



Moodle Training Overview

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Overview of Moodle:

1. What is a Moodle LMS ? - Learning Management System (LMS), Open Source, Australian Made, used around the world, translated into 75 languages and used in 175 countries, around 41,670 known Moodle sites around the world, 18.9 million users, and growing fast. Largest Learning Management System in New Zealand, even the NZ Taxation Office using it. Read more about moodle stats <http://moodle.org/stats/>
2. Why use Moodle? - simple to use, simple to learn and very useful for pulling together resources online for students, no licensing fees.
3. How big can Moodle sites get? 83 sites with over 20,000 users.
4. Google Summer Coders are assigned to work with Moodle on specific projects.
5. Microsoft paid Moodle to integrate the system to work natively on Windows Servers.

www.moodle.org - a great site, fantastic community and lots of information about Moodle.

Look and feel of Moodle:

Moodle is quite structured in the way it is built. It is clean, simple and efficient. Each course is structured similarly but with subtle differences which can be created by each teacher.

A theme is usually developed while the site is being built and this is then used throughout the site. Users can select their own themes if you allow them (I usually don't).

A few example Moodle sites

Wipe Out Waste - <http://www.wow.sa.gov.au> (flash splash page)

Work Green - <http://workgreen.com.au>

Tabor College - <http://www.taboronline.com.au>

Wallace Web Design and Development - <http://moodle.wwdad.com.au>

Notice there is always a banner, a content area, blocks on either side of the content, as well as a footer where the user information usually sits. The blocks can easily be changed.

The administrator / teacher will have additional blocks for other functions as well.

Structure of a Moodle Site

Moodle is built using different levels of Content, similar to year levels and subjects within schools.

1. **Categories** – similar to year levels at school; year 8, year 9, year 10, etc.
 - a. **Sub Categories** – similar to different classes within the same year level, ie year 8 teacher Mrs Smith, year 8 teacher Mr Brown etc
2. **Courses** – Similar to subjects within year levels; year 8 English, year 8 Science, year 8 IT, etc.
3. **Topics / weeks** – Similar to weeks of the school semester; week 1, week 2, week 3, etc. Often in the VET sector we use topics so that students can work ahead if they would like, or can catch up on previous weeks if they have missed out on them, or if they need to review them for any reason.

Roles within Moodle:

Moodle has a number of roles or levels that users can be given. The administrators of the site are able to make up new roles if required. The core roles within Moodle are;

1. **Administrators** – can do anything and make others administrators,
2. **Creators** – can create courses, add users, but not make others administrators,
3. **Teachers** – can develop content within courses and manage students,
4. **Students** – can participate in courses,
5. **Guests** – access parts of the site, depending upon the access given by the creators of the site.

Roles can be either given on a global level, across the whole site, or to a particular course.

Structure of a Moodle Course (this is where it all happens)

Most of the learning content is put within the courses within Moodle. As a teacher, creator or administrator of a course you will be able to edit content within courses.

Content Area:

This is the content in the middle of the page, and depending upon the way you have set your course up will either have a

- number of weeks with dates, or
- a number of topics.

This is where the content of your course is placed. You can add text, images, links etc within the beginning of each topic, and then add Resources and Activities to the topic to enhance the learning of the user.

Resources (giving users the knowledge)

Resources are used within Moodle to give users information / knowledge about the particular learning outcome. The different types of resources by default are;

- Text page
- HTML page
- Files and web pages
- Directory
- Label
- IMS Content

These can be used very efficiently so that the front page of the course is not clogged up with content etc.

Activities (applying the knowledge)

Activities are used in conjunction with the resources to give users the chance to apply their learning and hopefully embed it to a greater extent than by not applying it in a practical sense. This will depend upon your learners' learning style as well as the way the facilitator is comfortable delivering.

I taught Vocational Preparation Students at TAFE, and due to their low IT skills as well as literacy skills, I used many "Fun" activities to engage them, such as the Workcover Hotel site.

http://www.safework.sa.gov.au/show_page.jsp?id=6421

Activity Modules

Assignments

Assignments allow the teacher to specify a task that requires students to prepare digital content (any format) and submit it by uploading it to the server. Typical assignments include essays, projects, reports and so on. This module includes grading facilities.

