

1.1 Learning Management Systems

Learning management systems (LMSs) are web applications that run on a server and are accessed by using a web browser. The Moodle server is located on the University server and managed by the Centre for Communication and Information Technologies (CICT) can be accessed anywhere in the world with an Internet connection.

At their most basic, LMSs give educators tools to create a course web site and provide access control so only enrolled students can view it. LMSs also offer a wide variety of tools that can make your course more effective. They provide an easy way to upload and share materials, hold online discussions and chats, give quizzes and surveys, gather and review assignments, and record grades.

1.2 The Web-based Learning Environment

1.2.1 Definition

What makes a web-based learning environment different from a web site? The answer is: learning goals and feedback. Learning environments have very specific goals for students. Most other web environments are there for users to achieve their own goals. They provide information, a way to buy things, or a way to connect with other people. People come to these environments of their own volition and can participate at whatever level they choose.

1.2.2 Course Objectives

Learning environments provide goals for students to achieve, goals they are currently unable to meet on their own. Course objectives define a set of goals for students, goals they would not normally set for themselves. These objectives define how students will interact with the material, other students, and the lecturer.

1.2.3 Feedback

The second defining feature of learning environments is feedback. Feedback is critical for students to monitor their progress as they pursue the course objectives. Feedback is one of the critical defining aspects of a learning environment. If a student does not receive feedback, he has no way of knowing if he is closer to achieving the objectives of the course or not. Feedback in a learning environment can take many forms. Tests, assignments and quizzes are frequently used tools for measuring student progress. They can provide feedback to students in the form of right and wrong answers or a percentage score. Less formal feedback might include interaction with students in class, conversations with experts, or applying new knowledge in a work setting. The key is to structure the feedback in useful ways so that students can measure themselves against the course objectives.

1.3 The Moodle Interface

When you will first visit your Moodle site you will see the front page of the Moodle Site with the list of the courses which are available for the students as shown in Figure 1.

The Moodle interface can be customized a great deal. My home is a customisable "*dashboard*" page for providing users with links to various programmes, courses and activities within them, such as unread forum posts and upcoming assignments.

- **My home** usually has the Course overview block in the central column. Depending on the site settings for this block, categories and child courses may display under the main courses.
- On the **My home** screen, the courses in the Navigation block are expanded by default, as shown in Figure 2, whereas they are collapsed by default elsewhere in Moodle.

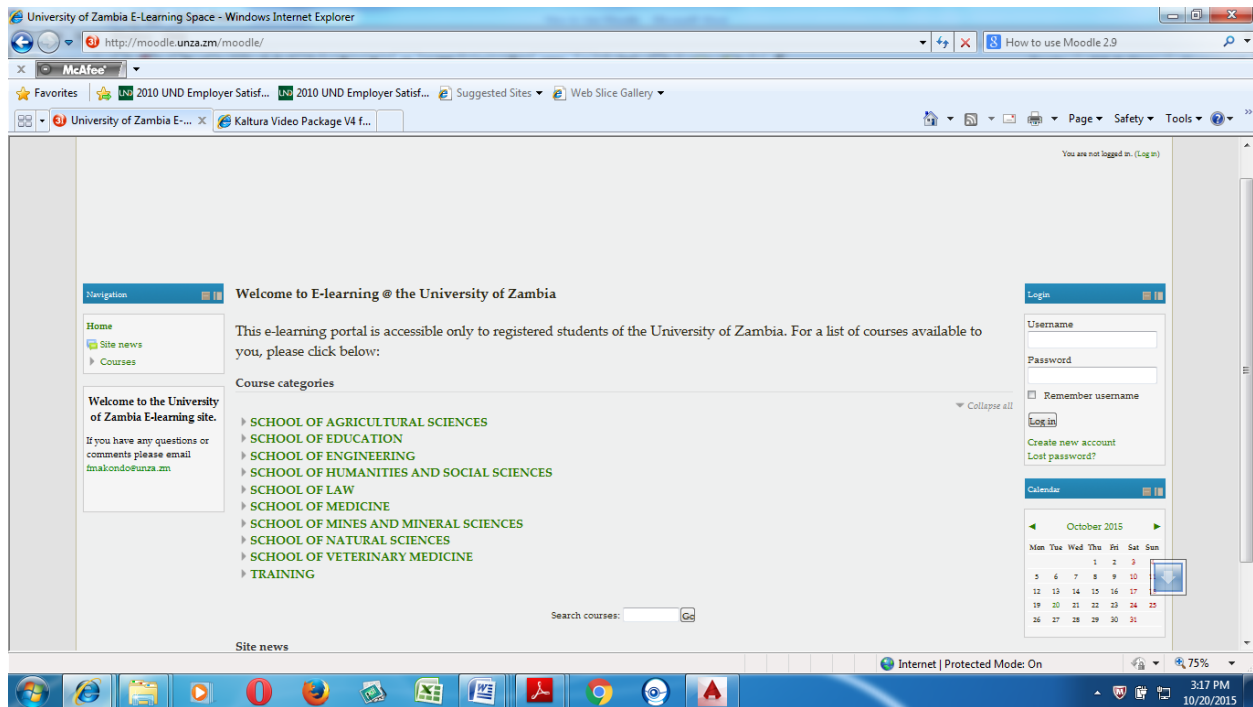


Figure 1.1 Moodle front page

1.4 Logging In

In the extreme top right corner of the Moodle site you will find a Hyperlink which says "*You are not logged in (Log In)*". You can also find the same link in the Footer of your site just above the Moodle Logo. Click the link and Moodle will present you with the login to the site page as shown in the Figure 2.

