



SimVenture



Validate

Validate User Manual

**A comprehensive guide for learners
using Validate for the first time.**

A SimVenture Guide V2



Contents

Introduction	>	3
How to create your account on Validate	>	4
How to login to Validate	>	4
How to Navigate Validate's Main Menus	>	5
How to change your Validate email address	>	6
How to change your Validate password	>	6
How to add a photo to my Validate account	>	7
How to create a new Validate project	>	7
How to create a team on Validate	>	8
How to duplicate a project	>	8
How to change a project title	>	9
Tour the Ideation area of Validate	>	9
Tour the Canvas area of Validate	>	10
Tour the Tests area of Validate	>	12
Tour the Portfolio area of Validate	>	13
Further support	>	15

Document Navigation Links

- > Click to navigate directly to each section.
- ^ Click to return to the Contents page.
- ▶ Click to view videos in a new browser window..



Introduction

Welcome to Validate, an online platform that allows you to ideate, map, test, and share your business or project ideas. Throughout this manual, please note that you will be referred to as the User, and your tutor/trainer/instructor will be referred to as the Educator.

Key purpose of this document:

To provide information about how to create your account, access, and navigate the startup ideas and business validation online platform, Validate.

To provide a reference point for:

- essential information to support new users
- understanding and accessing full functionality of Validate
- troubleshooting and frequently asked questions

Validate is a cloud-based platform that allows you to develop and think through your business and project ideas. It is a self-guided platform and is very user-friendly, meaning that it should be a fairly simple process to get started.

The four key areas of Validate are:

1. **Ideation:** where you can quickly develop new business or project ideas by considering problems and solutions.
2. **Canvas:** allows you to map out your idea on a Business Model Canvas, which includes an additional block for sustainability.
3. **Tests:** this is where you can test any of the assumptions you've made when completing your Business Model Canvas to validate or invalidate your business or project idea.
4. **Portfolio:** automatically brings across the information from the Canvas and Tests area of your project into a nicely presented portfolio which can be shared as a web link or as a PDF slide deck. There are also additional fields you can add if you would like to add more information.

While the four key areas listed above are available within any new project you create, it isn't a requirement to use them all or in a linear way. Areas one to three (Ideation, Canvas, and Tests) can all be used independently from each other depending on the needs of your project.

Within Validate you can also work on as many projects as you like, and each project can be developed as an individual or team project. If working in a team, your team members will however be required to also have Validate accounts.

With easy-to-understand language and real-life business case studies as reference points throughout each step of the process, Validate will not only help you further develop your business or project, but will help you further develop your own personal business knowledge and skills.

However you engage with Validate, we hope you enjoy the experience.



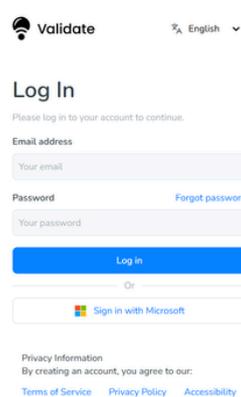
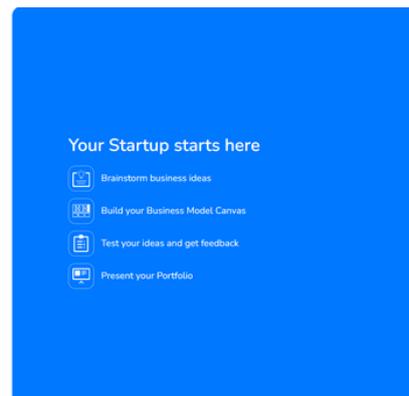
How to create your account on Validate

If your workplace or education institution has offered you a Validate user account, here are the steps to follow to help you create your account on the platform:

1. Click the unique class web link your Educator has provided you with.
2. Fill out your contact details and add a password. Please note: the email address is case sensitive.
3. Enter a name for your project. You can change this at any time.
4. Answer the question, 'Do you have a business idea?'. This will determine your opening screen, however you can always switch between sections easily once you are logged in to Validate.
5. Now you've created your account.

