



 moodle

Students' Guide to Using the
Learning Management System
(Moodle LMS)



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Aim and Objectives

Aim

- Prepare you for using an online learning environment.

Objectives

- Ability to navigate within the Moodle structure.
- Understanding the Activity modules.
- Interact with students and the course instructor(s).

Introduction

This guide will introduce you to the basics of participating in an online course. It will take you step-by-step through logging on, entering the Moodle environment and working within Moodle.

Moodle is a program that allows the classroom to be extended onto the web. Your lecturer has many options in setting up the Moodle environment so you may access your assignments, interact with the students in your course, upload assignments, access resources and much more.

This guide is your map to the electronic classroom.

What is Moodle?

Moodle is a virtual learning environment. This is an internet tool where students can access resources unique to their course; join in discussion forums with other students and contact lecturers and other students via email and messaging.

How do you access Moodle?

Go to the website using the site address <http://utechonline.utech.jm>. If you do not have an account your lecturer will provide you with your username and password. When you login in for the first time you will be asked to change your password.

The page should look like this.



How do you login?

From the main page you:

Top

You are not logged in. ([Login](#))
English (en) ▾

You are not logged in. ([Login](#))

Click on login
at the top or
bottom of the
page.

Bottom

next you will see this screen come up.

Login

You can also login
has a guest if the
course allows.

Login here using your username and password:
(Cookies must be enabled in your browser) ?

Username:
Password:

Some courses may allow guest access:

Forgotten your username or password?

Overview of Moodle home page

The screenshot shows the Moodle home page for the University of Technology (UTech). The layout includes a main menu, site news, site administration, course categories, and a list of courses. Callout boxes provide descriptions for several key areas:

- Site news:** Contains news relating to Moodle posted by the Administrator.
- Site Administration:** Contains information posted by the Administrator.
- Calendar:** Displays the current date and events inserted by the lecturer of your course.
- Course categories:** Contains a list of the different categories courses fall under.
- My courses:** Contains a list of the courses you are enrolled in.
- Upcoming Events:** Displays upcoming events for your course and University.

How a typical Moodle course looks

Each course in Moodle contains similar objects, but will look different depending on how the course is set up and what resources are used.

Example












The image shows a screenshot of a Moodle course page titled "Preparing for the Online Learning Environment". The page is annotated with several callouts and labels:

- Side Blocks:** Labels on the left and right sides of the page, indicated by double-headed arrows.
- Course Content Area:** A label in the center pointing to the main content area.
- Click here to view lecturers & users of the course:** A callout box pointing to the "Participants" link in the "People" block.
- View available activities:** A callout box pointing to the "Feedback Activities" link in the "Activities" block.
- View your grades and edit your profile:** A callout box pointing to the "Grades" and "Profile" links in the "Administration" block.
- View all courses on which you are enrolled:** A callout box pointing to the "Course categories" block.

The course content area displays a "Topic outline" with a "Welcome" banner and a list of activities including "Workshop Schedule", "Evaluation of Workshop", and "News forum". The "Administration" block shows options for "Turn editing on", "Settings", "Grades", and "Profile". The "Course categories" block lists "Architecture", "Building and Planning", "Management", and "Business". The right side features "Latest News", "Upcoming Events", and "Recent Activity" blocks.

What do all those icons mean?

Below is an explanation of some of the icons you may see in your course. Each course is different, therefore you may not see all the icons described below, or the icons may look different if your lecturer has applied a particular theme to the course.

Moodle resource and activities		Links to application resources	
	Assignments		Link to a Word document
	Chat session		Link to a PowerPoint presentation
	Discussion forum		
	Journals		
	Quiz or test		
	Web or text page		
	Workshop		
	Wiki		
	Glossary		

These are just some of the icons you will see in your Moodle course.

