

7 hacks.

7 time-saving hacks for course coordination



**associate professor
bronwyn lea**

Hi there! Here are seven hacks I use to preserve my time and sanity when coordinating large courses. Most are work-arounds that I dream will one day be replaced by the “perfect system”. If you have any other ideas, please let me know: b.lea@uq.edu.au

success formula

right information

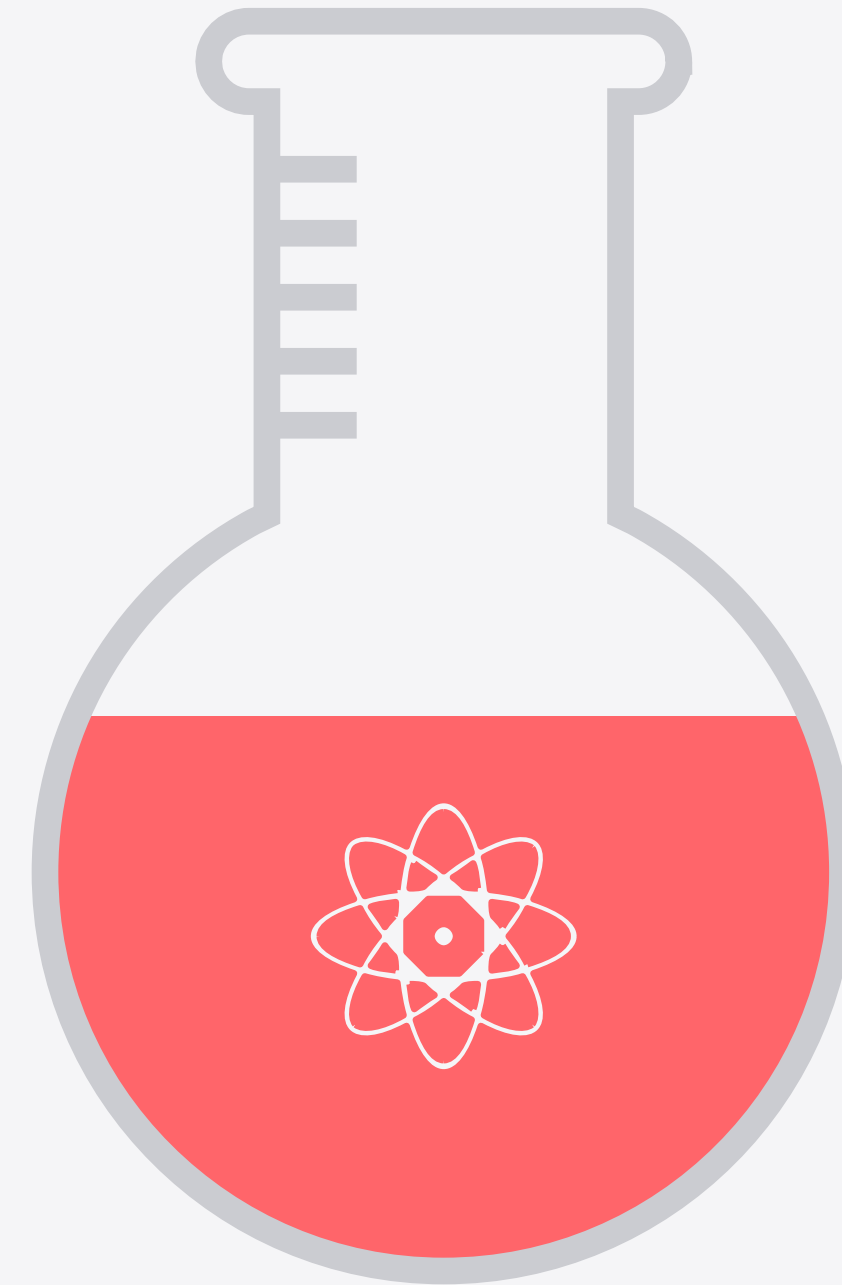
Students who know what's going on email less.

right time

Students who know when it's happening email less.

right place

Students who know where to find things email less.