If you are using SSO (Single Sign-on), please follow the steps below:

1. Click the unique class web link your Educator has provided you with.
2. Click "Sign in with Microsoft" at the bottom of the page
3. Using your existing institution credentials, follow the instructions as they appear on screen to sign up using SSO
4. Once signed up, you can continue to use this same button when logging in

Please note: Once you have created your Validate account, you will no longer need your unique class link. The next time you want to login to Validate, simply use this link, which will take you to the login page: <https://app.validatestartup.com/>

How to login to Validate

If you already have a Validate user account, simply use the link below to access the login page.

<https://app.validatestartup.com/>

Enter your email address and password (remember both are case sensitive) and click 'Log in'.

For SSO (Single Sign-on), click on "Sign in with Microsoft" and enter your existing institution credentials.



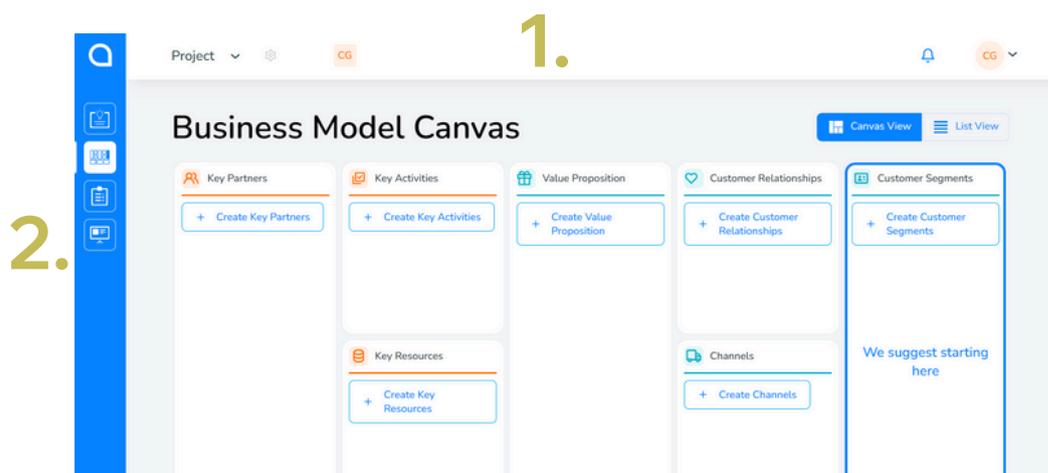
How to navigate Validate's main menus

Once you are logged into your Validate account, here is how you navigate through the platform from a PC.

Please note: while the navigation is the same for a mobile or tablet device, the layout is slightly different.

There are two main menus in Validate:

1. **The bar across the top of the screen**
2. **The bar across the left-hand side of the screen.**



The top bar from left to right includes:

- **Project Menu:** This is where you go to create a new project, or to access or edit an existing project. The project title that you have open will be the title of this menu. For example, if your project title is 'New Project' the menu will say 'New Project' along the top. This is so you can easily see which Validate project is open at any given time.
- **Initials/Profile Photo:** Next to the project menu will be initials/profile photo. This shows the Users who have access to the project you have open. If it is an individual project, there will be one square with your initials/profile photo shown. If it is a team project, there will be multiple squares – one with your initials/profile photo, and the others will have your team members initials/their profile photos.
- **Account Menu:** On the top far right corner is the account menu. This is where you can change your account settings, such as adding a profile photo, or changing your password or email address. You can also log out of Validate by using this drop down menu.



1.  The bar along the left-hand side of Validate contains four icons. These four icons represent the main areas that make up each project within Validate: **1.Ideation**,
2.  **2.Canvas**, **3.Tests**, **4.Portfolio**.

