

Moodle: A teacher's guide



**A guide to the Moodle VLE for teachers
and class administrators**

This resource is just one in a series of eight designed to help teachers and school/college staff get to grips with Virtual Learning Environments.

The other resources tend to concentrate on hands-on tips and advice for utilising the power of VLEs in and out of the classroom or, as here, try to give an overview of systems and methodologies.

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Note: there are many fantastic resources both online and offline for making the best of Moodle. Take a look at www.moodle.org or search “Moodle” on Amazon for a wealth of stimulating and informative resources.

Moodle is a software package for producing Internet-based courses and web sites. It is a global development project designed to support a social constructionist framework of education.

Moodle is provided freely as Open Source software (under the GNU Public License). Basically this means Moodle is copyrighted, but that you have additional freedoms. You are allowed to copy, use and modify Moodle provided that you agree to: provide the source to others; not modify or remove the original license and copyrights, and apply this same license to any derivative work. (Moodle, 2011).

As a teacher this probably won't be of huge consideration to you directly - but what it does mean is that there is an enormous development community out there, creating new bits of Moodle that you can use! Keep an eye on www.moodle.org and you'll find details of new developments that you can utilise.

Also, if you come across something that Moodle doesn't do that you want it to do, you can post a message to the development community and some beneficent developer may well pick it up and create it for you. Open Source is a great bonus for this kind of development.



An introduction to Moodle

Moodle is the brand name for an open source, student-centred Virtual Learning Environment - as you're reading this it probably means that you are using it already in your school or college.

Moodle is an abbreviation of Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment and the system is used by an estimated 40 million users across the globe - and growing.

Like all VLEs it allows the teaching in a classroom to become extended and supported on-line with a series of teaching and learning tools. Moodle also allows for organisation and presentation of course resources, uploaded to a single or multiple web pages and available online to all teachers and learners.

Moodle teachers have many options available



to them when setting up a course. They may choose to provide tools that facilitate interaction between students on a course (via discussion forums and wikis); to allow upload of assignments; to give access to resources and much more.

Here are some of the key 'building blocks' of Moodle:

- Assignments - for managing assignments including the ability for students to download/upload work and for teachers to mark it online
- Resource links - to web pages and files to help teachers build topics or courses or units of work
- Forums and "chat" areas that promote interactive discussion of ideas and concepts
- Quizzes
- Questionnaire
- Wikis
- Third-party content - content can be uploaded to your Moodle course that has been developed elsewhere - great for sharing resources
- Calendars
- Comprehensive monitoring of all activity

How Moodle works

The Front Page

The Front page of a Moodle site - the page you each user sees when they first enter typically includes information about the school/college itself and can be highly customised - you can include news, calendars of events, messages to staff and students, pictures etc.

Depending on how your institution sets up Moodle you can add a security layer at the front end to lock the front page down so that all a user sees when they click on the Moodle URL is a log in screen. It is common that this is set-up for off-site users but for users on-site they bypass this page automatically.



Each user of Moodle is given a Moodle account - how users join a Moodle site and get an account again depends on how your institution has set up the system. They might be given logins on enrolment; they might be allowed to make accounts themselves, or they may be given a Moodle account automatically.

A Moodle account is the same as any other account, it is personalised to that user - containing information about them and the courses to which they have access. It will also be linked to gradebooks, classes and teachers. Some institutions may link a user's Moodle account to their internal MIS Management Information System).

Inside Moodle

Moodle is usually constructed around an institutions courses and/or subject areas, allowing real flexibility for academic staff to customise the look and feel of each section. These sections are typically unique depending on how the member of staff wishes to share course content with their learners or indeed how the learner wishes to access their content. Some institutions provide guidelines on how a section/class should be laid out and what content structure it should reflect - please check with your administrator for this information.

The amount of information and the period in which it is available for each section/class, is typically in the hands of the staff who control that area. Courses can contain content for a year's studies, a single session or any other variants depending on the staff or institution.

The time at which material can become accessible to a learner can also be controlled centrally by staff. A whole year's worth of material can be uploaded in September to course, but certain parts only become accessible as the year progresses; linking the VLE to the learner journey.