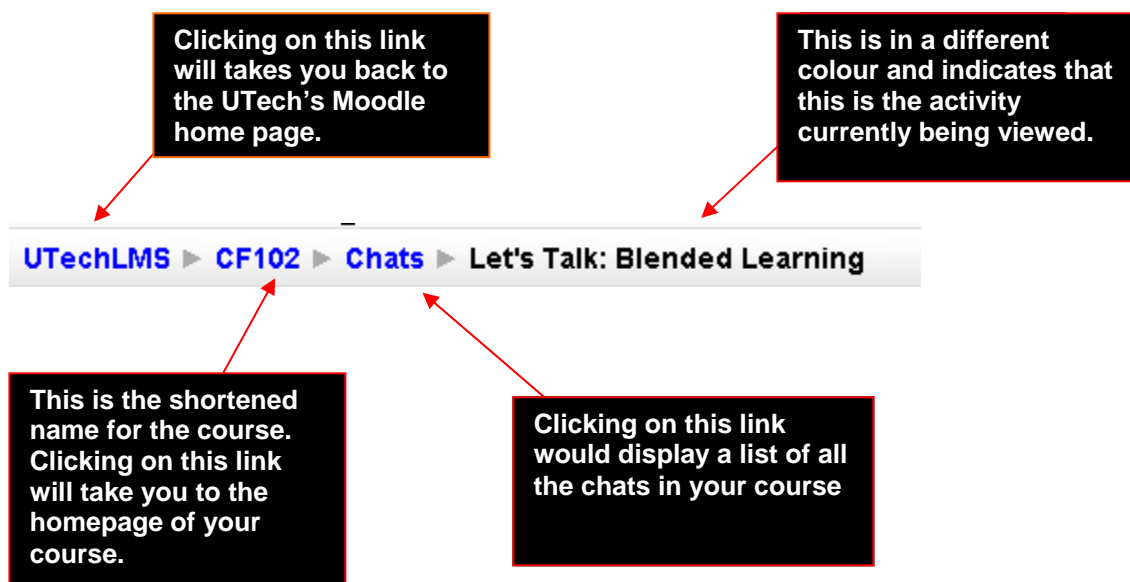
Navigating your Course

There are several ways to navigate through your course:

- Breadcrumbs
- Jump to
- Course Menu

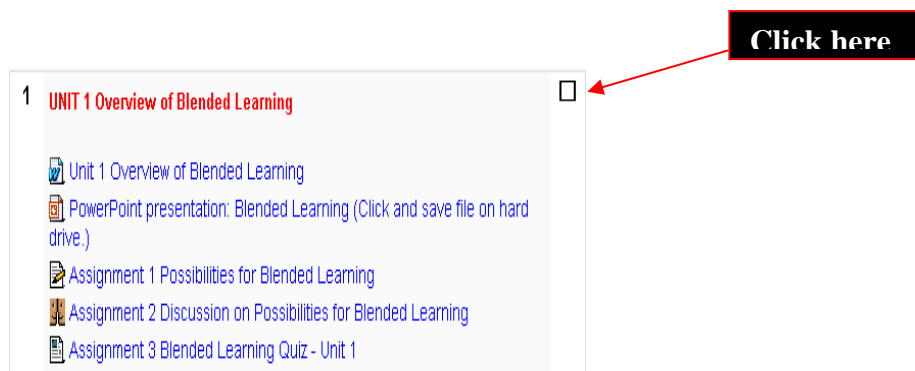
Breadcrumbs

This is a menu below the course title which shows your position in the course.

