

Getting Started with Moodle

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Digital Education
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Task 1 - Using Moodle as a student

For the first task we are going to use Moodle as a student. Using a new online environment for the first time can be quite daunting, so as you are using Moodle think about whether it is to use, and how clear the instructions are. Your insights here will be valuable to you for when you start to design your own courses, or edit existing ones.

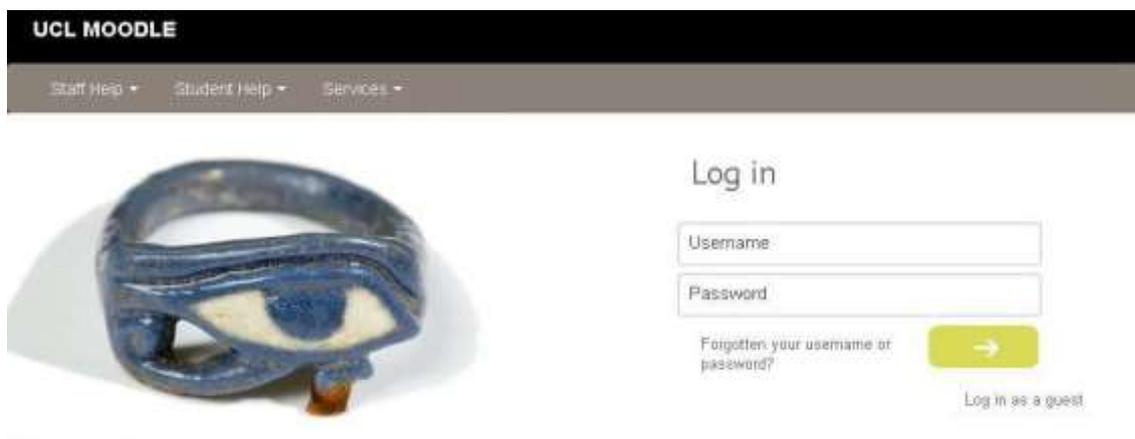
Step 1 - Load up Moodle

Open your web browser (Moodle works with Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome or Safari)

Type this address into your browser's address bar:

www.ucl.ac.uk/moodle

You will see the following page:



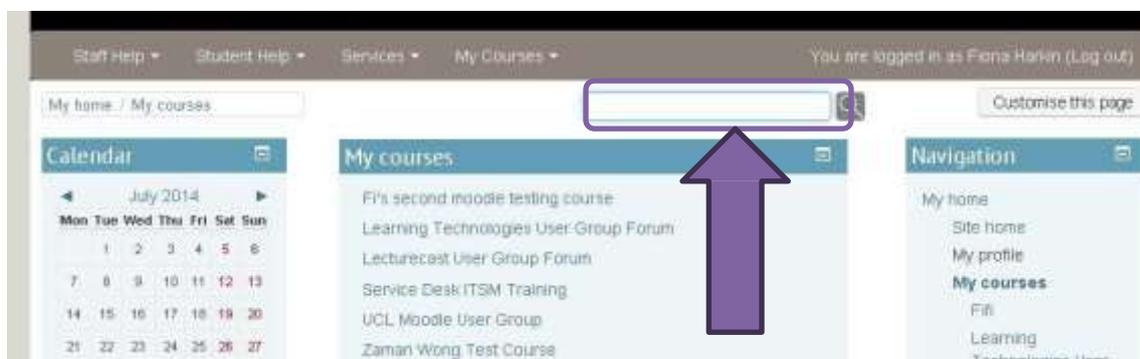
Step 2 - Log in

Enter your usual UCL **username** and **password** in the login box and click the **green arrow** to log in.

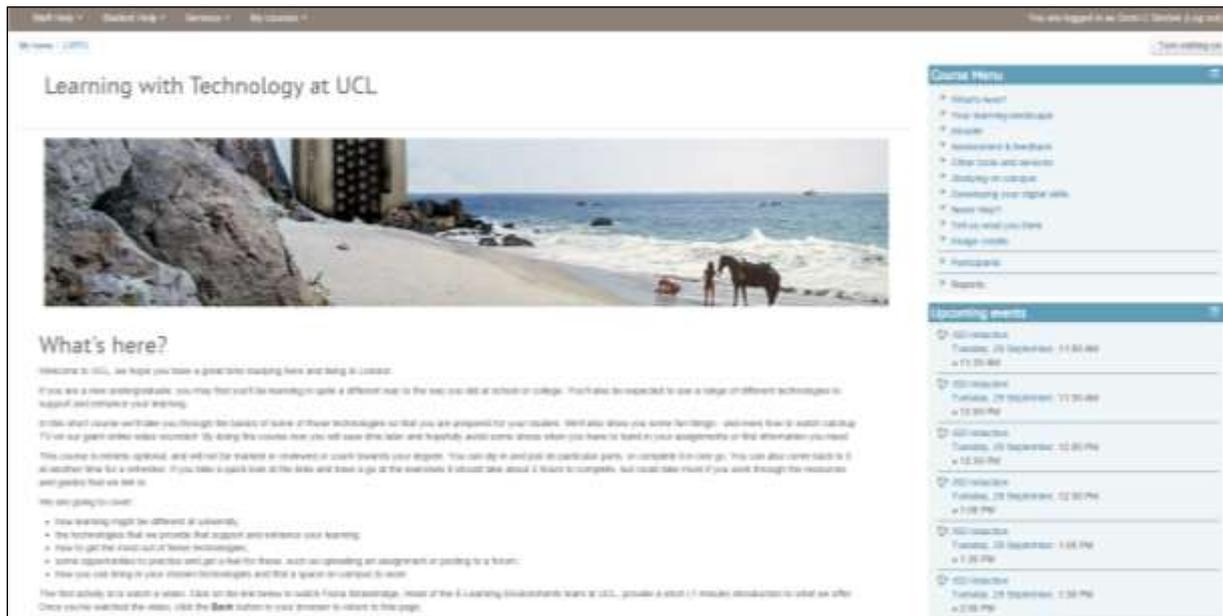
Moodle will now load an area called **My home** which shows you a list of your courses, and some other useful things.

Step 3 - Discover My home & search for courses

Within **My home**, using the search box at the top, find a course called **Learning with Technology at UCL**



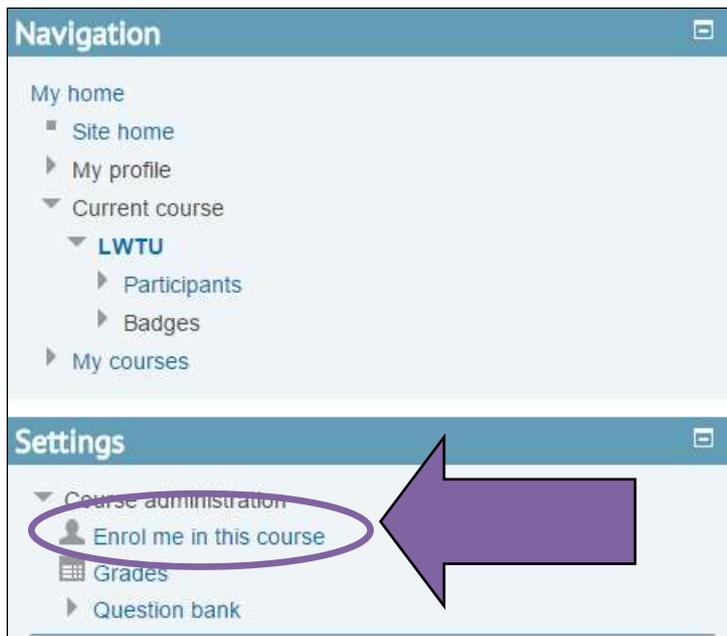
This will return all results which match the search term. Scroll down the list of results and click the title of the course to enter it.



