

Using the Administrative Reports in Canvas

Overview

Canvas offers a number of preset administrative reports, providing data for all modules within a School or Department and their participants. These reports are available to people who have been assigned the Colleague (editor) role for the relevant School or Department within Canvas. The reports are all provided as CSV files which must be downloaded and opened in a suitable application.

This guidance explains how to configure and run these reports. It will use the example of a report identified as relevant for measuring student engagement with Canvas.

Accessing the Reports area

People with an administrative role in Canvas (for example, the Colleague (editor) role) will see an “Admin” link in the main navigation menu when they log into Canvas on a web browser. Selecting this link will open a list of the School and Department “subaccounts” for which they have an administrative role in Canvas.

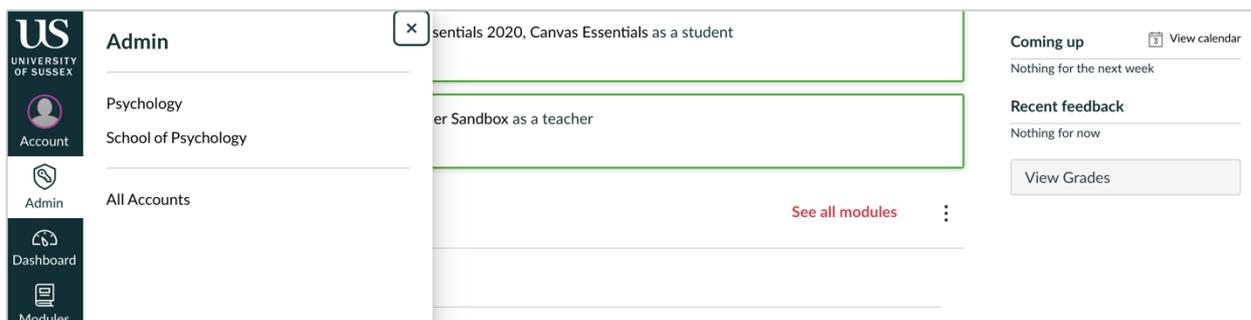


Figure 1: The Admin link and list of “subaccounts”

Choosing the School or Department name for which you wish to retrieve data will take you to the Administration area for that subaccount.

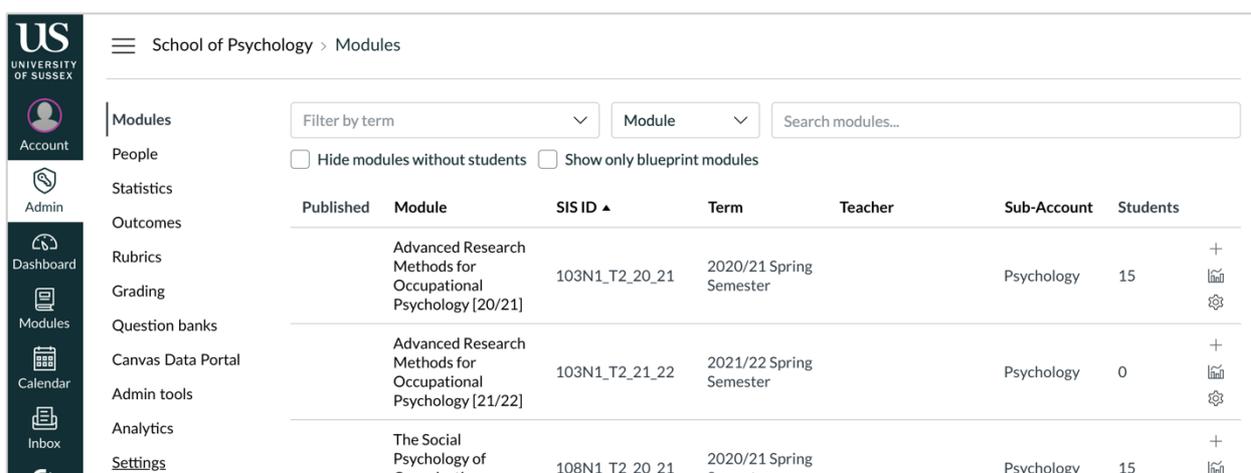


Figure 2: Administrative area for the School of Psychology subaccount

From here, choose the “Settings” link, at the bottom of the list that begins with “Modules”. This will take you to the subaccount settings, which include the reports.