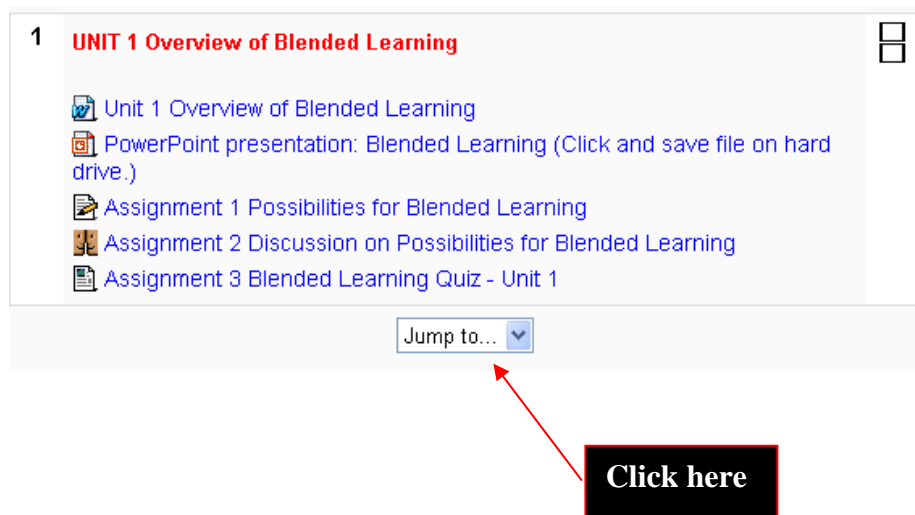


Jump to

If your course contains a lot of topics it can be tiresome having to scroll up and down the page. You can collapse the topics by clicking on the square box to the right of the topic heading.



When collapsed the jump to box will then be displayed, you can use it to navigate to another topics.



The topics can be fully restored by clicking again on the squared box to the right of the current topic.




Course Menu

Some courses may contain a course menu; this is an additional way to navigate topics content. The topics can be expanded by clicking on the plus sign (+) next to the folder icon. The course menu works in a similar way to the jump menu method, in that it only displays the topic you have selected. The remaining topics become hidden.

Note: if you use any of the above methods, or click on the links in the breadcrumb trail to navigate to another area of the course your input may not be saved. To avoid this always ensure that you complete what you are doing within the activity first e.g. post to a forum, completing a quiz, make sure you save or submit changes before clicking on the breadcrumb trail.

It is possible to navigate between pages by using the navigation buttons on your web browser. **This is not recommended.** You will obtain more consistent results by using the navigation options within Moodle and the course pages.

Why can't I access all of the courses on Moodle?

	Some courses allow guest access, this means that a course which displays the face icon alongside the course name can be accessed by anyone who logs in as guest.
	Some courses only allow guest access to people who have the enrolment key, this is a type of password that a guest needs to type in each time to enter a course.
	<p>Most courses can only be accessed by students who are enrolled in the course by their lecturer or students who have the enrolment key.</p> <p>The enrolment key is only required the first time you access the course. Students who have been enrolled by their lecturer do not need an enrolment key.</p> <p>If your course requires an enrolment key, contact your lecturer who will provide it.</p>

How do you check your grades?

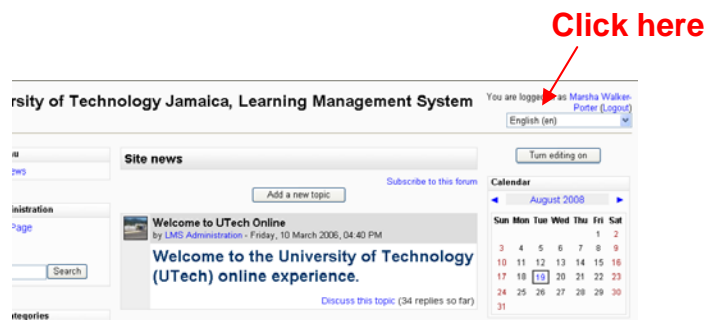
If you click on Assignment you will be able to view all the assignments available in your Course, you will also be able to see your grades.

You can also check your grades by clicking on the link to Grades in the Administration block.

The screenshot shows the UTechLMS interface for course EDU 5004. It features several navigation blocks: 'People' with a 'Participants' link; 'Activities' with 'Assignments', 'Forums', and 'Resources' links; 'Search Forums' with a search input and 'Advanced search' link; and 'Administration' with 'Grades', 'Edit profile', and 'Change password' links. Two red arrows originate from the 'Assignments' link in the Activities block and the 'Grades' link in the Administration block, pointing to a callout box on the right. The callout box contains the text: 'Click **Assignments** or **Grades** to view your results'.

How do you edit your profile?

