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Developing International Experience for Students through Virtual Mobility (MOVIDIS)

Guide for teachers on using Moodle for Virtual Mobility courses

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INTRODUCTION

This Guide targets higher education teaching staff who are supposed to design and deliver Virtual Mobility courses for international students using Learning Management System **Moodle**.

Moodle is a very popular web-based platform for supporting online teaching and learning worldwide. Moodle has a lot of different features facilitating the creation of engaging teaching and learning strategies. In the scope of this Guide it will not be possible, of course, to cover all the tools offered by Moodle. Instead, we picked up a few relevant activities on Moodle that might be used by teachers specifically in the context of Virtual Mobility and that can support them when working remotely with international students. In particular, we will focus on a few options on Moodle that promote individual and collaborative online activities in a classroom, conducting assessment and collecting feedback. You are invited to analyse the suggested activities and to try those which optimally fit your individual pedagogical scenario.

When presenting the corresponding activities on Moodle, we will highlight their pedagogical value rather than technical aspects. It is worthy to mention that the international Moodle Community already created numerous video tutorials showing how to set up and manage any activity on the platform. We will also recommend consulting these tutorials while demonstrating corresponding Moodle activities. It is always good to refer to visualized materials rather than to text descriptions. The most tutorials are provided with English sub-titles allowing a proper understanding of a spoken text. The length of each video tutorial is between 3 – 6 minutes so that it is quite comfortable to follow them.

We wish you a lot of fun and success for your Moodle-based Virtual Mobility courses!

Sincerely yours
MOVIDIS team

1. How to start?

The most of you have probably a few experiences with Moodle or similar LMS. Thus, we will quickly recap the most relevant things (let's say, basics) you should be able to do to set your course on Moodle.

1.1. Finding your way around Moodle

Being employed at your home university as teacher, you surely have got the access to the institutional Moodle and maybe an introduction into how navigate through Moodle. At this stage, it should be stressed that navigation through your Moodle will depend upon:

- **the administrator's settings**: to learn more about this, contact technician staff in charge of Moodle at your university,
- **the theme used**: they usually differentiate between **Classic** and **Boost** themes that allow the user to change the design of a Moodle site,
- **the Moodle version used**: Moodle is being regularly updated. The latest Moodle version is 3.9.1 (as of July 31, 2020). Updated Moodle versions usually offer newer features. Contact technician staff to learn which Moodle version is used at your university.

In the scope of this Guide, we will mostly refer to the **Moodle version 3.8** and to the theme **Boost**.

To get an overview of how your personalized Moodle page might look like, how to customize your Moodle site, and how a course on Moodle is typically structured, we suggest watching this video tutorial (just click on the image):
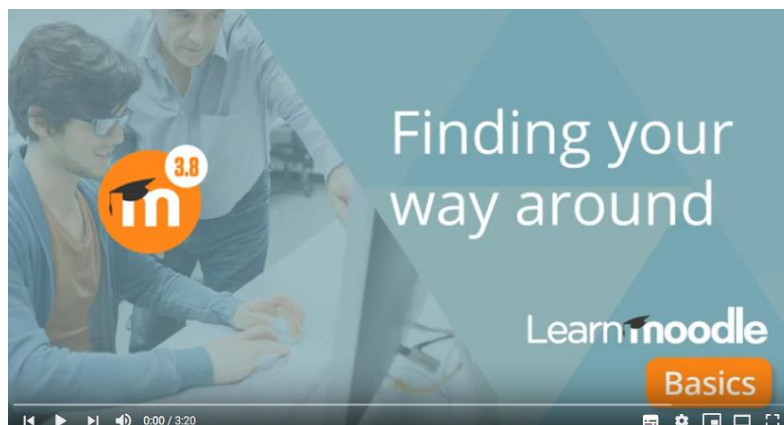
https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLxcO_MFWQBDfMnwMzFBq0ab9wSPniXEkp&v=cER OJvmM5C8&feature=emb_rel_end

1.2. How to layout your course on Moodle

When setting up online courses for Virtual Mobility students, they very first attention should be given to how your courses will appear on Moodle to your students resp. how they will see your course. By watching the next video tutorial, you will learn about the options available for setting up the visual appearance of your courses, such as course name, start and end date of the course, course description, course image, course format and many other interesting options.


