How do I set up areas for student collaboration in Moodle?

Moodle Help & Support

How to set up areas for student collaboration in Moodle

Moodle has several activities suitable for learners to work together as a whole class or in groups of various sizes. This tutorial brings together a variety of ways to use features in Moodle to promote student collaboration.

Possible benefits: These collaboration tools allow you to set up group working exercises in the same way as you might in a classroom or other situation outside Moodle.

This tutorial looks at:

- Working with groups
- Signup Sheets
- Group and collaborative activities
- Forums
- Wikis
- Database
- Glossary
- Chat
- Assignments
- Turnitin assignments

Working with groups

- All Help Sheets on working with Groups includes information on working with groups, creating groups, exporting lists of students placed in a group

This applies to Moodle 3.8 from September 2020

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How to create groups and groupings

Moodle allows creation of groups and groupings (which are "supergroups").

Groups allows you to split up your class into groups and assign activities and resources to those groups.

Groups can be Separate (people in that group can only see their relevant materials, activities e.g. discussions in forums etc.) or Visible (people in that group can see the materials and activities for all groups but cannot interact with or contribute to other groups e.g. forums, only to their own).

First Step - Enable groups in your module

1. Navigate to the module you want to work on
2. Click on the 'Actions Cogwheel' and select 'Edit Settings'
3. Under the Groups heading change "Group mode" to 'Separate groups' or 'Visible groups'
4. Change "Force group mode" to 'Yes' if you want to ensure that groups are then enabled for each activity/resource you then add to the module (although this sets the default for ALL activities then created, this can be amended in each activity during creation).
Showing group membership

You can allow students to see who is in which group by adding the People block.

If you select 'Visible groups', then users can sort Participants by group, if you select Separate groups, participants will see only a list of their own group members under Participants.

The difference between groups and groupings

With Groupings you can create "supergroups" out of your existing groups, allowing you to bunch different groups together into a larger one. For example, a collection of lab Groups taught on a different day to another collection of lab Groups could be clumped into Groupings labelled as that teaching day in order to differentiate them. Groupings is more to aid teaching staff on a module, particularly when it comes to marking; students do not see the grouping title, they only see their Group title.

How to create groups

1. From the front page of your course: drop down the Hamburger menu and click Participants. The Participants page opens.
2. Dropdown the 'Cogwheel Actions' menu on that page and select 'Groups'.

3. Click on the 'Create group' button
4. Give the new group a "Group name" (mandatory). "Group description" can be useful (e.g. noting who the marker(s) will be). The rest of the fields are optional.
5. Click on the 'Save changes' button and the new group will appear in the left-hand column.

6. Select the new group in the left-hand column entitled 'Groups:'.
7. Click on the 'Add' / 'Remove' users button under the right-hand column entitled "Members of:". A new screen will appear where you can add the students enrolled on your course to your new group. These are found in the right-hand column labelled "Potential members".
   a. Search for a student
   b. Select the student and click on the 'Add' button. You will also need to add Teachers if you wish them to take part in the activity and be restricted to that Group. Editing Teachers can access all Groups. NOTE: A student CAN be part of more than one Group.
   c. Once finished, click on the 'Back to groups' button.
How to create groupings

1. Drop down the 'Hamburger menu' and select Participants > Groups > Groupings.

2. Click on the Create grouping button, give it a "Grouping name" and click 'Save Changes.'

3. Your grouping will appear on the Groupings tab. Click the blue 'Person button' underneath edit to add groups to your grouping.

4. In the next page you can use the 'Add' & 'Remove' buttons to add your groups.

5. Click 'Back to groupings' when you're done.

Other pages on similar topics

- Groups in Moodle
- How to export a sign-up list from the Signup Sheet tool
How to send a message to groups of students or participants
How to enable group submissions in a Moodle assignment
How Working with groups of students
How To create groups and groupings
How to allow students to self-enrol on a module and into a given group
How to export a list of students who are placed in a group
How to release resources to students at different times or in different groups
An overview of how to use Groups and Groupings effectively
How to add a forum
Why might you need Groupings in Moodle?
How to use the Signup Sheet Tool
How to create a forum for groups
Magic with Moodle 12 - Using forums with groups
How to create a metalink to enrol students from another module
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Signup Sheets

The Moodle sign-up sheet can be used for many purposes - some examples include signing up for events such as careers fairs, indicating project choices and creating project groups for collaborative work.

Note: The groups formed by this system are not the same as Moodle's own groups and cannot be used in Moodle activities, therefore Signup Sheets are best used to form groups that are active outside Moodle.

More on how to create and use Signup Sheets

See also

How to export a sign-up list from the Signup Sheet tool

Group and collaborative activities

There are a number of activities in Moodle which allow groups of students to work together either privately (separate groups) or with sight of, but not access to, other groups (visible groups).

- Forums
- Wikis
- Database
- Glossary
- Chat
- Assignments
- Turnitin assignments
Using Discussion forums, wikis or Chat Rooms with Moodle groups enables students to work together in groups, on a collaborative task or project.

- More on How to create a forum for groups
- More on Working with groups of students

Group assignments

Students can also submit group assignments - either (1) one student submits for all in the group and it's automatically applied against the others in the group as soon as submitted, or (2) each student has to approve the submission of their own group's piece.

- How to enable group submissions in a Moodle assignment

Similar tutorials

The following other resources are also relevant to this topic:

- How to change whether I get emails from a forum

Other pages about Moodle forums

- Using rubrics when grading Moodle forums
- How do I enable whole forum grading?
- How to grade forums using whole forum gradings
- Magic with Moodle 10 - Using forums to answer student questions
- How to use a Forum for blogs or learning journals
- How can I see when new items are added to a forum in my module?
- I'd like to change the number of emails Moodle sends me
- How to add a forum
- How to change whether I get emails from a forum
- How to create a forum for groups
- Magic with Moodle 12 - Using forums with groups

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Possible benefits:

These collaboration tools allow you to set up group working exercises in a way similar to the classroom.