

# Provision of information and communication in ILIAS

## Overview

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## General procedures

Information distribution in virtual spaces is a form of communication between teachers and students. The aim is, for example, to control processes, formulate expectations or make agreements. Virtual communication differs in essential ways from communication in which all participants are present in the same place. Time sequences, which otherwise result from the pure attendance time in a course, must be defined in virtual rooms, e.g. in writing. Misunderstandings, e.g. about certain work processes, cannot be resolved directly or only with a time delay and usually too late.

Basically, one should simply keep in mind here,

- You don't see your attendees and vice versa.
- Communication usually takes place asynchronously

Therefore, define all the information about your "virtual" course:

- complete
- precise
- contextual

ILIAS offers numerous possibilities for information distribution, i.e. where, when and how information can be provided in a course room.

## Information about active elements

### Information via bulletin board

The ILIAS Forum can be used in a variety of ways. In terms of information distribution, it is a good idea to use a forum, e.g. as a "bulletin board" for important information. The forum differs from a standard discussion forum, in which two-way communication takes place, especially in its rights settings.

### Bulletin board

In general, the Forum item is created using the "Add new item" option.

A bulletin board offers the opportunity to provide information to all students of a course promptly and reliably. Posted information is automatically sent to all course participants. The posting of student contributions as well as the replying to existing contributions is deactivated in a bulletin board.

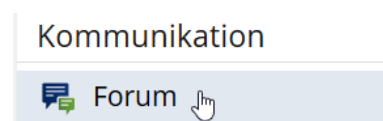


Figure 1 "Forum" Object Selection

First, you create a forum of the same name.

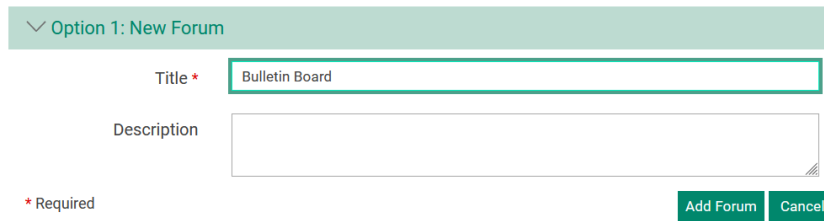


Figure 2 Creating and titling the forum

After the forum has been created, the input mask for a first post opens. However, the next step is to open the "Settings" of the forum via the tab bar and use the "Notifications" sub-tab to specify that posted posts are also sent to all participants. With this setting, shown in the figure, it can be ensured that information reliably reaches its addressees. Participants (referred to here as members) cannot deactivate the notification themselves. However, this also means using this tool for only a few, but

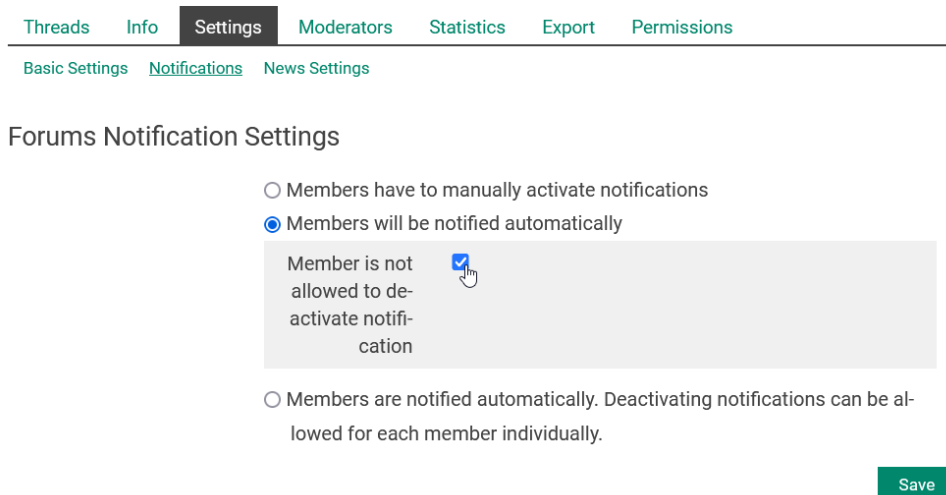


Figure 3 Defining the Notification Rule

important, pieces of information. On the other hand, it presupposes that no discussion takes place within this forum. Only teachers should be able to create contributions. Therefore, in a final step, the permissions for members are restricted accordingly. To do this, switch to the rights settings via the tab bar.