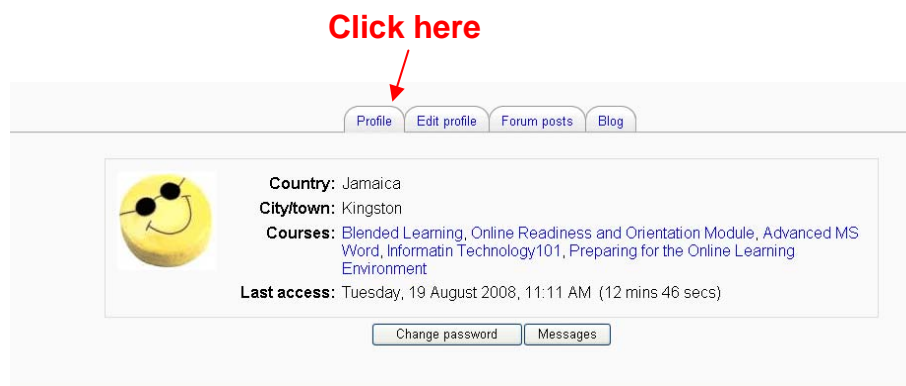
Once you have logged into Moodle you can access your profile by clicking on the link to your name at the top or the bottom of the screen.



Or



Once you are in your profile, click on the edit profile tab



You will then see the following screen:

The screenshot shows a user profile editing interface. At the top, there are navigation links: Profile, Edit profile, Forum posts, and Blog. The main content area is titled 'General' and contains the following fields:

- First name*: Marsha
- Surname*: Walker-Porter
- Email address*: mwalker@utech.edu.jm
- Email display: Allow only other course members to see my email address
- Email activated: This email address is enabled
- City/town*: Kingston
- Select a country*: Jamaica
- Timezone: Server's local time
- Preferred language: English (en)
- Description*: (with a smiley face icon)

At the bottom of the form, there is a rich text editor toolbar with various icons for text formatting and editing. The text 'Trebuchet' is visible in the editor's font selection dropdown.

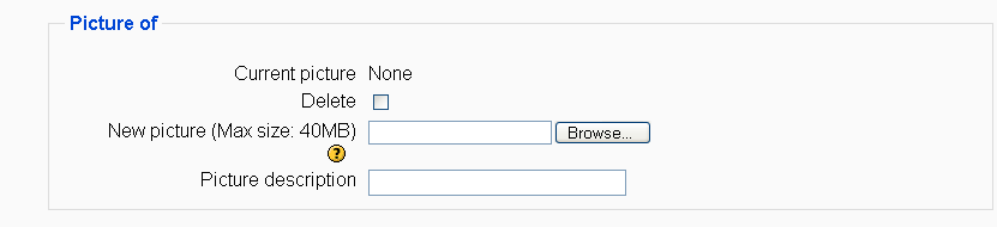
Click **Update profile** when you are done updating.

How do you change your picture?

You can upload a picture from your computer to Moodle, this picture will be used in various places to represent you.

To upload your picture, open your profile and if necessary click on the Edit profile tab. Scroll down the page until you see the area in which you upload pictures.

Screen should look something like this



The screenshot shows a form titled "Picture of" with the following elements:

- Current picture: None
- Delete:
- New picture (Max size: 40MB):
- Picture description:

To upload the image, click the **Browse** button and navigate to where the picture is stored on your computer, then click **Update my Profile** at the bottom.

When you are taken back to your profile page, the image might not appear to have changed. If this is so, just use the **Reload/Refresh** button in your browser. When you return to your profile you should see your new picture.

IMPORTANT: Please make sure that any picture you upload is not copyrighted, rude or offensive to other users of Moodle.