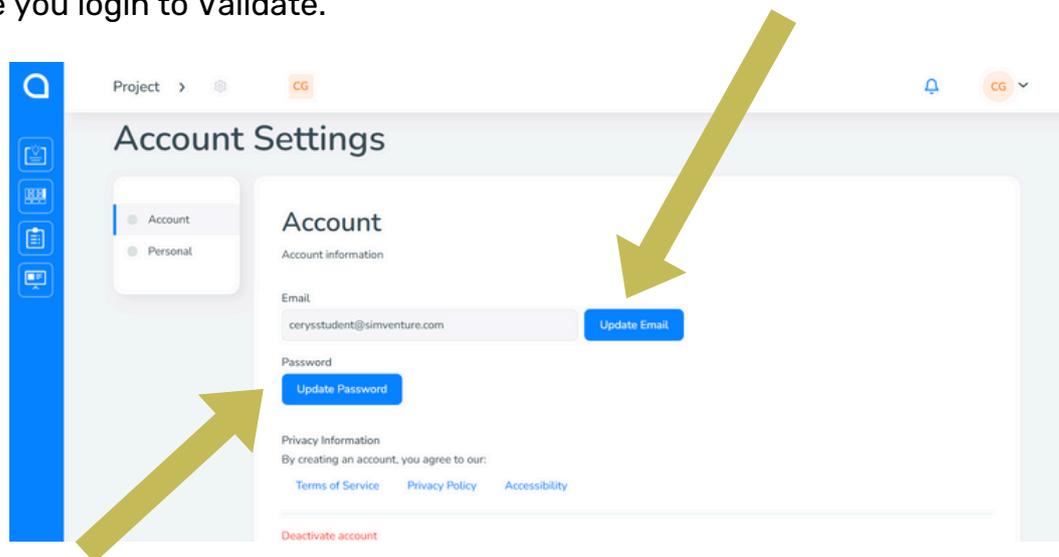
3.  Each time you create a new project, the four areas will be blank. This means, that you can work on as many individual projects (aka business or project ideas) as you like.
4. 

How to change your Validate email address

To change your Validate email address, login to Validate and follow the below steps:

1. Click the account menu in the top right-hand corner of the screen. This is a circle that contains your initials/profile photo.
2. From the drop-down menu that appears click on 'Account'. Here you will see your account details.
3. Click the button **'Update Email'** Enter your new email address, and confirm your new email address in the fields provided. Remember your email address is case sensitive when logging into Validate so please do take note of how you enter it here.
4. Click 'Update Email' button.

You have now successfully updated your email address. Remember to use this new email address the next time you login to Validate.



How to change your Validate password

To change your Validate password, login to Validate and follow the below steps:

1. Click the account menu in the top right-hand corner of the screen. This is a circle that contains your initials/profile photo.
2. From the drop-down menu that appears click on 'Account'. Here you will see your account details.
3. Click the button **'Update Password'** To change your Validate password, login to Validate and follow the below steps:
4. Enter your current password, your new password, and confirm your new password in the fields provided. Remember passwords are case sensitive, so be sure to take a note of your new password.
5. Click 'Update Password' button.

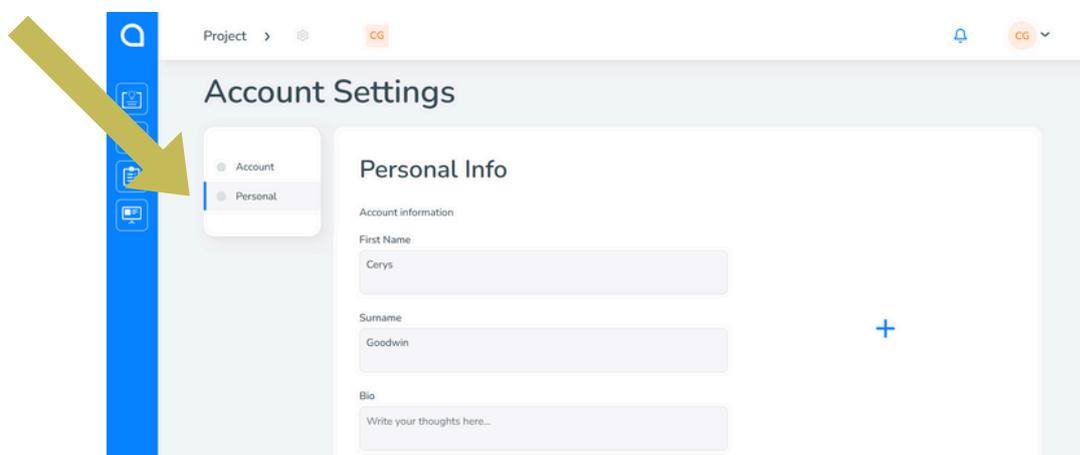
You have now successfully updated your Validate password. Remember to use this new password the next time you login to Validate.

