
Using Forums in the VLE

GUIDE

v4.0

User Services
IT Services



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A. Forums

The Forum activity within the VLE is a powerful communication and discussion tool. Tutors and students are provided with an area where they can post messages and reply to each other at any time. Since this process does not require tutors and students to be signed in at the same time (synchronously), this method of communication is referred to as asynchronous communication.

Both synchronous and asynchronous communication methods have their advantages and disadvantages. **Synchronous communication** (such as chat rooms, instant messaging or face-to-face conversations) allows for an immediate response, but may cause some students to not participate because they are afraid of embarrassing themselves by making a mistake. **Asynchronous communication** (such as forums) allows these students to take their time to compose replies. They can draft and rewrite until they are satisfied with their reply instead of feeling under pressure to respond immediately. By utilising a variety of synchronous and asynchronous tools for communication, tutors will allow students with different learning requirements to participate in discussions.

A forum can be compared to a room at a party: there's a living room, a kitchen, a dining room etc. In each room there are groups of people having different discussions. Each discussion has a thread with everyone replying to each other about the topic. Whilst being able to contribute to his group's discussion, one is also able to follow other discussions being developed within the same room. Without people having discussions, a forum is an empty, quiet space. Each forum can contain one or more discussions, each comprised of a message post and a number of reply posts.

Tutors may opt to create various forums within a VLE area, each of which is used for different purposes. Apart from the *Announcements* forum (refer to [Section B](#)), which is used for announcements, and the discussion forums, which are used to discuss VLE area related topics, one might consider providing students with a Student Café, which allows students to acquaint themselves with the use of online forums through informal and optional discussions.

B. Types of forums

An **Announcements** forum is automatically created in every VLE area, to which all participants (students and tutors) are automatically subscribed (refer to [Section J](#) for information about subscriptions). The *Announcements* forum is a simple one-way communication tool used by tutors to make any type of announcement relevant to the VLE area. The Announcements forum does not allow students to post messages or reply to announcements made by their tutors.

Tutors can create other forums where students can post messages. There are five types of Forums that a tutor can create:

- **A single simple discussion** – The tutor can create only one discussion in this forum. This is useful for short discussions, and will keep the conversation focused on one particular topic.
- **Each person posts one discussion** – Each student can start only one new discussion topic (though everyone can reply to each other's). This is useful when you want each student to start a discussion about, say, their reflections on the week's topic and everyone else responds to these.
- **Q and A forum** – The Q and A forum requires students to post their perspectives to a discussion before viewing other students' postings for the same discussion. After the initial posting, students can view and respond to others' postings. This feature allows equal initial posting opportunity among all students, thus encouraging original and independent thinking.
- **Standard forum for general use** – This is an open forum where anyone can start a new topic at any time. This is the best general-purpose forum.

- **Standard forum displayed in a blog-like format** – This is similar to the *standard forum for general use*, but the first post of each discussion is displayed as in a blog. Users can read the post and then choose to respond by clicking the **Discuss this topic** link bottom right of the post.

C. Creating forums

To create a forum:

1. Click the **Start editing** toggle button located at the top-right corner of the page. This will display a new array of options. Note that the **Start editing** button changes to the **Stop editing** button.

The screenshot shows the VLE interface for a course titled 'GEO1234-YR-A-2223: The Atmosphere'. At the top right, there is a 'Stop editing' toggle button, which is circled in red. The interface includes a sidebar with navigation options like 'Getting Started', 'Announcements', and 'Topic 1: A climate change...'. The main content area shows a 'Getting Started' section with icons for 'Study-unit Syllabus', 'Study-unit Schedule', 'Tutor's Profile', and 'Communication Statement'. The right sidebar contains options for 'Show study-unit to students' (set to 'Visible') and 'My VLE areas' with a list of years from 2017/18 to 2022/23.

2. In the section where you want to create the forum, click the **Add an activity or resource** button.

The screenshot shows the 'Add an activity or resource' dialog box. It features a search bar at the top and tabs for 'Starred', 'All', 'Activities', and 'Resources'. Below the tabs, there is a grid of activity and resource icons. The 'Forum' icon, which is a green speech bubble, is circled in red. Other icons include Assignment, Assignment (Turnitin), Assignment (with Panopto), Book, Chat, Choice, Database, External tool, Feedback, File, and Folder.