When you attempt to enter other courses you may be prompted for an enrolment key, or not be allowed access at all – this is dependent on how the course’s enrolments are set up.

Step 4 - Enrol in a course

Enrol yourself on the Moodle Student Inductions course by going to the **Settings** block and clicking on **Enrol me in this course** – as shown in the image below. You will need to scroll down to find this block.



You are now a student in this course.

Step 5 - Browse the course

Have a quick look through this course using the tabs to navigate to different sections.

Whilst you are browsing think about:

How do you return to the course front page?

How do you find out who else is involved?

How do you find a certain item?

How do you get help?

Task 2 - Download some files needed for the course

Step 1 - Find and download the files

Open a new tab and navigate to

<http://bit.ly/gswm-files>

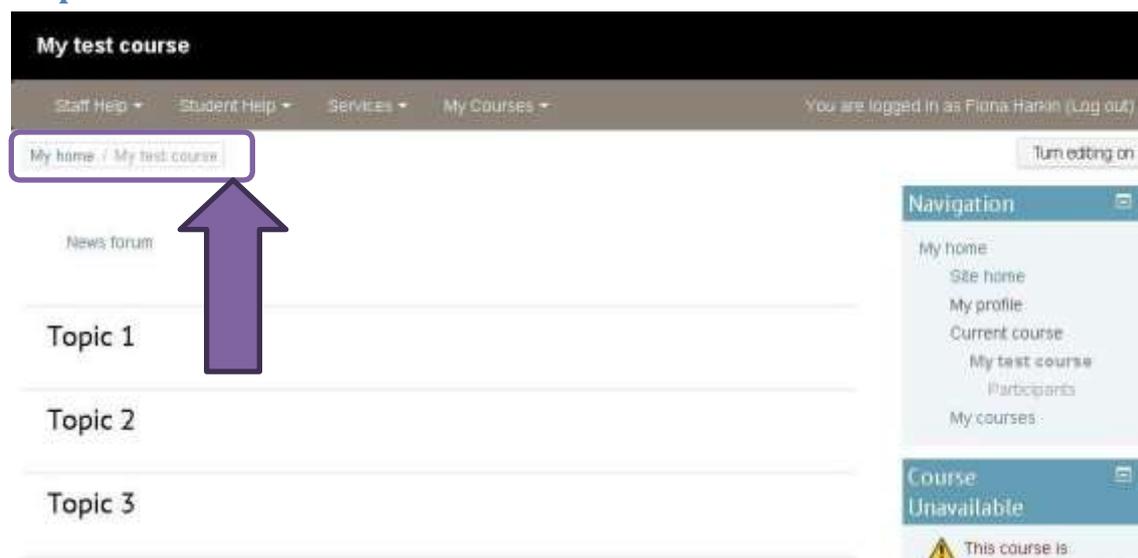
download the 'moodle.zip' example files. Make a note of where you have downloaded them to! If you weren't prompted for a download location they will usually be in your 'downloads' folder. You will also need to unzip them – right click on the zip folder and select Extract All...

Task 3 - Finding your test course

We have created an empty course for you that should be used for learning and exploring Moodle. This course will never be seen by students, so it's a good place for you to practice using Moodle. Your test course will continue to be available to you after today's session.

We recommend that you do not use this course to create academic content, instead view it as a 'play area' or sandbox, in which you can try things out and build confidence in using the system.

Step 1 - Find the breadcrumb trail



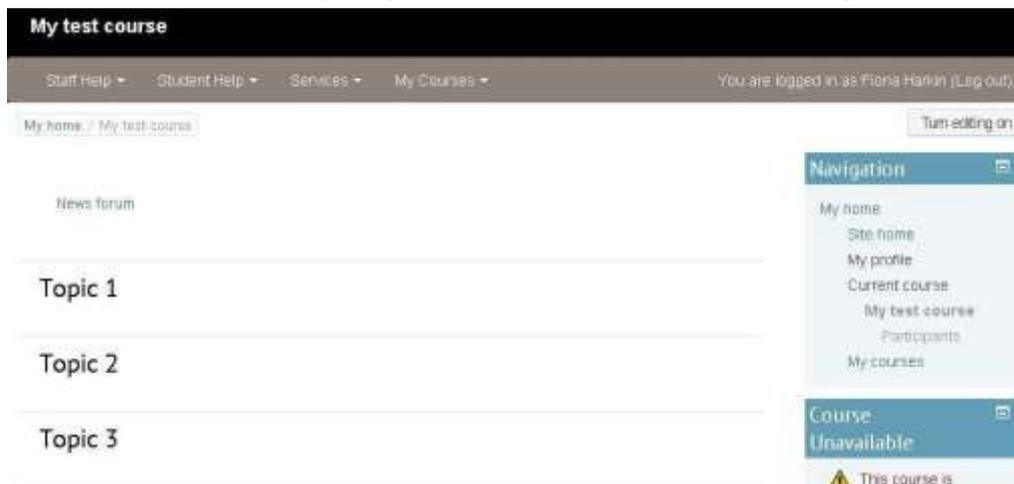
Step 2 - Click on My home on the breadcrumb trail as highlighted above.

This takes you back to the **My home** area. Look in the 'My Courses' area and find a course that you are enrolled on called:

[your name]'s Test Course

Step 3 - Click on the name of this course to enter.

This is an empty Moodle course, which is what you would normally get if you requested a new Moodle course to be set up for you. In the next tasks we'll start adding content and activities into it.

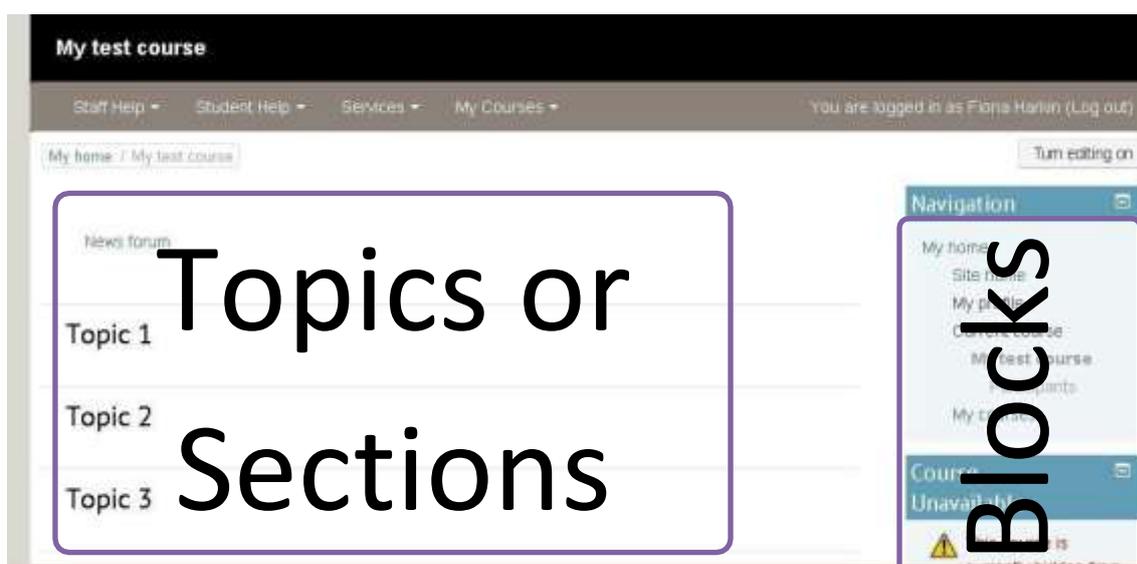


Task 4 - Adding structure to your course

The first thing we are going to do with our new Moodle course is to add a welcoming header, firstly to help students identify that they are in the correct place and secondly to add a little colour and personality to the space.

