

Course Teaching CHECKLIST

When you start teaching on-line for the first time in a new learning environment, it can sometimes be hard to keep track of all the items you need to check before you start teaching the course. This checklist is intended to help you out. It focuses on different elements to check:

- [The Course](#)
- [The Students](#)
- [Other Teachers](#)
- [The Course Materials](#)

A: The Course

So you have a course with course materials, assignments and other activities. What to do before starting your course?

1. Check that your course has a **timetable** that tells students what they are expected to do and when. If you do not have a timetable, add one, preferably as an editable resource page (so you can update it).
2. Do the **deadlines** on your assignments, lessons, quizzes and workshops correspond with your timetable? If not, set them. (Note that the deadlines of these tools appear automatically in the Calendar.)
3. Add **Calendar** messages for other deadlines, like in the case of forum discussion assignments, and for pre-planned off-line events, like contact classes, excursions, etc.
4. Check your **Course Settings**:
 - a. Are the course title and category correct? Is the description applicable?
 - b. Is the course start date correct?
 - c. Is the enrollment period correct?
 - d. Does the number of topics/weeks reflect your need? If you need more, choose the correct number, if you have too many topics choose a lower number (or hide the superfluous ones from student view)
 - e. Do you intend to separate your students into groups? If not make sure "No Groups" is selected. Otherwise select the default group type (visible or separate groups)
 - f. Is your course available to students? (If the course is unavailable students cannot enter (if they are enrolled) and they cannot enroll themselves (because it is hidden from their view if they are not already enrolled)
 - g. Choose a new enrolment keyword (that keeps out unwanted visitors from the course)
 - h. Check the maximum upload size (for a normal course 5 to 8 Mb is more than enough; only in case of a course containing very large sound or video files should the upload size be raised)
 - i. The "Show activity reports" setting should remain at "No"
 - j. Make sure the words for teachers and students are correctly defined.
 - k. In case of an advanced language course set the correct language of the course interface.
 - l. If you prefer another colour theme for your course than the (4 seasons) site theme, select one from the list.
5. Check your **News and Announcements forum** to see whether everybody is subscribed (so that messages posted there will be sent to all course users) and delete old/obsolete messages, if any.
6. Go through your **course materials/activities** and hide the ones you will not be using. Quizzes can remain hidden until they are needed and the same goes for discussion assignments (if you wish to avoid that students post messages there by mistake before the actual start of the

assignment). (Note that the Calendar listings of deadlines for hidden activities are invisible too. Likewise in the gradebook; hidden activities are invisible to students).




B: The Students

1. Are any **student IDs already enrolled** in the course (e.g. test students or old students from a previous run of the course)? If so, remove them. Note that unenrolling a student removes all the student's Assignment and Journal entries from the course, but not their contributions to glossaries or forums!
2. Do your **students have Moodle IDs**? If not, send the list of student numbers, first and last names, and e-mail addresses to eOK (well in advance). If you add the course short (code) name to the messages, students can be loaded automatically into your course by eOK.
3. If your students already have Moodle IDs, are they already enrolled in the course? (Check students or participants overview). If they are, they have access to the course (provided the start date has passed and the course is available to students, see settings). If not you have to enter the students into the course:
 - a. You can have the **students enroll themselves**, by giving them the enrolment key word and instructing them to select your course from the list and give the keyword when prompted for it (this only works if the start date has passed and the course is available to students, see settings). Change the enrollment key word in the course settings after all students have enrolled themselves (to avoid strangers enrolling themselves if the students give the keyword to unauthorized persons).
 - b. You can **manually enroll** each student on the Students page (all you need is the name list (see the instructions in the teacher manual). You can enroll students manually even before the course start date and while the course is unavailable to students.
4. Once the students are enrolled it is a good idea to **write a welcome message** in the News and announcements forum, so that the students will receive the announcement of the start of the course in their e-mail (provided their e-mail address is correct!).
5. Do instruct the **students to check, correct and complete their personal profile** (Edit Profile in the People box), particularly if their Moodle IDs have been newly created. It is **especially important** that their e-mail address is correct.
6. Before the course starts **check** the students in the course against a **student list** you have to make sure everybody is enrolled (manually enroll missing students and manually remove unauthorized or old students, if you had not done so already).
7. Remember that **inactive student IDs** will be automatically removed from a Moodle course after 120 days!
8. If you intend to use **groups** in your teaching, make sure the preferred group type is set in the course settings and then go to the Groups selector (in the People box) and create the groups you need and add students to each group. (Do not include yourself in any group).

C: Other Teachers

1. Are there any **other teachers** in the course and do they need to have access while you are teaching? As teacher in your course, you are able to enter other teachers into your course, in much the same way as with students. When you do so, define whether they should have editing rights (so that they are able to make changes in the course materials/tools), or whether they are only observers (in which case you turn the edit access to No). You can remove other teachers from your course too or hide them from student view if they play no role in the teaching process.
2. Also, if the other teachers are assigned to a **specific group** of students, add them to that group with the Groups tool (in the People box). Note that this may influence their access to certain tools!

D: The Course Materials

1. If you have **groups** in your course, turn editing on and run past the Tools and Activities in your course and set the group type per activity. If you followed this manual, then the default type should be “no groups”  and you can change that into “visible groups”  or “separate groups”  for those tools, in which the students need to work as groups, e.g. the Wiki tool. (Note that you can change the group setting at any time during the run of your course, allowing your students to work together privately before revealing their work to the other groups)
2. What if you discover an **error** in your course materials or if you want to add an activity?
 - a. As long as you have editing power in a course, as a teacher, you are able to add, edit and hide/remove activity tools in a Moodle course. (So it is possible to build a course while you are teaching.) However, it is not advisable to make drastic changes to graded activities, as students will most likely not appreciate that. Also changing the grading scale of an activity in the middle of a course could lead to confusion.
 - b. Correcting errors in your course materials, or adding illustrations, normally can't hurt.
3. Is there any course material in your course that requires more than a browser to be accessed?
 - a. **Sound files** require a player (Flash player for MP3 files, Windows Media Player or QuickTime for other formats).
 - b. **Video files** require a video player (QuickTime is preferred, otherwise Windows Media Player or Winamp. Real player had better be avoided). Note that video files take up a lot of bandwidth!
 - c. For **Flash files** a Flash player is required.
 - d. For **PDF files** the Acrobat Reader is necessary
 - e. MS Office (or Open Office) programs are required to read most **MS Office formats** (like .ppt, .doc and .xls), but you may assume that those programs are available in all user machines.

If any **special programs** are required, the students should be notified of it!

When you have gone through this checklist, you can start your course with a good deal of confidence that it will get off to a successful start.