3. Select **Forum**. The screen below is displayed.

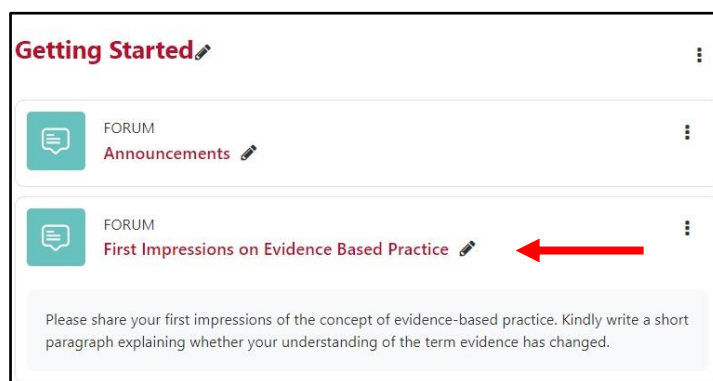
4. In the **Forum name** field, type a short name for the forum e.g., *First Impressions on Evidence Based Practice*. This will be displayed in the VLE area main page.
5. In the **Description** field, type in a description or introductory text for the discussion. It is good practice to include precise instructions for students regarding the subject of the forum and any possible assessment criteria that might be used in this forum.
- e.g., *Please share your first impressions of the concept of evidence-based practice. Kindly write a short paragraph explaining whether your understanding of the term evidence has changed.*
6. Tick **Display description on course page** if you want the description to be displayed in the VLE area homepage just below the link to the forum.
7. From the **Forum type** drop-down menu, choose the preferred forum type. Refer to [Section B](#) for more information about forum types. Expand the **Availability**, **Subscription and tracking**, **Discussion locking**, **Post threshold for blocking** and **Common module settings** sections. Adjust the following settings according to your preference:
- Availability:** As tutor, you may set up discussion forum activities to include a due date as well as a cut-off date, if necessary. A forum activity with a set due date is added to the VLE area's *Calendar* as well as to the *Scheduled activities* block in the VLE Dashboard. This allows students to effectively manage their work.

- i. **Due date:** The date when posts and/or replies by students are due. Please note that students can still post and answer questions after the due date.
 - ii. **Cut-off date:** The date beyond which students can no longer post and/or reply to discussion threads.
- b. **Subscription mode:** Refer to [Section J](#) for more information about subscriptions.
 - c. **Discussion locking:** Forum threads may be automatically locked after a defined period of inactivity. The default is set to never lock discussions, allowing students to contribute at any time. If you'd like to lock discussion threads, a period from a day to a year may be selected. Tutors have the capability to override locked discussions by simply posting a reply.
 - d. **Post threshold for blocking:** This is used to limit the number of posts any one student can make in a given period of time. When the student approaches that number, they will be warned that they are approaching the threshold.
 - i. **Time period for blocking:** The time period during which a student is limited to make a number of posts.
 - ii. **Post threshold for blocking:** The maximum number of posts a student can make during the above established period. Entering '0' (zero) will disable blocking. If blocking is disabled, warnings will automatically be disabled.
 - iii. **Post threshold for warning:** The number of posts a student can make during the above established period, after which s/he is warned that he is approaching the maximum number of posts. Entering '0' (zero) will disable warnings.
 - e. **Group mode:** Refer to [Section H](#) for more information about groups.
8. Click the **Save and return to course** button.

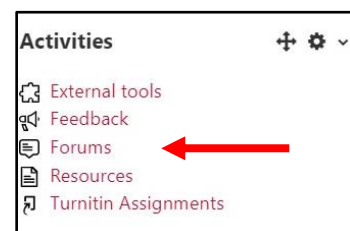
D. Accessing forums





You can access a forum you want to participate in by clicking its title in the contents section of the VLE area. Forums are denoted by the icon on the left.



You can also find a list of all the forums by clicking the **Forums** link in the *Activities* block in the VLE area homepage.




The Forums page shows a list of available forums in the VLE area, and information related to the forums, such as the title, description and number of discussions. You are also given the option to manage forum subscriptions. Refer to [Section J](#) for more information about subscriptions.

Forum	Description	Discussions	Unread posts	Track	Subscribed	Email digest type
Announcements	Tutors use this forum to communicate important information about the VLE area. Students will also receive a copy of this information in their University mailbox. This is a one-way forum which means that students are not able to respond to posts in this forum. Please make sure the VLE ...	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Default (No digest) ▼
First Impressions on Evidence Based Practice	Please share your first impressions of the concept of evidence-based practice. Kindly write a short paragraph explaining whether your understanding of the term evidence has changed.	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Default (No digest) ▼
Q&A Forum	<p>Welcome to the Q&A forum!</p>  <p>If you encounter any technology difficulties, or have queries with respect to an assignment or a study-unit requirement, please use this forum to ask any general study-unit-related questions.</p> <p>If you see a question you can answer or help with, you are invited to reply to ...</p>	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Default (No digest) ▼
The Café	<p>Welcome to The Café forum!</p>  <p>This is a social forum open for discussions about anything you want to discuss, where you can relax over a virtual cup of coffee ☺</p> <p>You may like to share any interesting news / experience / tools which are un/related to this study-unit, or simply some humour to break the ice!</p>	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Default (No digest) ▼

E. Adding a new discussion topic within a forum

Every Forum type (except for *A single simple discussion*, refer to [Section B](#) for more information about Forum types) is made up of a number of discussion topics.












To add a new topic within a forum:

1. Access the forum, as indicated in [Section D](#).
2. Click the **Add discussion topic** button. 
3. Type a short descriptive title for your topic in the **Subject** field.
4. Type in the content of your post in the **Message** text field.
5. If you would like to add files as attachments, follow steps a - b below, otherwise proceed to step 6.
 - a. Click the **Advanced** link.

