Add and Configure a Forum Activity

Forum

Lecturer

On this guide:

A. Creating Forum Activity
B. Configure Forum Options

- The forum activity module may be used to have asynchronous discussions, i.e. discussions over an extended period.
- Forums have many uses, such as a social space for students to get to know each other; for course announcements (using a news forum with forced subscription); for discussing course content or reading materials; For continuing online an issue raised previously in a face-to-face session;
- A help center where tutors and students can give advice; A one-on-one support area for private student-teacher communications (using a forum with separate groups and one student per group); For extension activities, for example 'brain teasers for students to ponder and suggest solutions to.
- There are several forum types to choose from, such as a
    - standard forum where anyone can start a new discussion at any time;
    - a forum where each student can post exactly one discussion, or
    - a question and answer forum where students must first post before viewing other students' posts.
- A lecturer can allow files to be attached to forum posts. The attached images are displayed in the forum post.
- The subscription mode to optional, forced, or auto, or prevent subscription completely. If required, students can be blocked from posting more than a given number of posts in a given time period, preventing individuals from dominating discussions.
- Forum posts can be rated by teachers or students (peer evaluation). Ratings can be aggregated to form a final grade which is recorded in the grade book.

Pre-condition

1. The user must be on a Moodle course page as a Lecturer of the unit. See *Moodle Enrolment*, *Accessing your course,* and *The Moodle course*.
2. The Course Editing is on. See *Course Editing On/Off*.

