



Course Activities

2.2.3 TOPIC 3 – COURSE ACTIVITIES

The way teachers manage activities is exactly the same as with resources: there is a button to assign resources and activities.

An additional panel pops up presenting the list of resources and activities offered by Moodle and from which a teacher can choose.

Similarly to resources, to add or edit activities, we need to make sure that editing is turned on. At the top on the right-hand side we have to click **Turn editing on**.

If the lesson already contains activities previously added, you'll notice that there are Edit buttons that appear next to many of these activities. Once your activities are added you have the option to edit them by clicking on the drop-down menu. Clicking on **Edit** we are allowed to edit the settings, like indenting the activity in the lesson page or hiding it so that it's not visible for students. It is possible to duplicate an activity, assign roles, or delete it.

At the bottom of each section there will be a clickable link titled **Add an activity or resource**. Once we click on this, a pop up will appear, showing the different activities and resources available to be added, including Assignments, Forums, Glossary, Quiz, Surveys and many other options.

Moodle provides help and instruction on the platform as well. For each of these activities it is possible to single click on them and get more information on how to work on the panel at the right side.

This way we get information about how we can create these activities and use them in our course.

Assignments

Assignments are an important part of most courses. They allow students the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the content. And they allow teachers an opportunity to receive feedback on how well their students are learning as well as an opportunity to give students feedback regarding their learning.

To add an assignment we first need to **Turn editing on**. At the end of each section we will see the button **Add an activity or resource** that will open a panel from where we will be able to double-click on Assignment.

Assignments must be named and optionally described with the text we can insert in the description area.

Although optional, a description is somewhat necessary, because it is giving students the instructions on what to do, read, watch and learn to complete the assignment.

The text area, just like the resource Page, can be populated with links, videos, text and a whole set of resources the students need to go through before writing the summary to be submitted to the teacher

Teachers can also add additional files. So if they wanted to upload an assignment or upload

resources that students had to refer to for the assignment, they could do that as well. There also a bunch of settings for your assignments. The first is for availability and it allows us to set a submission date that students can begin submitting the assignment on.

After that is the due date, followed by a cut-off date. The cut-off date is just a time when students will no longer be able to submit it. If you don't want a cut-off date because you want students to turn it in, even if it's late, just leave this unchecked. If you didn't want a submission date or a due date, you could also uncheck them.

Below dates, we have submission types. Very important thing here is whether or not we would like the students to complete the assignment in the text editor on Moodle or upload a file.

If we want the students to complete it within the text editor, we need to click **Online text**. **File submission** is the option for teachers willing students uploading their work in a separate file. For this option, two choices are relevant: the number of uploaded files and the submission size. We have the opportunity to enable word limits for their summaries. Under **Submission settings**, we first can require students to click a submit button. It can be set to **Yes** or **No**.

We can decide if they have unlimited attempts. We can choose whether or not we want to turn on **Groups** and have students be able to submit assignments in groups. We can set notifications that will let us know when assignments are turned in and we can also have one that notifies graders about late submissions. For grades, we can choose whether we want this to be points, scale or not graded. We can scale the grades, for example 1- 10 or 1-100.

Finally, at the bottom, we want to make sure this is visible to students if it's ready to go out. When all is done, click **Save and return to course**

Creating a question bank

Throughout the year, teacher have the ability to create assessment questions and store them in the Question bank, so that they can easily integrate these questions into tests and quizzes. We can access our question bank in the Administration Block on the left hand side (configuration of blocks depends on how Administrator has set the course page).

In Administrator block we have a button called **Question bank**.

The first thing we can do is select a category, that is whether or not we'd like to be in a general question bank or one that's specific to our course.

Next we can decide whether or not we want to show question text in the question list, if we can show the questions from sub-categories and if we can also show old questions.

At the beginning however we don't have any questions in our question bank: we have to populate it creating questions.

To do so we need to click on **Create a new question**. A popup menu appears with all the different types of assessment questions that we can create. Including some calculation questions, which we'd use numbers. There are drag and drop questions, essays, matching, multiple choice and more. Now, for any of these questions, if you click on the type, it will give you a description on the right hand side. So again, Moodle is very helpful on explaining what each of these question types are.

All question types, there are some basic settings we have to go through.

The default category is adding the newly created questions in the question bank for our course. We also need to create question name.

This will really help in the question bank when you want to go find a question to include on a quiz or test. Next, in the question text, we need to put the directions for the question. As an example of question type let's imagine willing to add a **Select missing words**.