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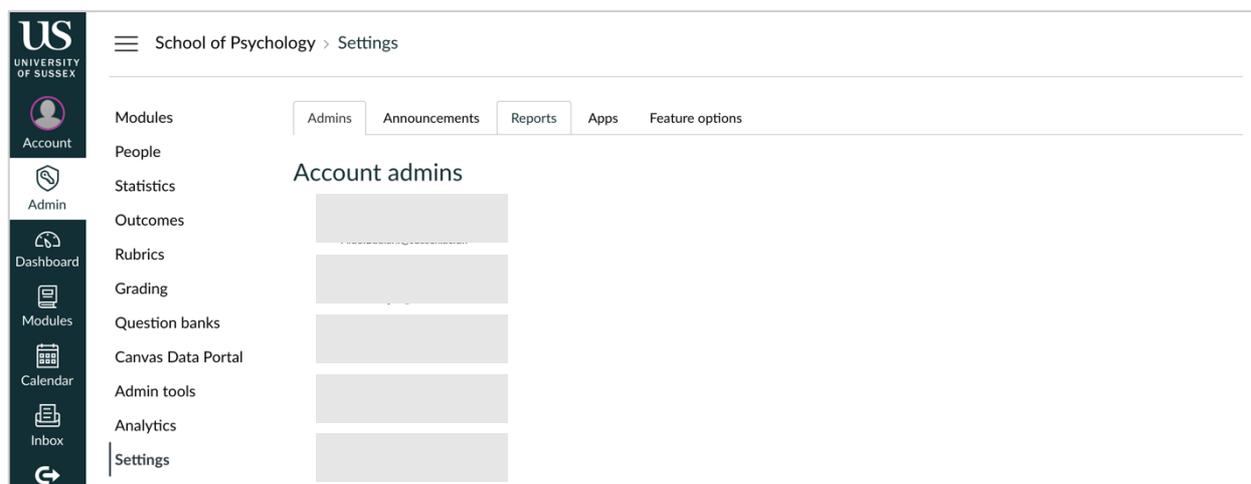


Figure 3: Subaccount "Settings" area

In the settings area, select "Reports" from the tabs near the top of the page. This will list the reports available.

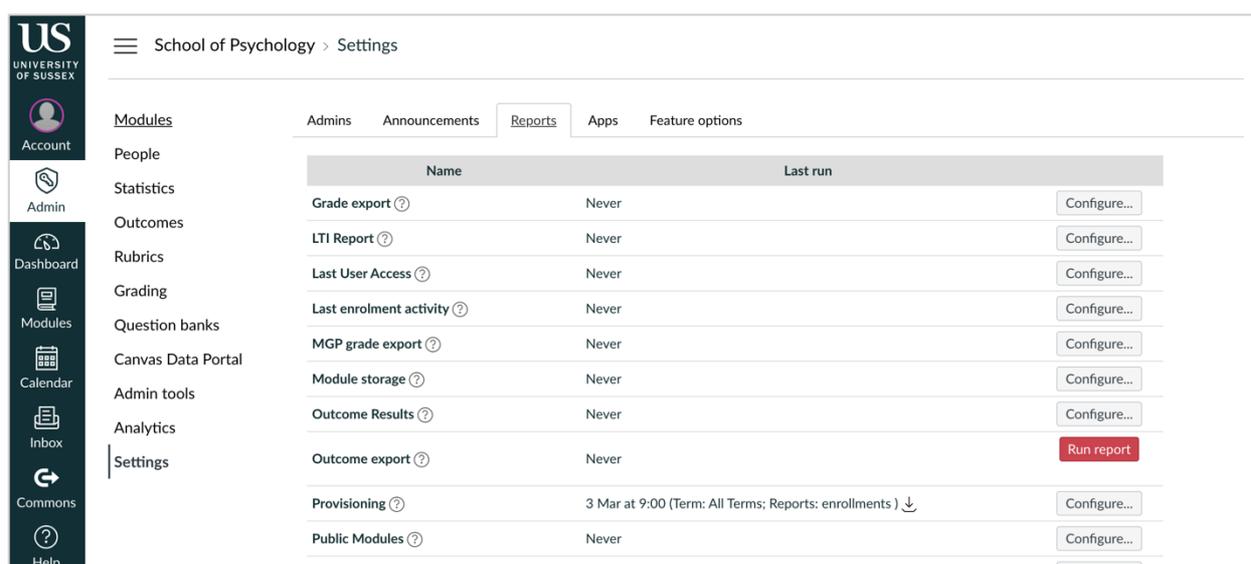


Figure 4: The "Reports" listing

Each of the reports includes a description of the data it returns (accessed through the question mark icon next to the report name), information about when it was last run and a button to configure and/or run the report.