A. Creating Forum Activity

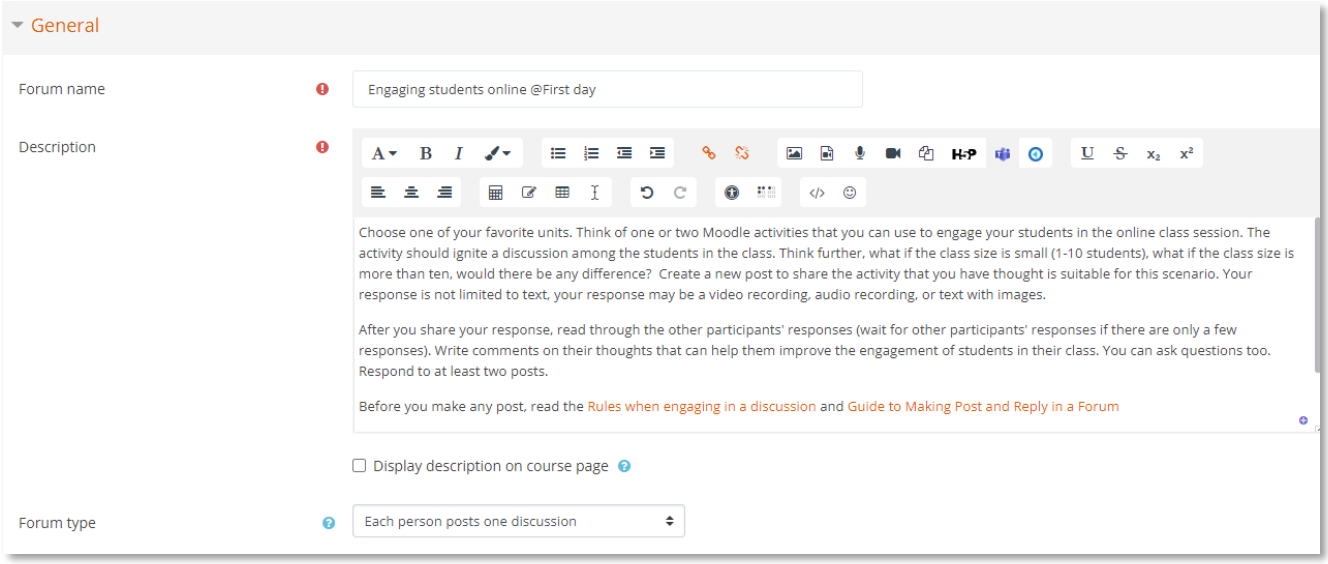
Procedure

1. Planning for a Forum activity
    a. Review the *Configure Forum Options* for details of Forum activity settings.

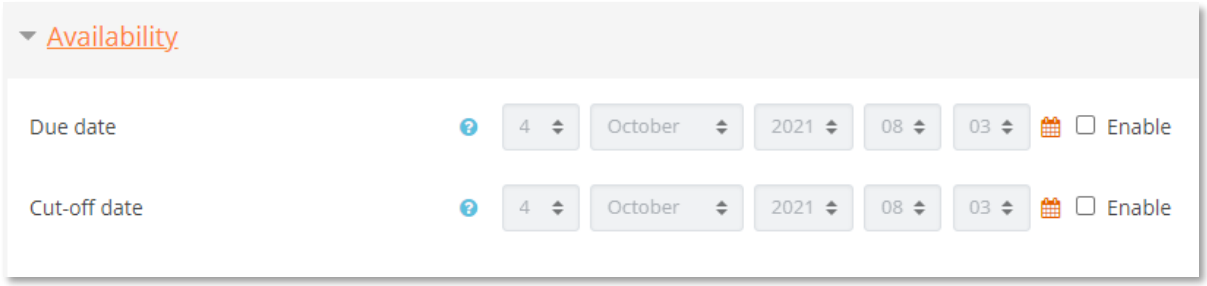
2. Adding a Forum activity
    a. Go to the section where you want to add a Forum activity.

b. Create a Forum activity Forum. The Forum Activity can be found under Activities or All tabs. See *Adding an Activity or Resource in a section.*

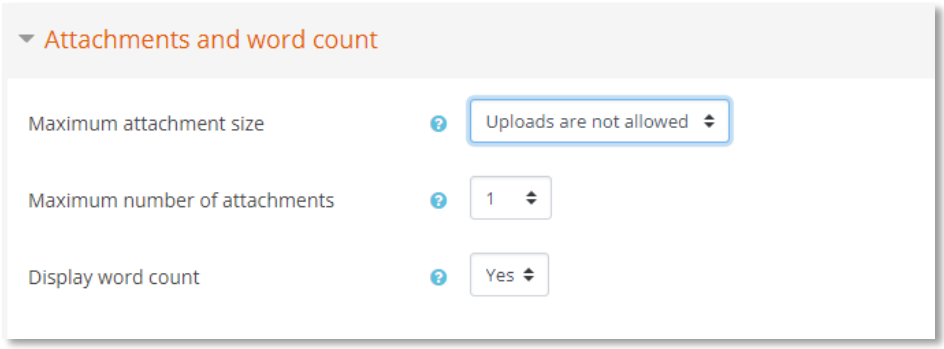
3. Setting the General
   a. Enter the **name** and **description**. See *Configure Forum Options* for required and optional settings.
   b. Select a **Forum type** depending on your requirement. See *Configure Forum Options* to see the description of each form type.



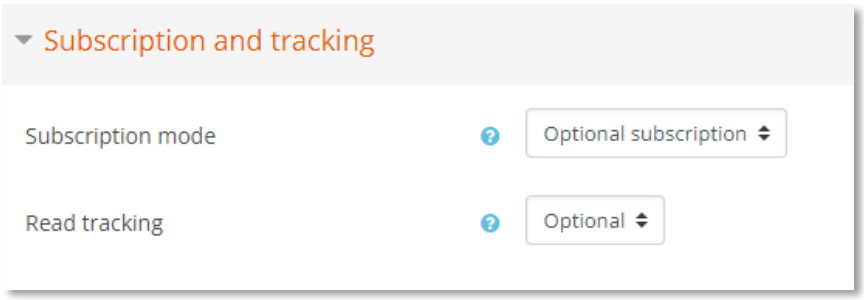
4. Setting the Availability
   a. Tick the corresponding **Enable** checkbox if setting the **Due date** and **Cut-off date.**



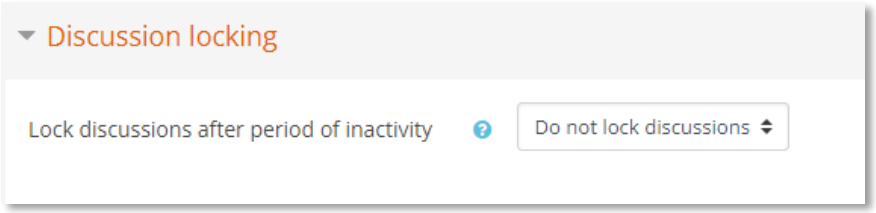
5. Setting Attachments and word count.
   a. Select the upload size from **Maximum attachment size** if students are required to upload a file; otherwise, select Uploads are not allowed to enter their posts or responses directly.
   b. Set the **Maximum number of attachments** if an upload is allowed.
   c. Set the **Display word count**.