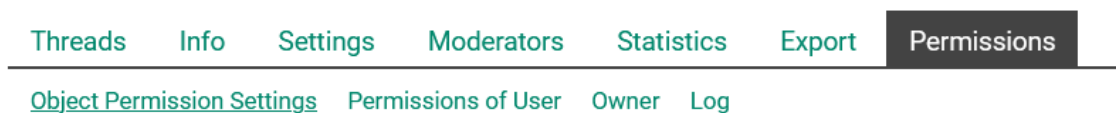


Figure 4 Option "Permissions"

The rights within the forum, as in all objects under ILIAS, are defined by roles. Students always have the role of "course member".

By default, they also have the right to create topics and answers, just like administrators and tutors. By removing the checkmarks, this right is restricted and thus the possibility of discussion is restricted.

Course Administrator	Course Tutor	Course Member
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visible
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Read	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Read	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Read
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Add Reply	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Add Reply	<input type="checkbox"/> Add Reply
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Add Thread	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Add Thread	<input type="checkbox"/> Add Thread

Figure 5 Changing the rights of course members

## Information about the News section of the home page

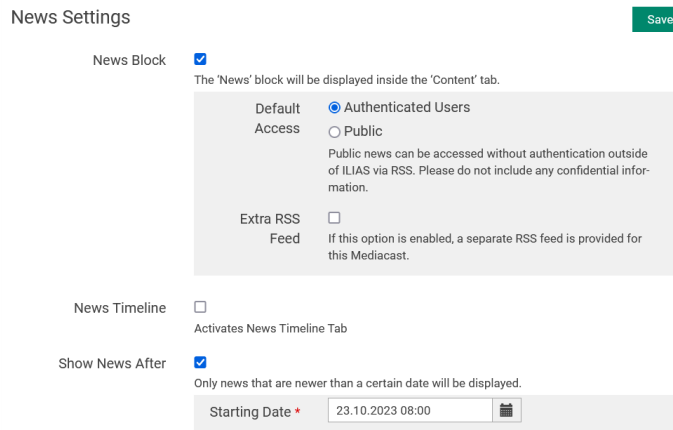
You can activate a block for all news directly on the home page, in which all activities are automatically displayed. To do this, activate the "What's New" option in the "Additional Information" section of the course settings. After initially saving the settings, the function "Open settings of News Block and Timeline" is now displayed in the gray text line (see figure 6) is active.

### Additional Features

- Calendar   
A calendar is available.
- News   
Use of the news block and/or timeline view. Users can subscribe for notifications if the news block or the timeline are activated. [» Open Settings of News Block and Timeline](#)

Figure 6 Enable News

This will open the further settings. You now have the option to activate the "What's New" block on the home page.



News Settings Save

News Block    
 The 'News' block will be displayed inside the 'Content' tab.

Default Access  Authenticated Users   
 Public   
 Public news can be accessed without authentication outside of ILIAS via RSS. Please do not include any confidential information.

Extra RSS Feed    
 If this option is enabled, a separate RSS feed is provided for this Mediacast.

News Timeline    
 Activates News Timeline Tab

Show News After    
 Only news that are newer than a certain date will be displayed.


Starting Date \*  

Figure 7 Block News and Setting the Start Date

You can decide who can see this news. By default, the news is only displayed to the Authenticated users of the course.

By selecting a defined start date, the topicality of the news can be narrowed down to the start of the course. This means that news about activities that took place during the course creation are left out.

## Information about a timeline

It consists of: Another Possibility to receive the latest news and information present. Als a Called Timeline In addition to the automatic activity hints, individually designed information can be provided Presentert. Automated information, such as whether a file has been posted, can also be deactivated in the timeline. This can be viewed via the "Timeline" entry, which in this case is newly displayed in the tab bar.

To add a timeline to the classroom, activate As for the What's new already described, in the course settings, in the "Additional Features" section, select the option "News".