Running a report

This guide will use the "Last User Access" report as an example, but the steps are the same to run any of the reports. Additional reports that may be of value when measuring student engagement are the "User Course Access Log" and the "Zero Activity" reports: the relative value and limitations of these three reports is outlined in Appendix A below.

Each report will have its own configuration options. Typically these allow you to choose to return data from one specific Canvas "Term" or to set a date range for the report.

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To begin the process of running a report, select the “Configure...” button next to that report.

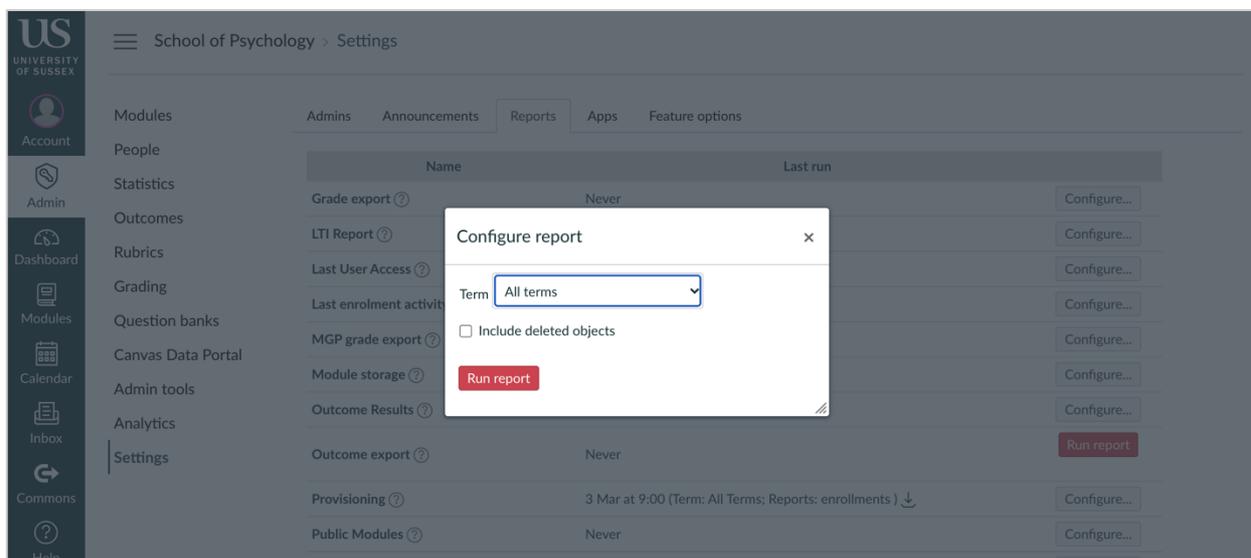


Figure 5: Configuration options for the "Last User Access" report

The terms in Canvas are set to mirror the categories used in the University's Oracle records database (CMS). As a result, at any point in the academic year, there may be several terms with modules in progress. For example, during Semester One of the 2020/21 academic year, modules in all of the following terms may be underway:

- 2020/21 Autumn Semester
- 2020/21 Autumn & Spring Teaching
- 2020/21 All Year Teaching
- 2020/21 U/G Academic Year
- 2020/21 P/G Academic Year
- 2020/21 Flexible Academic Year

As a result, in order to capture data from all the current modules, you have the choice of running the report several times over, for each of the relevant terms, or else running it once for “All terms”. The consequence of running a report for “All terms” however, is that it will also return data from all previous terms (dating back to the 18/19 academic year). This data will need to be discarded from the report results.

Once you are happy with the configuration options you have chosen, press the “Run report” button.

You will then be taken back to the report listing and will see a message that the report is running where the “Configure...” button was previously. This also indicates that you will be sent an email when the report is complete, but you should note that this depends on the notification settings you have chosen in Canvas (see Appendix B below). Most reports will only take a few minutes to complete; you can close the browser window or navigate elsewhere in Canvas and return later to download the report output.