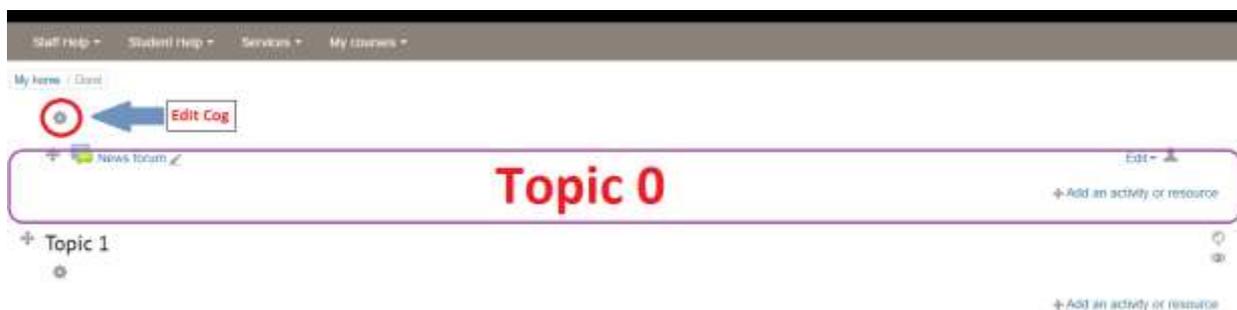
Step 1 - Familiarise yourself with your course

To start, look at your screen (with a new, blank course) or the screenshot below. The largest section on the left contains divided areas with the number 1-10 on the left side. These are called topics or sections, and are where the course's activities and resources are located. The first section doesn't have a number but can be thought of as section 0. Down the right side is a thinner column of blocks, which are designed to complement the course by giving additional links or information – these are covered in more detail later. The course screenshot shows a course in a 'viewing' state – this is how it will look to anyone entering the course, for example a student.



Step 2 - Making changes – Turn editing on

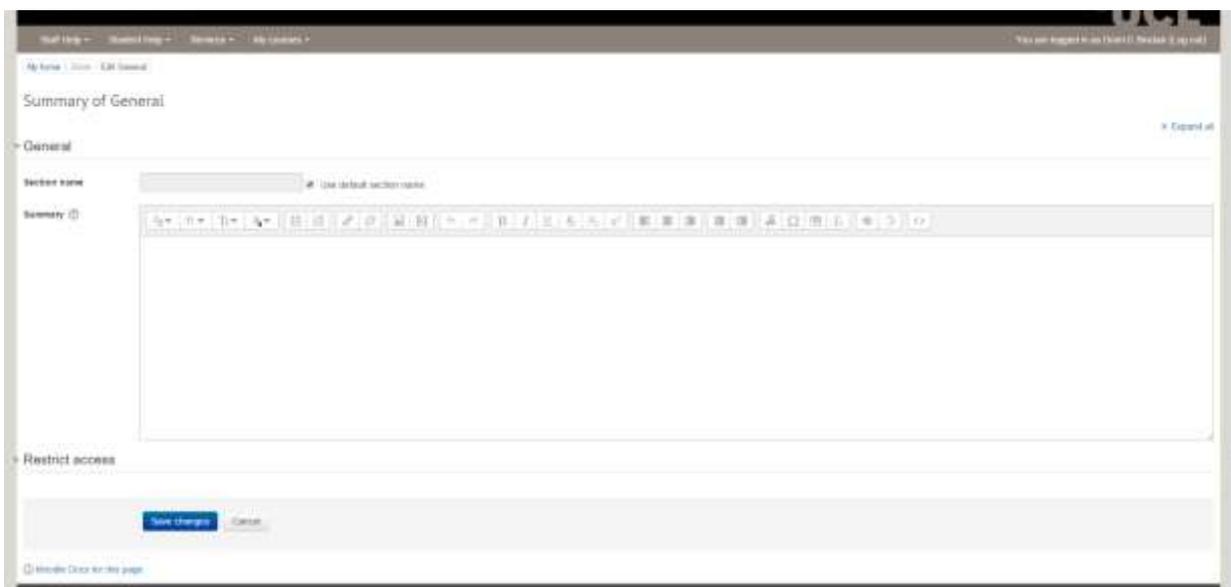
As a course Tutor or Administrator you are able to make changes to the course. Click  (top right, below the UCL logo) and Moodle's editing controls will appear all over the page, as shown below:



Don't worry too much about what all these things do; we'll approach them over throughout this workbook.

Step 3 - Edit the first topic of the course

The first topic in a course is Topic 0 (sometimes also called 'General'). This topic is a useful place to put information about the course, e.g. the module description, timetables, syllabus and learning outcomes etc. Click the **Edit** icon (the cog highlighted in the image above) at the top of the topic. It will load the screen below:



The main part of the screen shows the Text Editor – you'll see this in most places where you can add content directly into Moodle. It functions like a word processor, but is designed for web content editing, so it's a little different. At first, there only appear to be a few option, clicking **Expand all** (top right), will show you additional functions.

Step 4 - Add a section name and summary

Untick **Use default section name** and enter the title of the section (in this example we have chosen "French for Beginners - Course Information" but you can choose any subject) in the **Section name** field. Enter some brief descriptive text in the **Summary** text area – you don't have to copy out the text in the image below 😊.

Note: Giving sections a title will facilitate navigation and ensure that the title is reflected in navigation tools within Moodle (such as the Course Menu block).



Step 5 - Format your text

The text editor shows one row of icons by default. Select some parts of your text and apply some formatting. The functions of the text editor are similar to those of a word processor.



Try out some of the following

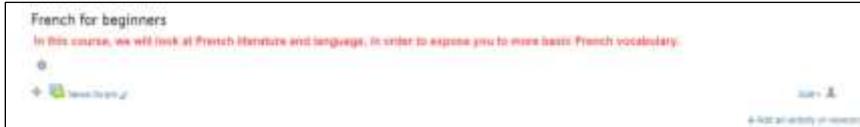
Changing the font, or size	 
Using emphasis on certain text	 
Aligning the text	  
Changing the colours	
Making lists or indented areas	 

Step 6 - Save changes

Once you're finished, scroll down the page and click



all your changes will then be displayed in Moodle.



Note: you can always return to the editing screen and update it.

Task 5 - Adding more topic headings to your course

We've already seen that Moodle gives us 10 topics to start with. We can use these topics in any way we choose:

- Using one topic for each week throughout the duration of the course
- Using one topic for each aspect of the course (such as hand-outs, useful links, assignments, discussions)
- A combination of the above
- Something else entirely – it's your course after-all.

When designing a course, it's helpful to title each topic section so students can navigate their way around.

Step 1 - Edit topic 1

Ensure you have editing turned on and click the first **Edit icon** in **Topic 1**. Repeat the steps outlined in Task 3 and give the topic a title.

Step 2 - Edit topic 2

Click the first **cog icon** in **Topic 2**. Repeat the steps outlined in Task 3 and call the topic '**Useful resources**'

Task 6 - Adding a page of content

You can put content into Moodle in a number of ways. For shorter items you can use the **Label** resource and add it directly to the course page. If it is a longer item you could use a **Page**. For even longer items, you may want to consider uploading a separate file, such as a PDF or word processed document, or add a **Book** to your course.