When the timeline is activated, the entry

"Timeline" is automatically entered in the menu bar of the start page. Automatically created news must be explicitly allowed. The timeline can also be activated as a start page. This option leads to the fact

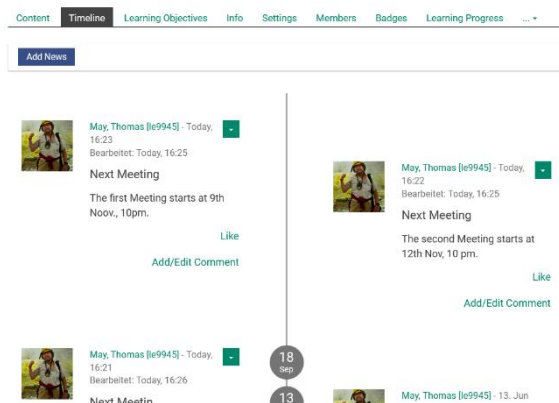


Figure 8 Timeline



## Information in file form

An easy way to place specific information is to make it available as files for direct viewing or downloading.

In principle, non-editable (or difficult) file formats should be chosen for such information. For example, it is better to set PDF files instead of Word or similar.



Figure 12 Direct File Preview

For PDF files and graphics, ILIAS offers a preview function, i.e. content can be viewed directly to a certain extent.

## General event information

In order to illustrate the course of a (virtual) event, it can, for example, be set up as a file for download. This ensures that all appointments and activities are available to the participants. The same applies to formal requirements, such as the expected performance to obtain all credit points, e.g. in a seminar.

For a quick overview, a simple graphical representation is often sufficient, as the following example shows.

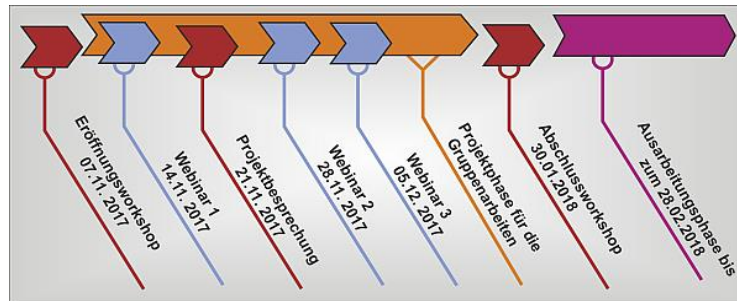


Figure 13 Graphical Schedule

In principle, such central information should be offered compactly in a correspondingly visible course area.

## Information about page elements.

The general conditions of a course, such as regular dates, concrete work instructions or performance requirements for students, can be displayed prominently as page design elements. Depending on the objective, this can be realized within different areas of activity.

In the following three (ILIAS) areas, you have the option "Customize Page" to generate information in a contextual manner.

- Content page (home page) of the course room
- Folder
- Group

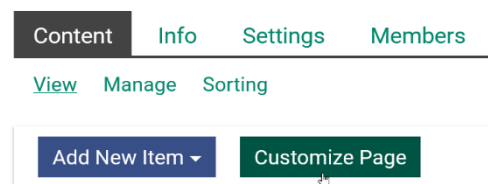


Figure 14 Option "Customize Page"

These areas can be assigned corresponding target groups and settings of the information content. These can be roughly outlined as follows.

### Course room content page

On the content page, you can place all the information that ...

- ... affect all students of the course
- ... Information that remains valid for the entire period
  - ... Course Schedule
  - ... Dates
  - ... Requirements



## Folder

Within a folder, you can place all the information that ...

- ... affect all students who have access to the folder
- ... the materials contained relate to:
- ... explain the subject area delimited by the folder

## Group

Within a group, all the information that ...

- ... which concern group members
- ... Information about
  - ... Working methods of the group
  - ... Dates

## Page design elements

You can find comprehensive information about page design in the "Page Design" tutorial.

## Insert texts

Important information can be inserted directly as text on the content page. Different styles offer the possibility, for example, to emphasize the importance by marking them appropriately. In the example, the note to start setting up the typesetting system immediately is highlighted. Predefined processes can be displayed as a list. This results in a comprehensive overview of everything important as soon as you enter the ILIAS room.

### Welcome to the virtual course room "Introduction to $\text{L}^{\text{A}}\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$ ".

The module is divided into three blocks:

1. "Installation and configuration"
2. "The Basics of  $\text{L}^{\text{A}}\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$ "
3. "The math mode in  $\text{L}^{\text{A}}\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$ "

You can access all the materials in the respective block using the categories below this text block.