How to add a photo to my Validate account

If you would like your photo to appear at the top of each Validate project instead of a square with your initials, you can choose to upload a photo of yourself to the platform. To do this:

1. Ensure your photo is less than 5 MB (the file size limit).
2. Click the account menu in the top right-hand corner of the screen. This is a circle that contains your initials.
3. From the drop-down menu that appears click on 'Account'. Here you will see your account details.
4. Now click on '**Personal**' on the left side menu. Here you can edit your name, add a bio, and upload a photo.

Once you have uploaded a photo, the square with your initials/profile photo next to the project menu will now show your photo instead.

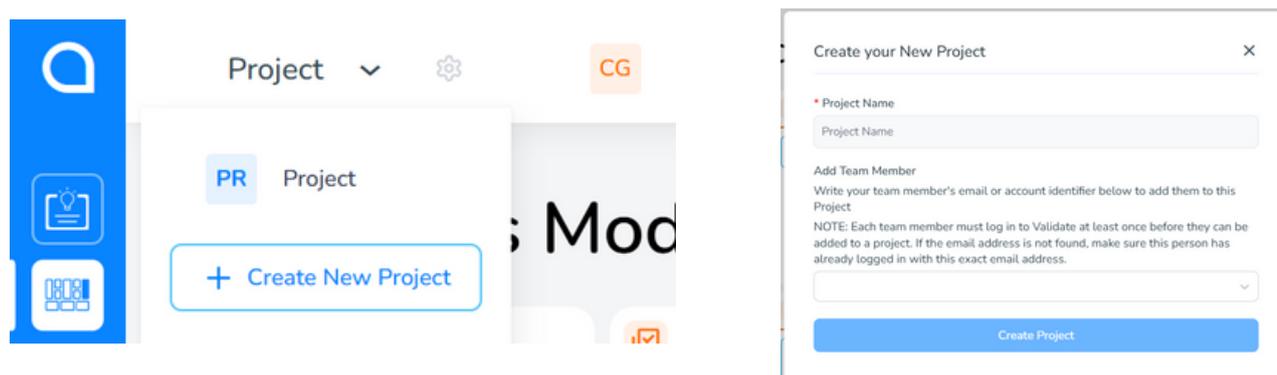


How to create a new Validate project

To create a new Validate project, click on the project menu on the bar across the top of your screen. Then click the 'Create New Project' button that appears at the bottom of the drop-down menu.

A pop-up window will appear where you can enter a title for your new project and add team members to your project. Once entered click 'Create Project'.

Now your new project will appear in the list of projects from the project menu.

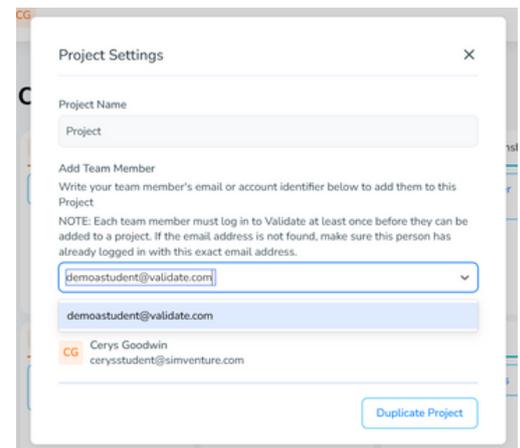




How to create a team on Validate

If you would like to invite team members to collaborate with you on a Validate project, follow the steps below:

- 1.Ensure all team members have created their account on Validate, have signed in at least once, and are signed up to the same class.
- 2.Designate one person from your team to complete the following steps. This person will have ownership over who has access to the project.
- 3.Select the project menu to view all projects.
- 4.Select the settings cog next to the project title that you would like to add the team members too.
- 5.In the settings window, enter the team members' email addresses you would like to add to the project. Please ensure you enter their email address correctly as this field is case sensitive.
- 6.Select your team members email address from the drop-down list that appears.
- 7.Now this person is added. Repeat this process for each team member.



Once team members are all successfully added to the Validate project, you will see their names listed in the project settings. For a quick view, team members' initials (or photos if they've uploaded one to their Validate account) will appear next to the project title on the top menu bar of the screen when using a PC.