Subject !

Message !

Edit View Insert Format Tools Table Help

p 0 words ↗

! Required

- b. In the **Attachment** setting you can upload files through one of two options: [Method i – Traditional upload](#) or [Method ii – Drag-and-drop](#).

Note:

- Files will be added as attachments and can also be accessed within the email notification sent to students.

6. By default, an email notification is sent to VLE area participants who are subscribed to the forum, typically some 30-45 minutes after it is made. Tick the **Send forum post notifications with no editing-time delay** check box (available within the **Advanced** link), if you want participants to receive the email notification immediately.

Attachment Maximum file size: 100 MB, maximum number of files: 9

Files

You can drag and drop files here to add them.

Pinned

Send forum post notifications with no editing-time delay

Alternatively, you may schedule a forum post to be made visible and/or sent to students at a later time.

- Click the **Advanced** link.
- Within the *Display period* section, tick to enable the **Display start** date. Subsequently, set the date and time, as needed.

Display period

Display start Enable

Display end Enable

The forum post will be made visible on the date and time set for the **Display start** setting. Moreover, if the particular forum activity has subscription enabled, an email notification will also be sent to all participants on the set date and time.


- Click the **Post to forum** button.

Note that:

- Students have a 30-minute time window to edit or delete message posts they made to a forum. On the other hand, tutors do not have such restrictions as they can edit or delete any message posts (including students') made to a forum. You will notice that the links to edit or delete message posts are added to the bottom of each post.

Lecture cancelled

Display replies in nested form | Move this discussion to ... | Move | Settings ▾


 Lecture cancelled
by **Dummy Tutor** - Monday, 23 October 2023, 8:43 AM

Dear Students,

Kindly note that today's lecture has been cancelled.

Regards,
Dummy Tutor

Permalink **Edit** **Delete** Reply

- When you copy text from MS Word (or any other word processor) and paste this to the text editor, you might need to use the **Clear formatting**  tool (available via the *Format* menu) to remove unnecessary HTML tags. If not removed, these tags might appear as extra text in line with your message post.

Another way to prevent the unnecessary tags from showing is to:

1. Open a simple text editor, such as *Notepad*.
2. From MS Word (or the word processor you are using), copy the text that you wrote.
3. Paste the copied text into *Notepad*.
4. Copy the text again, this time from *Notepad*.
5. Paste the text into the discussion forum.

Note:

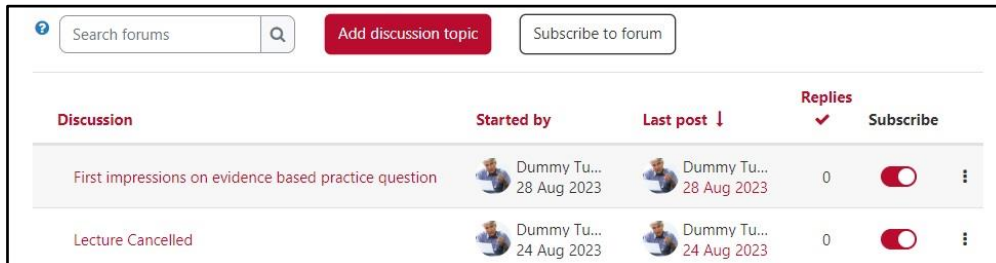
- If a forum, including the **Announcements** forum, is set as hidden (i.e., not visible to students), the email containing the post is only sent to participants who can access the hidden forum, namely Tutors and Guest Tutors.
- Similarly, the above-mentioned behavior applies if a forum is visible but within a hidden VLE area. Again, in this case, the email notification is only sent to participants who can access the hidden VLE area, namely Tutors and Guest Tutors.
- Thus, a forum post is sent via email to those participants who are subscribed to the forum, **and** have access to the particular forum activity.

F. Reading forum discussions

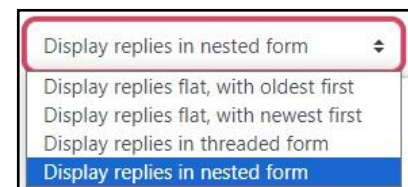
Every discussion topic is made up of a message post (created when adding a new topic, refer to [Section E](#)) and a number of reply posts. To read the discussion posts:

1. Access the forum, as indicated in [Section D](#).

You are shown a list of discussion topics in the selected forum. For each discussion topic, the page shows the author who started the topic, the amount of reply posts within that topic, along with information related to the most recent message (author's name and date).



2. Click the title of the discussion topic you want to read. You will now see a list of all posts in that discussion.
3. A discussion may be displayed in four ways. Click the drop-down menu at the top of the discussion page to select a display type.



- **Display replies flat, with oldest first** - The reply posts will be displayed without indentation and ordered chronologically from the oldest to the latest.

Note:

- With replies displayed flat, the discussion's starting message post is always displayed at the top page, and is followed by replies sorted chronologically (oldest to latest).

- **Display replies flat, with newest first** - The reply posts will be displayed without indentation and ordered chronologically from the latest to the oldest.

