Overview

To assign an activity, or release a resource, to a select group of students, the group must belong to a grouping.

NOTE: If you need to, you can create a grouping containing a single group.

This page contains all instructions you'll need to create groups manually, auto-create groups, import groups from spreadsheet, create groupings, to release resources and activities to groupings, and to manage groups generally.
A separate page describes how to create groups and groupings using Team Builder, a tool created by the UNSW Faculty of Engineering to assign students to groups based on their answers to a series of instructor-specified questions. This gives you more control than allowing Moodle to create groups, but can involve some work setting up the initial logic. However it can then be easier to assign students to a group of your choosing.

Sometimes you want to allow students to choose which group they will join for group work purposes in Moodle. A separate page tells you how to create a Group Selection activity, and how to change group memberships once students have made their selections.

**When to use**

In your Moodle course, you can assign students to one group or to several. Or you can set up groups so that students assign themselves. If you use groups, you must also create "groupings" to contain one or more of your groups.

**Manage activities using groups/groupings**

Use groups and groupings when you want to split students, and possibly tutors, into small or large groups to view resources or work together on an activity. You don't need to create a separate activity for each group; you create a single activity and configure it be a group-based activity. For example, if you want to split students into groups to participate in a discussion activity, create a single discussion forum and configure the forum settings to specify that it's a group activity. (To do this, open the forum, then in the Settings block select Edit settings, then in the resulting page change the Common module settings.)

- Discussion forums or peer review exercises are particularly amenable to being managed using groupings.

**Restrict access to an entire course topic, using a grouping**

You can also use groups/groupings to restrict access to an entire topic within a course. (To do this, Turn editing on, then click the topic's Edit summary icon 🎨. On the Summary of Topic page, under Restrict access, select the relevant group from the Grouping access drop-down list.)
Benefits

In Moodle, you create groups in an independent operation. Once your groups and groupings have been set up, whenever you add any resource or activity you can assign it to any grouping you wish.

Guide

Step by step instructions

- Create a group
- Use Class ID field for easier student grouping
- Import groups
Create a grouping
• Allow Moodle to create groups (within a grouping) for you
• Release a resource to a grouping
• Assign an activity to a grouping
• Set up an assignment with self-selected student groups
• View and export a class list, annotate or communicate with a group

See also:
• Create groups and groupings using Team Builder
• Allow group selection

Create a group

1. In the Settings block, select Course administration > Users > Groups.

2. On the Groups page, click Create group. (Alternatively, you can click Auto-create groups and specify how
you want all students in the class divided into groups.)

3. On the Create group page:
   - Enter a Group name.
   - Enter a Group description, if necessary.
   - If you wish, enter an Enrolment key. In this way, you can restrict access to the course to users who know the key. Entering the key will admit the user to the course and automatically make them a member of this group. This will only take effect if the course has been created as a Self-Enrolment Course.
   - If you wish, you can add an identifying picture for the group, which you can choose to Hide or display.
   - Click Save changes
Instead of continuing on to steps 4 and 5, once you have created a number of groups you can create a Group selection activity that allows students to enrol themselves in groups.

4. On the Groups page, click on the group you want to add or remove users from. Click Add/remove users.
Moodle implements a regular task log to automatically remove suspended users from Moodle groups and notifies instructors with an e-mail.

1. On the Add/remove users page:
   - Select names from the Potential members list.
   - Click Add to move them into the Group members list.

Use the Class ID list for easier group creation

You can now auto-create groups using Class ID for much faster group creation based on student enrolments. Class
ID's come from Timetabling and reflect what lectures/tutorials/laboratories that a student is enrolled in.

1. Navigate to Settings>Users and then click on **Groups**.

2. In the **Groups** tab, click **Auto-Create groups**.
3. In the **Grouping of auto-created groups** drop down menu select **Class ID**.
4. Click **Submit**.
5. Your group containing all users with the same Class ID will now have been created.
When enrolments change in your course groups will not be automatically updated. To update groups repeat steps 1-5 above.

If your Moodle course contains more than 1 Class ID e.g. you have a lecture and a tutorial, then a group will be created for each Class ID. If necessary you can manage these groups using the grouping function (a group of groups).
Import groups

You can create a group list in Excel and import it into your Moodle course in the following way:

1. In MS Excel:
   ◦ Create a new spreadsheet.
   ◦ Name the first column 'userid' and the second column 'group'.
   ◦ Enter the students' zIDs in the userid column, and the group names in the group column.
   ◦ Save the spreadsheet as a CSV file.