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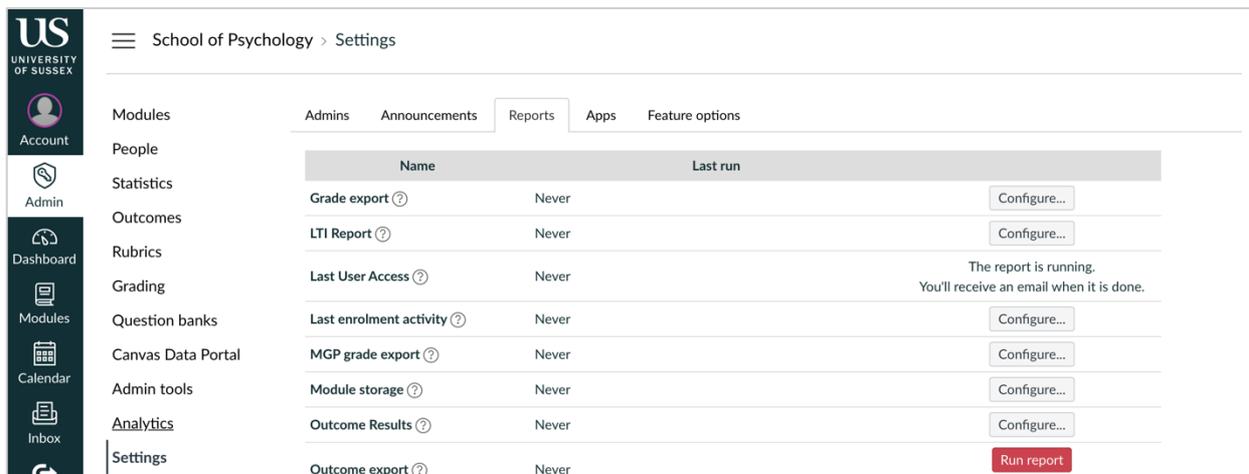


Figure 6: The reports listing, indicating that the Last User Access report is running.

When the report has completed, the “Last run” information for the report will show the date it was completed, the configuration options chosen and a link to download the csv output file. Only the most recent run of each report will be available.

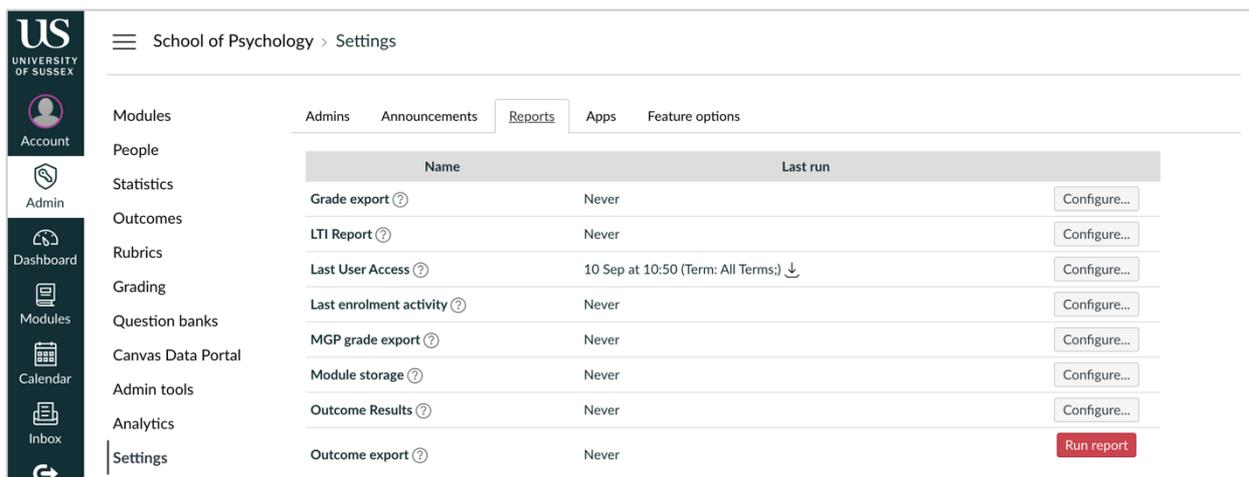


Figure 7: The reports listing showing the "Last run" details and download link for the "Last User Access" report.

You will need to download and store your report output and use a suitable application to open it and access the data.