“The bad news is **time flies.
The **good news** is you’re the **pilot.**”**



business strategy



**we have an
action plan**

autofile emails

- ✓ set up folder for each course you convene
- ✓ set up rules to autofile by subject line
- ✓ store course folders when not in use



ask students to put **course code** in subject line



sample frequently asked questions



limit FAQs to **seven** (or they won't get read)

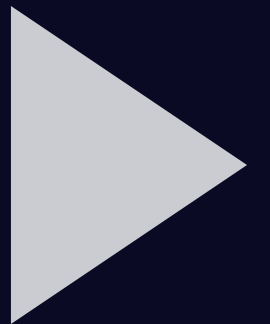
- Where is the [WRIT2100] lecture held?
- What is an ECP?
- How do I sign up for a tutorial?
- When do tutorials start?
- Can I register for my preferred tutorial if it's already full?
- Who is my tutor?
- What is Blackboard?
- What if I need help using the library?
- Where can I get help with [MLA] referencing?
- How do I request a remark on my assignment?
- How do I request an extension on my assignment?
- Are there [poetry] clubs at UQ?
- Are there [state or national arts bodies that support poets]?

**we have an
action plan**

 **02**

bespoke email signatures

- ✓ write a FAQs for each course
- ✓ paste FAQs into a bespoke email signature for each course
- ✓ reply to emails with selected signature





set up signatures for **each computer** you use

**we have an
action plan**

respond and save sapds

- ✓ compose template and save
- ✓ print screen of sapd agreement to pdf (**control p**)
- ✓ save using year, course, student name



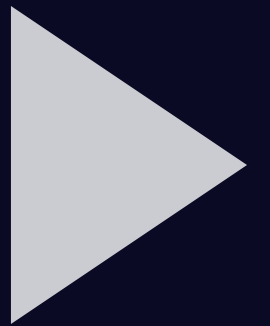
save template to **dropbox** or **cloud** software
(e.g. TextEdit) for universal access

**we have an
action plan**

 **04**

file sapds on blackboard

- ✓ create sapd column in gradebook on Blackboard
- ✓ set column for text and non-graded
- ✓ type YES in cell and upload sapd pdf via grading notes





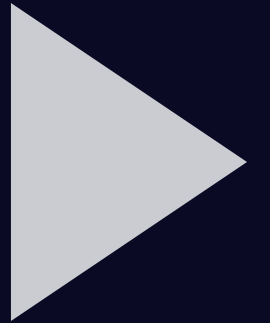
use “quick edit” for notes but keep column **hidden**
(& hide other columns not in use)

**we have an
action plan**

 **05**

digitise extension requests

- ✓ create new assignment in assessment folder
- ✓ upload modified instructions pdf for extension requests
- ✓ tutor approves extension using “quick comment”





modified instructions

HOW TO SUBMIT THIS FORM

1. Save a blank form to your computer as FAMILY NAME, Given Name #STUDENT ID Course Code (Example: SMITH, Jane #41235678 WRIT2100)
2. Complete your application details on your saved form, then click 'Save'.
3. **Upload the completed form to the request for extension link in the assessment item folder on Blackboard. Also upload your supporting documents** such as medical certificate, funeral notice or employer letter (scan or photo). You will be notified if you need to provide original documents.
4. Upload your application form by the due date specified in Section 5.3 of the relevant Electronic Course Profile (ECP).
5. You will be notified of the outcome of your application via **Gradebook on Blackboard**.

Extension applications must be received by the assessment due date.



add **tutor initials** column to gradebook so you quickly see who belongs to who – it’s a breeze if do it through “smart views”

**we have an
action plan**

gradebook columns

- ✓ hide columns: student number, last access
- ✓ move extension request column next to assessment
- ✓ tutor approves request and enters feedback



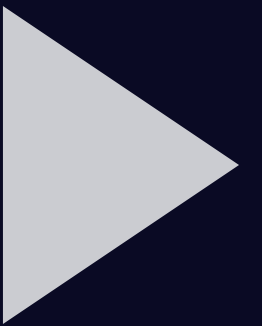
set up a similar system in Blackboard for **remark requests**

**we have an
action plan**

 **07**

pimp your ecp

- ✓ 1.4 add FAQs for tutorials
- ✓ 4.2 add FAQs and other helpful course information
- ✓ 5.3 modify instructions for extension requests





standardise processes across your discipline so students don't get confused (and email you)

brainstorm