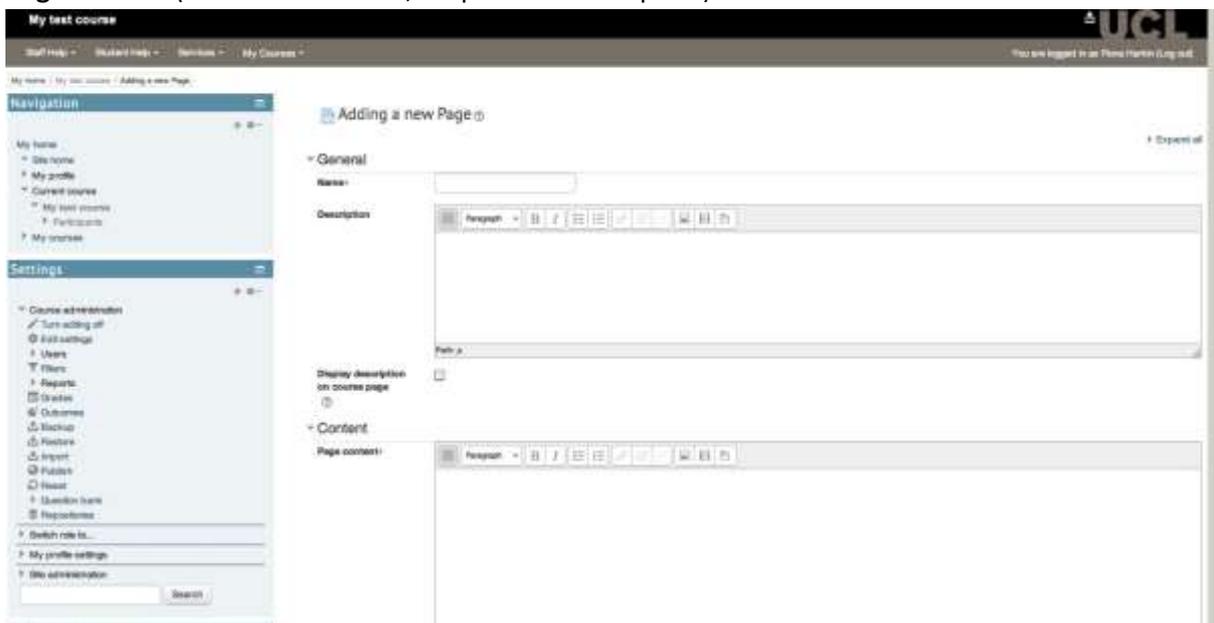
For now, we are going to add a short welcome page to our course giving a brief overview for the students.

Step 1 - Add a page to your course

With editing turned on, go to Topic 0 and click **Add an activity or resource**. Choose **Page** from the list of options. Click 'Add' at the bottom of the pop-up window.

The **Adding a new Page** screen displays all the options you'll need for a page of content in your course. There are lots of options but only two are mandatory, as indicated with the red asterisk:

- **Name**
- **Page content** (scroll down to find, it's past the Description)



Add as much content as you like to **Page content**, Moodle has no limits on how much content you wish to enter in this area. However please note there is no auto-save, so ensure you save your content early and often as you work.

Note: Later you'll learn how to add images, videos, tables, mathematical symbols and lots of other useful content, but for now, it's OK to keep it simple.

Step 2 - Save your page

Save and return to course

Click **Save and return to course**. You are now taken back to your course.

You can enter the page and view the content you just created.

Task 7 - Linking to a website

Web links are useful for providing additional resources or reading materials for your course.

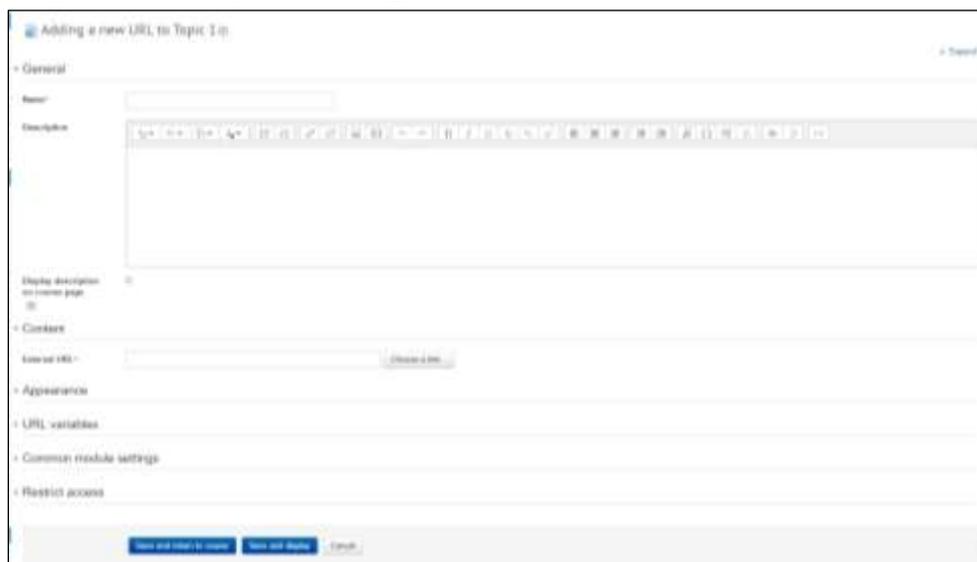
*Note: Moodle sometimes called website links another term: URL – this means Uniform Resource Locator and it's the fancy word for **web link**)*

In this instance we will link to **Google translate** – for those who are struggling to get a word out (translate.google.com)

Step 1 - Click Add an activity or resource

- Click Add an activity or resource
- Choose **URL** from the list

Step 2 - Select you settings



This is the same as when adding a Page, Moodle will give you lots of options, but only those with an asterisk are mandatory:

- **Name** – add something clear in here
- **External URL** – add the web link or URL for the page you are linking to

Step 3 - Save

Click **“Save and return to course”** when you are finished

Task 8 - Linking to a file

Another way of adding content to your course is to upload an existing file that is stored either directly on your computer, or a shared drive.

You can upload many types of files including Microsoft Word, PowerPoint and Excel or PDF files. You can also upload media such as images, audio and video. Files are limited to 160MB per file, there is no course limit (although Digital Education can help if you're uploading lots of large files, like video as there are better ways of doing this).

Step 1 - Add a file

Click **Add an activity or resource** and chose **File** from the list. This will load the **Adding a new File** screen.

The is the same as when adding a page or web link, Moodle will ask you for lots of options, but only those in red are mandatory:

- **Name** – add something clear in here
- **Content** – this is the file we're linking to. It starts off empty, and we will add a file.

Step 2 - Upload a file

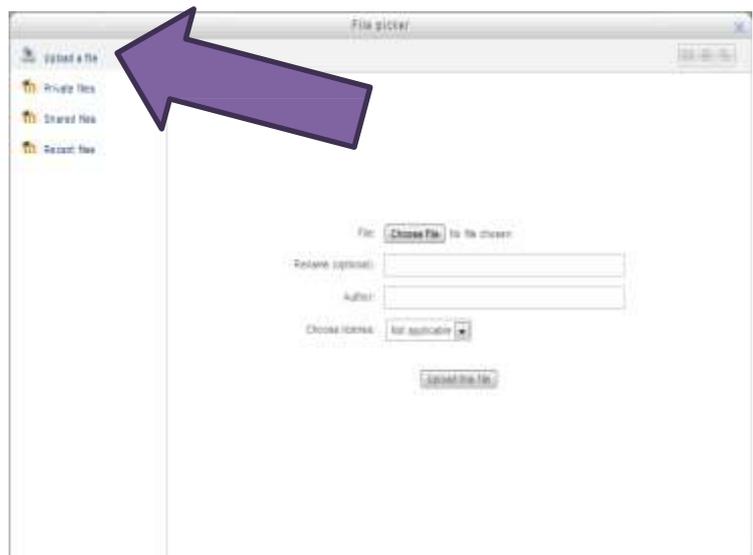
Click **Add** from the **Content** area, as shown.



This loads the **File picker** – a tool for uploading and finding files in Moodle.