For any further advice on the administrative reports or understanding their data, please contact tel@sussex.ac.uk

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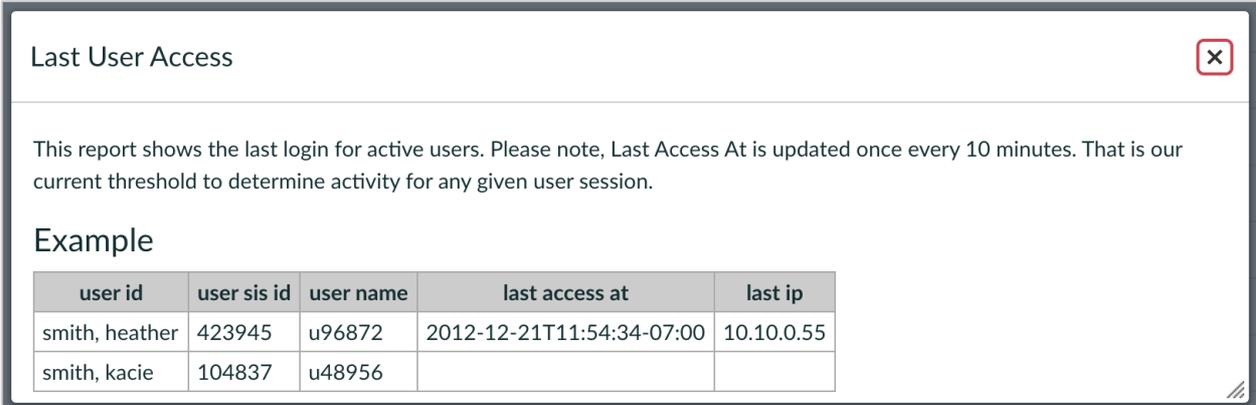
Appendix A: Value and limitations of various reports

There are three reports that have been identified as having potential value in measuring student engagement with Canvas:

- Last User Access
- User Course Access Log
- Zero Activity

Notes on the Last User Access report

- This report indicates the last time each person “accessed” a module in the relevant subaccount.
- It is important to understand that “access” in this context has a technical meaning that is not the same as the last activity – the student may have visited pages in Canvas at a later date than the one shown.
- The report will return results for people with an active enrolment on any module in the subaccount.
- The report gives a high-level view of access and does not detail access to individual modules in the subaccount.
- People with an active enrolment who have not logged in to Canvas will be recorded in the data with the “last access at” and “last ip” fields blank.
- The data returned is near live, updated every ten minutes.



Last User Access ✕

This report shows the last login for active users. Please note, Last Access At is updated once every 10 minutes. That is our current threshold to determine activity for any given user session.

Example

user id	user sis id	user name	last access at	last ip
smith, heather	423945	u96872	2012-12-21T11:54:34-07:00	10.10.0.55
smith, kacie	104837	u48956		

Figure 8: The description and output fields of the Last User Access report.

Notes on the User Course Access Log report

- This report shows the last time each person viewed individual pieces of content within modules in the subaccount.
- The report shows data going back a maximum of one month (the exact start date can be configured); by default (i.e. if left unconfigured) the beginning of the previous week is used.
- The report only shows the last time each piece of content was viewed, it doesn’t detail the history of viewing.
- The report will only list people who have viewed each piece of content; it will not show people who have not viewed the content.
- The data returned is not live; it is updated every 24 hours.

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- As we use multiple enrolments (through Canvas “sections”) in order to manage assessment and teaching groups, each person’s viewing of each piece of content will be recorded multiple times; the duplicate data will need to be filtered out of the report output.

User Course Access Log ✕

This report shows all the activity from users enrolled in all courses in a given term. The resulting csv file will have one row per student activity and will have the following headers: section id, section sis id, section name, course id, course sis id, course name, term id, term sis id, term name, user id, user sis id, user name, content type, content name, times viewed, times participated, last viewed. The times viewed and times participated are counters from the beginning of time until the time the report was generated. A maximum of one month's data will be retrieved. By default, it will return data from the beginning of the previous week.

Example

section id	section SIS ID	section name	module id	module SIS ID	module name	term id	term sis id	term name	enrollment type	user id	user sis id	user name	content type	content name	times viewed	times participated	last viewed
345	s342	section 1	235	c4567	English 101	125	t125	Term 1	teacher	4333	u8989	Philo Farnsworth	assignment	assignment 1	3	1	2013-02-26T11:50:36-07:00
345	s342	section 1	235	c4567	English 101	125	t125	Term 1	student	3453	u4563	James McCaffrey	assignment	assignment 1	6	0	2013-02-24T08:43:38-07:00

Figure 9: The description and output fields of the User Course Access Log report.