In the direction area we need to enter the text for the question. As this is a fill-in-the-blank-type question, text will have blanks where students are going to place words that they can select from. Words to be inserted must be written below under Choice 1, Choice 2 and Choice 3 (assuming the question text has three blank areas)

Now we have to tell Moodle the correct positions for the three choices. To do so in the question text instead of the blanks we need to add `[[1]]` if we mean that Choice 1 is the correct word for that position. The same we do adding `[[2]]` for Choice 2 position and `[[3]]` for Choice 3 position.

Further settings are available before saving our question.

Under multiple tries, we can decide whether or not we want students to have a second opportunity to place the item in the correct place. And we can even make it so that they have a certain amount of points taken away if they need a second chance. For example, we can set 33.33, meaning that will be the penalty if they do need a second chance. We can also enter a hint.

When done let's click, "Save changes." So, the question is created.

We can preview it and try the test our own.

At this point we have added a question to our Question bank. Adding an entire set of questions we can create quiz to assess students preparation.

Creating quiz

Assessing students' progress is an important part of most courses. In Moodle teachers have the ability to create and share quizzes within course. In order to create a quiz, we first need to make sure that editing is turned on. Then we need to navigate to the section that we

want to include the quiz in. Going down to the bottom of that section we can click on **Add an activity or resource**. From here, select **Quiz** and double click.

We're not actually going to include any questions yet, but again, just setting up the settings and the framework. First of all, we need to type in the title and a description. We can select **Timing** if there is a certain time that we want the quiz to be available to students or a certain time when it will close, that they no longer have access.

You can also set a Time limit. if you only want students to have, say, 20 minutes to complete it. It's also important to decide what you want to happen when time expires. In other words, *Open attempts, Submitted automatically after a grace period, or attempts must be Submitted before time expires or they're not counted.*

Next, for Grade, we can decide if we want to put it in a category, if we would like students to have multiple attempts at the quiz, and if they do, how we'll grade that (Highest grade, Average, First or Last attempt).

For Layout, we can decide to have every question on a new page or a number of questions in the same page.

Let's Save and return to course when finished.

Now, here we have our Quiz Structure, but we haven't yet entered any questions. If we click on it, we can see the settings we added in the structure like a Time limit of 20 minutes. It also says here that No questions have been added yet, so we'll click on **Edit quiz**.

As we can see, there's nothing here, but on the right-hand side, we are allowed to click on **Add** and then select from a **New question**, a **Question bank**, or a **Random question**. Although we have prepared a question bank to choose from, we are going to select a new question.

I'll choose a Multiple choice one. I'll click Add. It allows us to set up this question. The have the possibility to create here a question from scratch.

If we do so, you'll be requested to name your questions because each of these will be saved in the question bank, so you can access them later. You're going to want to be able to recognize them when you see the names.

Below, we can put the question text. We can choose whether we want **One correct answer** or if there are **Multiple answers** allowed.

We can decide if we want to Shuffle the choices and how we want to **Number the choices**: Letters or Roman numerals. Then we add Choices where some can be correct and others wrong (in case of multiple choices) or one correct and all others wrong (in case of One correct answer).

If a choice is wrong, we have to select None as grade; for correct choices we need to grade it as 100%

We do have the option to give partial credit, so if there was an answer that you thought was a good one, but didn't deserve full credit, you could issue partial credit.

You could give Feedback for questions, too. In case of wrong answer, we can give a hint as feedback.

Let's click on **Save changes** when done.

As we said previously, we can add a question from our question bank.

If we click here, it will bring us to our question bank including the questions that we already entered. We can also drag our questions to reorder them.

When done, just click on **Save**.

Now let's navigate back to our course, we can click on the quiz and see that we're able to attempt it.

If we click **Attempt it now**, it will bring up our questions.

Managing a Forum

Class discussions is a great way to engage students in learning. As well as in-class discussions, online discussions are important and require a different set of skills. It's not rare to see a quiet student speak up more in an online discussion or to have students working on their writing skills while in a discussion. Moodle allows you to create online discussions through their Forum activity. First, it's necessary to set editing on. It is possible to add a forum in any section of our page, so we need to click on **Add an activity or resource** by the section we want it to appear: the usual panel of Resources and Activities will appear and we will have to choose **Forum**.

At the top, we need to give a name to our Forum. Then, we can put a Description. This is not where we put our actual discussion question. This Description is simply describing the Forum.