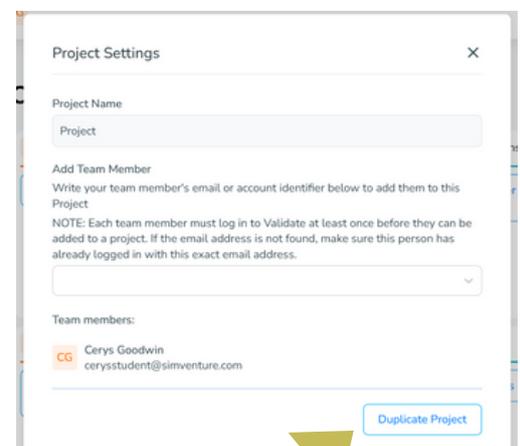
How to duplicate a project

Duplicating a project in Validate is a way to save a record of your project at any point in time.

This may be useful, for example, if you would like to record your Business Model Canvas before and after any changes are made because of an invalid assumption.

In this case, you could simply duplicate the project by following the steps below:

- 1.Go to the project drop-down menu
- 2.Click the settings cog next to the project you would like to duplicate
- 3.In the pop-up screen that appears, scroll to the bottom and click on the text in the bottom right-hand corner that says '**Duplicate Project**'.





4. Another pop-up window will appear to confirm that you would like to duplicate the project. Click 'Confirm' to continue.
5. Now your duplicated project will be open on the screen and will have '[cloned]' at the end of the project title.

After duplicating your project, you may wish to rename the project title to something more meaningful to you.

How to change a project title

To change a Validate project title, follow the steps below:

1. Go to the project menu
2. Click the settings cog next to the project you would like to rename
3. In the pop-up 'Project Settings' window that appears, click in the 'Project Name' field and edit the project name.
4. Once you've typed in the Project Name field, you don't need to click anything else to confirm the change. Simply click the 'x' in the top right-hand corner of the screen to exit the pop-up window.

The name of your project will now be changed, which you will be able to view at the top of the project menu.

Tour the Ideation area of Validate



The ideation area of Validate will help you quickly develop new project and business ideas based on identifying real-life problems and potential solutions.

To access the Ideation area of Validate click on the Lightbulb icon pictured here.

Within the Ideation area of each Validate project, you can develop as many ideas as you like.

To create a new idea, click the 'Create New Idea' button.

In this section you will go through a six-stage process of developing your own idea. Validate will explain each stage as you go through the process, as such we do recommend reading the information provided within the platform.

At certain points within the ideation section, there are real-life case studies to refer to. These case studies are available as reference points in case you need some inspiration or examples to understand what's required within the section.

Case studies are available in the Ideation stages listed below and can be found by clicking on the 'Case study' tab in the relevant section.

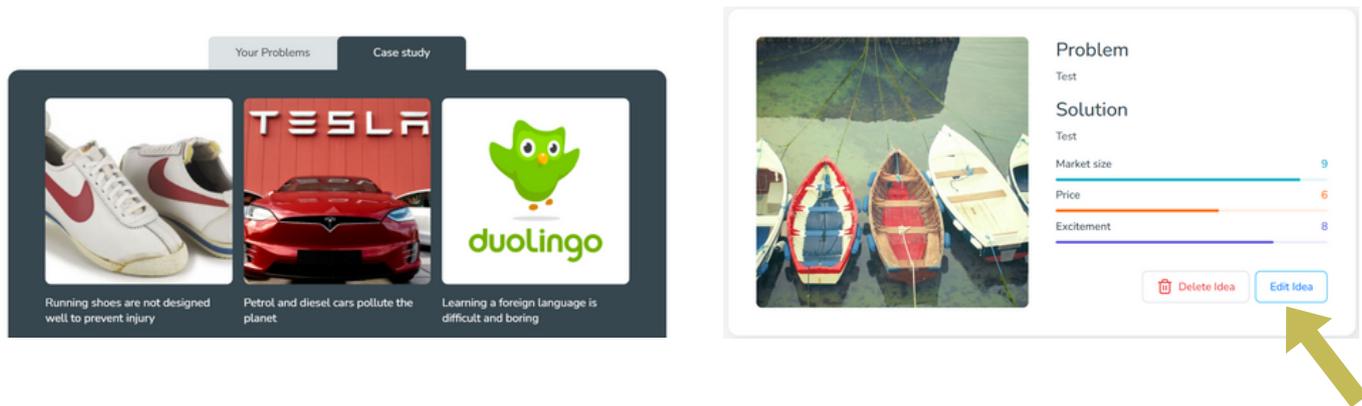
- Problems are opportunities
- Opportunities to solutions

Once you've created one idea, you can either go back and edit that idea or create a brand new idea in the same Validate project.