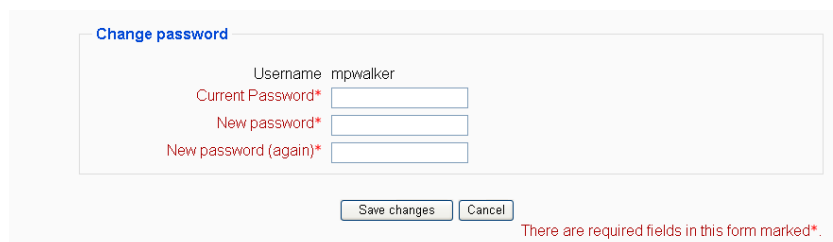
How do you change your password?

From the profile page



Click here

Click the **change password** button and the screen below will come up.



Enter your Moodle password in the **Current password** box. In the **New Password** box enter your new password. Enter it again in the **New Password (again)** box. Click the save changes button. A confirmation message will appear that the password has been changed.

What if you have forgotten your password?

If you forget your password click the yes, help me login button at the bottom of the login page.

Returning to this web site?

Login here using your username and password
(Cookies must be enabled in your browser) ?

Username

Password

Some courses may allow guest access

Forgotten your username or password?

Click here

Then enter your username and or your email address in the spaces provided then click ok and a new password will be emailed to you.

Forgotten password

Username

Email address

Enter username here

Enter email address here

Click here

Using the Communication Tools in Moodle

There are two types of communication tools in Moodle

- Forums
- Messages

Forums

There are four different types of forum:

- News
- General
- Each person post one discussion
- Q and A







News- This type of forum is used by the course lecturer to post messages to everyone on the course. Generally, this forum is for announcements only and you cannot reply to these messages.

General – This type of forum can be named as anything, there is no limit to the number of forums which can be in a course. It is for discussion with your lecturer and other course members. Anyone can start a new topic at any time.

Each person posts one discussion – Each person can post exactly one new discussion topic and everyone can reply to them. This is used when a lecture wants each student to start a discussion.

Q and A – The Q and A forum requires students to post their thoughts/answers before viewing other students' postings.

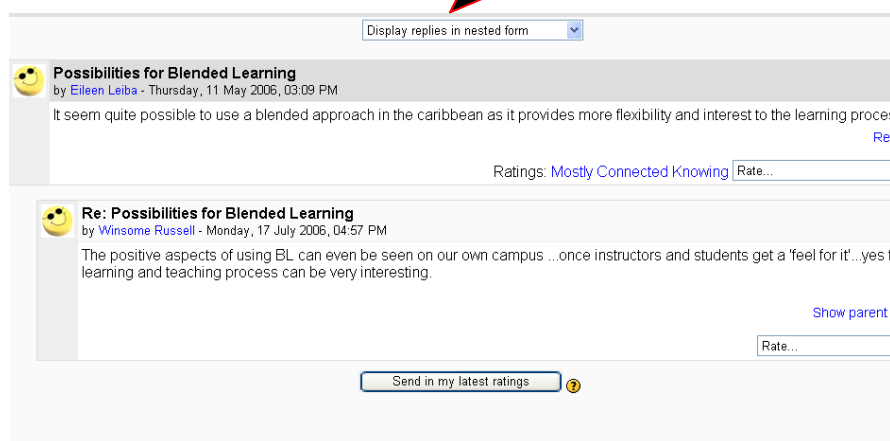
When you enter a forum you will see a list of discussion topics. (See example below) Each message should have a subject heading so that the reader will know what the discussion is about. Clicking on a subject heading will open the original message where you can view messages and any replies.

Discussion	Started by	Replies	Las
Possibilities for Blended Learning	 Eileen Leiba	1	Winsor Mon, 17 Jul 2006,
JB's response	 Jeanette Bartley	4	Winsor Mon, 17 Jul 2006,
Blended learning in the C'bbean	 Mairette Newman	1	Haldane Thu, 11 May 2006,
The importance of BL	 Haldane Johnson	2	Haldane Thu, 11 May 2006,
Hi	 Neil Beepat	0	Na Thu, 11 May 2006,
Cheryl's Response	 Cheryl Messam	0	Cheryl Thu, 11 May 2006,

The front page of a forum also gives details on the name of the person who started the discussion, the number of replies and the date of the last posting; this is useful when checking to see if there are new messages.

