Blackboard

Course Automatic Archive for SaaS Deployment

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Product: Blackboard Learn

Information:

This feature provides peace of mind for Administrators by automatically creating an Archive of any Course on a Learn SaaS site that has had User activity since the last time the process ran. These Archives are stored in the Content Collection, and are retained by the System for 30 days; after that, they are deleted.

Course Automatic Archives: are created daily and retained for 30 days. This interval is not user-configurable. These archives are "thin" and only contain *references* to content-file data stored out of the archive, and existing already. When they are downloaded or restored they are "materialized" to full-size "on the fly."

The previous distinction between "thin" and "permanent" or "thick" automatic archives was abolished in early 2023. For more information see KB 77093: [Upcoming change to Learn SaaS automatic archives in early 2023](#)

Regular ("thin") Archives contain an XML representation of database data, and pointers to the files.This mechanism relies on the the ["Deferred Delete"](#) mechanism which is explained in KB 000057526. The "thin" archives contain metadata about course files referencing the unique identifiers for the deduplicated data of the files. In the event that the referenced file is deleted before restoration (or download) is initiated, the "missing" data is fetched transparently and automatically from the "deferred deletion" status.

Administrators can restore these Archives to an existing Course or new Course on the same Learn SaaS site. Or download them for permanent storage in external filers. This feature provides Institutions with some of the following benefits:

- Last semester's or year's Courses can easily be recreated, reducing the number of Courses an institution needs to retain within Learn's interface
- Institutions can restore deleted Course Content and Assessments from a previous version
- Institutions can restore a Course to a previous state
- Institutions can compare different versions of current Courses to identify changes

Because Learn will be discard old archives after 30 days, it is recommended that Institutions go through the Course Auto Archives the end of each semester and retain a single backup of each Course (unless they need to retain multiple copies to retain the daily changes).

Finally it is worth noting that the system will automatically archive any course that is deleted. This safeguards against accidental data loss and this mechanism can be exploited to create archives for download. Technically: this is unrelated to the mechanism described in this article but the term "automatic archive" is often used vernacularly to describe this.

Related Links and Resources:

For more information about this new feature available with SaaS deployment, visit [Archive Courses](#) on [Bb Help](#).