2. In the relevant Moodle course, in the Settings block, select Course administration > Users > Groups
3. On the *Groups* page, click **Import groups**.

4. On the *Import groups* page, click **Choose a file**.

5. In the *File picker*, click **Upload a file**, then **Browse**, **Open** and **Upload** the CSV file you created at step 2.
6. On the Import groups page, click Import groups. A list of the groups that have been successfully added will display. Click Continue to see the groups listed on the course groups page.

Create a grouping

A grouping is a set of groups. Groupings enable groups of students to be arranged into different sets of groups for each activity.

Why are groupings necessary?

Use groupings to restrict access to an activity or resource to a subset of students. To assign an activity, or release a resource, to a select group of students, the group must belong to a grouping.

For example, instead of giving the whole class access to a discussion forum, you may want only some members to see it and participate, and you may want that subset of students to also conduct their discussion within separate or visible groups. To make the forum available to some groups but not others in the class, place the groups who need access to the forum in their own grouping.

A grouping can contain only one group, or several groups. If you assign a resource or activity to a grouping, only students who are members of groups within the nominated grouping will be able to view the resource or complete the activity. It will be invisible to other groups or groupings.

1. In the Settings block, select Course administration > Users > Groups.
2. On the *Groups* page, click the **Groupings** tab.

3. On the *Groupings* page, click **Create grouping**.

4. On the *Create grouping* page, enter a **Grouping name**, and click **Save changes**.
5. On the Groupings page, in the Edit column for the new grouping, click the Show groups in grouping icon 🔄.

6. On the Add/remove groups page:
   - Select a group or groups in the Potential members list.
   - Click Add to move the selected groups into the Existing members
Allow Moodle to create groups (within a grouping) for you

1. On the course home page, in the Settings block, under Course administration, select Users > Groups.

2. On the Groups page, click Auto-create groups.
3. On the *Auto-create groups* page:

- **under General**
  - enter a **Naming scheme**
    - Group @ will create groups named Group A, Group B, Group C . . .
    - Group # will create groups named Group 1, Group 2, Group 3 . . .
  - at **Auto create based on**, select whether you will created groups based on the number of groups or the number of members per group, then enter that number in the **Group/member count** field.
  - at **Group/member count**, enter the number of members you want in each group

- **under Group members**
  - select which role (probably **Student**) and/or the cohort/grouping/group you want to select from
  - select how you want Moodle to **Allocate members** to the groups, if you don't want the default random selection. (If this is to be a self-enrolment grouping, select **No allocation**.)
  - If you specify Members per group and select Prevent last small group, members will be added to existing groups rather than a new group being created with fewer than the specified number of members.
  - select if you want to **Ignore users (already) in groups**

- **under Grouping**
  - at **Grouping of auto-created groups**, specify whether to add the groups to a new or an existing grouping. If you select **New grouping**, also complete the **Grouping name** field.

- **Click Preview.** The groups display in a table. For auto-allocated groups, the **Group members** also display; for non-allocated groups, this column is empty.
4. Make any adjustments needed, and click **Submit**. The new groups display in the **Groups**
Release a resource to a grouping

1. On the Adding or Updating page of the resource, under Common module settings:
   - Select whether you want the resource to be Visible at this point. (You can Hide it now, then return later and change it to Show, if you wish.)
   - Select the Available for group members only check box.
   - Select the appropriate Grouping from the drop-down list.

2. If you wish to restrict the resources to grouping members only, click the Add group/grouping access restriction button (you may need to expand the Restrict access section after clicking this button).

   Depending on your requirement you should add an access restriction based on Group or Grouping.
Note this will cause the activity/resource to appear in grey since a restriction has been applied.
Assign an activity to a grouping

If you want your class to undertake a small-group activity under the supervision of a single person (say, a project coach), you can create a single activity and use groups to keep each team's activity private. Specify an activity as a group activity in the Common module settings section of the activity's Add or Update page.

Separate groups and Visible groups

When you configure an activity as a Separate group activity, group members can only see their own group's work; they cannot see the work of other groups. So, for example, in a discussion forum, all students will click the same link to the single discussion activity, but when they enter the forum they will only see posts put up by members of their own group. Instructors can see all the groups’ posts, but students can only see and participate in their own separate group activity.