Again, how a learner enrolls on courses is in the hand of the institution; for example they can self-enrol, be enrolled manually by staff or automatically upon enrolment.

Courses tend to be categorised in ways that match the institution; whether that be by year group, subject area or study level.



Teachers, students and other users

Like most VLE's the level of access and rights on your own Moodle is customisable to reflect the policy and protocols of your institution.

Access rights are completely customisable, meaning that a Head of Year could access any course pages and materials that relate to their year group or a course leader who can only access their courses. This is all controlled centrally by your IT or administration departments. Rarely, an institution will open all content and courses to all users. More typically user access will be based upon class enrolment and sector/subject involvement.

There is usually at least one area that is open to all users and this area tends to be used for general communications. Moodle is a tool designed for learning and teaching but it can also serve as a highly efficient communication system. Some institutions even open up areas of Moodle to facilitate communication between the institution and parents or guardians. Allowing them to access information around what their child or dependent is currently studying or how they are performing academically or to give them access to news, school events etc.

The stimulation of dialogue is a speciality of Moodle (and other VLEs - think about ways you can use the system to gather feedback from different stakeholders of your organisation.

The benefits of Moodle

For students Moodle's benefits are endless. There are many ways in which Moodle can greatly increase the learner experience. An increasing number of institutions are beginning to invest in infrastructure that enables online submission; a capability that comes as part of Moodle. This allows the learner to easily submit their work and allows for the teacher to provide feedback electronically. Students can also sit mini-task or tests through Moodle at home during their own time. Or they can take part in debates by way of group forums which can be created by the learner or institution.

Safeguarding more than ever is a high priority in education. E-safety is an increasing challenge for institutions to ensure they are safeguarding their learners. Moodle offers a comprehensive monitoring tool to enable staff to observe learner activity within the VLE.



The benefits of Moodle from a Learner and Teacher perspective

Learner:

"I can get to my school and class work from home as well as at school and it looks just the same. This means I can follow up on things I am particularly interested in, do my homework online and share my school work with my parents. If I'm ill or have to miss school, I can catch up on what I've missed using Moodle. Moodle lets me and my classmates work as a team and I can talk to them or to teachers using forums, chat and wikis. It think it's a great way to do some of my work and a lot of the features in Moodle make it more fun and more interactive than schoolwork used to be - I'm used to doing a lot on computer, what with Facebook etc. so it seems like a really natural place to work."

Teacher:

Moodle helps me to focus on the specific needs of learners by tailoring resources and activities to groups or individuals. Lessons that I prepare in Moodle can be reused again and again and resources can be updated very simply. When learners' complete online tasks and assignments, their results are automatically stored in an electronic grade book which can be access any time to check their progress - in fact some of the quizzes and activities mark themselves, which saves me some valuable time! I love some of the tools that Moodle provides, they can help make my classes much more stimulating, interactive and interesting - I've discovered new ways of teaching many subjects using Moodle - and there's so many tips and tricks online for teachers using the system that I never run out of ideas.

The final few pages in this resource are screen shots of the Moodle environment. These should help you to become acclimatised to the system and understand what you're looking at when you first access your own Moodle system in your institution.

Of course, Moodle is a system that can be very easily personalised by institutions and/ or individuals - as such, the shots that you see below - taken from www.moodle.org's test server, may not exactly match the screens that your Moodle will present you - but the content should follow the same general structure.

Good luck with your forays with Moodle, we're sure that you'll quickly become a confident and competent online teacher.

Moodle Demonstration Site

moodle.org moodle.com

Navigation

Home

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▼ Site pages

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▫ Blogs

▫ Notes

▫ Tags

▫ Calendar

▫ Reports

👤 Site news

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▶ My courses

Settings

▼ Front page settings

🔓 Turn editing on

📅 Edit settings

▶ Users

🔧 Filters

🗑️ Backup

🔄 Restore

❓ Questions

📁 Legacy site files

▶ My profile settings

▶ Site administration

Welcome!

This site is for you to explore features in Moodle 2.1.2, our most recent stable release.