Step 3 - Upload a file - cont

Select **Upload a file** from the left list of options. From here you can click **Choose File** or **Browse** (depending on your web browser) to find a file from your computer. There are some other options but for now, we can just click the **Upload this file** button. You'll be taken back to the previous screen, with your file in the Content area and an icon if the file type was detected; the example below shows the recently uploaded **Course handbook.doc**



Content

Select files



Step 4 - Click Save and return to course when you're finished.

Try clicking on your newly uploaded file.

Course materials



 Course handbook 48KB Word document

You will notice that the default file upload settings display the size and type of the file by the link.

You may have noticed a 'drag and drop' area in the file upload content area. If you have time you can experiment with this functionality.

Task 9 - Adding an image

Images are important in learning and many other aspects of content creation. For example, without images this workbook would be harder to follow and difficult to relate between what's being said, and what you see on your screen. Images can be used all over Moodle; in course homepages, pages of content or books, quiz questions, forum postings, blog entries, and many other places. We recommend you use them, not excessively, but to help keep content clear and interesting.

In this example, we will add an image to the course homepage, you'll need an image for this task so if you don't have one, there are plenty available for free, and copyright clear on some websites.

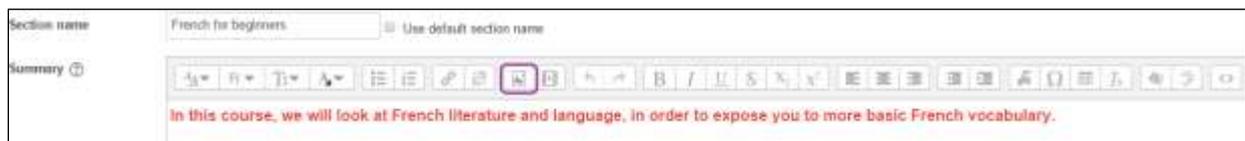
Creative Commons images – these can have licenses which allow their use freely in education, take a look at the following website to start searching for usable images:

<http://search.creativecommons.org>

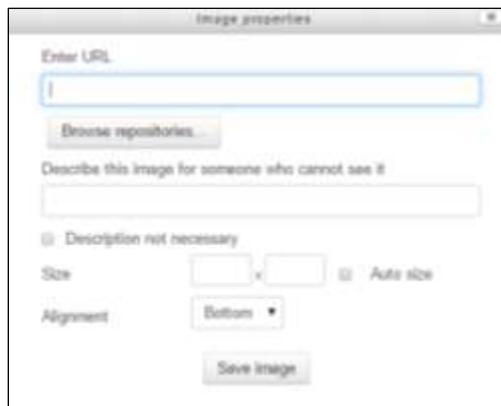
Step 1 - Edit a topic heading in your course

Choose a topic heading (topic 0 is used in our example). Click on the cog icon below it.

In the **Text Editor** click the **Insert/edit image** icon  (top row, to the left)



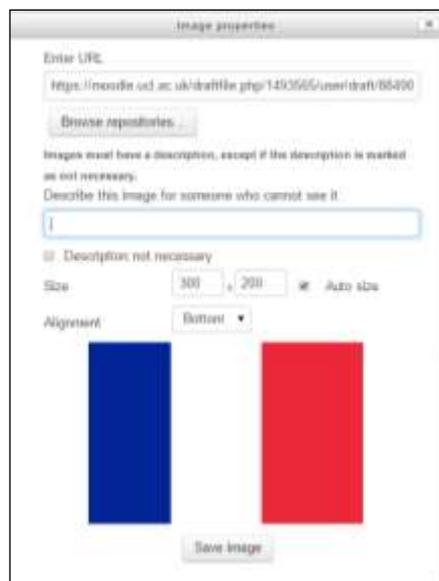
This will load the Insert/edit image tool



Step 2 - Select an image

Click **Browse repositories...** and the **File Picker** will open. If not already selected, click **Upload a file** on the left menu.

Now click **Choose File** and find an image on your computer. Once you have selected one, click **Upload this file**. This will close the File Picker and return you to the Insert/edit image tool, with a preview of your image, as shown:

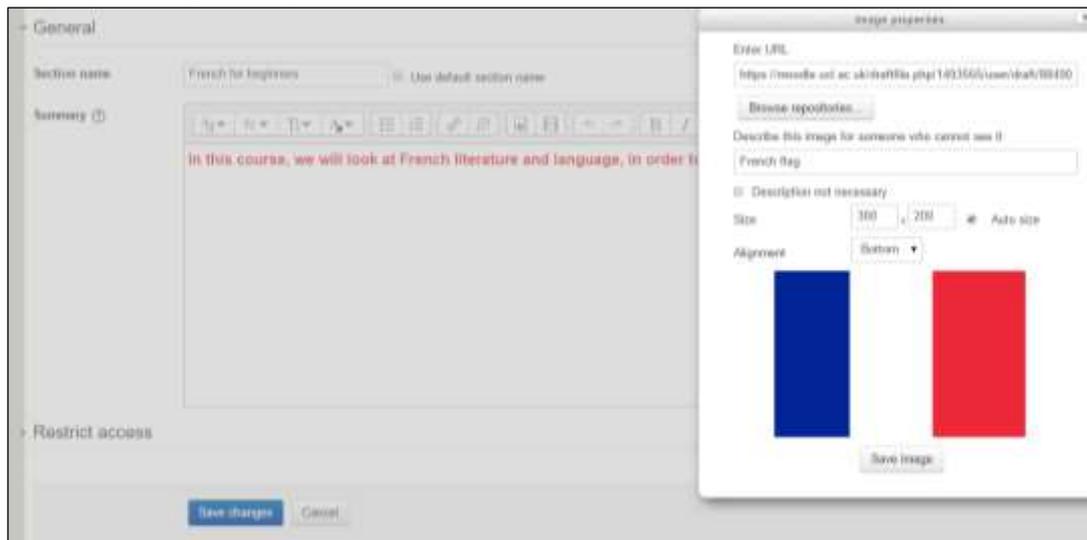


Step 3 - Add a description

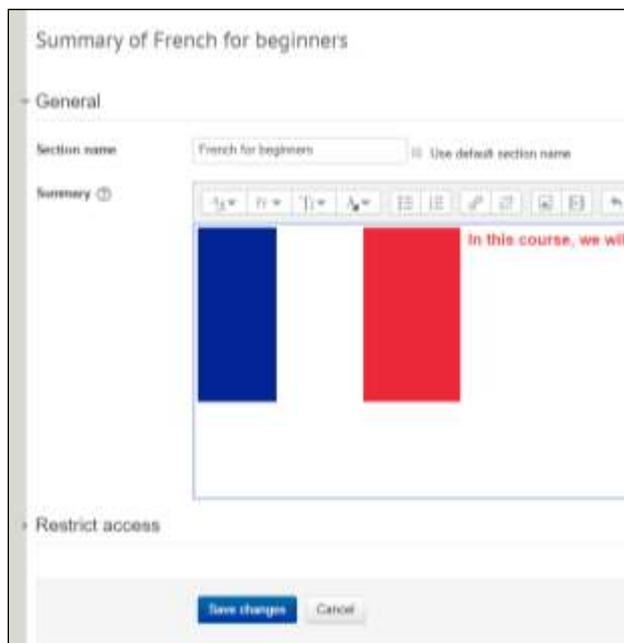
The last step is to add an **Image description**.

This description is shown for those who have images disabled or are unable to view it, for example people use screen readers which can't decipher images.

Click **Save image** once you are finished.



This will put the image directly into the Moodle Editor, and allow you to finish, or continue editing.

