Using discussion forums in Moodle

To access the forum activity, click on the link from your Moodle course page.

Seminar question discussion (Forum)

A single simple discussion

This enables Module Leaders to post one single message that students can then reply to. Staff should be aware that the message for this type of discussion needs to be typed into the **Description** field when they first set the forum up. There is no second step to add a new topic as there is with the other forum types.

Once Module Leaders have posted their message they will only be able to *edit* it, *reply* to it and *export* it to their Mahara portfolio by clicking on the appropriate link at the bottom right of the message.
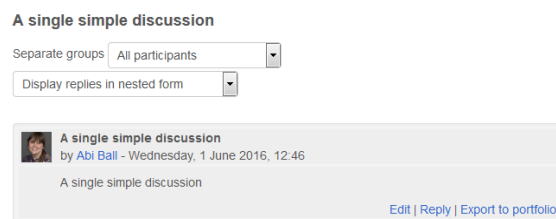
Students are not able to start new messages with this type of forum. They can only *reply* to messages or *export* messages to their Mahara portfolio by clicking on the appropriate link.

Both staff and students can choose to display the replies in different formats using the **Display replies in …** drop down menu. This is available for all forum types. The options are **Display replies in nested form**.
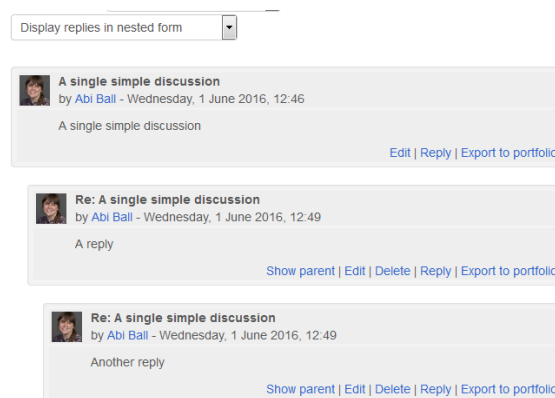
This is fairly easy to navigate as you can always see the original message at the top left of the screen but it can take up a considerable amount of space and may involve lots of scrolling as the replies are displayed in full indented under the original message.

Display replies flat (either with the **oldest** or **newest** message at the top of the page). This can take up a considerable amount of space and using it may involve lots of scrolling.

Abigail Ball, Digital Services

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Display replies in threaded form displays the original message at the top left of the screen and the replies in chronological order showing just the title(s) underneath the initial message. This takes up less room but it can be difficult to judge the content of the message just by the title.

Each person posts one discussion

Each student can post *only one* new message that everyone can then reply to. Once they have posted their new message they will only be able to reply to other messages.

Click on the **Add a new discussion topic** button to post your new message. Fill in the **Subject** field and add the main body of the message into the **Message** field. You can format the content using the buttons on the toolbar. You can also add hyperlinks, images and media to your message using the toolbar. For further information about the HTML editor toolbar see the document entitled *The Moodle text (or HTML) editor toolbar.*

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Decide whether you want to receive an email copy of your post by clicking on the down arrow next to the **Dicussion subscription** menu.

Attach any files to your post by clicking on the **Add** icon at the top of the **Attachment** pane. This will display the **File picker** menu. You need to click on **Upload a file** and then the **Browse** button to find a file on your PC. Click on the **Open** and **Upload this file** buttons to complete the process.

Alternatively you can **drag and drop** files from your desktop into the Attachment pane. Be aware that you need to use the latest versions of Firefox, Google Chrome or Safari 6 (for Mac OS 10.7 and 10.8). Drag and drop will not work with Internet Explorer 9 or earlier, or Safari 5 or earlier.
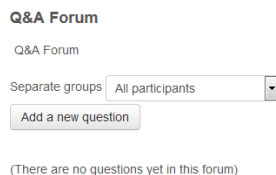
Normally when you post a message you receive a confirmation message saying that you have 30 minutes to edit it. If you are sure you will not need this you can force Moodle to post the message immediately by checking the **Mail now** box. (This may only appear for certain roles). Otherwise click the **Post to forum** button and then click the **Continue** link under the message to return to the main forum page.
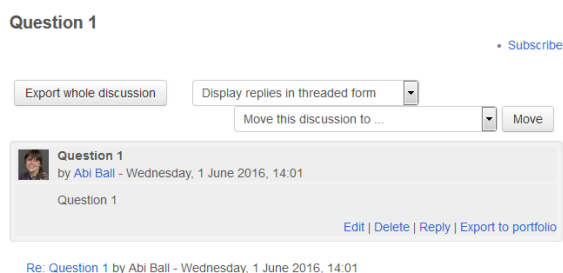

Messages are displayed in table format. Click on the **Discussion** title link to open the message and reply to it. The number of replies will be displayed as a clickable number under the **Replies** column. Likewise the **Unread** column will display the number of unread replies you have. This is also a clickable link.

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Q and A forum

The Module Leader poses a question that the students have to reply to. The documentation states that students can only see other replies once they have submitted a response but this does not seem to be the case for our Moodle installation. Staff and students can post new messages and reply to other messages so this forum type seems to behave very much like the standard forum.
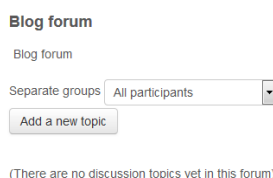
Q&A Forum

Q&A Forum

Separate groups | All participants |

Add a new question

(There are no questions yet in this forum)

Click on the **Add a new question** button to start the forum. Complete the fields as per the previous forum example.

Question 1

• Subscribe

Export whole discussion | Display replies in threaded form |

Move this discussion to ... | Move

Question 1
by Abi Ball - Wednesday, 1 June 2016, 14:01

Question 1

Edit | Delete | Reply | Export to portfolio
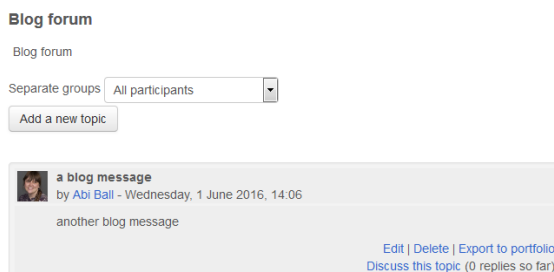
Re: Question 1 by Abi Ball - Wednesday, 1 June 2016, 14:01

With this type of forum you also get the option to **Subscribe** to the forum and you can **Move the discussion to…** a different course (this option is available for Module Leaders only).

Standard forum displayed in a blog-like format

This is an open forum where anyone can start a new message at any time. New messages are added chronologically onto one page.

Blog forum

Blog forum

Separate groups | All participants |

Add a new topic

(There are no discussion topics yet in this forum)

Click on the **Add a new topic** button to start the forum. Complete the fields as per the earlier forum examples to post your message.

Blog forum

Blog forum

Separate groups | All participants |

Add a new topic

a blog message
by Abi Ball - Wednesday, 1 June 2016, 14:06

another blog message

Edit | Delete | Export to portfolio
Discuss this topic (0 replies so far)

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To reply to a blog-like forum click on the appropriate **Discuss this topic** link.

Standard forum for general use

This is an open forum where anyone can start a new message at any time. Each new message appears as a row in a table. Replies show as a clickable number.

Click on the **Add a new discussion topic** button to start the forum. Complete the fields as per the previous forum examples.

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