Notes on the Zero Activity report

- This report lists any people who have not viewed any content in the modules in the subaccount.
- The report can be configured with a specific start date and will identify people who have not viewed any content since that date.
- Results are returned for each module; people will be listed against any module they have not visited since the selected start date.
- The data returned is believed to be live.
- As we use multiple enrolments (through Canvas “sections”) in order to manage assessment and teaching groups, where a person has “zero activity” on a module, they will be listed multiple times.

Zero Activity ✕

This report shows all the students enrolled in any modules in a given term. Resulting csv file will have one row per user enrolment that have not visited the module since the date.

Example

user id	user sis id	name	section id	section sis id	section name	module id	module sis id	module name
234523	u8989	Rolls, Jeff	23458	s54672	math01	57833	c4567	Math 101
324522	u4563	Thomas, Bob	23458	s54672	math01	57833	c4567	Math 101

Figure 10: The description and output fields of the Zero Activity report.

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Appendix B: Notification setting for administrative reports

Notification settings are individually configured for each person. They can be viewed and adjusted from your Canvas profile. Select “Account” from the main Canvas navigation menu, then choose “Notifications” from the list of options that appear.

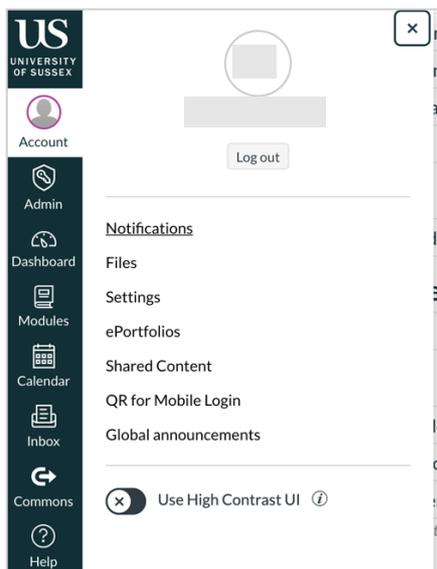


Figure 11: The Account menu, showing the Notifications link.

Each notification type can be configured to be sent immediately, within a daily or weekly summary, or else not at all. The notifications will be sent to every email address registered for the account and to any mobile device using the Canvas app. These can all be configured separately.

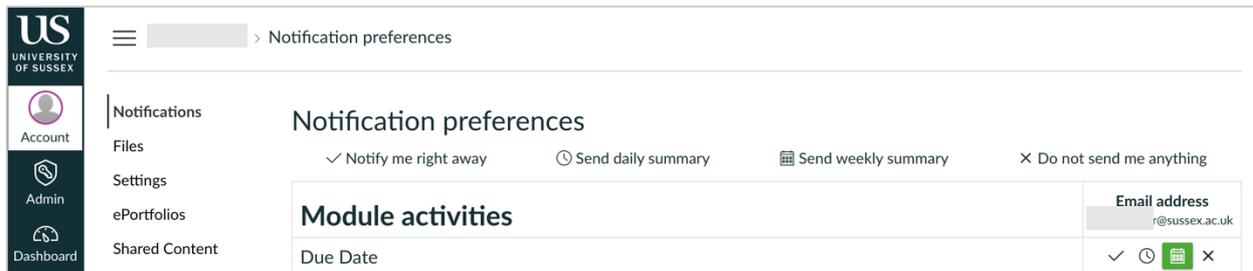


Figure 12: Canvas Notification Preferences, showing the four alternative settings.

The notification relevant to administrative reports is the Administrative Notifications setting, under the Alerts heading.

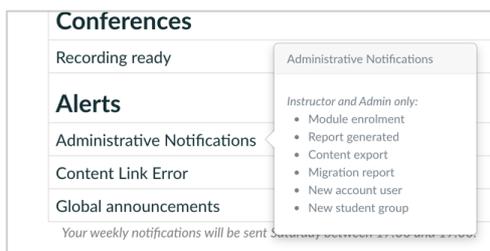


Figure 13: The Administrative Notifications setting, showing the events that trigger the notification.