What Tools are Available in Moodle?

Overview

Two types of Moodle tools are available to you as you build your course:

- **resources** - which you can use to present information to your students
- **activities** - which can be used to build community and provide formative and summative assessment

This page lists and describes all the tools available to you in UNSW Moodle 2. It also describes administrative tools such as the Gradebook, the Participants list and the Reports function.

To start thinking about how you might use these tools, visit the page [What Can You Do with Moodle?](http://www.maths.unsw.edu.au/currentstudents/maple-lab-consultants)

When to use

A large part of developing your competence in Moodle course-building is learning to match resources and activities (including assessment activities) to the learning outcomes you want your course to deliver.

This page presents a list and description of all the tools, for your reference when making such matches.

Benefits

Knowing the full breadth of tools within Moodle means that you can then choose a suitable selection of these tools. They will help you deliver a varied, rich course to cater to students’ different learning styles and present different types of course material.

Guide

Getting started

A–C

Assignment: A tool for creating gradable items and allowing students to upload digital content in response. Students can enter assignment text directly, or submit essays, spreadsheets, presentations, web pages, photographs or graphics, or small audio or video clips. You can also use this tool to remind students of offline assignments they must complete, and to return assignments to students online with feedback attached.

Attendance: Use the Attendance block (the most efficient way to use the Attendance activity) to record students’ attendance at classes or activities, to report on attendance, or to change the attendance settings. In the student view of Moodle, the same block will display an attendance report to the individual student.

Blackboard Collaborate Classroom: Blackboard Collaborate 12.0 is a virtual classroom system that allows for complex online interaction. Sessions can be large, open group presentations that can easily break into smaller groups for discussion and group work.

Blog: A blog (weblog) is an online journal, with entries organised chronologically with the most recent first. Blogs can be a group or an individual effort. Blogs in Moodle are user-based; each user has their own non-course-specific blog. You can also use Open University (OU) blogs.

Book: A Moodle book (very similar to the Learning Module tool in the Blackboard LMS) is a multi-page resource that is formatted like a book, containing main chapters and subchapters. A good way to keep the course home page neat and short is to place lesson content within a book.

Calendar: You can include a calendar in a course by adding a Calendar block, which can display the following types of events:

- Site—viewable in all courses, created by administrators
- Course—viewable only to course members, created by teachers
- Groups—viewable only by members of a group, created by teachers
- User—viewable only by the user and created by them.

An alternative to the Calendar is the Upcoming events block, which displays future events and/or deadlines in a list generated from the calendar, providing links to event/activity details or directly to an activity. Users click a date to
see the day-view calendar for that day.

**Chat:** The Chat tool allows students and teachers to have real-time synchronous text-based discussion in an online chat room. (For audio chat, see "Voice tools" or "Wimba Classroom" below.)

**Choice:** Use this tool to present students with a single question and a number of answers to choose from (e.g. for a discussion starting-point, a quick poll, or to establish preferred arrangements for an excursion). You can allow participants to change their choices, or set the activity to close or lock down on a specific date, allowing participants to change their minds several times before finalising their choice. Choice is one of 3 survey-type tools in Moodle - visit this [comparison page](#) before you choose which to use.

**Database:** With the Database activity, you and your students can collaborate on building a searchable bank of record entries relating to any topic. The format and structure of the entries can be almost unlimited, including images, files, URLs, numbers and text.

**Dialogue:** A two-way text-based communication tool. You might use Dialogue for a private conversation between you and a student, or between you and all the members of a group. Any participant can attach files to a dialogue post. All dialogue activities are logged and can be viewed by both students and teachers.

**EchoLink:** Enables instructors to provide a link to a lecture stream or a single lecture recorded in Echo360.

**External Tool:** Enables student access to learning resources on another website e.g. those produced by a publisher. Allows a secure relationship between students in Moodle and the external resources.

**Feedback:** A student-survey tool. You can view responses in summary or analysis format, or by individual user. You can specify anonymous response if you wish. Feedback is one of 3 survey-type tools in Moodle - visit this [comparison page](#) before you choose which to use.

**Forum:** An online discussion board where you and your students can post messages to each other, and keep track of individual discussions. Not the same as a [News forum](#).

**Glossary:** A tool for embedding glossaries of terms used by practitioners in your area of study. Glossaries can be created interactively, with students contributing terms and definitions. Consider:

- Allowing comments to encourage interaction.
- Encouraging students to add images and links to their definitions, for a more dynamic Glossary generally and more 'stickability' of definitions.
- Automatically linking certain words/phrases anywhere in the course to the glossary entry.
- Approving glossary entries by default for a self regulated, student-created glossary.
- Grading this activity, or having the users rate it.
• Placing a Random glossary entry block on the course home page that displays a different glossary term-and-definition every time a student logs in to the course.