Books

Book is a simple multipage study material

Chats

The Chat module allows participants to have a real-time synchronous discussion via the web. This is a useful way to get a different understanding of each other and the topic being discussed - the mode of using a chat room is quite different from the asynchronous forums. The Chat module contains a number of features for managing and reviewing chat discussions.

Choices

A choice activity is very simple - the teacher asks a question and specifies a choice of multiple responses. It can be useful as a quick poll to stimulate thinking about a topic; to allow the class to vote on a direction for the course; or to gather research consent.

Database Activity

The Database module allows the teacher and/or students to build, display and search a bank of record entries about any conceivable topic. The format and structure of these entries can be almost unlimited, including images, files, URLs, numbers and text amongst other things. You may be familiar with similar technology from building Microsoft Access or Filemaker databases.

Exercise

An Exercise is a simple but powerful assignment. In an exercise the teacher asks the students to do a piece of practical work. It could be writing an essay or a report, preparing a presentation, etc. When the student has done the task they must first self-assess their work before submitting it to the teacher. Once submitted the teacher assesses the piece of work itself. The teacher can give feedback to the student and ask the student to improve the work and re-submit it or not. The final grade is based on how well the student assessed their own work and the work itself.

Forums

This activity can be the most important - it is here that most discussion takes place. Forums can be structured in different ways, and can include peer rating of each posting. The postings can be viewed in a variety of formats, and can include attachments. By subscribing to a forum, participants will receive copies of each new posting in their email. A teacher can impose subscription on everyone if they want to.

Glossary



This activity allows participants to create and maintain a list of definitions, like a dictionary.

The entries can be searched or browsed in many different formats.

The glossary also allows teachers to export entries from one glossary to another (the main one) within the same course.

Finally, it is possible to automatically create links to these entries from throughout the course.



Hot Potatoes

This module, the "HotPot" module, allows teachers to administer [Hot Potatoes](#) quizzes via Moodle. The quizzes are created on the teacher's computer and then uploaded to the Moodle course.

After students have attempted the quizzes, a number of reports are available which show how individual questions were answered and some statistical trends in the scores.



Journals

This module is a very important reflective activity. The teacher asks the student to reflect on a particular topic, and the student can edit and refine their answer over time. This answer is private and can only be seen by the teacher, who can offer feedback and a grade on each journal entry. It's usually a good idea to have about one Journal activity per week.



Labels

This is not a true activity - it is a "dummy" activity that allows you to insert text and graphics among the other activities on the course page.



Lesson

A lesson delivers content in an interesting and flexible way. It consists of a number of pages. Each page normally ends with a question and a number of possible answers. Depending on the student's choice of answer they either progress to the next page or are taken back to a previous page. Navigation through the lesson can be straight forward or complex, depending largely on the structure of the material being presented.

Quizzes

This module allows the teacher to design and set quiz tests, consisting of multiple choice, true-false, and short answer questions. These questions are kept in a categorised database, and can be re-used within courses and even between courses. Quizzes can allow multiple attempts. Each attempt is automatically marked, and the teacher can choose whether to give feedback or to show correct answers. This module includes grading facilities.

Resources

Resources are content: information the teacher wants to bring into the course. These can be prepared files uploaded to the course server; pages edited directly in Moodle; or external web pages made to appear part of this course.

SCORM/AICC Packages

A package is a bundle of web content packaged in a way that follows the SCORM or the AICC standard for learning objects. These packages can include web pages, graphics, Javascript programs, Flash presentations and anything else that works in web browsers. The Package module allows you to easily upload any standard SCORM or AICC package and make it part of your course.

Surveys

The Survey module provides a number of verified survey instruments that have been found useful in assessing and stimulating learning in online environments. Teachers can use these to gather data from their students that will help them learn about their class and reflect on their own teaching.

Wikis

A Wiki enables documents to be authored collectively in a simple markup language using a web browser.

"Wiki wiki" means "super fast" in the Hawaiian language, and it is the speed of creating and updating pages that is one of the defining aspects of wiki technology. Generally, there is no prior review before modifications are accepted, and most wikis are open to the general public or at least to all persons who also have access to the wiki server.