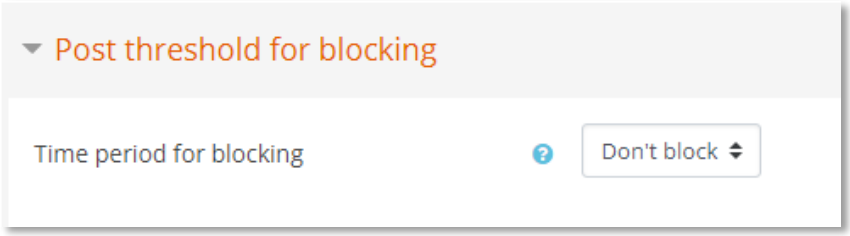
6. Setting Subscription and tracking
    a. Set the **Subscription mode** and **Read tracking** as per your requirement; otherwise, leave the default settings.



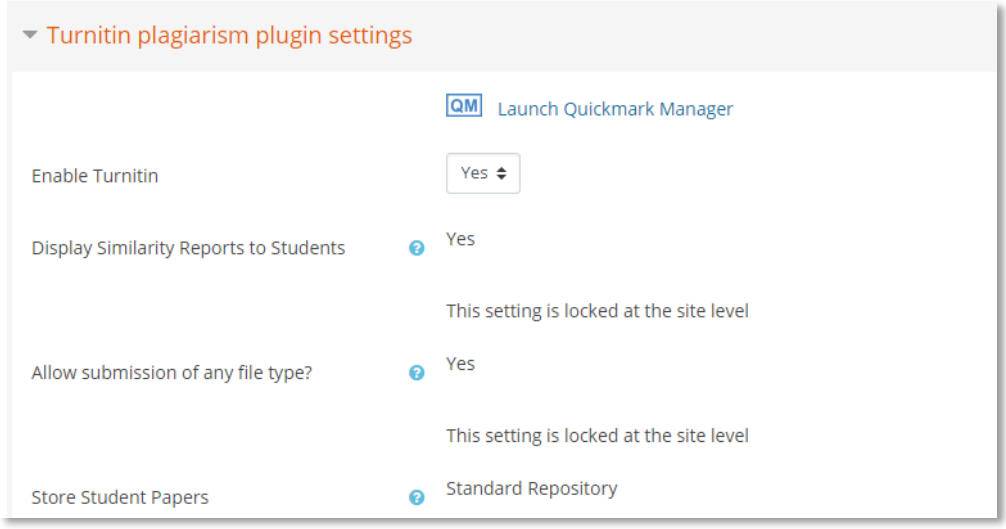
7. Setting Discussion Locking
    a. Set the **Lock discussion after a period of inactivity** as per your requirement; otherwise, leave the default settings.



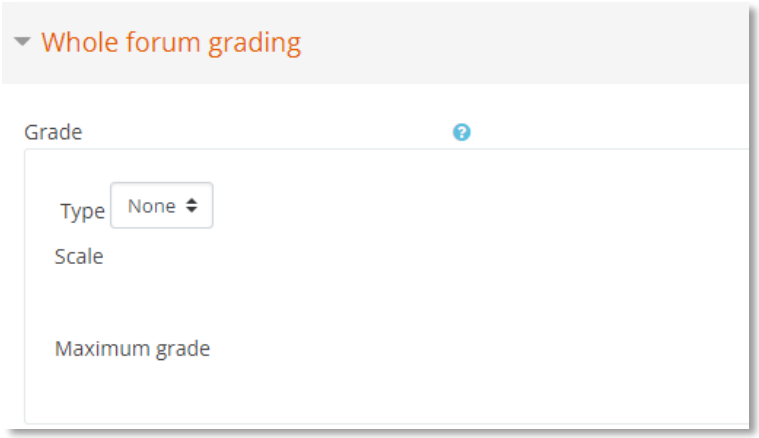
8. Setting Post threshold for blocking
    a. Set the **Lock discussion after a period of inactivity** as per your requirement; otherwise, leave the default settings.