See this website for more suggestions about using the Moodle Glossary tool creatively: Moodle Glossary tips.

**Group selection:** This tool allows you to set up groups and then let students choose which group they want to join. You can specify maximum numbers for the groups.

**Gradebook:** You can record, track and calculate grades within Moodle. The grading tool is complex and flexible. You can provide feedback to students in the form of comments, which can be standardised using a scale. You can use scales for any kind of assessable activity except an automatically-graded quiz.

**H–T**

**Lesson:** Using lessons, you can create programmed learning units in which each correct answer brings up a new piece of information and a new question, or in which you simply enforce sequential viewing of various pieces of content. Moodle’s Lesson tool lets you create quite complex branching lessons.

**Participants list:** You can use the Participants list to view the course participants by group or role, to annotate participants individually or collectively, to message individuals, groups or classes, and to download filtered lists as CSV files.

**Maple T. A. Assignment:** This assignment type is suitable for maths and science subjects. Information on how to use Maple T.A. is available to students from Maple T.A. lab consultants.

**Messaging:** You can message a specific group of students within a Moodle course, and configure how you will receive return messages.

**Media Collection:** A tool for creating galleries of images, audio and video, which students can contribute to and be assessed on.

**News forum:** A News forum is automatically created for the course home page of every course. Only teachers and administrators may post to the News forum or reply to posts on it, but every enrolled person is automatically subscribed. Use the News forum for general announcements.

The Latest News block displays a specific number of recent discussions from the News forum.

**Questionnaire:** The Questionnaire tool is for data-gathering, not for assessment. Use it to obtain student feedback or opinion. This tool offers a variety of question types: for example, check boxes, radio buttons, essay boxes, rating/scaling. Questionnaire is one of 3 survey-type tools in Moodle - visit this comparison page before you choose which to use.

**Quiz:** In Moodle, you can
• create quizzes with different question types
• randomly generate quizzes from pools of questions
• allow students to re-take quizzes multiple times, and
• let the software take care of the scoring.

Reports: The reports currently available to teachers (some are also available to students) are:

• Logs (select course, group, students, date, activity, changes and format)
• Live logs (all activity for the past hour)
• Activity report (total usage per course activity or resource)
• Course participation (select activity, period, role, actions)
• Statistics (select course, report type, period).

Scheduler: Use this tool to enable students to sign up via Moodle for face-to-face appointments/consultations.

SCORM package: Using this tool, you can upload any package of SCORM (Sharable Content Object Reference Model) content to your Moodle course. SCORM is a collection of specifications that enable interoperability, accessibility and reusability of web-based learning content. This type of content is created using HTML, JavaScript, SWF files and (for non-technical users) SCORM authoring software.

Team Builder: Team Builder assigns students to groups based on their answers to a series of questions that you specify. To use it, follow these instructions.

Turnitin Assignment: UNSW uses 3 Turnitin products: OriginalityCheck, GradeMark and Turnitin for iPad. OriginalityCheck checks submitted assignments against Turnitin’s databases for originality; GradeMark allows you to digitally mark up and give feedback on student submissions, and Turnitin for iPad allows staff to review, grade and mark up student assignments using an iPad. Instructions on using Turnitin products with Moodle 2 are available on the [UNSW Turnitin support site](#).

U–Z

Voice activities (Authoring, Board, Email, Podcaster, Presentation): Voice activities allow you to incorporate audio recordings into your course. You can create audio content to be played within the course or downloaded as a podcast, set up an asynchronous voice-based message board, send and receive voice emails and present web content, images and PDFs with audio instructions, narration or messages, to which students can respond with audio and text comments.

Moodle Wiki: Wikis are collections of collaboratively authored web pages, beginning with a home page that students can edit, and to which they can link more pages. Changes to all pages are visible using the page history function. You can create wikis at both class and group level. Moodle offers two types of wiki, a basic Moodle Wiki and a more flexible OU (Open University) Wiki that allows you to create an assessable wiki, set time limits for
editing, define reusable wiki page templates, annotate students' entries and better track page versions and history.

**Workshop (UNSW):** A peer review/peer assessment tool, the UNSW Workshop tool allows the instructor to define several aspects of a task by setting up multi-criterion evaluation or rubrics. Students submit their own work; then they assess others' submissions, considering each task aspect separately, giving feedback, and suggesting a grade. They are then graded on both their own submission and their effectiveness in assessing their peers' work.

**Additional information**

**Further assistance**

If you experience technical or other issues, consult the [Where to get help](https://teaching.unsw.edu.au/moodle-tools) page.