To edit the idea, click the **'Edit idea'** button on the Idea card.

To create another new idea, click the 'Create Another Idea' button in the top right-hand corner of the Ideation section.

To scroll through multiple ideas within one project, simply click on one of the arrows to the right or the left of the idea card.



Tour the Canvas area of Validate






The Canvas area of Validate allows you to think through all the components of your idea using a Business Model Canvas. The original Business Model Canvas ("BMC") was designed by Alexander Osterwalder and contained 9 blocks: Key Partners, Key Activities, Key Resources, Value Proposition, Customer Relationships, Channels, Customer Segments, Cost Structure, and Revenue Streams.

While the BMC in Validate includes all nine original blocks, the Validate Canvas also includes an additional block for Sustainability.

To access the Canvas area of Validate click on the Table icon pictured here.

In this section, you will think through all the various elements that make up your business or project idea in a lot more detail.

Please note: you can only create one Business Model Canvas within each Validate project. Therefore, if you would like to create more than one Validate Canvas, you will need to either duplicate an existing project or create a brand new project.

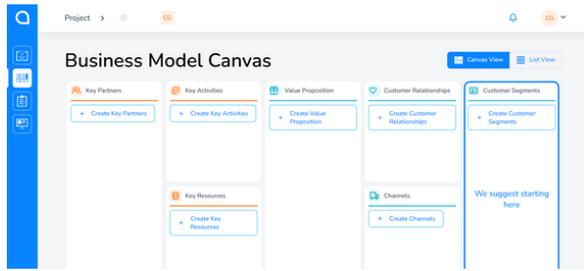
Before we get started with filling in the Canvas, there are two different views you can choose from.

In the top right-hand corner of the screen, you will see a 'Canvas View' and 'List View' button.

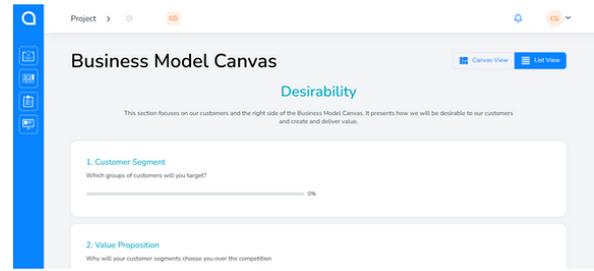
If the **Canvas View** button is selected, you will see the Validate Canvas in the layout of a traditional BMC.



If you select the **'List View'** button, all the elements of the BMC will be in list form under the headings: Desirability, Feasibility, and Viability.



Canvas View



List View

Choose the layout/view you prefer.

While the platform suggests starting from the 'Customer Segments' block in the Canvas, you can start in any block of the Canvas you like.

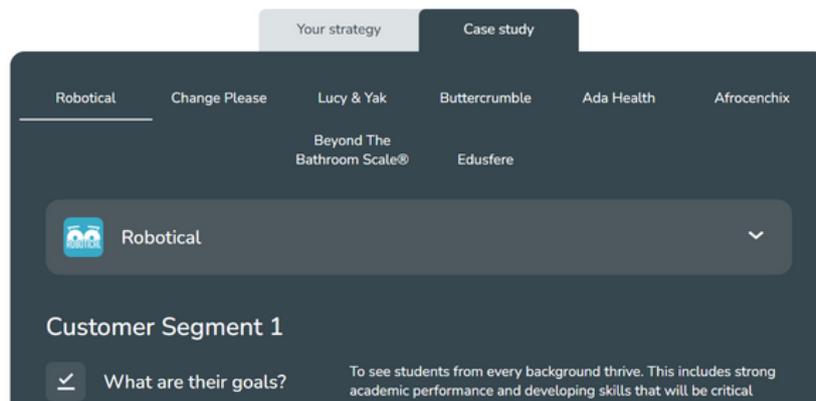
To get started with one of the sections, click the '+ Create [block name]' button if viewing in 'Canvas View' or the 'Start' button if viewing in 'List View'.