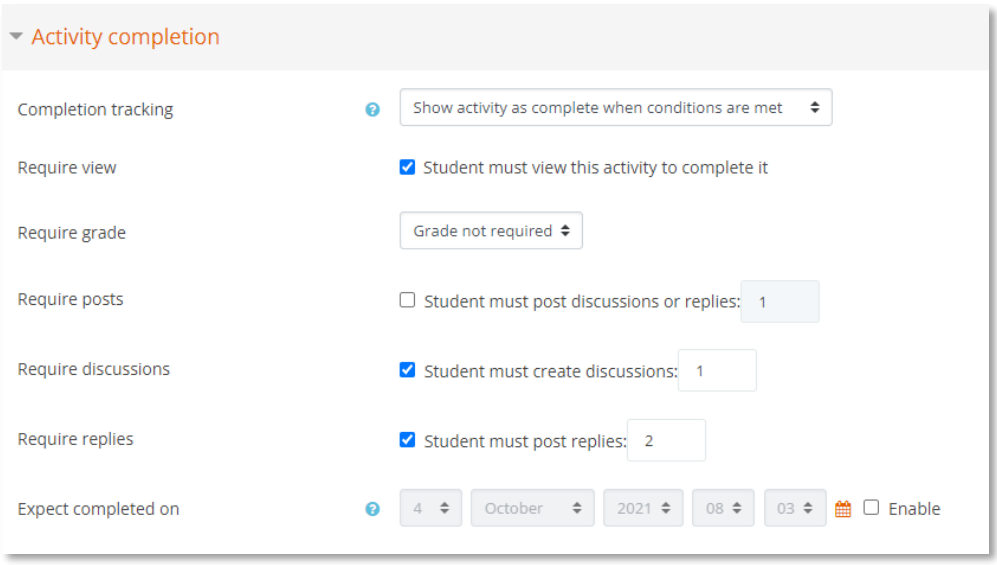
9. Setting Turnitin plagiarism plugin
    a. Select **Yes** if the requires the students' paper to be feed to Turnitin.



10. Setting the Whole forum grading
    a. Set the appropriate grade setting for the forum.



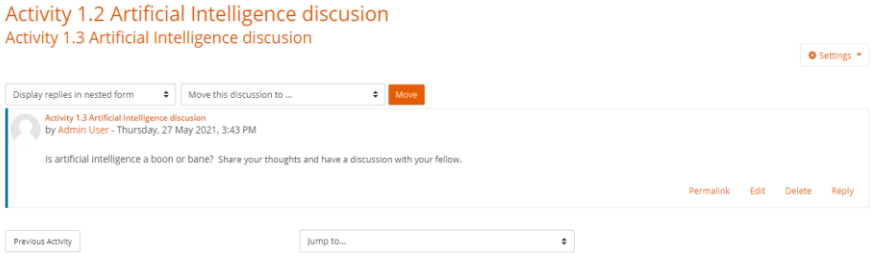
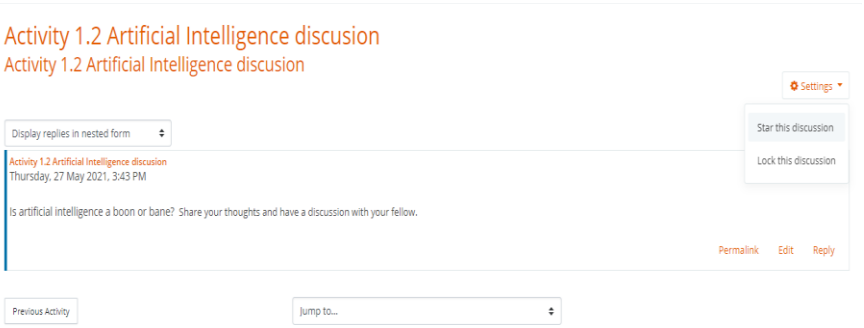
11. Setting Activity completion
    a. Set the Activity completion as below or depending on your requirements.