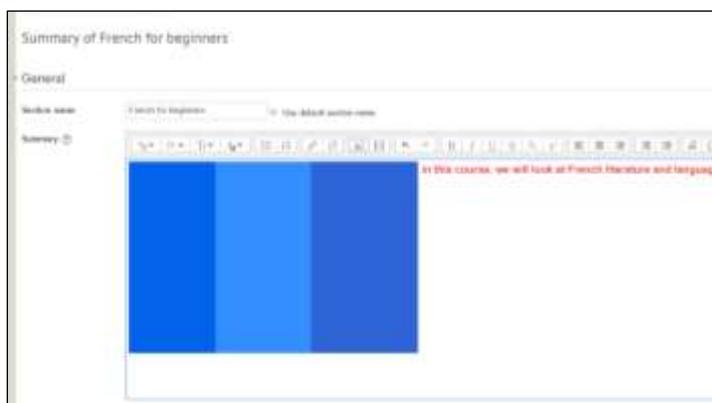


Step 4 - Move and resize the image

If the image is in the wrong place, or so big you can't see anything else, try the expanding the editor by clicking on the bottom right corner and dragging it– this will give more space to move your image.

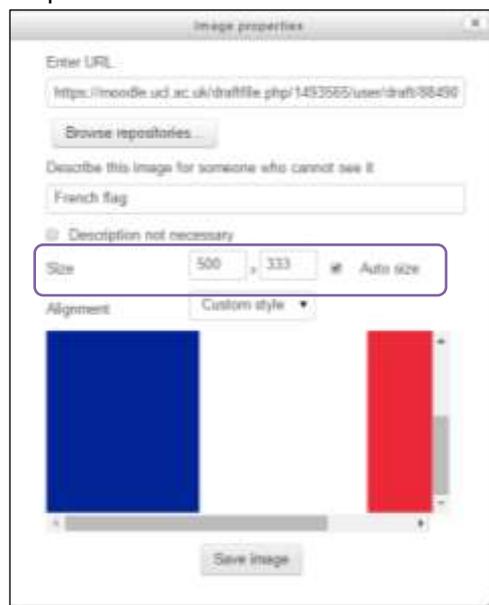
Step 5 - Move the image

Click and drag the image around to move it into the correct place. To make an example, we will move it just before the very first word:



Step 6 - Resize the image

Resizing can be done by selecting the image and then clicking on the image icon in the text editor. Here you can adjust the size by editing the number of pixels, ensuring **Auto size** is ticked will keep the aspect ratio:

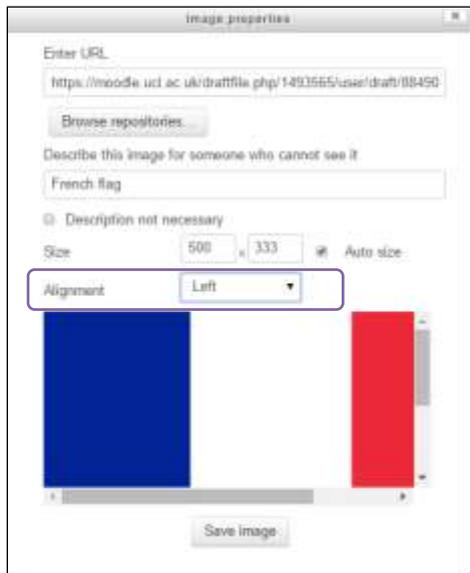


Note: Don't make the image bigger, it'll look stretched. If the image is much bigger than you need, you should resize it outside of Moodle, as otherwise it will take a long time to load and will use up more mobile Internet data for those accessing it from a mobile device.

Step 7 - Align the text with the image

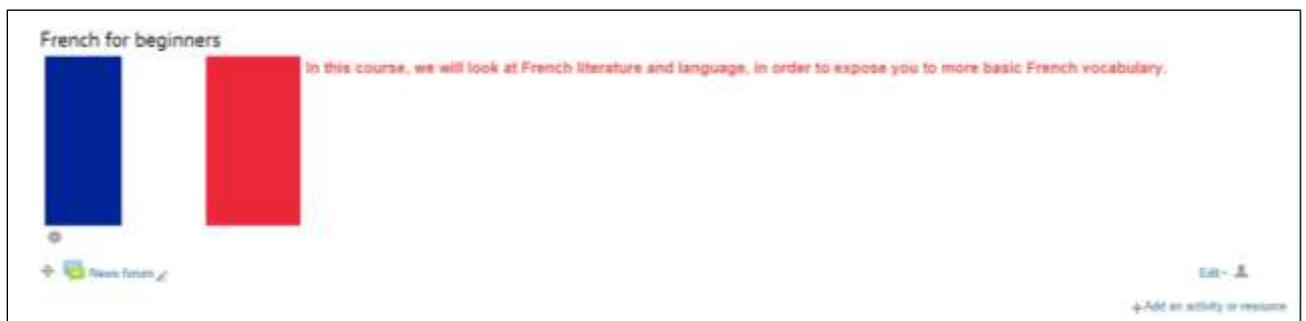
If you're really keen, you can **click the image** once more, and use the **Insert/edit image** (in this example left) to align the image within the text.

Note: We're just covering the basics here, if you want to see all the options, click the image and then click the Insert/edit image icon in the Editor and there are many advanced and optional controls to set.



Step 8 - Click Save Changes.

Your course now has your image.



If you are not sure about the position, or want to change the image you can click edit and make any further changes.

Task 10 - Uploading many files at once

Adding file resources to Moodle is great, but repeating the process many times over can have drawbacks:

- It takes time and is repetitive
- Makes updating files a lengthy process
- Courses can 'grow' quickly with lots of files on the course homepage

One trick is to add a folder, and add many files inside that folder. It's not as 'neat' and its best if you're linking to more than five or so files, but try it out and see if you prefer it.

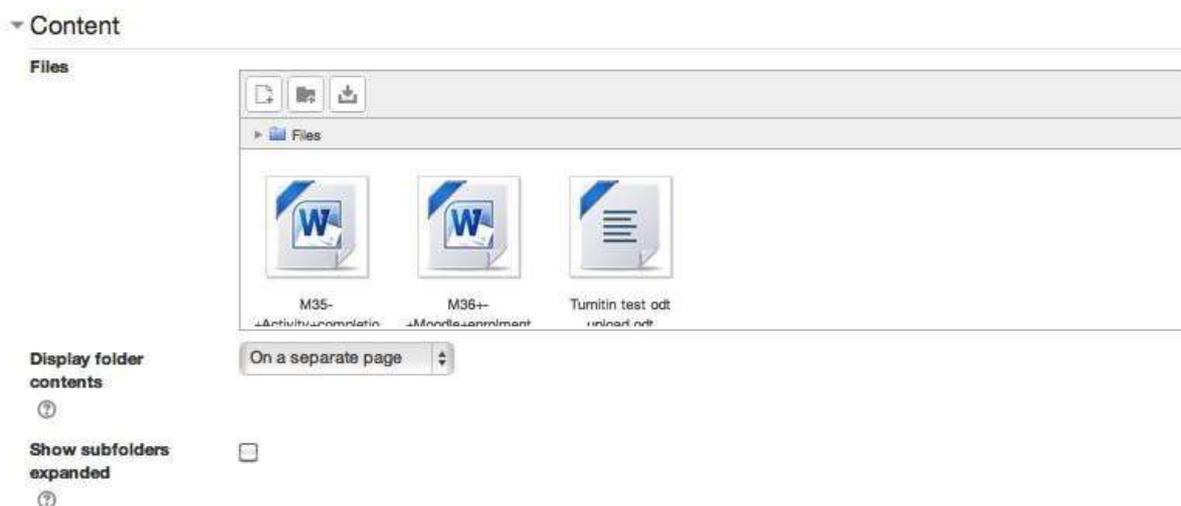
Step 1 - Set up a folder

Click **Add an activity or resource** and choose **Folder** from the menu

Much like when adding a file, the folder is the same process but the outcome differs.