Here are some demo accounts for you to use:

- Administrator - username *admin*, password *demo*
- Manager - username *manager*, password *demo*
- Teacher - username *teacher*, password *demo*
- Student - username *student*, password *demo*

Here are your standard class or course to these will become very familiar to you

The database and files are erased and restored to a clean state every hour on the hour, so don't worry if you m

Also please note that you might not be the only person using one of the demo accounts at the same time, so yo

Site news

Add a n



Download all

by Admin User - Sunday, 20 November 2011, 01:02 PM

This site is now running Moodle 2.1! 😊

If you notice any problems anywhere, please post in the [Testing and QA forum](#) and/or report bugs in the

These are your administrative tools; this is how you control Moodle

Courses

▼ Arabic

*The system tell you who' logged in;
very useful if you want to observe or
communicate with learners*



Online users

(last 5 minutes)

-  Teacher Demo
-  Guest user
-  Admin User
-  Sam Student

Moodle News



Moodle development news available on Planet Moodle Moodle 2.1.2, 2.0.5 and 1.9.14 are now available
Web conferencing integrations available from Moodle Plugins directory
New Moodle Plugins directory now available
Moodle mobile app for iPhone now available

Subscribe to this forum

*Latest news is shown here;
this can be institutional or from
a single course*

new topic

Moodle Tracker.

Edit | Delete

Discuss this topic (0 replies so far)

Older topics ...

*Users can leave comments
on content - great for getting
feedback on lessons or resources*

Comments

Save comment | Cancel

Moodle Features Demo

moodle.org moodle.com

Home ► Courses ► English ► Features Demo

Navigation



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 - ▶ Understanding Moodle

Topic outline

Welcome to the Moodle Features Demo Course!

News forum

1 Assignments

This is your courses area; it list all your courses and their sections via dropdown menus

Assignments enable teachers to grade and give comments on uploaded files and assignments created o

- Upload a single file
- Advanced uploading of files
- Online text
- Offline activity
- Assignment module documentation

2 Chats

The chat module allows participants to have a real-time synchronous discussion via the web.

- A repeating chat
- An open chat
- Chat module documentation

3 Choices

Note all the tools and features available for any course

Here a teacher asks a question and specifies a choice of multiple responses.

- A choice with anonymous results
- A choice with non-anonymous results
- Choice module documentation

*Course download;
You can archive a copy of this
course and all the resources it contains*

Course Download

**Moodle 1.9.3 Features Demo
course backup**

See the [Administration FAQ](#) for details of how to install this course on your Moodle site

on and off line.

Latest news

Teacher Demo 14 Nov, 22:31
Welcome to the course! [more...](#)

[Older topics...](#)

*Note the personalised content
in the left hand bar - all course specific*

Upcoming events

There are no upcoming events

[Go to calendar...](#)

Search forums

[Advanced search?](#)

Recent activity

Activity since Saturday, 19
November 2011, 02:01 PM

[Full report of recent activity...](#)

*Recent activity;
great for teachers and learners
to track what's been going on*

Romeo and Juliet Sample Unit

moodle.org moodle.com

Home ▶ Courses ▶ English ▶ Romeo and Juliet

Navigation



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 - ▶ WATER HOME
 - ▶ German
 - ▶ Greek
 - ▶ Japanese
 - ▶ Korean
 - ▶ Norwegian
 - ▶ Persian

Settings



- ▼ Course administration
 - 👤 Enrol me in this course

Topic outline

General Information

Course Syllabus or Overview Goes HERE

📄 Welcome and Instructions for Visitors

1

Introductory Discussions

- 📄 Primary Document for Parenting Advice Forum
- 📄 Seventeenth Century "Advice to Parents"

Assignments and Handouts

- 📄 Prologue Assignment
- 📄 Shakespeare's Biography
- 📄 Performance Requirements
- 📄 Character Analysis Assignment

Quizzes

- ✔ Act 1 Quiz

Journals

- 📄 R & J Journal/Short Writing Assignment

Concluding Discussions

Welcome to



Romeo and Juliet

Note the structural layout of this course - quicker students have resources available to move on independently and the course workload is apparent to all

o English 9!



and Juliet

Calendar



◀ November 2011 ▶

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Events key



Global



Course

Credits



This course was developed,
taught and donated by

Lesli Smith

<http://moodlerooms.com/>