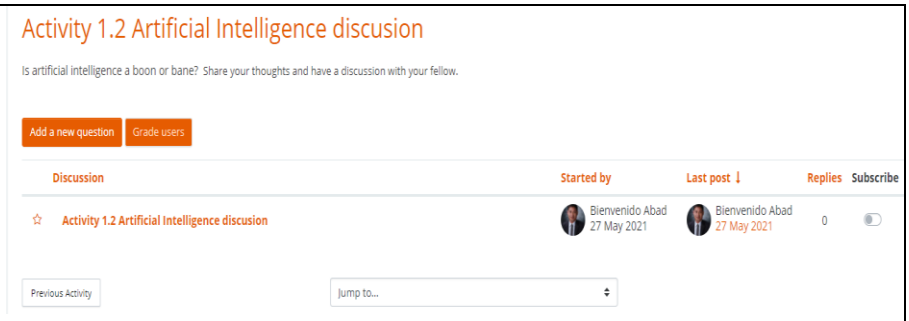
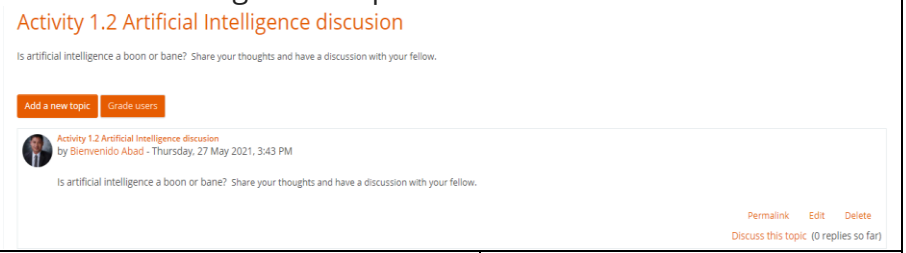


12. Save

Leave other settings, then click **Save and return to course** to go back to the course page or **Save and display** to display the **Forum activity page**.

B. Configure Forum Options

	Setting	Moodle Description	IBS Moodle Setting
General	**Name of Assessment**	Identifier and text display	• See *Convention for Name and Description of an Activity or Resource*
	Description	If enabled, the description will be displayed on the page just below the name activity or resource.	• See *Convention for Name and Description of an Activity or Resource*
	Forum Type	• In the (default) **Standard forum for general use**, students will see an introduction text in a separate space above the list of discussions. Students see a button to start a new discussion (thread).  • Default **Standard forum for general use**,	
	Forum Type	• **Single, simple discussion** the teachers posts a question and students are able only to reply. They cannot start a new topic of discussion. This is useful if you wish to keep a discussion focused. **Note**: This forum type does not work with separate groups.  	
		• The **Question and Answer forum** is best used when you have a particular question that you wish to have answered. The teacher posts a question and students respond with possible answers. By default, a Q and A forum requires students to post once before viewing other students' postings.	

			
		The **Standard forum displayed in a blog-like format** works like the standard forum for general use, but the first post of each discussion is displayed (as in a blog) so that users can read it and then choose to respond by clicking the "Discuss this topic" button bottom right of the post. 	
Availability	**Due date**	• The deadline for submissions.	• As specified in the UIG if assessable.
	Cutoff date	• Setting a Cut-off date to after the due date has passed allows students to submit their response after the due date has passed. Once the cutoff date has passed, students will not be able to post • Not enabling the cut-off date means that students can continue to post.	• Not enabled.
Attachments and word count	**Maximum attachment size**	• This setting defaults to the maximum upload limit.	Default **100MB (maximum)**
	Maximum number of attachments	• **Maximum number of uploaded files** as required by the assignment. This is also the maximum number of feedback files that you can attach to each individual student when providing feedback.	Default **5**
	Display word count.	• This setting specifies whether the word count is displayed	Default **No**.
Subscriptions	**Subscription mode**	• When a participant is subscribed to a forum it	Default **Optional subscription**.