The Café

Forum Settings Advanced grading Subscriptions Reports More ▾

Favourite Food

Display replies flat, with newest first ▾ Move this discussion to ... ▾ Move Settings ▾

Display replies flat, with oldest first
Display replies flat, with newest first
 Display replies in threaded form
 Display replies in nested form

Let me know your favourite foods.
 August 2023, 12:54 PM
 Permalink Edit Delete Reply

Re: Favourite Food
 by Dummy Student 2 - Monday, 28 August 2023, 12:58 PM
 Here is a reply to the second message.
 Permalink Show parent Edit Split Delete Reply

Re: Favourite Food
 by Dummy Tutor - Monday, 28 August 2023, 12:57 PM
 This is the reply to the reply.
 Permalink Show parent Edit Split Delete Reply

Re: Favourite Food
 by Dummy Student - Monday, 28 August 2023, 12:56 PM
 This is the reply to the welcome message.
 Permalink Show parent Edit Split Delete Reply

- **Display replies in threaded form** - Only one post is displayed (by default being the one starting the discussion). Replies are reduced to the headlines (including author and date) and indented to the right. Any replies to the same post are indented in-line with each other.

The Café

Forum Settings Advanced grading Subscriptions Reports More ▾

Favourite Food

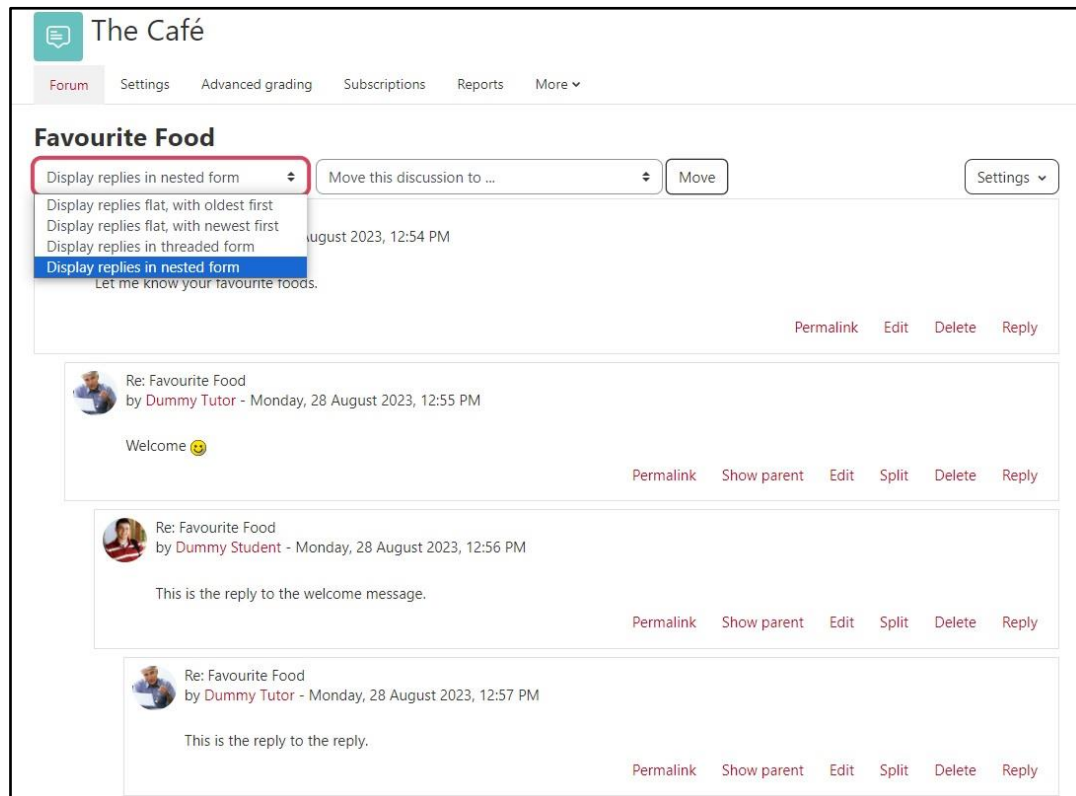
Display replies in threaded form ▾ Move this discussion to ... ▾ Move Settings ▾

Display replies flat, with oldest first
 Display replies flat, with newest first
Display replies in threaded form
 Display replies in nested form

