

Organizing Learners Using Groups

Moodle **groups** allow instructors to assign learners to one or more groups. Groups can be set at the course or activity levels.

Using groups allows the instructor to:

- completely isolate groups of learners from each other
- partially separate groups, where one group can see other groups and each groups' activity, but not interact with the other group(s)
- identify each group with an icon.

The **Forced** groups feature in the course settings can allow different classes and their instructors to take the same course asynchronously without creating a "new" course.

It is not pressing for instructors in the blended LINC scheme to use groups, as the learners are in daily contact with each other and with the instructor. However, using groups may be relevant to project tasks.

You can assign tutors and learners to one or more groups within a course. Groups are defined at course level and the group mode is then set for each activity as **No groups**, **Visible groups** or **Separate groups**. For some activities, such as forums and wikis, setting the group will restrict interaction within the activity. For other activities, such as assignments and quizzes, setting the group allows tutors to filter results. To hide resources or activities from all those not in particular groups of learners, use **Groupings**.

Group levels

There are two levels of groups:

1. **Course level** - The group mode defined at the course level is the default mode for all activities defined within that course. To use groups, a group mode must first be set up in Settings>Course administration>Edit settings.
2. **Activity level** - Each activity that supports groups can also have its own group mode defined. If the course setting **Force groups** mode is set to **Yes**, the option to define the group mode for individual activities is not available. If it is set to **No**, the instructor may change the group mode.

Group modes

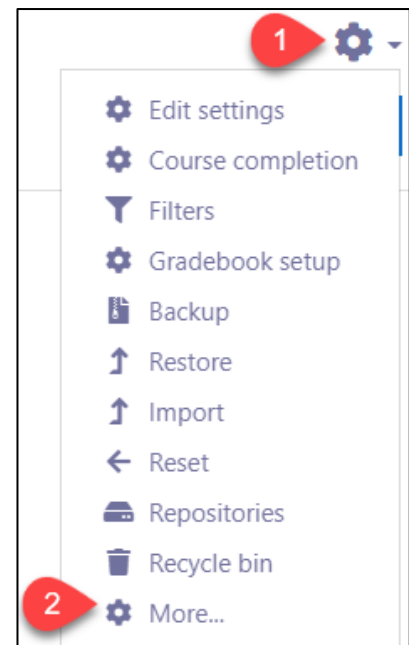
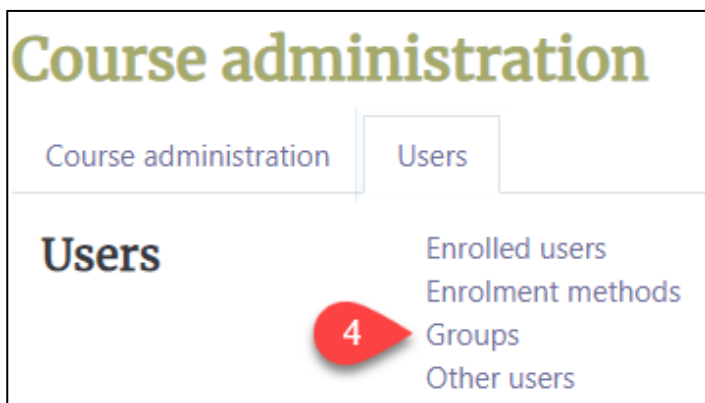
There are three modes of groups:

1. **No groups** - There are no subgroups; all learners are part of one big community
2. **Separate groups** - Each group can see only their own group; others are invisible
3. **Visible groups** - Each group works in their own group but can also see other groups. Note that the other groups' work is read-only to those outside the group.

Adding groups to a course

Learners and staff can be added to groups in Moodle either automatically, if large groups are needed, or manually, if only small groups need to be created.

1. On the course, click on the **Actions menu** icon.
2. Click on the **More...** option in the drop-down menu.
3. On the **Course administration** screen, click on the **Users** tab.
4. In the **Users** section, Click on the **Groups** link.



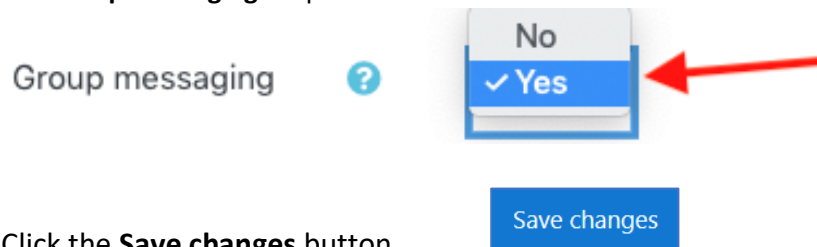
5. Click the **Create group** button on the **Groups** Page.
6. A Groups form appears, type in the **Group name**.