		means they will receive forum notifications. • Optional subscription. Participants can choose whether to be subscribed. • Forced subscription. Everyone is subscribed and cannot unsubscribed. • Auto subscription. Everyone is subscribed initially but can choose to unsubscribe at any time. • Subscription disabled. Subscription not allowed.	
	Read tracking	• Read tracking enables participants to easily check which post they have not yet seen highlighting any new post. • If set to optional. Participants can choose whether to turn tracking on or off via a link in the action menu. • If Allowed forced read tracking is enabled, then further option is available. Forced this means that tracking is always on, regardless of users' forum preferences.	Default Optional
Discussion Locking	**Lock discussions after period of inactivity**	• Discussions may be automatically locked after a specified time has elapsed since the last reply. • Users with the capability to reply to locked discussions can unlock a discussion by replying to it.	Default **Do not lock discussions**.
Post threshold for blocking		• Students can be blocked form posting more that a given number of posts in a given time period.	Default **Don't block**
	Turnitin plagiarism plugin settings	• If Enable Turnitin is on the post and replies will be submitted to Turnitin for similarity report	Default **Yes**.

		• All Turnitin plagiarism settings are set by default.	
Whole forum grading	**Grade**	• Select the **Grade** type. The options are None, **Scale** or **Point**. If **Scale** is chosen, you can then choose a scale from the **Scale** drop-down options**.** If the scale you want to use is already available in the drop-down list select the scale from the list.	Default **None**. If Assessable, set to **Point.**
	Maximum Grade	• Available if Grade is set to Point • The maximum points available for the assignment	Set to Weight of the assessment.
	Grading method	• The Simple Direct Grading method is the most commonly used grading option. • The Marking Record is an advanced grading method where a lecturer can enter a comment per criterion and a mark up to a maximum. • The Rubric is an advanced grading form used for criteria-based assessment. The rubric consists of a set of criteria. For each criterion, several descriptive levels are provided. A numerical grade is assigned to each of these levels. The rater chooses which level answers/describes the given criterion best. The raw rubric score is calculated as a sum of all criteria grades. The final grade is calculated by comparing the actual score with the worst/best possible score that could be received.	Default **Simple Direct Grading**

	Grading category	• This determines where your assignment will sit within the grades area. • You will need to set up the categories in the **Grader report** first.	Set **Assessable assessments** to Assessable category or its sub-category.
	Grade to pass	• This setting determines the minimum grade required to pass. The value is used in activity and course completion, and in the gradebook, where pass grades are highlighted in green and fail grades in red.	Set to 50% of the total weight
	Default setting for "Notify students"	• Set the default value for the "Notify students" checkbox on the grading form.	Default **Yes**
Common module settings	**Availability**	• If the availability is set to Show on course page, the activity or resource is available to students. • If the availability is set to Hide from students, the activity or resources is only available to users with permission to view hidden activities. • If the course contains many activities or resources, the course page may be simplified by setting the availability 'Make available but not shown on course page'. In this case, a link to the activity or resource must be provided from elsewhere, such as from a page resource. The activity would still be listed in the gradebook and other reports.	Default **Show on course page**
Activity Completion	**Completion tracking**	• **Do not indicate activity completion** - this will not show checks (ticks) next to the activity • **Students can manually mark the activity as completed** - students press	**Show activity as complete when conditions are met**

		the check (tick) to change it. (Note: they can do this even without doing the activity!) • **Show activity as complete when conditions are met -** the selected completion criteria must be met before the check (tick) will change style	
	Require view	• When this option is ticked, students have to view the activity i.e. click the link in order to complete it. You should not turn on the 'view' condition if you have other requirements - this makes extra work for the server and it's unlikely that a student could meet any other conditions without viewing the activity.	Not **ticked**
	Require grade	• When this option is ticked, students have to get a grade on the activity in order to complete it. For example, a quiz would be marked completed as soon as the user submits it (so long as it doesn't contain any "essay" questions).	If assessable, **ticked**.
	Require posts	• Student must post discussions or replies:	
	Require discussions	• Student must create discussions:	
	Require replies	• Student must post replies	