CUNY Blackboard Third-Party Tools (Building Blocks and LTI) Procedures

In an effort to maintain a secure and optimal performance of CUNY’s Blackboard LMS as well as ensure all third-party Tools (Building Block and LTI) requests are completed in a consistent and timely fashion, the following process has been developed.

1. Requester (faculty or academic staff member) and Campus Blackboard Admin complete the request form with all the necessary information.

2. The request form is submitted to the Building Block committee for review. The committee will contact the vendor and the requester if there’s a need for more information and/or presentation. Then, the request is added to the agenda for the next Blackboard Management Council (BMC) meeting.

3. The Blackboard Management Council (BMC) submits to CIS a formal request to install the tool on the test/staging server along with any necessary information (from the request form, which should include the security policy from the vendor).

4. The tool is installed by CIS on staging server.

5. CIS performs a technical testing in order to confirm the tool is working and not causing any performance issue:

   - The requester and local campus Blackboard Admin are expected to participate in the testing to ascertain that the tool meets the instructional need (along with the testing group and other Blackboard Admins if necessary).

   - The testers should provide testing documents and scenarios to CIS along with their findings.

   - CIS documents all issues that happen during the testing (such as installation/maintenance/support issues).

6. A decision about the tool is made:

   The decision will be referred to the Blackboard Management Council and the Blackboard Admin from the campus the request is originated.

   - **If approved:** CIS is asked to install the tool on the University Blackboard production environment using normal IT change management procedures and the requester will be notified as well.

   - **If rejected:** The rationale is documented and communicated back to the original requester by the Building Block committee

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Some of the reasons a request might be rejected:

- Significant costs are involved
- Significant downtime is involved
- Significant workload for the Blackboard Admins at campuses that don’t use the tool
- Significant data security issue*
- Significant impact on performance*
- No funding decision was agreed upon

7- Timeline:

Tools that don’t require down time will be installed in the production environment during the weekly maintenance window preceding the creation of course shells for the upcoming semester – see course shells creation schedule below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upcoming Semester</th>
<th>Course Shells Creation Date</th>
<th>Tool Request Submission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Starting the 1st Wednesday of June</td>
<td>End of February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Starting the 1st Wednesday of November</td>
<td>End of September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Starting the 1st Wednesday of April</td>
<td>End of January</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Tools that require downtime and/or performance testing due to extra load on the system will be installed in the production environment during the annual December Blackboard upgrade.

* Automatic rejection

**Please note:** The Building Block committee reserves the right to reject any request for a third-party tool that does not comply with the system standards.