Create group

7. Type a **Group description** (optional).

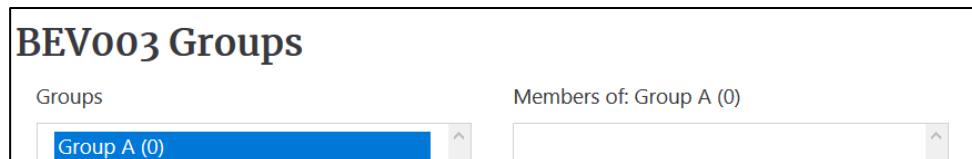
Note: LINC courseware users do not need to use the group enrolment key. This key allows users into a course and automatically makes them a member of this group.

8. If you want to be able to send a message to group members from your **Messaging drawer**, select **Yes** in the **Group messaging** dropdown menu.



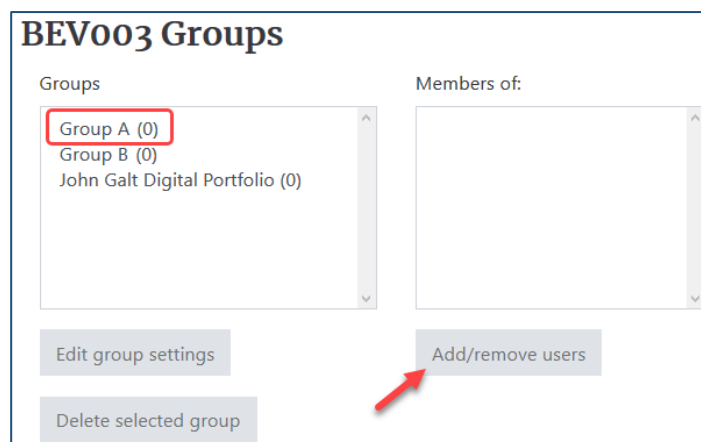
9. Click the **Save changes** button.

The group should now appear on the **Groups** page. The number in brackets after the group name displays the number of group members.



Adding students to a group manually

1. Go to the **Groups** page. (see steps 1 to 4 in section **Adding groups to a course**)
2. Select the **name** of group to which the learners should be added in the box under **Groups**.
3. Click on the **Add/remove users** button.



The names of **course participants** are displayed.

Add/remove users: Group A

Group A ⚙️

This group is for

Group members

Potential members

Selected user's membership:

None

→ Add

Remove →

Student (4)

Ahmed Ali (ahmedali@fakemail.ca) (1)

Lee Chan (leechan@fakemail.ca) (1)

Eduardo Garcia (Eduardogarcia@fakemail.ca) (1)

Maria Gupteز (mariaguptez@fakemail.ca) (1)

Teacher (1)

Beverly Davis (beverlydavis@fakemail.ca) (0)

Search Clear

Search Clear

Search options ▶

- Click the names of the participants to be added to the group under **Potential members**. Use [CTRL] + click (for Windows) or [CMD] + click (for Mac) to select multiple users.

Potential members

→ Add

Remove →

Student (4)

Ahmed Ali (ahmedali@fakemail.ca) (1)

Lee Chan (leechan@fakemail.ca) (1)

Eduardo Garcia (Eduardogarcia@fakemail.ca) (1)

Maria Gupteز (mariaguptez@fakemail.ca) (1)

Teacher (1)

Beverly Davis (beverlydavis@fakemail.ca) (0)

- Click the **Add** button. If there are a large number of course participants, use the **Search** text box at the bottom to find, select and add the learner. You can search by name or email.

- Once the task of adding people to the group is completed, click the **Back to groups** button or navigate elsewhere. There is no need to save.

Group members

Teacher (1)
Beverly Davis (beverlydavis@fakemail.ca)

Student (2)
Eduardo Garcia (Eduardogarcia@fakemail.ca)
Maria Guptez (mariaguptez@fakemail.ca)

Search Clear

Search options ▶

Back to groups

Auto-creating groups with learners assigned automatically

To create groups automatically with learners assigned randomly to each group:

- Go to the **Groups** page. (see steps 1 to 4 in section **Adding groups to a course**)
- Click the **Auto-create groups** button in the **Groups** page.

Auto-create groups

- Enter a group **Naming scheme**. Group # will generate Group 1, Group 2, Group 3 etc. **Group @** will generate Group A, Group B, Group C etc.
- Set **Auto create based on** either the **Number of groups** or the number of **Members per group**.