The exercises and examples provided are usually case studies of the various options and functionalities of the system.

First start by installing and configuring a  $\text{L}^{\text{A}}\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$  distribution.



Figure 15 Course Schedule Information

## Carousel

Important information such as appointment dates, notes can be displayed on a page (content, folder or group) as a kind of continuous ticker.

**1001st community meeting on February 29, 2024**

On Tuesday, February 29th, 2024, the Ilias User Network will meet at KIT for its next virtual meeting. It is aimed at all committed KIT employees and student representatives who work with ILIAS and is intended to serve as an opportunity for shared exchange and mutual support when working with ILIAS.

Figure 17 Schedule Ticker 1

**Shutdown of the entire instance!**

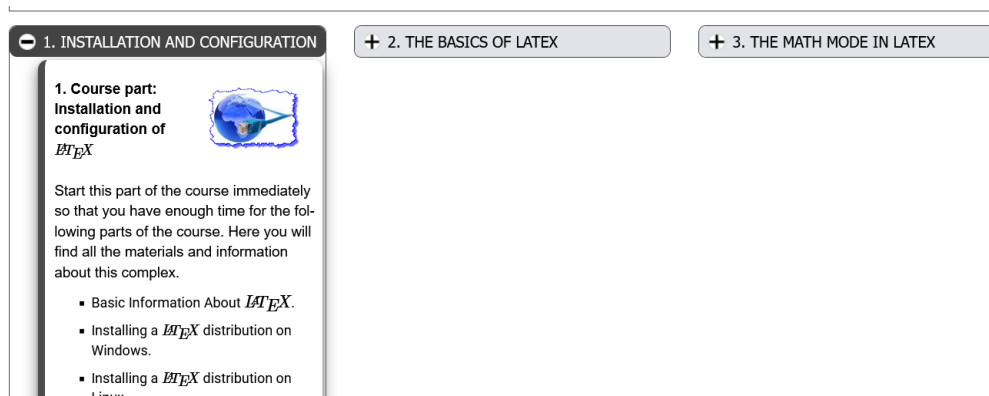
On September 31th, 2024, the entire ILIAS instance will be closed due to switched off for urgent maintenance work.

Figure 16 Appointment Ticker 2

The registers are changed automatically. The interval in which the individual registers are displayed can be specified in the settings. On touchscreens, but also via mouse, viewers can move the individual registers and thus move through the entries.

## Page structuring as an information tool

A page can be divided into areas that reflect the context by providing materials and/or activities for an event's history. This results in a structure that is largely self-explanatory. In the following example, the areas of course information, lecture (materials) and exercises are shown as separate areas.



1. INSTALLATION AND CONFIGURATION    + 2. THE BASICS OF LATEX    + 3. THE MATH MODE IN LATEX

**1. Course part: Installation and configuration of  $\LaTeX$**

Start this part of the course immediately so that you have enough time for the following parts of the course. Here you will find all the materials and information about this complex.

- Basic Information About  $\LaTeX$ .
- Installing a  $\LaTeX$  distribution on Windows.
- Installing a  $\LaTeX$  distribution on Linux

Figure 18 Page Structure

The individual areas contain the corresponding materials and active objects. These are grouped together using the "Object Blocks" object. This makes it possible to combine different object types such as forums, files, etc. in a common block and title it accordingly.