The Visible groups option enables students to view other groups' work, but they can only contribute to their own group's activity. This is useful when you want students to be aware of how other groups are undertaking an activity.

Set up groups first

Before you perform the steps below, you should have set up the appropriate groups, taking care to include the supervisor in every group they will be coaching. Then create the activity, including the following steps (you can also perform them on an existing activity):

1. On the activity’s Adding or Updating page, under Common module settings:
   - Select whether you want the resource to be Visible at this point. (You can Hide it now, then return later and change it to Show, if you wish.)
   - For Group mode select either:
     - Separate groups (where a group can only see their own group’s work, for complete privacy) or
     - Visible groups (where a group has read-only access to other groups’ work, for limited privacy).

   - For Grouping, select the grouping.

   - If you wish to restrict the resources to grouping members only, click the Add group/grouping access restriction button (you may need to expand the Restrict access section after clicking this button). Note this will cause the activity/resource to appear in grey since a restriction has been applied.

2. Complete the rest of the page as appropriate and Save your changes.
### Set up an assignment with self-selected student groups

You can set up an assignment where students, having selected themselves into groups, are asked to address different questions or topics. You do this by creating a group selection activity, which is all that the students will be able to view in the course home page.

- Once they have chosen a group, the assignment for that group will display.
- Once they have submitted their individual assignment, you will be able to filter the submissions by group.

To set up an assignment in this way, you will need to have selected the **Group mode** of **Separate groups** or **Visible groups**
To set up an assignment to operate this way:

1. **Auto-create groups** of students, one for each question or topic (e.g. Q1, Q2, Q3). On the *Auto-create groups* page,
   
   - under **General**
     - enter a **Naming scheme**
     - at **Auto create based on**, select **Members per group**
     - at **Group/member count**, enter the number of members you want in each group
   
   - under **Group members**
     - select which role (probably **Student**) and cohort you want to select from
     - at **Select members from cohort** (probably **Any**), **Select members from grouping** (probably **None**) or **Select members from group** (probably **None**), select the appropriate option
     - at **Allocate members**, select **No allocation**
   
   - under **Grouping**
     - at **Grouping of auto-created groups**, select **New grouping** and
     - enter the name of the assignment in the **Grouping name** field

   - click **Submit**.
2. Create a group selection activity, ensuring that on the Adding a new Group Selection page you make the following selections:

- In the General section, at Allow selection from, select the grouping you created at step 1
In the **Common module settings** section (click **Show advanced** if necessary), at **Group mode**, select **No groups**

- at **Visible**, select **Show**.

3. Create the assignment. On the *Adding a new assignment* page, under **Common module settings** (click **Show advanced** if necessary):

- at **Group mode** select **Separate groups** or **Visible groups**, depending on whether you want the students to be able to see each other’s work
- at **Grouping** select the assignment-specific grouping
- select the **Available for group members only** check box
- at **Visible**, select **Show**
4. Once students have submitted their assignments, filter the submissions by going to the *Submission inbox* and selecting the group into the *Visible groups/Separate groups* drop-down box.

**View and export a group list, annotate or communicate with a group**

Note that you can only perform these actions if *Separate groups* has been selected as the group mode on the *Edit course settings page*.

1. In the *Navigation* block, for the relevant course click *Participants*
2. From the Separate groups drop-down list at the top of the page, select the group to display. A list of the group members displays. (Depending on the settings, you may need to click Show all below the list to view all the group's members.)

3. Below the list, click Select all, and from the Choose drop-down list, select:
   - Send a message to open a page where you can enter a message, remove group members from the recipients list, preview and (in the preview page) send the message
   - Add a new note to open a page where you can add personal, course or site-specific notes for your own reference against, for example, individual students’ names. Site-wide notes are visible to all instructors in all Moodle courses, and are not recommended.
   - Add a common note to open a page where you can add a personal, course or site-specific note that applies to all members of the group. Site-wide notes are visible to all instructors in all Moodle courses, and are not recommended.
   - Download as CSV to export the group list as a CSV file to your computer.
Advanced guide

- Create a **private space for tutors**, using groups within groupings.

Additional information

**Further assistance**

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