Add a **name** & consider adding a **Description** (tick **Display description on course page**). While the description is not required it will be displayed directly above the files (and helps clarify what they are).

Scroll down to the **Content** area and **add** a file. Repeat this process, adding more files into the content area:



Step 2 - Click Save and Return to course

Note: you can also click Save and display – which will show you what just got created:

Folders versus Individual files

Benefits

- Make quick edits to add/remove/modify files
- Upload multiple files within a single .zip file and extract it into Moodle
- And some advanced uses too...

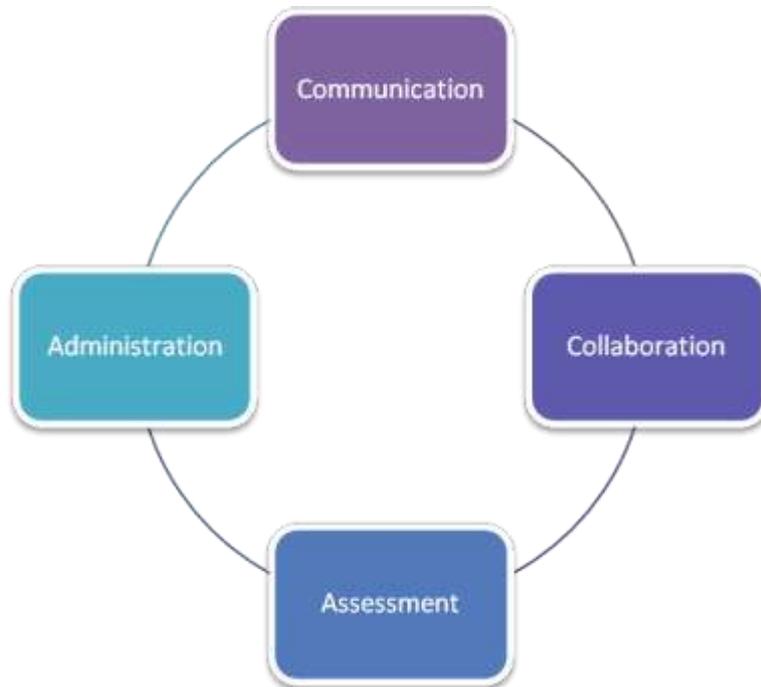
Drawbacks

- *Either all files, or none of the files, are can be made available (unlike a course, where individual visibility can be controlled)*
- *Files are listed by filename, so a bit untidy*
- *No metrics on how the files are downloaded/used (individual file links can)*

It's your course, so it's your choice how you set these up – if you're unsure then seek further advice from Digital Education.

Adding activities to your course

It may seem easy to fill a course with resources, especially as Moodle brings them all together into a shared environment which is easy for students to access and for staff to edit. On a different angle are Moodle activities which are designed to support this group of people in their learning and teaching activities. To do this, Moodle contains four main types of activities:



Although there are around 20 activities in Moodle, it's impossible to say that one is for assessment and the other is for communication, as the tools are highly flexible and can be used in different contexts.

Task 11 - Example activity - adding a choice to your course

Choices are a very simple and useful way of allowing students to select or choose between several options. Once a number of options are set students can then pick one. Examples include:

- Selection of a group project
- Signing up for tutorial slots
- Booking meetings or events

Although simple, the options with Choices are quite flexible.

In this example we are going to ask students to book a tutorial slot with one of three tutors. Two of the tutors are very (very!) busy and can't see more than eight students each; the other is able to see twelve students. Luckily we can limit the number of students per tutor, thus ensuring no one gets over-subscribed.

Step 1 - Add a choice

Click **Add an activity or resource** choose **Choice** from the list

As usual Moodle asks for lots of options, but for now we just need to start with the basics.

Step 2 - Add a name and Description

Note: the **Description** must clearly explain what is required to students. You cannot leave this space blank, so ensure what's added will ensure the task can be completed with minimal confusion or error.

Step 3 - Set a limit

Below the introduction text is the option to set a limit, change this to Enable. This means we can ensure limited numbers of students can see each tutor.

Add each tutor and their individual limit

For each tutor, enter their name in the Option text and set the Limit to the correct number, for example:

- General

Choice name*

Description*

Please ensure you have selected your tutor by 2nd October.

There is a limit of 20 students per tutor, so you may find you have to select your **second** choice if your first choice is fully booked.

Display description on course page

Display mode for the options

- Options

Allow choice to be updated

Allow more than one choice to be selected

Limit the number of responses allowed

Option 1*

Limit 1

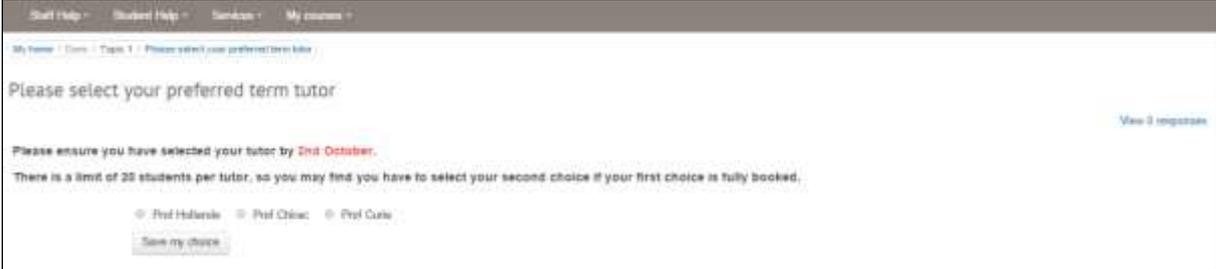
Option 2

Limit 2

Option 3

Note: You may add more options by clicking Add 3 fields to form. Any left blank will be ignored.

There are many other options in the form which change the behaviour of how this choice activity will behave. You are safe to ignore them and click Save and Return to Course OR click Save and display, which will show you something similar to:

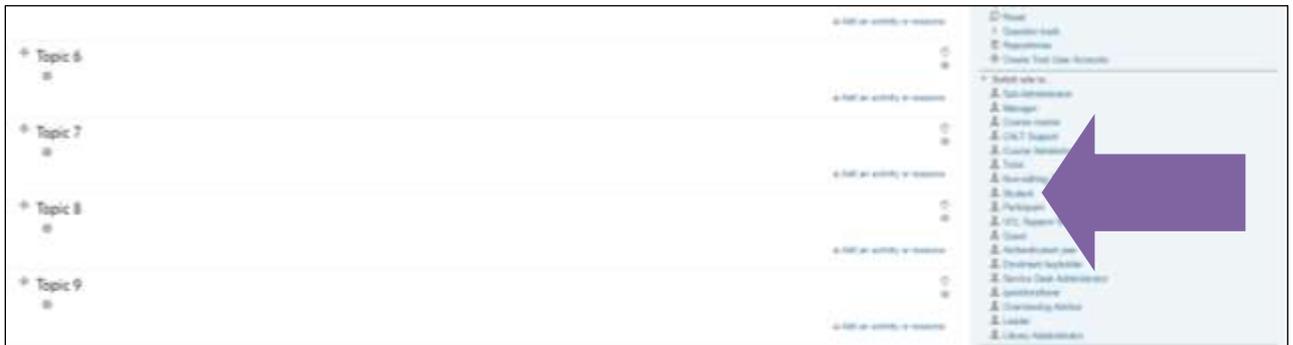


The screenshot shows a web interface for selecting a preferred term tutor. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Staff Help', 'Student Help', 'Services', and 'My courses'. Below this, a breadcrumb trail reads 'My home > Home > Term 1 > Please select your preferred term tutor'. The main heading is 'Please select your preferred term tutor'. To the right of this heading is a link that says 'View 3 responses'. Below the heading, there is a red warning: 'Please ensure you have selected your tutor by 2nd October.' Underneath this, a note states: 'There is a limit of 20 students per tutor, so you may find you have to select your second choice if your first choice is fully booked.' At the bottom, there are three radio button options: 'Prof Holbrook', 'Prof Chinn', and 'Prof Culp'. A 'Save my choice' button is located below these options.