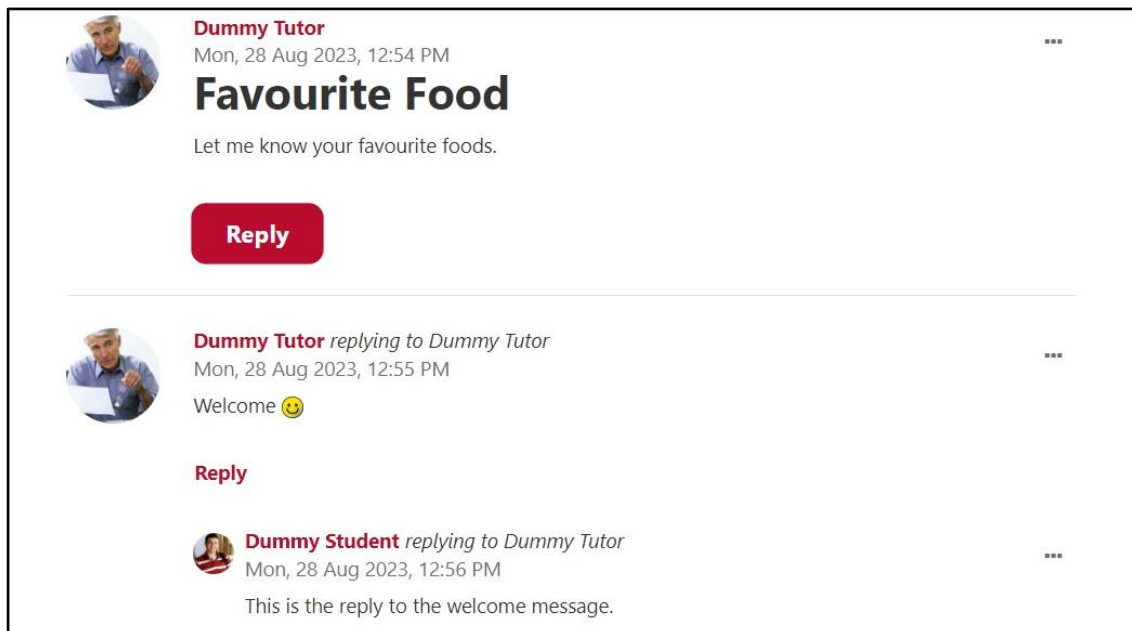
Let me know your favourite foods.
 August 2023, 12:54 PM
 Permalink Edit Delete Reply

Re: Favourite Food by Dummy Tutor - Monday, 28 August 2023, 12:55 PM
 Re: Favourite Food by Dummy Student - Monday, 28 August 2023, 12:56 PM
 Re: Favourite Food by Dummy Tutor - Monday, 28 August 2023, 12:57 PM
 Re: Favourite Food by Dummy Student 2 - Monday, 28 August 2023, 12:58 PM

- **Display replies in nested form** - All posts are displayed in full format. Replies are indented to the right so that only replies to the same post are in-line with each other.



Alternatively, all users may change their forum activities interface by switching to the experimental nested discussion view which provides a minimalistic interface, as shown below.



If you prefer this interface, you may enable it via your user preferences:

1. Click on your **User** menu (upper right corner) and choose **Preferences**.
2. Click on **Forum preferences**.
3. Change the **Use experimental nested discussion view** setting to **Yes**.



- Click the **Save changes** button.

Note:

- If at any point you would like to switch back to the common interface, repeat the steps above and in step 3 switch the setting back to **No**.
- If a tutor enables the experimental interface via their preferences settings, they will not affect their students' view. Each user can set their own preferences.

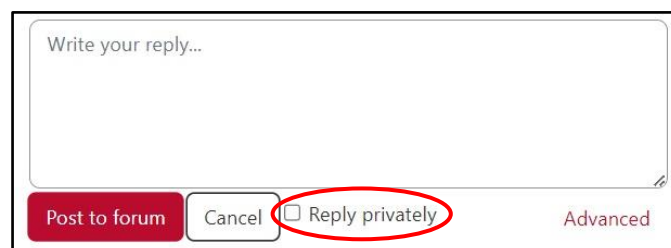
G. Replying to forum posts

To reply to a forum post:

- In the discussion page, click the **Reply** link allocated at the bottom-right of the message post you want to reply to.
 
- Type in the content of your reply in the **Message** text editor.
- If you would like to include an attachment as well, please follow steps a to b, otherwise proceed to step 4.
 - Click the **Advanced** link.
 

- In the **Attachment** setting you can upload files through one of two options: [Method i – Traditional upload](#) or [Method ii – Drag-and-drop](#).

Note: You can also reply to a post privately so that only the student you are replying to can see the reply. In such case, simply check the **Reply Privately** checkbox.



Write your reply...

Post to forum Cancel Reply privately Advanced

- Click the **Post to forum** button.

H. Using groups in forums

The Groups feature allows tutors to divide participants (students and tutors) within their VLE area into groups. Students can then undertake VLE activities within these groups, allowing them to work more closely together, and encouraging more collaboration from each member than they might get in a whole-class exercise.

Refer to the [Using Groups & Groupings in the VLE \[PDF\]](#) for more information about setting up groups.

Forums and groups

If you wish to have your students discussing the same concepts in different groups, thus expanding the same topic into multiple branches, you only need to create a single forum, rather than one for each group. For example, if you are organising an online discussion and decide to divide 40 participants into 4 groups of 10, the Groups feature allows you to set up a single discussion forum, rather than 4 separate ones. A unique area within the forum will be created for each group.

Setting group mode in forums

Group settings are located in the *Common module settings* section when setting up a new forum (refer to [Section C](#) for more information about creating forums).