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gw0R_j803cI&feature=emb_rel_end

Of course, it is up to you, which options you will make use of. When making layout of your course, think of your target audience - international students – for whom you are designing the course. It is very important to layout a course in a way that facilitates an easy and friendly navigation through it.

1.3. How to upload files on Moodle

When creating your course, you will have to produce different learning materials and to make them available on Moodle for your students.
The most typical files are word-processed documents or slideshow presentations. Basically, these materials can be displayed on the Moodle page either as individual documents or bundled together inside folders. One teacher might, for example, want to share a single document in pdf format. Another might have a folder for students to download. By watching the next video, you will learn how to upload your files using the Moodle option **"Add an activity or resource".**
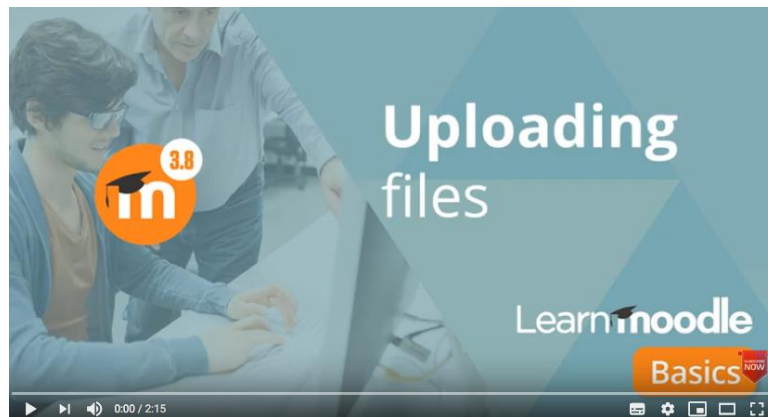
1.4. How to enrol learners to the course

The last basic function of Moodle you should be able to master and which we show here, is how to add your learners to your course. It is to differentiate between learners registered on Moodle, and learners enrolled in any course. In the first step, students will be registered on Moodle in line with institutional policies. In the second step, they should be enrolled to a course they are registered for.

There are many ways to enrol students to a course, for example, Moodle administrator can do it for your or students can enrol themselves into a course. By watching the video below, you will learn how you can **manually add students to your course.**

2. Creation of individual learning activities on Moodle

Moodle offers numerous options for creating engaging learning tasks for students that can promote both individual and collaborative learning. Within this chapter, we will present a few opportunities of Moodle that can be used by teachers in order to support individual learning of Virtual Mobility students.

2.1. Lesson activity – Adaptive Learning

A relevant Moodle's tool for designing interactive learning contents is **Lesson activity**. The main feature of Lesson activity is its **adaptive ability**. This means, each answer provided by a student within this activity can be commented by a different response of a teacher (depending on student's response), and then sent to a student to a different page in the lesson. The task of a teacher when planning this activity is therefore to design the content and questions in a way so that no further action is required by a teacher.

Moodle's lesson activity might be perfectly used for decision-making exercises, simulations, autonomous revision, and subject practice. Students can choose their own path through the contents. In this way, Lesson activity greatly supports individual learning.

Watch the video tutorial below and learn how to design Lesson activity:


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEPGNaXZNSI

2.2. Assignment activity

With the Moodle option Assignment, a teacher can create and communicate an online task to students, collect their works and provide feedback and grades. The task can be submitted by students, for example, as Word files, audio or video clips.

Teacher can provide different feedback on student's assignments, such as leaving comments, uploading marked-up files. Grading may be by percentages or custom scales.
Assignment can be used for both, individual students and student groups.