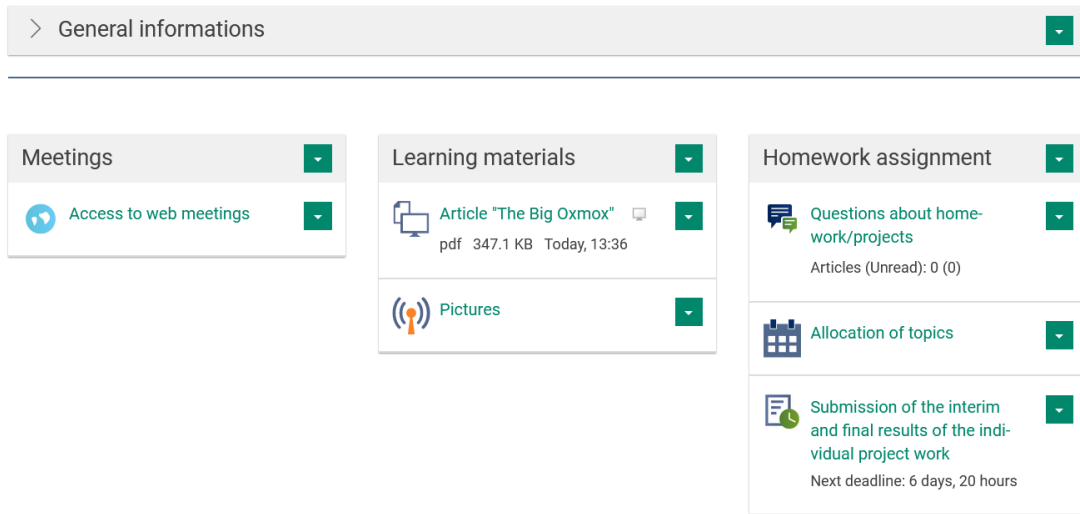


Figure 19 Item Groups with Associated Items

In the overall view, the three lower blocks have also been inserted into three columns via the page design: This serves to save space. Of course, the areas can also simply remain one after the other in a list-like manner. The following is a step-by-step explanation of the procedure

1. First of all, you create the majority of the required objects. This means that you upload files, create forums, exercises, etc. as desired.
2. Now you create as many item groups as are needed. Under "Add new object" you give the item a title, representing the content.
2. The first thing to do is to give the object block a title and create it.

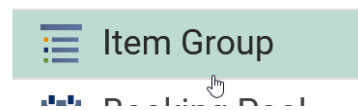


Figure 20 Selecting the "Item Group"

New Item Group

Title \* Homework assignment

Description

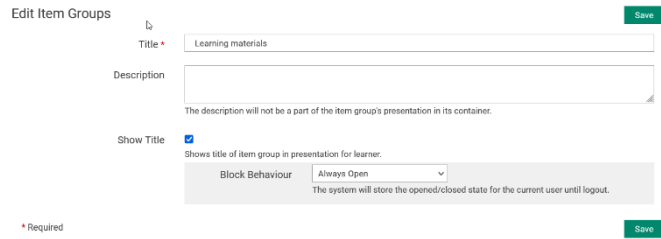
The description will not be a part of the Item group's presentation in its container.

\* Required

Add Item Group Cancel

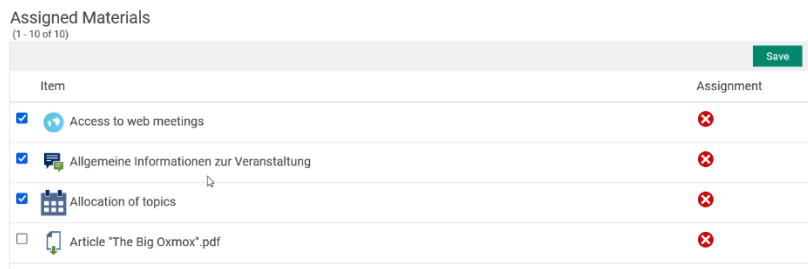
Figure 21 Creating an item group

- From the list (opens automatically) of available objects, you assign the desired objects via Save. New objects can also be created in this dialog (see top right).
- Via the "Settings" option you can now define how the behavior of the block should be, i.e. open or closed.



The screenshot shows the 'Edit Item Groups' dialog box. It has a 'Save' button in the top right corner. The 'Title' field contains 'Learning materials'. The 'Description' field is empty, with a note below it: 'The description will not be a part of the item group's presentation in its container.' The 'Show Title' checkbox is checked, with a note: 'Shows title of item group in presentation for learner.' The 'Block Behaviour' dropdown menu is set to 'Always Open', with a note below it: 'The system will store the opened/closed state for the current user until logout.' There is a '\* Required' label and another 'Save' button at the bottom right.

Figure 22 Item Group Settings



The screenshot shows the 'Assigned Materials' table. It has a 'Save' button in the top right corner. The table has two columns: 'Item' and 'Assignment'. There are four rows of items, each with a checkbox in the 'Item' column and a red 'X' in the 'Assignment' column.