Once you've clicked on a Validate Canvas Block, a new screen will appear with detailed instructions walking you through each step of the process. This process is different according to which BMC block you've selected to walk through, so we do recommend reading through the guidance carefully.

On the left-hand side of the menu, you will see the number of steps throughout the BMC block's process. You will also see a 'Section Progress' graph showing you how much of the process you've completed.

To go back to the main Canvas at any stage in the process, simply click the 'Back' button on the left-hand side menu.

Like the Ideation section, throughout each Validate Canvas block there are real-life case studies from a range of different businesses throughout. We highly recommend when you find a section that contains case studies, to reach through each one even if it isn't relevant to your own idea.





Tour the Tests area of Validate



The Tests area of Validate encourages you to think through the critical assumptions you've made when completing your BMC and to test each one. Each test you conduct should be an indicator of whether the critical assumption you've identified is valid or invalid. If you conduct a test and find an 'invalid' result, this is usually an indication that something in your Canvas needs to be edited.

Don't worry if you're not sure what a critical assumption is yet as this is all explained within the 'Tests' area of Validate.

To get starting with testing, click the check-list icon.

This will open the testing screen, which will say 'Testing your business idea' at the top.

To start your first test, click the 'Create New Test' button.

Please note: You can create as many tests that you like in any one Validate project. Generally, there will be multiple critical assumptions and multiple tests will need to be conducted as a result.

Like the Ideation and Canvas areas of Validate, once you've clicked the 'Create New Test' button a new screen will appear with guidance on the right-hand side and a small menu to the left listing out the steps you'll go through within this section.

Please read through all the guidance as you work through understanding and identifying your first critical assumption and planning your test.

It's important to note that this area of Validate is like a project planner. You'll use it to identify your critical assumptions and plan how you'll test them. Once you've planned how you'll test the critical assumptions, you'll most likely move away from the computer to conduct the test/s (for example, if your test involves interviewing people, trying to sell, or prototyping a physical product). Once you've conducted your test and gathered your findings, you'll then come back to your test plan in Validate to enter your results, upload any supporting documentation, and analyse your findings.

To exit a test once open, you can click on the 'Back' button at the top of the left-hand menu. The work you've completed so far will automatically be saved.

From here, you can create another new test by selecting the 'Create New Test' button, or you can go back to an existing test by scrolling through the list and clicking on the test card.

Once you've clicked on a card for an existing test, a pop-up window will appear. You can either edit some of the details here, or to go back to the full test click the 'Continue' button in the top right-hand corner of the test window.



Choose Your Test

There are many ways to test assumptions. Different tests require different resources, commitment and time. And they also provide varying levels of certainty and quality of evidence. For example, someone saying they would buy something is nowhere near as compelling as someone actually giving you their money.

Below are 6 types of Tests that you can do, arranged from easy to hard. And for each we have predicted the quality of evidence that the results will provide.

Select the Test that you plan to do.

[Homepage](#)

[Research](#)

[Survey](#)

[Interview](#)

[Prototype](#)

[Sell](#)

Tour the Portfolio area of Validate



The Portfolio area of Validate provides you with a presentable way to share your business or project idea either digitally as a web link or as a downloadable PDF.



The core content of your portfolio is automatically generated by bringing the information through from the Canvas and Tests areas of your project.



However, importantly, there is also the opportunity to add additional information in all sections of your portfolio. In addition to text you can add images, photos and files.



This flexibility gives you the opportunity to enhance the core data already captured. It allows you to create a document that reflects fully what you are trying to convey by adding this additional information.

Additional information includes items such as a logo, cover image, information about your team members, or additional fields for each of the BMC blocks and tests.

If you feel you have not been able to describe any aspect of your idea fully there are multiple ways you can add information with-in the portfolio.

One main area is project summary. Here you have space to write the key summary information you want to get across. This is one of the first sections the reader encounters so an ideal place to make an impact.