When you view a message you will see the replies. You can click on the dropdown menu at the top of the screen to determine the order in which you would like to view the thread.

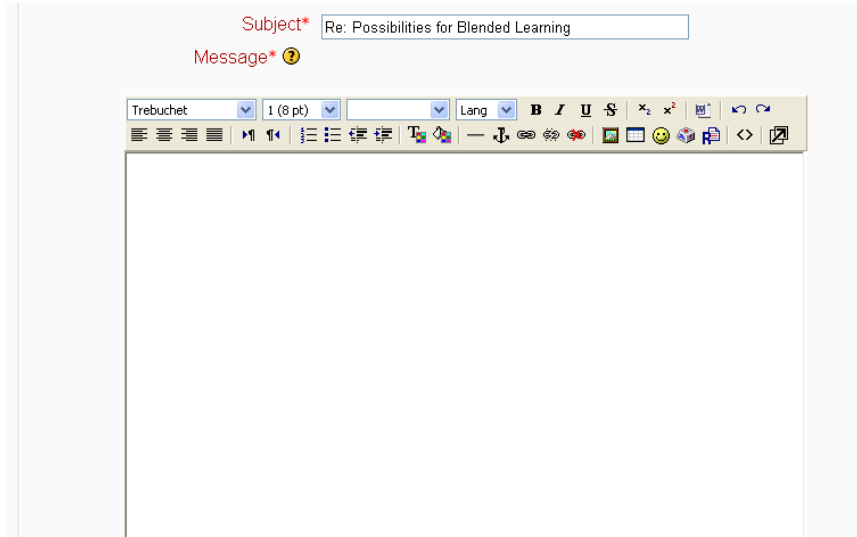
Click dropdown menu



To add your own reply to a thread, click on the reply link in a message. This will open the editor, some of the toolbar icons are similar to those found in most word-processing programmes.

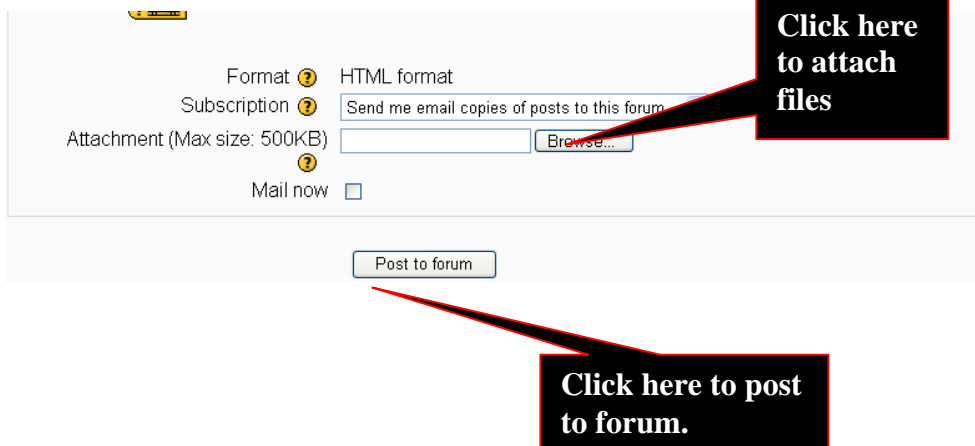


Click reply



Example of the text editor

If you need to attach a file there is an option at the bottom of the page. You can also select whether you want replies of the message emailed to you.



When you have finished, click on Post to forum.

Message

There are a variety of ways to send messages in Moodle, two of them are:

- Sending messages from another user's profile
- Sending messages from your profile

Sending Messages from another user's profile

The easiest way to send messages is from another user's profile. Locate your classmate's profile by clicking on the Participants link in the People block in your course space.



You'll access your classmate's profile by clicking on their name or user image. At the bottom of your classmate's profile, click on the send message button. This will launch the messaging system, which will open up in a new window.