▼ **Common module settings**

Availability ? Show on course page

ID number ?

Force language

Group mode ? No groups

From the **Group mode** drop-down menu, select one of the following:

- **No groups:** All students can view and participate to the same discussions.
- **Separate groups:** Students can view and participate in discussions within their own group. They cannot view or participate in other groups' discussions.
- **Visible groups:** Students can view and participate in discussions within their own group. They can also view other groups' discussions but not participate in them.

Viewing and participating in forums with group mode

A forum set with Group mode (*Separate groups* or *Visible groups*, see above) is recognised accordingly from the top-left corner of the forum's page.

Separate groups

To view discussion topics of a particular group, select the group from the **Separate groups / Visible groups** drop-down menu (top-left corner of the page).

Separate groups

- All participants
- Group A - Full Time
- Group B - Evening Course
- Group C - Weekends Only

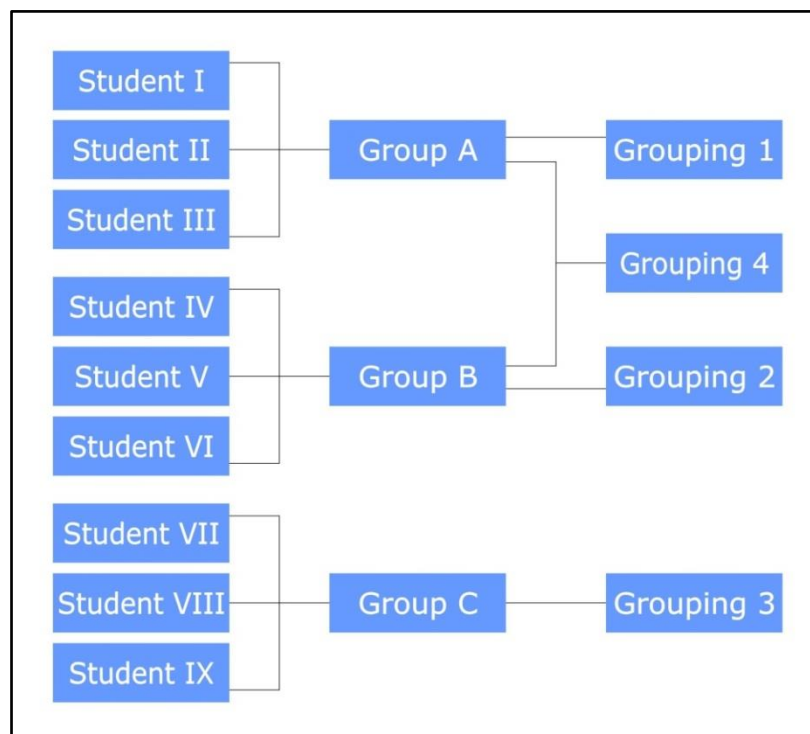
I. Using groupings in forums

The Groupings feature allows tutors to organise groups into groupings. A grouping is a collection of one or more groups. Tutors can make an activity (or resource) specifically available to groups (within a grouping), whilst hiding it from those groups not assigned to the activity.

Refer to the [Using Groups & Groupings in the VLE \[PDF\]](#) for more information about setting up groups and groupings.

Forums and groupings

Tutors who need to create a forum activity targeted to one or more particular group can use the Groupings feature. By assigning a grouping to a forum, the tutor can channel specific instructions to the relevant groups (within the grouping) without making the information available to groups not involved in the discussion.



In the above example, 3 groups have been created and assigned to 4 groupings:

- Grouping 1 (Group A)
- Grouping 2 (Group B)
- Grouping 3 (Group C)
- Grouping 4 (Group A and Group B)

The first three groupings are made up of one group each. Thus, forums set for each of these groupings are hidden from all but that group.

However, the last grouping has two groups. When a forum is set for this grouping, a tutor has several options. Apart from hiding the forum from Group C, the tutor can use different Group mode settings to:

- let Group A and Group B work together
- let Group A and Group B work in visible groups
- let Group A and Group B work in separate groups.

Setting forums to be accessible to groupings

To make a Forum accessible to a particular grouping:

1. When setting up a new Forum ([Section C](#)), scroll down to the **Common module settings** section.

Common module settings
 Availability: Show on course page
 ID number:
 Force language: Do not force
 Group mode: No groups
 Add group/grouping access restriction

2. From the **Group mode** drop-down menu, select how you prefer the forum to operate. Refer to [Section H](#) for definitions of the different options.
3. From the **Grouping** drop-down menu, select which grouping you want to assign to the forum.
 The name of the chosen grouping will eventually be displayed adjacent to the Forum link in the VLE area main page. This is applicable to tutors only, as students will only see the Forum link that they have access to.
4. If you want to make the Forum link unavailable to students who are not part of these groups, click the **Add group/grouping access restriction** button, within the *Common module settings* section.