Then, we have to choose the Forum type. There are several different types:

- A single simple discussion
in which the teacher would post one question, and students can respond to it.
- Each person posts one discussion
in which the teacher and each student has the opportunity to post a discussion.
- Q and A forum
which has students answer a question and requires them to put their answer before seeing the answers of other students.
- Standard forum displayed in blog-like format
- Standard forum for general use
which allows anyone to create a discussion at any time

We can decide if we want students to be able to add attachments, and if so, how many can they add and what size

We can display a word count, so students stay conscious of it.

Subscriptions and tracking allow students to subscribe to the Forum, and also for a teacher to track who is reading them. Under Grades, we can set the category we would like it to be in if we'd like to grade it.

If you do, will open Ratings. Here's where it allows you to decide how you want to rate this forum. If you leave it at No rating, students are simply participating in the discussion without worrying about a grade.

We can set a time that the discussion will open and a time that it will end. Again, we can make it visible to students or hide it. When done click on **Save and display**. When I do this, we're going to see our Forum item, but here's where we need to add the text or the question. Let's imagine we added a "Q and A forum" and click on **Add a new question**. This way we'll be allowed to type in a question.

Once done, we can choose to add an Attachment. Finally, we click on **Post to forum** so our post is successfully added. In the next 30 minutes we still can edit it and make changes, then it will be posted.

Clicking on that Forum, we can see that there is one post and opening it up, it asks the question that we have posted.

Creating choices and surveys

On the Moodle platform there are a couple ways for teachers to get feedback from students. This will help to improve teachers' instruction, as well as get to know students better, helping to build rapport, and allowing you to customize the student learning experience.

Choice and the Survey are the activities that we can utilize. If we want to add a Choice activity, let's open the activity panels in the usual way and choose the **Choice** option. We will be requested to name the choice we want to give students.

For example "How confident are you for the section above?"

We can also put the Description, useful if we want to add some context to the question. We can choose whether we want our answers to appear horizontally or vertically.

Then we need to make some choices as far as can students update their choices. If for example they are allowed to give more than one answer to a question, in this case we can limit the number of responses.

Then let's click on Option 1: here's where we'll give the first choice to our students, for instance Very Confident, Fairly Confident, Not Sure, or Not Confident.

Then click on Availability, to adjust the times that this Choice will be open. It is possible to limit the date that they can start answering and a date that they need to have it answered by. Results is a very important section under Choice, because we have to decide what happens once students make their choices.

- Do not publish results to students
- Show results to students after they answer
- Show results to students only after the choice is closed
- Always show results to students

For privacy of results we can publish them anonymously or publish them with the student names. When done click **Save and display**, it will show how Choice will look like.

Another way to get feedback from students is through the use of **Surveys**.

Teachers do not create the surveys. The surveys are pre-populated by Moodle and contain some well-known surveys.

Let's create one clicking on **Add an activity or Resource** and choose **Survey**. As always a Survey needs a name, and here I'm just going to give it the title of my course, and then we'll have to choose the **Survey Type** that is the pre-populated survey that Moodle platform offers. We can choose between

- The Attitudes to Thinking and Learning Survey
- Critical Incidents
- The Constructivist Online Learning Environment Survey

Then click Save and display.

Notice that this survey was pre-populated, so the questions are already here. The purpose of this survey, as it says here, is to evaluate your students' attitudes towards thinking and learning, it may serve to get a feel for your students and their thoughts or opinions on learning.

Another survey is The Constructivist Online Learning Environment Survey (COLLES) the purpose of this survey is to understand how well online delivery enabled the student to learn. So, this is one that you'll want to give after the students have completed part of the course, or have received feedback on how they're doing in the course.

Setting a glossary

In order to conduct quality research about a topic it's important to be familiar with the associated vocabulary. In Moodle there is a nice resource called the **Glossary** which you can incorporate into your course. We can add a different Glossary in any section of our page, because we can add a Glossary as any other activity. As usual, we have to name our glossary and add a description if we'd like. Under Entries we have some decisions to make.

- Should our messages be automatically approved or do we want to have to moderate them.

- Whether or not we always want to allow editing
- Duplicate entries yes or no
- Whether or not we allow comments

Then we have some settings on Appearance, Grading and Rating of our Glossary. Each teacher can customize the Glossary according his preferences.

When done, click on **Save and display** and our glossary is then created. However, there aren't any terms that are in our glossary at this point yet. In order to add a term, we simply click on **Add a new entry**. Here we can type in the **Concept** and the **Definition**.

We can also add an attachment to let students see an image or a video that represents that term When done, click **Save changes**.

Now we have our first entry. Once we have a large number of terms we will be able to separate them by alphabetical order, or search for them up at the top.