





Taking part in a discussion

a student training document

Introduction

This document will show you how to take part in a discussion, known in Moodle as a forum. You will learn how to:




-  Post and reply to messages
-  Add attachments to your messages
-  Use forum management features such as tracking and subscriptions

You can access forums either from a link within the content or from the Forums link in the Activities block. All forums have the same icon (). If you are unsure where to find a forum it's best to use the **Forums** link in the **Activities** block.

| General forums | | | | | | |
|----------------|---|-------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----|
| Forum | Description | Discussions | Unread posts | Track | Subscribed | RSS |
| Social forum | An open forum for chatting about anything you want to | 1 | 0 | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No | |
| News forum | General news and announcements | 0 | 0 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | Yes | |





| Learning forums | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|---|-------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Section | Forum | Description | Discussions | Unread posts | Track | Subscribed | RSS |
| 3 | Forum (Discussion Board) | This is an example of a forum (discussion board) , for asynchronous communication. | 4 | 0 | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RSS |

The forums page shows all forums within the module, split into categories. For each forum the table shows a title, description, number of discussions and the number of posts you haven't read. You are also given options to manage your use of the forums:

-  **Tracking** - With tracking switched on any unread posts will be highlighted and you can tell at a glance how many post you have not read.
-  **Subscription** - You will receive an email message each time someone posts a message or a reply. You can change your subscription settings by editing your profile and clicking the **show advanced** button. You can then enable digests which will instead send one email per day.
-  **RSS** - You can also subscribe to a forum using an RSS reader such as Google reader or Firefox.

Reading Messages

To open a forum click on its **title**. You are then shown a listing of that forum's discussion threads. There is an item for each initial starting message of a thread, and an indication of how many

| Add a new discussion topic | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---------|--|--|
| Discussion | Started by | Replies | Last post | |
| Campus cat |  J.Bloggs | 5 | Mick Norman Fri, 23 Jan 2009, 12:50 PM | |
| Experimental Discussion |  H.Smith | 1 | Mick Norman Thu, 22 Jan 2009, 10:13 AM | |
| PGCHE discussions... |  K.Jones | 3 | A.A. Edwards Sun, 2 Nov 2008, 06:36 PM | |
| Combined Studies Tutors and the PGCHE |  L.Locke | 0 | C.A. Vickerman Tue, 21 Oct 2008, 08:46 PM | |

messages (replies) are within that thread, along with the information on the most recent message (date and author name).

Click on the **name** of the discussion you want to take part in.

You will then see a list of all messages in that discussion thread. You can change how you view this message list using the drop-down box at the top of the page.



The default is 'replies in nested form'. Alternatives are:

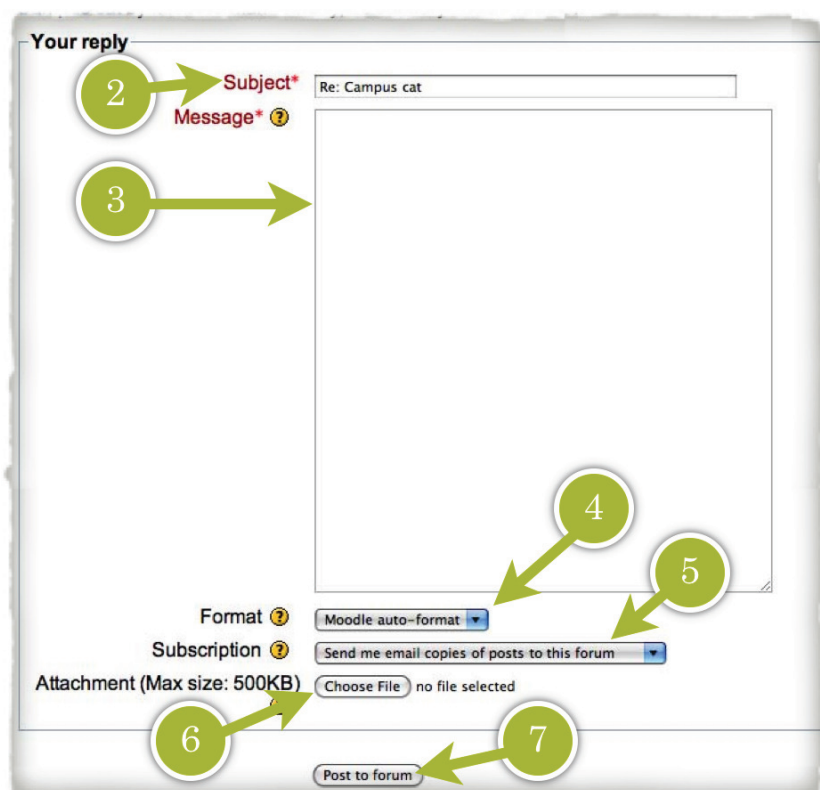
- Threaded form
- Replies flat with newest first
- Replies flat with oldest first

Note: With flat replies, the thread's starting post will always be displayed at the top no matter if it is oldest first or newest first. Oldest/newest is only relevant for the replies.

Posting and Replying

Posting or replying to a message is much like composing an email. You can post a new message by clicking the **Add a new discussion topic** button (if available) on the forum's start page. In most cases you'll be replying to an existing message.

1. To reply to a message click **Reply**.
2. Edit **Subject** line if appropriate.
3. Type in the contents of your **message**.
4. Choose a **format** (moodle-auto format is advised).
5. Select whether you want to be subscribed to the forum. If you subscribe you will receive an email copy of every message posted to the forum.
6. If required/allowed, attach a file such as a Word document or PowerPoint presentation using the **Choose File** button.
7. Click on the **Post to Forum** button.



After posting your message you are given a 30 minute window of time to edit or delete your post (very helpful if you hit post too soon, or spot a mistake right after posting). You'll see that the links to edit or delete your post are added to the bottom of your post.



Frequently Asked Questions

I need to delete a message I posted but it's been more than 30 minutes. What should I do?

Contact your teacher and ask them to remove the message for you.

Why do I keep getting email every time someone posts a message?

You are subscribed to the forum. You can visit the forum and click the unsubscribe link, but your teacher may have disabled this if they have forced subscriptions. To better manage your subscriptions we recommend that you set up a digest. To do this:

1. Go to your **profile** page (by clicking on your name anywhere you see it)
2. Select the **Edit Profile** tab.
3. Click the **Show advanced** button. This displays hidden options.
4. In the **Email digest** type drop-down list, select **Complete (daily email with full posts)**.

You will now only receive one email per forum per day.