Add group/grouping access restriction

5. Click the **Save and return to course** button. The forum activity is displayed in the VLE area as shown below.

First Impressions on Evidence Based Practice
 Please share your first impressions of the concept of evidence-based practice. Kindly write a short paragraph explaining whether your understanding of the term evidence has changed.
 Not available unless: You belong to a group in **Grouping 3**

J. Forum subscriptions

When subscribed to a forum, users will receive an email message in their University / JC mailbox each time somebody posts a message or a reply. This makes it easy to keep track of what's happening in the forums without constantly logging in. By default, such email messages are sent 30 minutes after the post is made in a forum.

Subscribing to forums

There are several ways to subscribe to a forum:

- **At the time of posting / replying:** Tick the **Discussion subscription** checkbox if you would like to be subscribed to the discussion within the forum thread (available within the **Advanced** link).
- **Within a forum:** When you access a forum, if you are not already subscribed to that particular forum, click the **Subscribe to forum** button.





Otherwise, if you're already subscribed to a particular forum and you wish to unsubscribe, click **Unsubscribe from forum** button.

- In the **Forums** page (available when clicking the Forums link in the *Activities* block, refer to [Section D](#)), the button in the **Subscribed** column in line with the forum identifies if you are subscribed to the forum. Click the "No" button (which will then change to "Yes") to subscribe to the forum.

General forums						
Forum	Description	Discussions	Unread posts	Track	Subscribed	Email digest type
Announcements	Tutors use this forum to communicate important information about the VLE area. Students will also receive a copy of this information in their University mailbox. This is a one-way forum which means that students are not able to respond to posts in this forum. Please make sure the VLE study-unit ...	1	0	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Yes	Default (No digest)
Study-unit Q&A	This is the place where we can post questions about the course. If you see a question that you can answer, please go ahead and reply. We need to ensure that no question or request for help goes unanswered.	2	0	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Yes	Default (No digest)

Learning forums							
Topic	Forum	Description	Discussions	Unread posts	Track	Subscribed	Email digest type
Participating in forum discussions	Discussion: What do you understand by 'evidence'?	Before proceeding to the readings, please explain, in not more than two short paragraphs, what you understand by the term 'evidence'. Please click on the question below and then click 'Reply' to give your answer.	1	0	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Yes	Default (No digest)

Subscribe to individual discussions

In a forum with *Optional* or *Auto subscription*, you can choose which discussions to subscribe to. It is not necessary to receive emails for all distinct threads within a particular forum. To subscribe to a particular discussion, click the toggle icon  available under the **Subscribe** heading. When the toggle icon is red  it indicates that you are already subscribed. To unsubscribe from a particular discussion, click the toggle button.

Discussion	Group	Started by	Last post ↓	Replies ✓	Subscribe
First impressions on evidence based practice question		 Dummy Tu... 28 Aug 2023	 Dummy Tu... 28 Aug 2023	0	 ⋮
Lecture Cancelled		 Dummy Tu... 24 Aug 2023	 Dummy Tu... 24 Aug 2023	0	 ⋮

Enabling email digests

By default, the VLE will send an email message for every forum post. Although preferred by some users, others might get overwhelmed by all the messages cluttering their mailbox, especially if subscribed to multiple forums.

For this reason, you may set up message filtering in your email client (i.e. Gmail, Mozilla Thunderbird, MS Outlook, etc) to sort your incoming email into separate folders according to their content.

You may also enable email digests for your profile, so that the VLE only sends one email a day. This email, which is typically received after 1700hrs (Central European Time), will include all the new posts made throughout the past 24hrs in forums you are subscribed to in all your VLE areas.

To enable/change the email digests:

1. Click your **User** menu (top-right corner).
2. Select **Preferences**. The *Preferences* page will be displayed.
3. Click the **Forum preferences** link.
4. From the **Email digest type**, select your preferred option.

Forum preferences

Email digest type ? No digest (single email per forum post) ▾

Forum auto-subscribe ? No digest (single email per forum post) Complete (daily email with full posts) Subjects (daily email with subjects only) discussion ▾

Use experimental nested discussion view No ▾

▼ **Forum tracking**

Forum tracking Yes: highlight new posts for me ▾

When sending forum post notifications Mark the post as read ▾

5. Click the **Save changes** button.

K. Forum tracking

Forum tracking helps you to identify any forum message posts that you have not viewed. These posts are marked as unread.

Such notifications are made in the following manner:

- In the **Notifications** (bell icon) menu, a notification is listed when a new discussion or a reply to a topic is posted



- In the **homepage of your VLE area**, any forums containing unread posts are identified by the label 'x unread posts' next to the forum title.