Auto-create groups

General

Naming scheme

Auto create based on

5. Enter the **Group/member count** and choose if you want members to be able to send each other messages.

Group/member count

Group messaging

6. To determine which course roles group members will be added, choose roles from the **Select members with role** menu.
7. Select **Randomly** in the **Allocate members** drop-down menu to assign members of groups randomly. You can also choose the other options if needed.

▼ **Group members**

Select members with role

Allocate members

Randomly

No allocation

Randomly

Alphabetically by first name, last name

Alphabetically by last name, first name

Alphabetically by ID number

8. Clicking on **Prevent last small group** will allocate additional members to an existing group instead of adding a new group with very few members.

▼ **Group members**

Select members with role

Select members from grouping

Select members from group

Allocate members

Prevent last small group

Ignore users in groups

Include only active enrolments ?

- Click the **Preview** button to preview group allocation.

Groups (2)	Group members	User count
Group A	Beverly Davis, Eduardo Garcia, Maria Guptez	3
Group B	Ahmed Ali, Lee Chan, f [REDACTED]	3

- Review the distribution of group members. You can change the settings and click **Preview** again as needed.
- Click the **Submit** button when the group allocation is satisfactory.

Setting the group mode to change activity behaviour

Activities will behave differently depending on the group mode chosen. For example, using groups will allow instructors to filter assignments or restrict with whom learners work in forums and wikis.

- On the homepage, click the **Turn editing on** button.
- Identify an activity in the course and click on its **Edit** link.
- Click on the **Edit settings** in the drop-down menu.



- Scroll down the **Settings** page and under **Common module settings**, choose the appropriate group mode from the drop-down list.

▼ **Common module settings**

Availability

ID number

Group mode

Grouping

- No groups
- Separate groups
- Visible groups
- Add group/grouping access restriction

Adding students to a group in the Participants window

Note: In this example, it is assumed that there are two course groups previous set up.

Groups


- Group A (0)
- Group B (0)

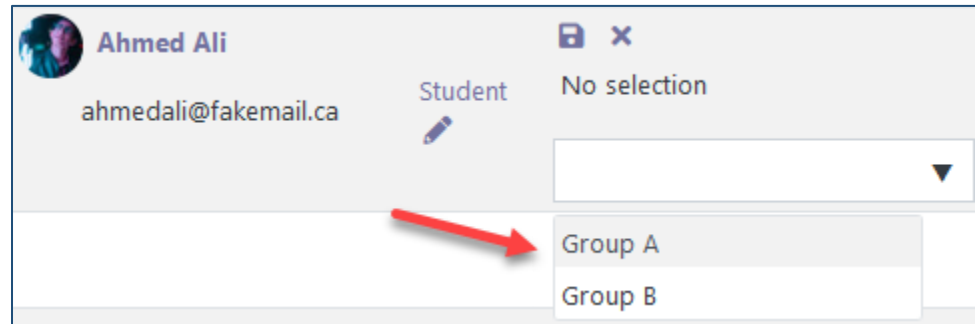
- In the course **Navigation Drawer**, click on the **Participants** link.



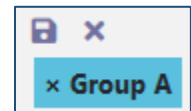
Note: The course participants appear in a list. If there are groups established in the course a pencil appears in the **Groups** column in each participant's row.

First name / Surname	Email address	Roles	Groups
Ahmed Ali	ahmedali@fakemail.ca	Student	No groups
Maria Guptez	mariaguptez@fakemail.ca	Student	No groups
Lee Chan	leechan@fakemail.ca	Student	No groups
Beverly Davis	beverlydavis@fakemail.ca	Teacher	No groups
Eduardo Garcia	eduardogarcia@fakemail.ca	Student	No groups

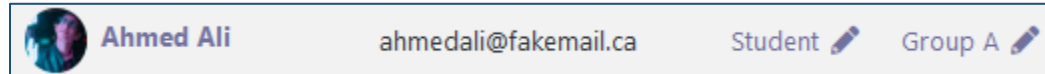
2. Click on one of the **pencil** icons. 
3. The student row expands revealing an empty drop-down menu, click on the drop-down menu.
4. Choose a **group** name from the drop-down list.



5. The **Group name** appears in a blue rectangle. Click on the **Save** icon to complete the group assignment.



Note: The student is now in the selected group. It is shown by a blue rectangle in the participants list.



Video Resource

How can I add groups to my Moodle courses?

<https://youtu.be/Gaq1M9-ETtQ>

Resources

[Moodle Documents: Groups](https://docs.moodle.org/39/en/Groups)

<<https://docs.moodle.org/39/en/Groups>>

[Moodle Documents: Groups FAQs](https://docs.moodle.org/39/en/Groups_FAQs)

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[Moodle Documents: Groupings](https://docs.moodle.org/39/en/Groupings)

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