

An overview of how to use Groups and Groupings effectively

Moodle Help & Support

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This refers to Moodle 3.6 from July 2019 onward

Groups and Groupings can be a good way to restrict access to resources, activities and sections within the module. They could be used as an effective way to manage lab report submissions within Science and Engineering and grading assignments when there are multiple graders, one per group of students.

Are groups enabled already?

If **Groups** has been applied to an activity the following icons will be displayed next to the Edit dropdown when editing is turned on.



No groups



Separate groups



Visible groups

Assessment

Both Turnitin and Moodle assignments can use Groups and Groupings to aid marking, for example if there is more than one marker, each assigned to a group of students. This can be turned on in the *Common module settings* within the settings of the dropbox. There are two settings, 'visible groups' and 'separate groups', it does not matter which you choose in the case of an assignment dropbox as you are not restricting access, only aiding marking.

Moodle assignments

If you organise students into groups to work on collaborative projects with the idea of a single submission e.g. a joint presentation to be submitted, then Moodle assignments is ideal. You can set up the dropbox so one group member submits and then all other students in a group have to click 'submit' to confirm they're happy with the submission or only one member of the group needs to submit on behalf of all members without official confirmation.

- [How to create a Moodle assignment](#)

Turnitin assignments

Groups and Groupings can only be used to aid marking in Turnitin dropboxes. However, within Peermark (a peer assessment activity that can be incorporated into a dropbox) you can force assignment distribution. This could be a useful approach if you have a small cohort of students and want one group to assess another group's submissions, especially if they've researched different topics, as it could be a good way to get students to learn from their peers about something they have not researched, while also learning how to evaluate.

- [How To setup Peermark in Turnitin](#)
- [How to view submitted and received reviews in Peermark](#)

Collaboration

Using Groups and Groupings in a Forum, Wiki or Chat can aid a more organised collaboration. This can be useful for you as well as the students as it enables you to keep track to conversations and progress with specific pieces of work set for different groups.

This method creates ONE activity but each GROUP sees it differently. To create multiple activities, one for each group, see below.

Forum

This is a good tool if you want to promote peer support within the module by breaking the students into smaller groups promoting social cohesion which will result in better discussions in class. If 'visible groups' is set within the Forum setting students will be able to see all conversations but only participate in their own. If 'separate groups' has been set students will only be able to view 'all participants' posts but not interact, and view and participate in discussions for their own group, they will not be able to view other group's discussions or posts. This can be useful if you have multiple teaching staff responsible for teaching a particular group of students on a module as it ensures they only collaborate with their own group of students rather than bombarding all students with irrelevant information or important information being lost in the overall discussion. If you are using 'separate groups' for a forum, in addition to collaborating with different groups of students, you could also use it as an alternative to the Announcements forum (the default forum in all modules) as the 'all participants' option works in the same way, it allows you to send out one-way communication.

- [Magic with Moodle 12 - Using forums with groups](#)

Wiki

This is a good tool if a group of students need to work together to produce a single piece of work as it acts like a live document, everyone in the group can go in and make changes to what others have written in the aim of producing a collaborative piece of work. In this instance it would be better to set the wiki as 'separate groups' initially so each group can't see what the others are doing and then once the work has been submitted you could change the wiki setting to 'visible groups' so they can view the progress of all the other groups in order to compare their own. This would be similar to a peer assessment approach but without the assessment aspect, more for self-reflection.

- [Magic with Moodle 16 - Using wikis to create a student knowledge hub](#)

Chat

This is a good tool if you want to have a separate space for each group of students to have live discussions with you and each other about a piece of work at set times. This tool works best with Groupings rather than groups as then you can set up a few Chat activities that will only be visible by that group of students, this will also allow you to set each discussion to only open at certain times for different groups.

Managing access to resources and activities

This method creates a separate resource or activity for EACH group, visible only to them.

This can be useful if you only want certain groups to have access to certain resources, activities or whole sections (topics down the centre) within a module. This can be set in the Common module settings for a resource and Restrict access in the settings for a section.

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How to restrict access to a resource or activity or section in Moodle

It is possible to restrict access to resources or activities or to sections in a variety of ways.

- from a specific start date
- to a specific end date
- only visible if students have achieved a required grade in a previous activity
- visibility is based on the value in a field in the user profile (for example course code)
- restrict to a particular group of students

Add restriction...

Activity completion	Require students to complete (or not complete) another activity.
Date	Prevent access until (or from) a specified date and time.
Grade	Require students to achieve a specified grade.
Group	Allow only students who belong to a specified group, or all groups.
User profile	Control access based on fields within the student's profile.
Restriction set	Add a set of nested restrictions to apply complex logic.

Cancel

To restrict access

- In the **Edit Settings** page for an activity or resource, click to open the **Restrict access** section
- Click on the **Add restriction...** button
- Select from
 - **Activity completion** (only available if activity completion is set up on your module) - allows you to limit visibility only to those students who have completed (or not completed) another previous activity
 - **Date** - a To or From date and time can be set from when or until which the item is visible to students
 - **Grade** - a way to limit visibility only to those who have achieved a specified grade or range of grades in a previous activity such as a quiz, or in the module total
 - **Group** (only available if groups are enabled in your module) - make the item visible to a specified group of students (you need to create the groups first)
 - **User profile** - limit visibility to those with a particular value in a user profile field (e.g., a Course Code, or Country)
 - **Restriction set** - Add a set of nested restrictions to apply complex logic.
- Click on the required restriction button and you will return to the **Restrict access** section where further choices can be made.

For more information see: [How to set up groups and groupings](#)

Similar tutorials

The following other resources are also relevant to this topic:

- See here for all How To guidance on [Groups in Moodle](#)