User picture	First name / Surname	City/town	Country	Last access
	Marsna Walker-Porter	Kingston	Jamaica	now
	Petrona Anderson	St Andrew	Jamaica	22 days 1 hour
	Richelle Harvey	Kingston	Jamaica	26 days 3 hours

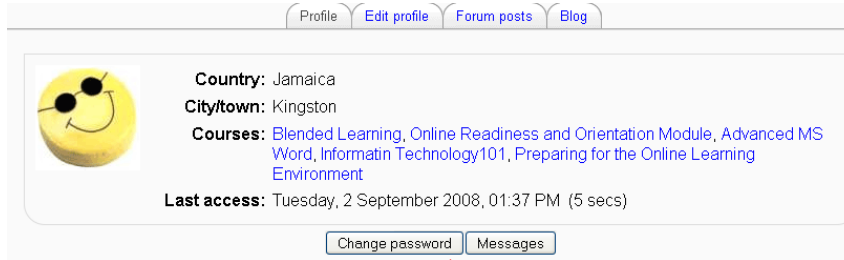
Profession: Multimedia Technician
Company: University of Technology, Jamaica
Contact info: ext. 2458
Location: SHTM

Country: Jamaica
City/town: St. Andrew
Email address: panderson@utech.edu.jm
Courses: Advanced Culinary Skills (Garde Manger/Pâtisserie), Basic Pastry Making & Cake Decorating Theory 1, Information Technology, Blended Learning, Online Readiness and Orientation Module, From moodle.org: Exploring Moodle Modules, Interactive Multimedia Presentations, Multimedia Equipment Setup, Configuration and Troubleshooting, Multimedia in Instruction using PowerPoint, Introduction to Moodle, Winsome's Course, Introduction to Computers, What is a computer?, What is a Computer 101
Last access: Monday, 11 August 2008, 11:10 AM (22 days 1 hour)
Roles: Student

Click here

Sending messages from your profile

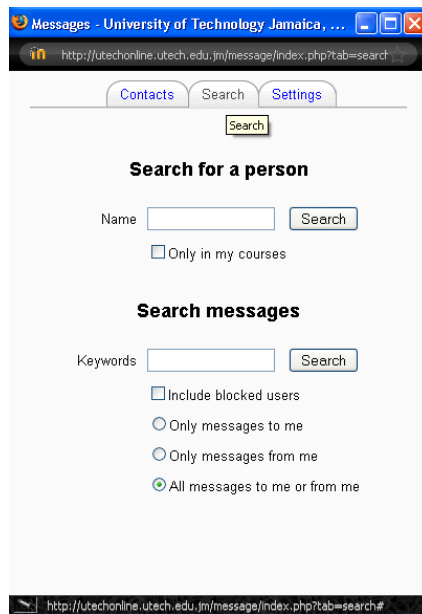
You can send a message to another person from your profile. At the bottom of the page click the message button. This will launch the messaging system, which will open up in a new window.



Click here to send message

In the Messages window click on the Search tab to search for the person, if you only want to send a message to persons in your course check the box "Only in my courses", then click on their name. (Alternatively, if the person is listed in the Online Users block, simply click on the "Add/send message" envelope opposite their name.)

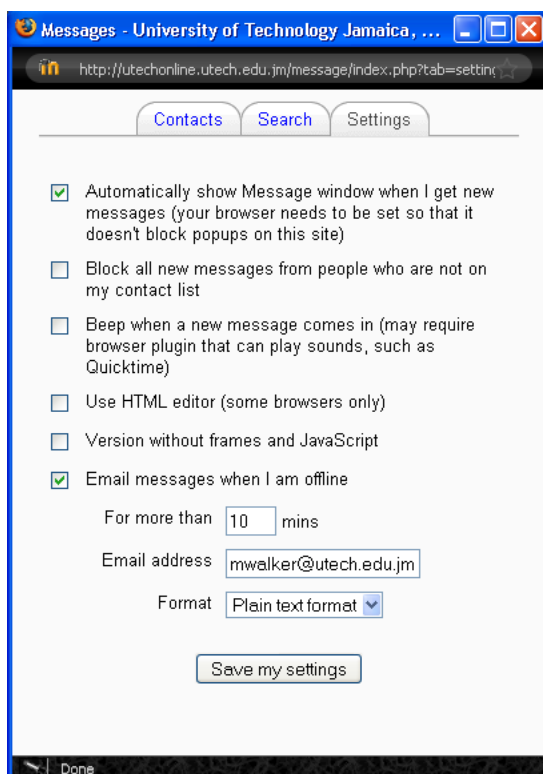
Type the message in the pop-up box then click on the "Send message" button.