You can also add up to 10 files of up to 5Mb per file each here. These files could be PDF, Excel, Word, or images. Image files accepted are jpeg, jpg, png, gif, and webp. Just remember if you are using specialist application the reader needs to be able to access them.

Project Summary

Add Description

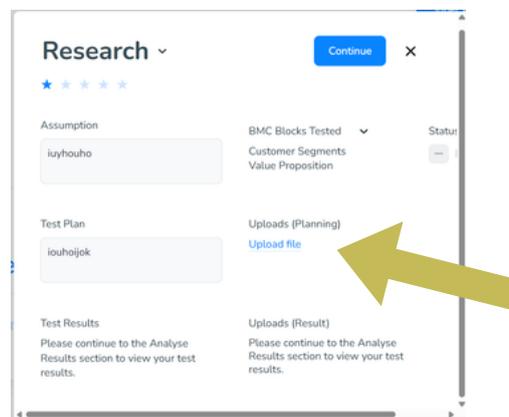
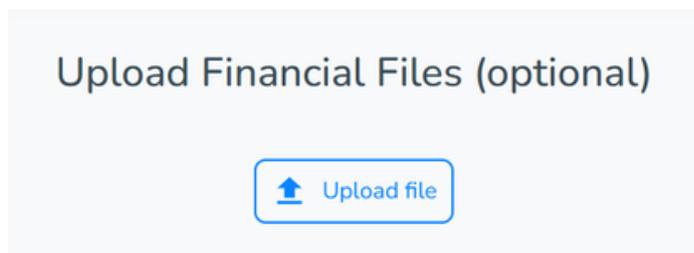
 Upload file



Other areas within Validate that you can upload files are in the Finance and Testing sections. The maximum files sizes are 5 files of up to 5Mb per file for the Finance section and 3 files per test of up to 10Mb per file for the Testing section.

The Finance section files can include PDF, Excel, Word, and images.

The Testing section files can include PDF, Excel, PowerPoint, Word, and images.



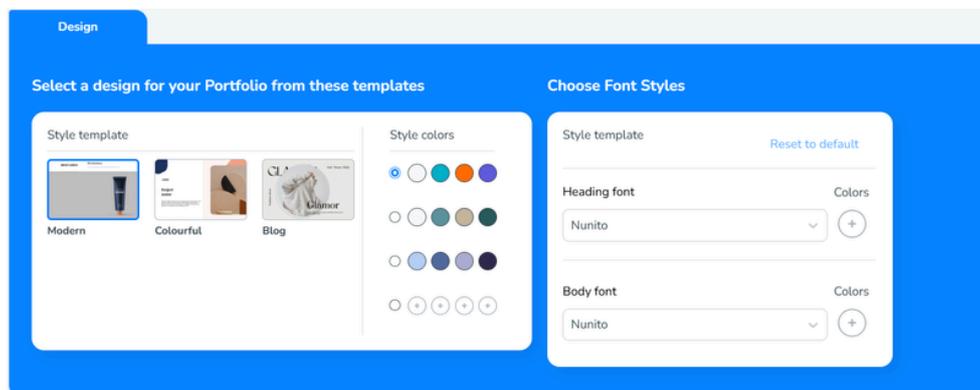
At the beginning of each section of the portfolio there is a button that says 'Add description'. Clicking this button opens a text box where you can type in whatever information you feel is required. It might be a summary of that whole block or an explanation behind your strategy or findings.

Anywhere that you see a box like this is an opportunity to upload a photograph.



The max image size is 5Mb and can accept jpg, jpeg and png. Gif, webp, and PDFs are not accepted. One thing to note is once you add a photo you can replace it with another photo but can't go back to having no photo in that space.

You can change the overall look of your portfolio by selecting one of the themes and or changing the colourways and fonts in the design panel at the beginning of the portfolio section.





Further Support

We hope the information within this User Manual for Validate helps you create, develop and launch a successful business or project.

For further support, we highly recommend visiting our [website](#) or [YouTube channel](#).

If you have any questions at all regarding Validate, please contact your Educator in the first instance.

If you have any questions or problems regarding this document, please email us at comms@simventure.co.uk