Learn how to create Assignments by watching the video tutorial below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txZkB-5nlx8
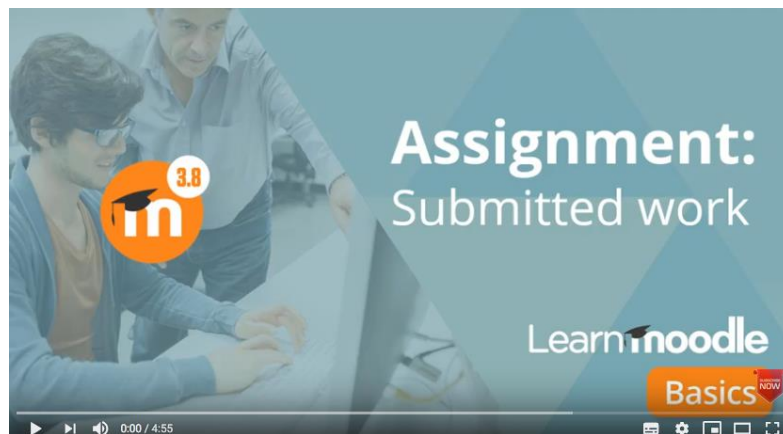
3. Creation of collaborative learning tasks on Moodle

Collaborative learning plays a significant role in todays' education as it promotes relevant transversal competences of students, such as teamwork, leadership, ownership but also helps achieve specific pedagogical goals. In the scope of this chapter, we will demonstrate a few Moodle features towards designing and delivering collaborative learning scenarios.

3.1. Forum activity

If you want to promote collaborative work among your international students, the Forum activity might be a relevant option for you. The forum allows students and teachers to exchange ideas by posting comments on a specified topic in an asynchronous mode. Images and media might be added to forum posts, too.

The Forum can be perfectly used by teachers for **assessment purposes** meaning that teacher can grade forum posts of students. In this way, students' motivation to participate to Forum activities will increase.

Finally, Forum can greatly support **peer learning**: teacher can create a scenario where students get a task to rate posts of each other.

Watch the video tutorial and learn how to set up and manage your Forum activity:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZyVRfbav6g
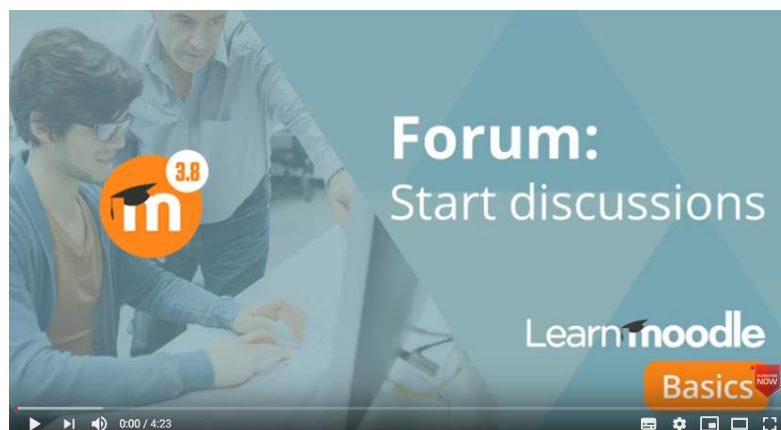
3.2. Glossary activity

Another tool to promote collaboration among international students is Glossary. The Glossary activity allows students to jointly elaborate and manage a list of definitions on a topic

suggested by a teacher, like a dictionary. In this way, the knowledge of students will be collaboratively created.

Of course, you can also provide grades on students' entries to the Glossary or let students to rate the entries of each other, like in Forum.

Learn how to set up a Glossary activity by watching this video tutorial:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRwpD6YDNk8

3.3. Wiki activity

The next powerful tool for collaborative work in Moodle is Wiki. The most of us already know Wikipedia source as a collection of collaboratively authored web documents. In principle, a wiki page is a web page on which everyone can work together. Each author can add other pages to the wiki by creating a link to a page that doesn't exist yet.

In Moodle, your students can edit a document together and create a collaborative output, too. You can use Wiki, for instance, for doing a small-scale research project, or writing a collective essay. Or each student can have their own wiki that is visible only to them and their teacher. You can decide, which option fits best your pedagogical scenario.