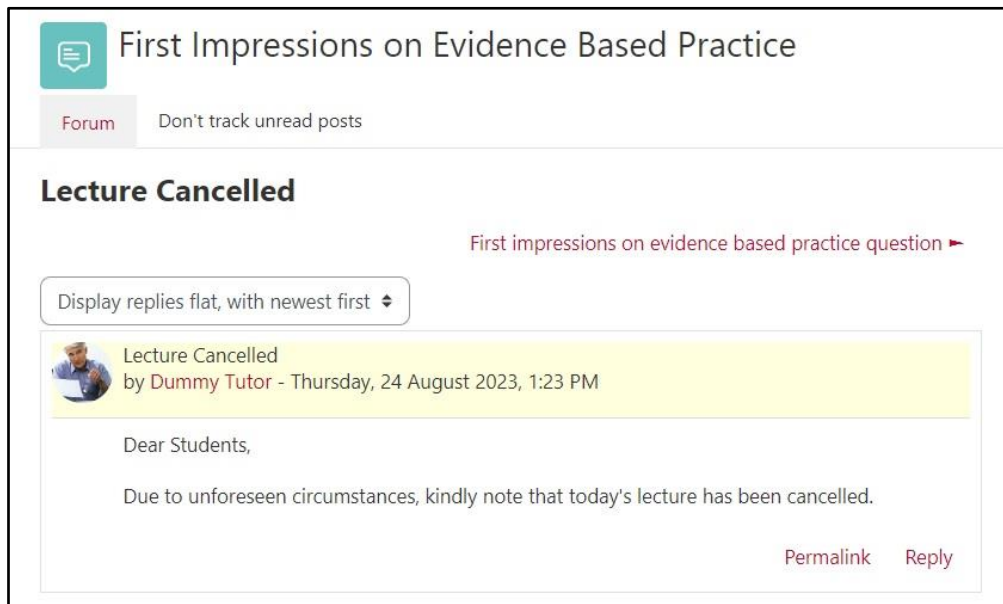
- In the **Forums page** (which is accessed from the *Activities* block), the number of unread posts in a forum are identified in the **Unread posts** column:

General forums							Email digest type
Forum	Description	Discussions	Unread posts	Track	Subscribed		
Announcements	Tutors use this forum to communicate important information about the VLE area. Students will also receive a copy of this information in their University mailbox. This is a one-way forum which means that students are not able to respond to posts in this forum. Please make sure the VLE ...	0	0	Yes	Yes		Default (No digest)
First Impressions on Evidence Based Practice	Please share your first impressions of the concept of evidence-based practice. Kindly write a short paragraph explaining whether your understanding of the term evidence has changed.	2	1	Yes	No		Default (No digest)

- In a **forum**, the number of unread posts in a discussion are identified with a red numbered circle in the **Replies** column:

Discussion	Started by	Last post ↓	Replies ✓	Subscribe
First impressions on evidence based practice question	Dummy Tu... 28 Aug 2023	Dummy Tu... 28 Aug 2023	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lecture Cancelled	Dummy Tu... 24 Aug 2023	Dummy Tu... 24 Aug 2023	0 1	<input type="checkbox"/>

- In a **discussion**, an unread message post is identified by a highlight surrounding the message heading:



Note:

- The VLE cannot identify whether you have gone through the text. Thus, a message post is considered as read after it has been accessed.

Enabling forum tracking

To enable/disable forum tracking to notify you of any unread forum message posts:

- Click your **User** menu (top-right corner).
- Select **Preferences**. The *Preferences* page will be displayed.
- Click the **Forum preferences** link.
- From the **Forum tracking** setting, select your preferred option.



- Click the **Save changes** button.

Note that:

- You can turn on/off forum tracking for individual forums. In the **Forums page** (available when clicking the Forums link in the *Activities* block, refer to [Section D](#)), the button in the **Track** column in line with the forum identifies if tracking is activated. Click the "Yes" button (which will then change to "No") to stop tracking the forum (shown overleaf).

General forums

Forum	Description	Discussions	Unread posts	Track	Subscribed	Email digest type
Announcements	Tutors use this forum to communicate important information about the VLE area. Students will also receive a copy of this information in their University mailbox. This is a one-way forum which means that students are not able to respond to posts in this forum. Please make sure the VLE ...	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Default (No digest)
First Impressions on Evidence Based Practice	Please share your first impressions of the concept of evidence-based practice. Kindly write a short paragraph explaining whether your understanding of the term evidence has changed.	2	0	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Default (No digest)

L. Summary reports

Tutors can easily see an overview of each student's contribution to a forum activity. The summary report provides information on the number of discussions started and replies posted by each student.

To view the summary report:

1. Access the required forum.
2. From the tabular navigation menu choose **Reports**.

The Café

Forum Settings Advanced grading Subscriptions **Reports** More

Forum selected: The Café

Forum summary report

Dates

	First name / Last name	Number of discussions posted	Number of replies posted	Number of attachments	Number of views	Word count	Character count	Earliest post	Most recent post	Export posts
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dummy Tutor	1	2	0	27	15	62	Monday, 28 August 2023, 12:54 PM	Monday, 28 August 2023, 12:57 PM	<input type="button" value="Export"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dummy Student 4	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dummy Student 8	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dummy Student	0	1	0	19	8	34	Monday, 28 August 2023, 12:56 PM	Monday, 28 August 2023, 12:56 PM	<input type="button" value="Export"/>

**User Services
IT Services
University of Malta
Msida MSD 2080
MALTA**

Web: www.um.edu.mt/itservices/vle
Help: www.um.edu.mt/itservices/help
Tel: +356 2340 4113



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