1.5 Editing Your User Profile

Once you have successfully confirmed your account and logged in, you will find yourself back at the main page along with one additional block on the Left hand side of the screen with title "Administration". The links in this block will depend on the permissions available for your account.

If you look at the upper-right corner as well as in the footer of the site, you'll see that the Login link has changed. It now says "You are logged in as: Your Name" highlighted as a clickable Link.

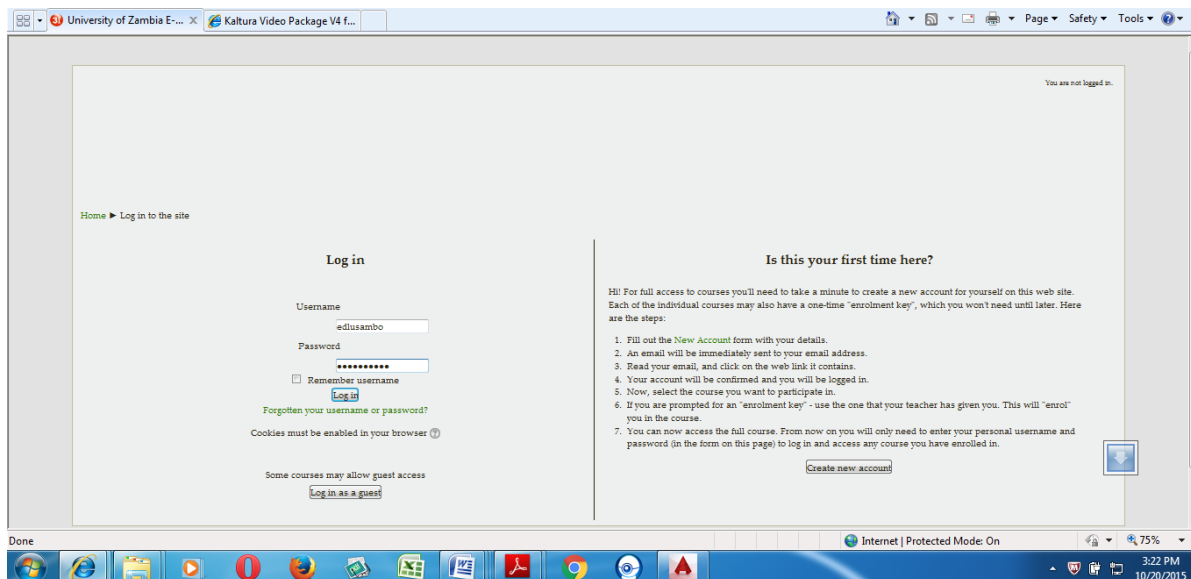


Figure 1.2 Logging in page

Click on your name to view your user profile. Press the **Edit Profile** button to edit your profile. Moodle will then present you with your personal profile details page, like the one shown in Figure 1.3. You'll see your profile summary, interests, your courses and the first and last time you logged in.

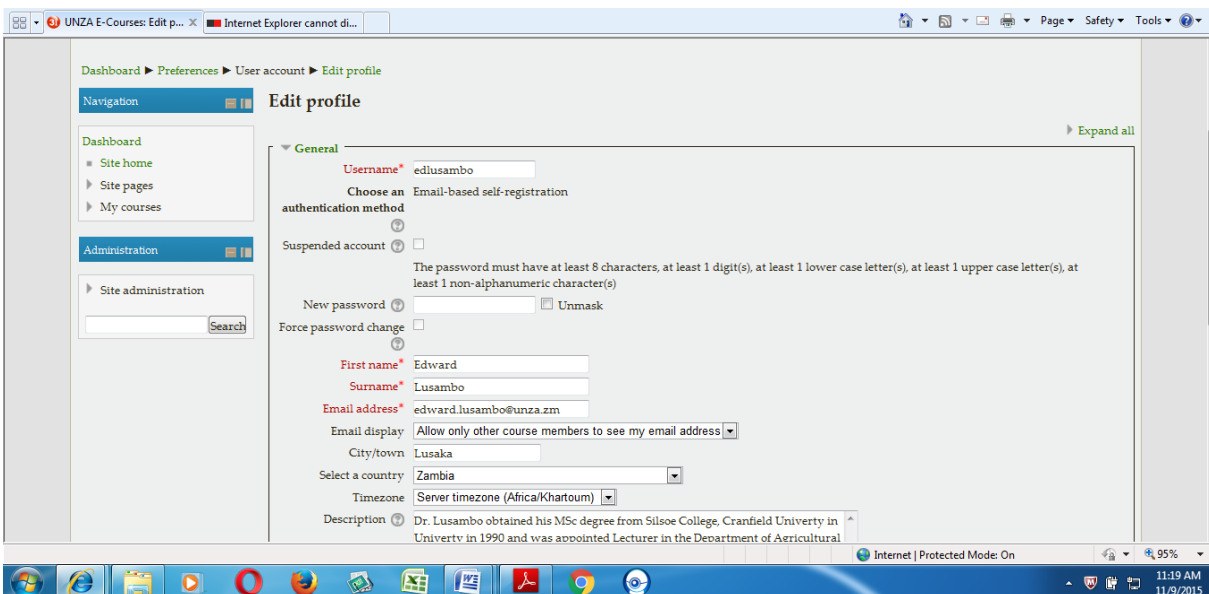


Figure 1.3 Edit profile page