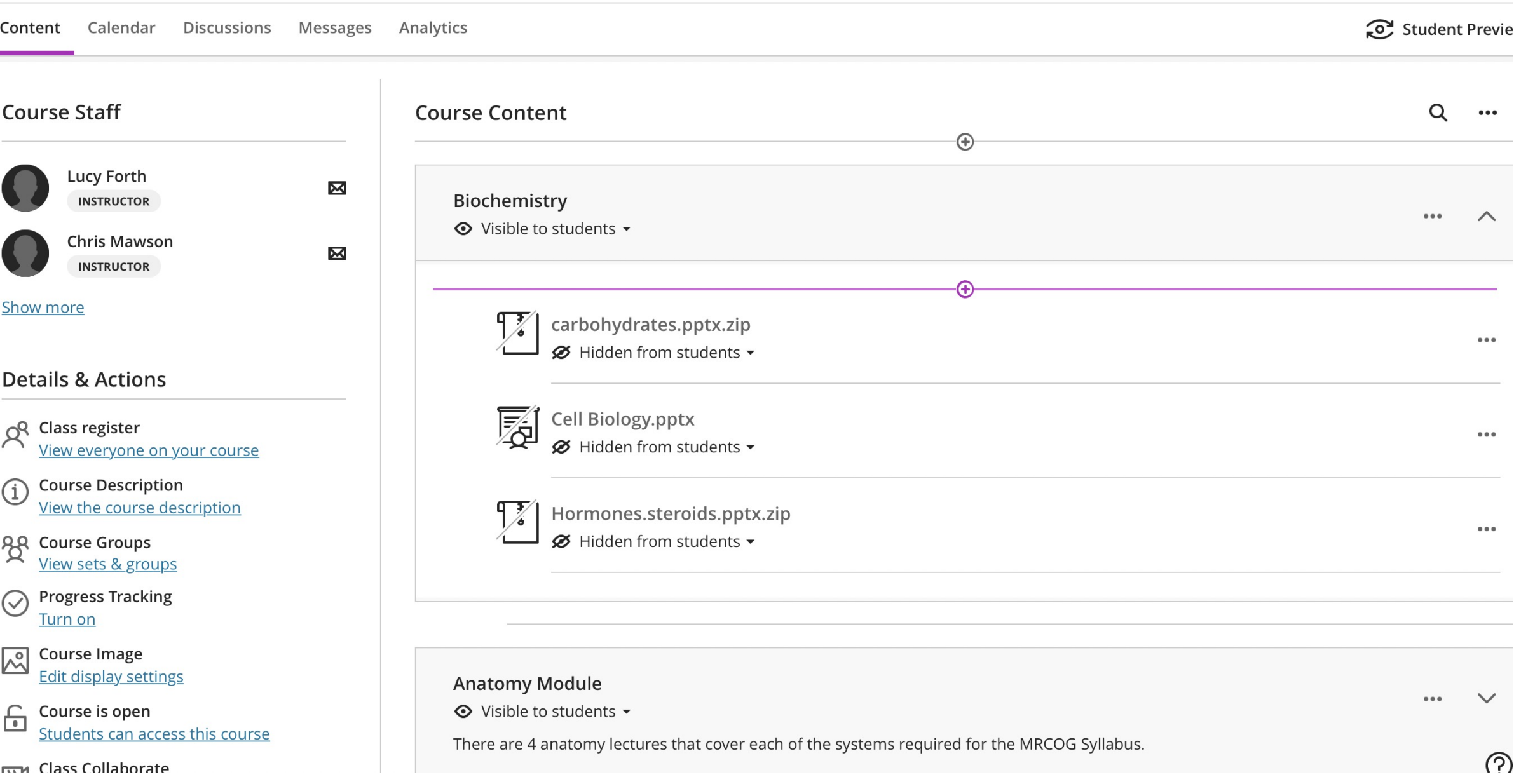


Figure 2: Trainee use of Blackboard

Figure 3: Example of course content to support preparation for the MRCOG

MRCOG Part 1 Revision Course



Useful Interactive Features

- Polling
- Interactive drawing and writing during tutorials
- Blackboard Collaborate
- Discussion Boards
- Announcements section – This allows any announcements to be shared with trainees quickly. This includes fellowship announcements, ARCP updates, course notifications and messages from the trainees committee. The executive school board members such as the Head of School and TPDs can also easily contact trainees.
- All of the above promotes peer to peer support through training and ensures that information is received by trainees.

Conclusion

Blackboard is now an essential resource for O&G trainees within Yorkshire & Humber. It provides a great platform for teaching and learning. It also allows notices to be shared quickly between all trainees across the region including adverts for webinars, OOPE opportunities and links to external bodies of interest. It has allowed us to develop several new initiatives through the trainees committee, for exam preparation and the development of a surgical education hub.

References:

1. School of Obstetrics & Gynaecology Yorkshire & Humber.
https://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/obstetrics_and_gynaecology