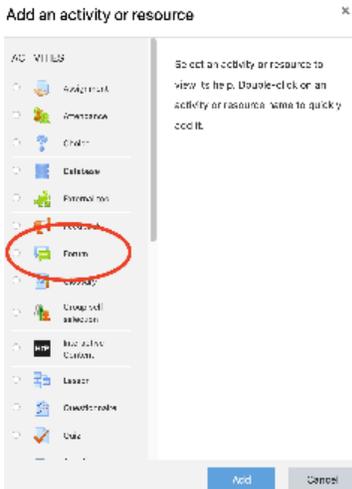# Discussion Forums

The **Forum** activity provides opportunities for asynchronous communication in a course. Forums can be useful for organizing online discussions and providing a collaborative space for students. On this page, you'll find the steps to create a forum in AsULearn.

Step-by-step guide

1. From your course page click the **gear** icon (top right) and select **Turn editing on** from the menu.

2. In a topic section click the **+Add an activity or resource** link.

3. Click on the **Forum** activity in the list, then click **Add** at the bottom of the popup.

4. Enter the (required) **Forum name** and (optional) **Description**.

5. Modify settings in the sections that follow (see below), then click one of the **Save** buttons at the bottom.

6. From your course page click the **gear** icon (top right) menu and select **Turn editing off**.

The **Forum settings screen** can be opened from the Edit menu for the Forum when editing is turned on for the course (step 1 above).

Forum activity settings

Enter a **Forum name**. This is the title of the link that will appear on the course main page.

Enter a **Description** for your forum. Include the directions and expectations for this forum activity. This description will also display with the Forum if you click **Display description on course page**.

Select your forum type. There are five types of forums:

- **A single simple discussion** - A single topic discussion developed on one page, which is useful for short focused discussions (cannot be used with separate groups).
- **Each person posts one discussion** - Each person can post exactly one new discussion topic (everyone can reply to them); this is useful when you want each student to start a discussion about something like *Reflection on the week's topic*, and everyone else responds to one reflection of their choosing.
- **Q and A forum** - Instead of initiating discussions, teachers pose a question in the initial post of a discussion. Students reply to the post with an answer, but they will not see the replies of other students to the question in that discussion until 15 minutes after they have themselves replied to the same discussion.
- **Standard forum displayed in a blog-like format** - The first few lines of an entry are displayed, with the newest entries displayed first.
- **Standard forum for general use** - An open forum discussion where anyone can start a new topic at any time; this is the best general-purpose forum. This is the most popular and may be the easiest to begin using.

> ⓘ Click the arrow to the left of the title for the settings section to toggle expanding the display; or click **Expand all** in the top right to open all sections. See the blue question marks ❓ on the settings screen for explanations of settings not covered here.

Availability

- **Due Date** - Although this date is the one that appears in the calendar, it only identifies the desired deadline. Students can still post after this date.
- **Cut Off Date** - It is no longer possible to add posts to the forum, after this date.

Attachments and word count

Teachers can specify the maximum file size for attachments, the number of attachments possible with a single post, and if a word count will display.

Subscription and tracking

Subscribing to a Forum sends an email to the user whenever there is a post. Click the **Subscription mode** dropdown to select:

- **Optional subscription** - Participants can choose whether to be subscribed. Select this option if you do not want an email every time someone makes a post.
- **Forced subscription** - Everyone is subscribed and cannot unsubscribe.
- **Auto subscription** - Everyone is subscribed initially but can choose to unsubscribe at any time.
- **Subscription disabled** - Subscriptions are not allowed.

NOTE: Changing the **Subscription mode** will only affect users who enroll in the course in the future, and not existing users.

When **Read tracking** is enabled, participants can track messages that are read and unread in the forum and in discussions, as unread posts remain highlighted.

[Turnitin plagiarism plugin](#) settings

Enable Turnitin (select **Yes**) for the plugin to evaluate students' posts.

Whole forum grading

When enabled, this setting allows teachers to score forum participation in the [Gradebook](#). Advanced grading methods such as rubrics and grading guides may also be used by selecting different Grading Methods.

NOTE: If using whole forum grading, scores will be recorded to the Gradebook, but if rubrics or grading are used, students must click the **View grades** button in the overall forum, not a specific post, to view the grades.

Ratings

The ratings feature existed before the **Whole forum grading** option was available. Ratings is not as robust a tool for grading.

Common module settings

Specify Availability (**Show** or **Hide from students**) and Group settings.

Private replies option

Within a forum, teachers can make private replies to students. After clicking reply to a post, simply click the reply privately checkbox below the message window.

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- Course: Backup
- Course: Fix Broken Page Display
- Course: Import
- Course: Restore from a Backup
- Course: View as Generic Student will see it
- Course: View as Specific Student will see it
- Course: Visibility
- Designing for the AsULearn Mobile App
- Discussion Forums
- Email Students in Your Class
- Google share link for documents (e.g., your Syllabus)
- Gradebook
- Gradebook: Export
- Gradebook: Import Grades
- Gradebook: Simple Weighted Mean of Grades
- Gradebook: Single View tab for Overrides

- Gradebook: Sum Points (Natural)
- Gradebook: Visibility in AsULearn for students
- Gradebook: Weighted Mean of Grades (Percentages)
- Groups: Create user groups and groupings in a course
- Groups: Messaging
- Hypothesis: Annotate Online
- Incompletes
- Link to a Website
- Menus: Drawer and Gear
- Metacourse: Combine courses
- Metacourse: Metagroup sync
- Panopto: AsULearn Integration
- Participants: Add to Course (Enrolling a User)
- Participants: Importing into a committee or workgroup course
- Questionnaire
- Quiz - Aiken Format
- Quiz: Add Questions
- Quiz: Create a Question Bank
- Quiz: Creating a Quiz
- Quiz: Download Essay Submissions
- Quiz: Overrides
- Quiz: Respondus LockDown Browser and Monitor
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