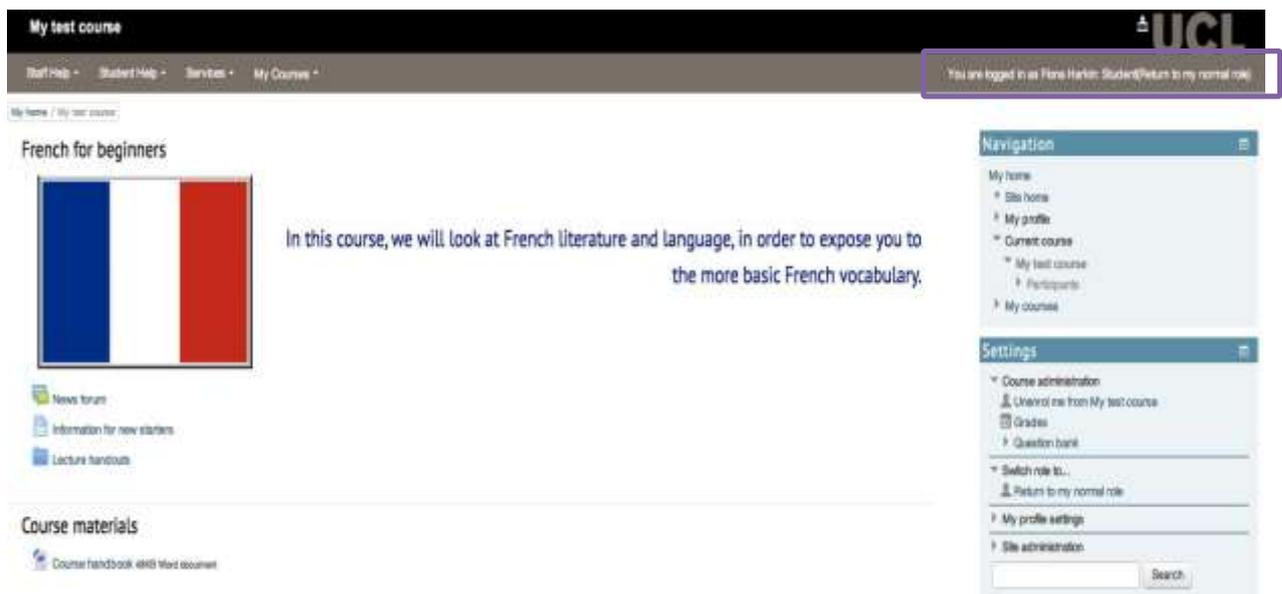
Task 12 - A few things to round off

Step 1 - View your course as a student

Editing a Moodle course can be daunting, and hard to know exactly what a student sees. Click the **Settings** button (left side) and expand the menu called **Switch role to...**



Select **Student** role to view as a student. Your course will now be presented as it is for a student.



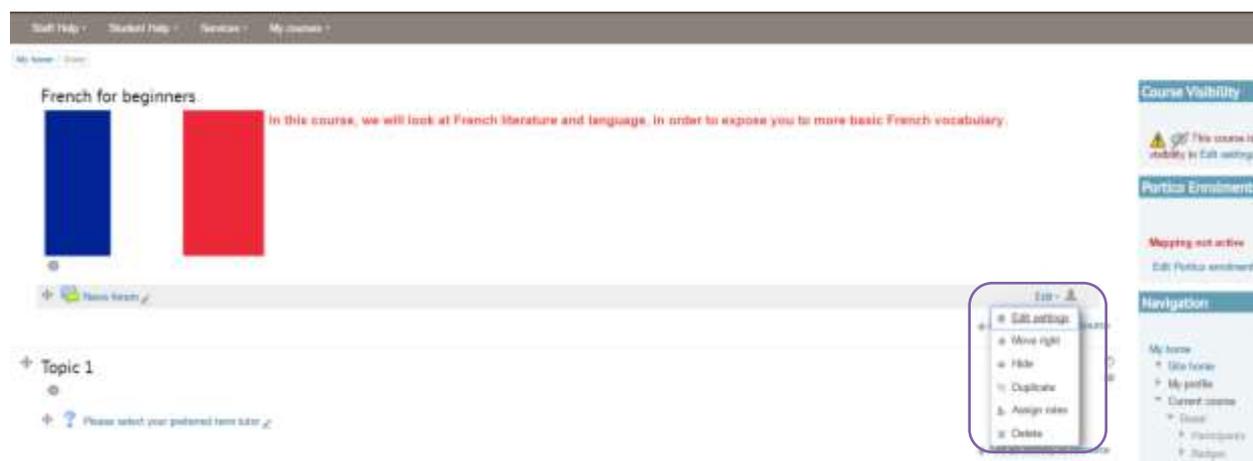
Step 2 - Become an editor again

Click **Return to my normal role** (top right of screen, above UCL logo) and you'll be a course editor again.

Step 3 - Move course items around

Moodle courses can grow really quickly, usually in a somewhat cluttered way. You can make a course look good, quickly by rearranging items.

Observe the icons available next to each item in your course:



Each of these icons will help you quickly keep your course organised:

Item	Icon	Definition	Good for
Move left or right		Use these to make your course items in and out dented, like a list	Making items in lists clear to read
Edit		Make changes to that item	Updating or modifying the item
Duplicate		Make a complete copy, and then be able to modify that copy	Saves time when making similar items
Delete		Permanently delete the item	Clearing the course up
Visible (or not)	 or 	Change visibility for students	Having items 'work in progress' or unavailable
Groups	 or  or 	Quick access to change group mode	If you want to quickly change group options
Assign roles		Assign specific roles to that item	Granular control of your course permissions

Discussion points

Whilst using Moodle here are some questions you may wish to keep in mind:

1. What is the benefit of putting these resources online?
2. How do students know where to find things on my Moodle course?
3. Is this accessible for all my students?
4. Does my Moodle content compliment my face-to-face teaching?
5. How will I communicate with students?
6. How can students communicate with me, or with each other?
7. What is the best tool for my requirements?

You may not have the answer to all these questions, but by asking them to yourself and colleagues you can ensure the best possible use of Moodle. As with any tool it will be most effective if you know why you are using it and what you are trying to do with it. You will also see there are many activities and resources available within Moodle, and they will all suit different tasks – so think carefully about what you wish to do and not wish tool you wish to use.

Moving on with Moodle

If you are ready to move on with Moodle then why not consider the following:

- Assignments in Moodle – Quizzes, Turnitin and Moodle Assignments can all help with this
- Lecture flipping – requiring students to watch lectures of complete tasks before class and then using class time for questions or hands on activities
- Student contributors – why not utilise the students to create content, quiz questions or to collect and curate resources for you?

Contact and Links

Contact

Digital Education can advise you on any of the above so please feel free to contact us by any of the following means:

Email: digi-ed@ucl.ac.uk

Phone: 020 7679 5000 (extension 25000)

Website: www.ucl.ac.uk/ele

Links

To keep up with the latest developments in learning technologies you can read our blog or follow us on Twitter:

Blog: <http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/digital-education>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/@UCLDigiEd>

Vlog/ video: <https://www.youtube.com/user/LTSSUCL/>

Getting started with Moodle online:

<https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=20838>

The Moodle Resource Center:

<https://wiki.ucl.ac.uk/display/MoodleResourceCentre>

The global hub for Moodle:

<http://moodle.org>

<http://www.youtube.com>

Searching for Moodle + the page, resource, activity or function you are interested in will often return useful video demonstrations of how others are using Moodle