By watching the video tutorial below, you will learn how to create the Wiki activity on Moodle:

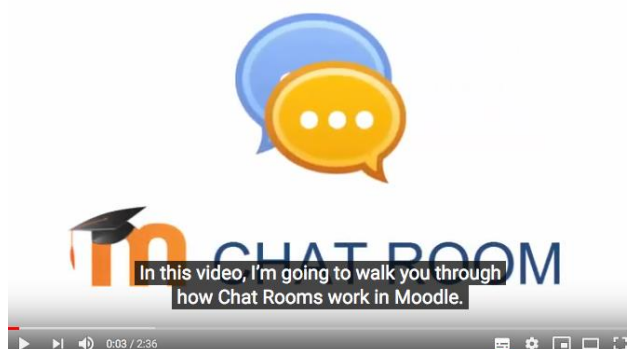https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dO71VQj0gtY
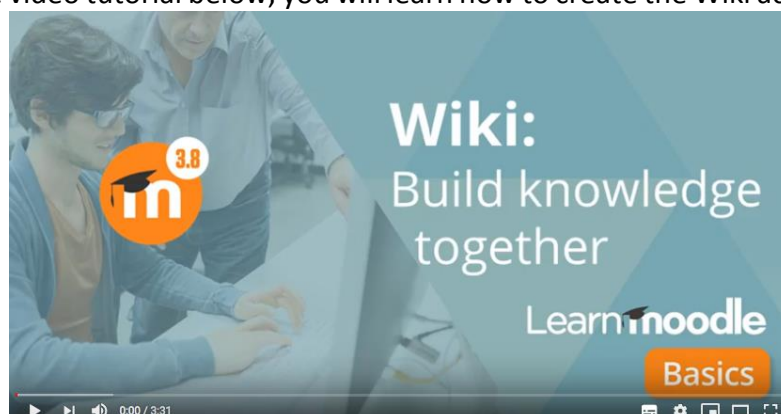
3.4. Chat activity

Whilst the above-mentioned Moodle activities for promoting collaboration (Forum, Glossary, Wiki) fit pedagogical scenarios in asynchronous mode, Chat activity is typically used to support **real-time** communication and discussions out of classroom. Chats might be very useful for Virtual Mobility students who are not able to meet face-to-face but want to exchange about their course experience with classmates and with a teacher, to clarify any specific question, or to catch up with their work. It is a good opportunity for getting together and creating a feeling of a living community.

In a newer Moodle versions, the Chat conversation is not only text-based but can also be muted.

Watch the video tutorial below and learn how to set up the Chat Activity:

In this video, I'm going to walk you through how Chat Rooms work in Moodle.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmNwz2sbfY4&t=7s

3.5. Workshop activity

The Workshop Activity can be recommended to teachers who wish to organize **collaborative work through peer assessment**. This tool envisages several phases: first, a student receives an assignment from teacher and submits his/her own work. Then a student receives a number of submissions from other students which he/she must assess based on the criteria elaborated by a teacher. A scenario is also possible where teacher lets a student to assess his/her own work.

The grading strategy for the Workshop Activity is typically the following: a student obtains a grade for his/her own submission and a grade for the quality of the demonstrated peer assessment skills.

Workshop is considered a student-focused activity. However, a teacher plays an important role when realizing Workshop. For instance, teacher can act as a guide by providing example submissions for students to try out prior to assessing their peers. Or at the end of the workshop, a teacher may publish some examples of peer assessment.

We recommend consulting this page for learning more about the Workshop activity:
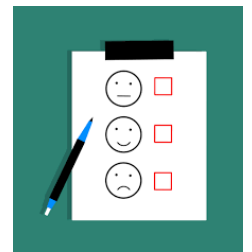
https://docs.moodle.org/39/en/Using_Workshop

In addition, watch the video tutorial below that will help you manage technical settings for your individual Workshop activity:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spPxDmPOjyQ&t=1s

4. Feedback and assessment on Moodle

Most of you will work remotely with international students for the first time. Therefore, you need to constantly get an overview about students' general performance and perception of classes suggested in order to improve your own teaching strategy and quality of your course. Moodle has a few tools to support you when assessing and getting feedback from students.