Setting up message preferences

You need to access your profile.

When in your profile click on the button marked **Message**, then click the **Settings** tab. From here you can set up preferences for your messages.



When you receive a message from someone you can, reply, add the contact to your message list, or block message from that person.

In contacts, move your mouse over the icons under incoming contacts to see what each icon is for. The message history holds a record of all of the messages you have sent and received from people in your contact list.

When you reply to a message you will see the pop-up window recording your conversation, this window refreshes every 60 seconds.

Moodle Database activity

Your lecturer can use the Moodle course management system's Database activity to create resource sharing learning activities. It can be useful especially when the lecturer wants to enable students to view each others' submissions and comments.

Database activities that lecturers use are:

- Moodle Journal
- Moodle wiki

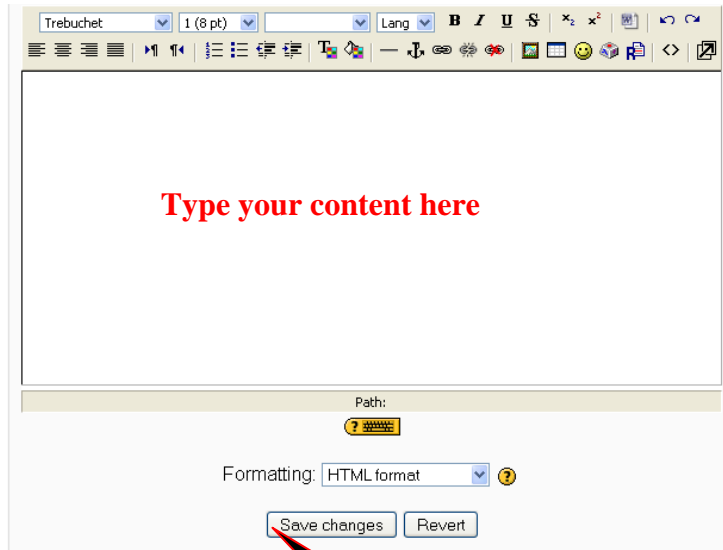
Moodle Journal

Moodle's journal tool is an electronic journal where you can record your thoughts and reflections. Your lecturer can use journals to encourage you to reflect on the course and the content in ways which are difficult to do with other tools. The **privacy** of the journal and the open-ended nature of the response give you a safe space to explore new knowledge. You can edit and refine your answer over time.

In your **Journal**, give detailed consideration to your own personality and learning styles and preferences. Ask yourself, ?Would I make a good online learner? What are the features that I have that would make me a success in an online environment? What are the features that would probably make me fail? What steps can I take to improve my chances for success online?? Spend time in reflection, and then post your thoughts (about 250 words) in response to all these questions.

Start or edit my journal entry

Click to start typing in the journal or to edit existing content.



Click to save changes.

Moodle Wiki

A wiki is a collection of collaboratively authored web documents. Basically, a wiki page is a web page everyone in your class can create together, right in the browser, without needing to know HTML.

As any activity in Moodle, a wiki is initiated by your lecturer of the course. Once created, each lecturer or student is considered an author with full editing rights: You can add other pages to the wiki by simply creating a link to a page that doesn't exist yet.

Wikis get their name from the Hawaiian term "wiki wiki," which means "very fast." A wiki is indeed a fast method for creating content as a group. It's a hugely popular format on the Web for creating documents as a group. There is usually no central editor of a wiki, no single person who has final editorial control. Instead, the class edits and develops its own content.