Item	Assignment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Access to web meetings	✘
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allgemeine Informationen zur Veranstaltung	✘
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allocation of topics	✘
<input type="checkbox"/> Article "The Big Oxmox".pdf	✘

Figure 23 Selection of Items

Thus, the areas are set up. So far, these are still available as a list.  
In order to insert a column structure and explanatory texts for the areas, you have to transfer all generated elements into the page design. To do this, proceed as follows.

1. Open the page editor via "Design page"
2. Creation of a so-called "Resource List" for each object block.
3. As a resource, you call the desired object block (Figure 26).

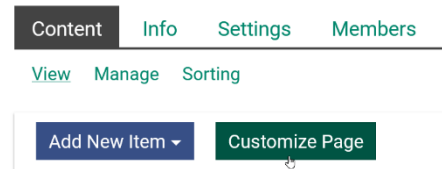


Figure 24 Customizing the Page

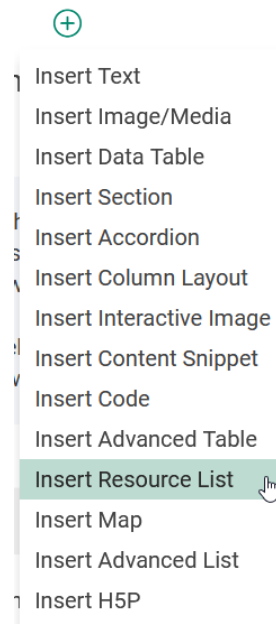


Figure 25 Inserting a Resource List

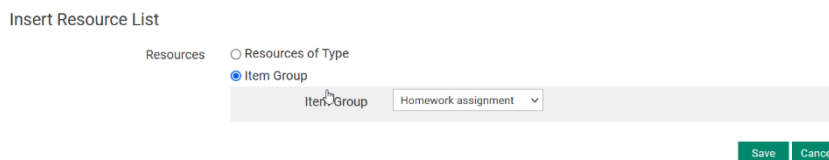


Figure 26 Assigning a item group

4. For the division into columns, select the column layout (see Figure 27) as the page element. In the left-hand slate, it is possible to select one of the predefined column sets, or to create the layout individually.
5. In the case of individual creation, you first define the number of columns. The column width can be defined for display devices of different sizes (e.g. smartphones, tablets or normal screens). A grid of 12 applies to the window width. 12/12 corresponds to a column width of the entire display window, 4/12 e.g. one third of the display window. In the example, the three columns are shown on a small display one below the other on a full page. Otherwise as three-columns.
6. The text blocks above the material lists can now be inserted into the columns.

**Insert Column Layout**  
Adds a responsive column layout based on a grid with 12 units per row.

**Column Layout**

- Two-column-layout  
Creates two equally wide columns next to each other. Switches to a one-column layout in Mobile View (small).
- Three-column-Layout  
Creates three columns of equal width next to each other. Switches to a one-column layout in Mobile View (small).
- Main and side block  
Creates a wide column on the left and a narrower column on the right. Switches to a one-column layout in Mobile View (small).
- Two-time-two-box  
Creates two rows with two columns of equal width. Switches to a one-column layout in mobile view (small) and to a four-column layout on extra-wide screens (extra large).
- Manually created page layout  
Enables the free design of the number and width of columns.

**Insert** **Cancel**

Figure 27 Selection of Column Layouts

Manually created page layout  
Enables the free design of the number and width of columns.

**Number of Columns**

**Small**  
 ▼  
E.g. smartphone

**Medium**  
 ▼  
E.g. tablet

**Large**  
 ▼  
E.g. desktop

**Extra Large**  
 ▼  
E.g. wide desktop

**Insert** **Cancel**

Figure 28 Editing the Column Width

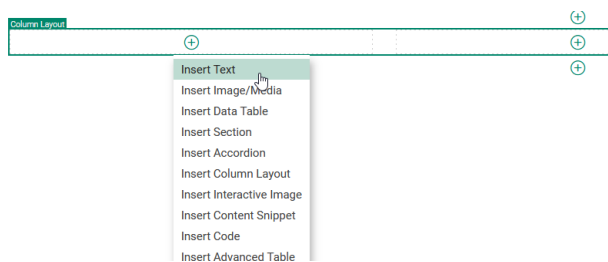


Figure 29 Inserting the Elements

## Info & Contact

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