4.1. Choice activity

Choice activity can be understood as students' voting. Choice might help you to quickly collect students' feedback on any **single question**. For instance, their current understanding of a course topic, or short confirmation on attending a course, or agreement with suggested course conditions. A side-effect is stimulation of students' thinking about a topic.

When collecting students' feedback via the Choice activity, only teacher will see their responses meaning that the feedback is not public. There is an option to update students' responses so that teacher can monitor their understanding and therefore, to adapt teaching strategy accordingly.

By watching the tutorial below, you will learn how to set up the Choice Activity:
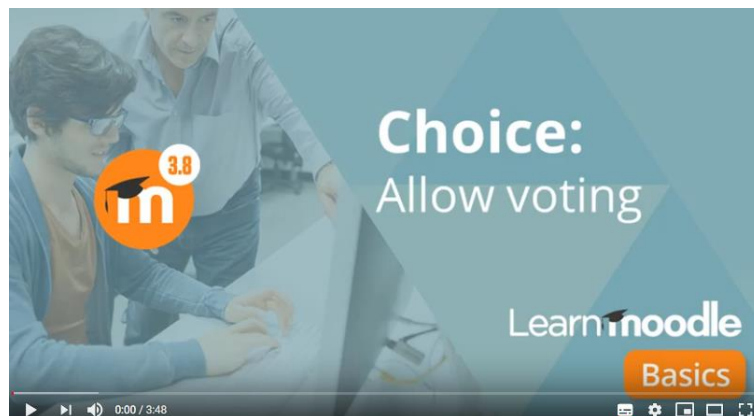
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHAIe_mkiMs

4.2. Feedback Activity

If you want to conduct a course evaluation and get students' responses on, for instance, quality of your teaching and of applied tools, the Feedback Activity might be very helpful. It allows you to generate and conduct surveys. You can create your own questions and thus ask for specific questions you want to get response on.

Unlike the above-mentioned Choice activity that aims at getting an immediate response on a single topic and serves rather as monitoring tool, Feedback activity enables you to conduct a more detailed and targeted custom survey for **evaluation purposes.**

Learn more about the Feedback Activity by watching the next video tutorial:

4.3. Quiz – automatic grading

Quiz is a very popular tool for a brief online assessment. Within asynchronous online studies, Quiz might motivate students to complete exercises and improve learner's performance.

The Quiz activity on Moodle is a very powerful tool that allows teachers to create different types of quizzes and assess learners formatively (during a course) and summatively (upon finishing a course). The typical feature of Quiz is **providing grades** for students' answers. Quizzes can be composed of a large variety of question types, such as multiple choice, true-false, short answer and drag and drop images and text.

By watching the video tutorial below, you will learn how to design and build your own Quiz on Moodle.

Summary

Within this Guide, we demonstrated a number of Moodle features that might support teachers in designing and delivering engaging individual and collaborative online learning activities to international students as well as in conducting monitoring and assessment. As you should have noticed, we primarily focused on the pedagogical value of diverse Moodle tools – how can they enhance teaching strategy towards achieving specific pedagogical goals set. Based on our understanding, it is first important to realize, which situations a teacher might face when working with Virtual Mobility students, which competences of learners should be promoted for their successful studies, and how online learning can provide a pleasant learning experience. After that, the technical implementation of a designed scenario will be much more targeted.

As mentioned at the beginning, it is hardly possible to present each activity and option on Moodle. With this Guide, we provided a few examples of tools that might be used by Virtual Mobility teachers when mastering their online courses. In addition, we would encourage teachers to try further Moodle activities and resources on their own. The following webpage might be of help when discovering related Moodle features: https://docs.moodle.org/39/en/Activities

In case of need, you can still contact the central MOVIDIS office for support at the following address: movidis.contact@univ-cotedazur.fr

We wish you a lot of fun and success with your Moodle courses!

Sincerely yours
MOVIDIS team