

### 4.1 Introduction

Assignments are an easy way to gather and track student submissions. Students can submit any type of electronic file to fulfill the requirements. Instead of collecting unwieldy stacks of paper, you can let Moodle track who has turned in an assignment and when.

The feedback options provide you with an easy way to send grades and/or comments back to the students about their work.

Assignments are a simple and flexible catch-all for things you want to grade that do not fall into any of the other tool types.

The assignment module allows lecturers to collect work from students, review it and provide feedback including grades. The work students submit is visible only to the lecturer and not to the other students unless a group assignment is selected.

The assignment module gives you an easy way to allow students to upload digital content for grading. You can ask them to submit essays, spreadsheets, presentations, web pages, photographs, or small audio or video clips. Anything they can store on their hard drives can be submitted in response to an assignment.

Assignments do not necessarily have to consist of file uploads. You can create offline assignments to remind students of real-world assignments they need to complete. Alternatively, you can ask students to input their answer directly into the assignment itself.

### 4.2 Assignment Types

The standard assignment submission options available are:

- (a) File submissions (students submit a file for assessment)
- (b) Online text (students can type their responses directly in Moodle)
- (c) Submission comments
- (d) Offline Assignment

### 4.3 Adding an Assignment Activity

*To create an assignment:*

- Click the “**Turn Editing On**” button.
- Within the required Week or Topic Block click **Add an Activity or Resource** link.
- In the Add an activity or resource dialogue box that appears, select Assignment and click **Add** and the screenshot shown in Figure 4.1 will appear.

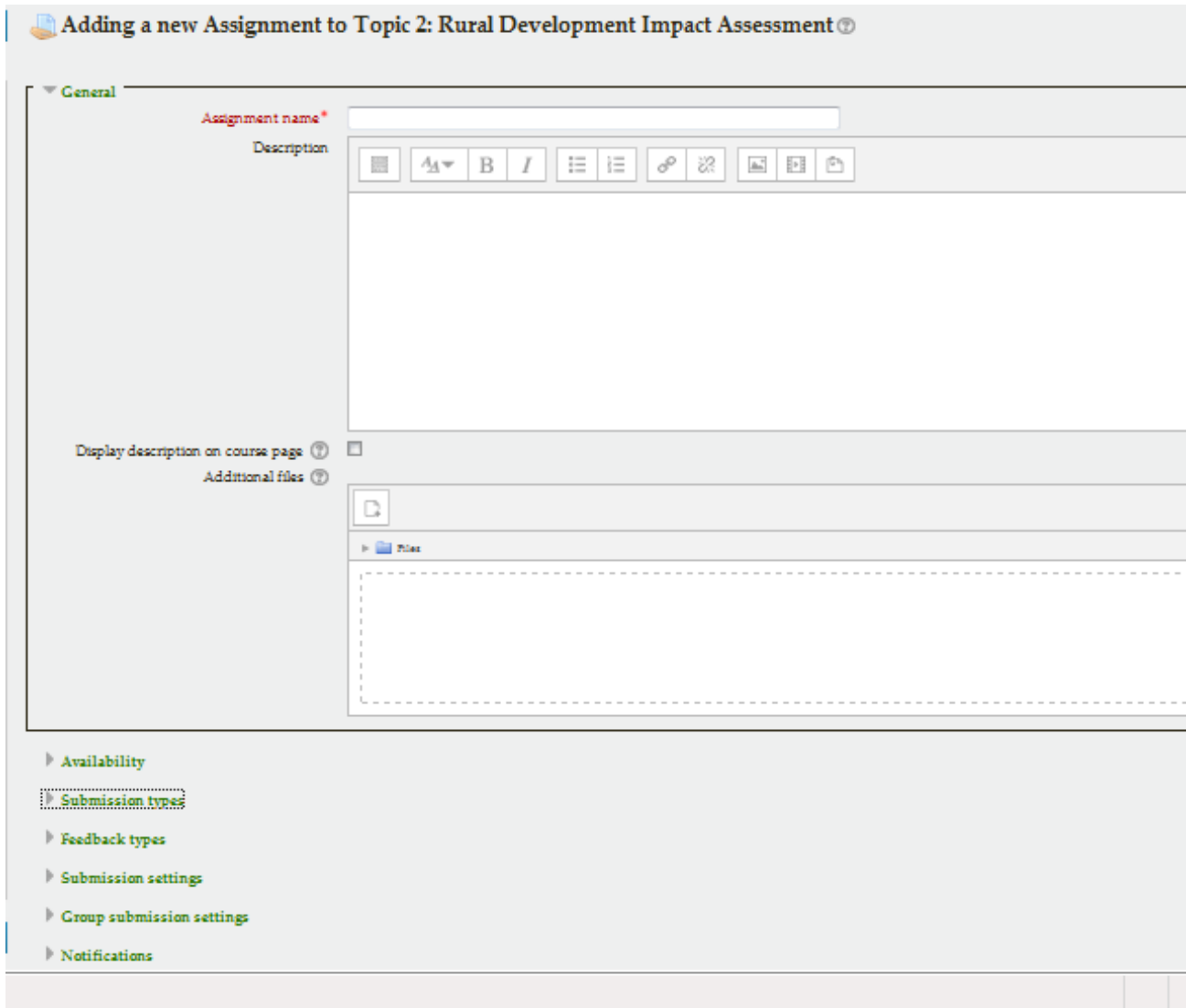


Figure 4.1 Adding a new assignment

## 4.4 Configuration Options

The following configuration options are available when creating or editing/updating any Assignment activity. Only General, Availability and Submission types are open by default; the others are collapsed. To expand everything, click the "Expand all" link top right.

### **General Section**

- (a) *Assignment name*: Give your Assignment a name (e.g. "Assignment 1"). The title entered here will be the name that students see in the course content area. Students will click on this name to view the details of the assignment and, if applicable, submit their work.
- (b) *Description*: Provide instructions for your students here so they are clear what they have to do. Click the icon on the left to expand the toolbar and drag the bottom right of the text box out to expand it. You can also provide information or resources related to the assignment, such as a video clip, an image, or a link to a webpage.

- (c) *Display description on course page:* Enabling this will display the description on the course page just below the link to the assignment activity.
- (d) *Additional files:* Here a lecturer can attach files which may be of help to the students as they do their assignment, such as example submissions or answer templates. The lecturer may also upload an existing assignment prepared in Word, which students can download and answer.

### ***Availability Section***

- (a) *Allow submissions from:* If enabled, students will not be able to submit before this date. If disabled, students will be able to start submitting right away.
- (b) *Due Date:* This is when the assignment is due. Submissions will still be allowed after this date but any assignments submitted after this date, are marked as late. To prevent submissions after a certain date - set the assignment cutoff date.
- (c) *Cut Off Date:* If set, the assignment will not accept submissions after this date without an extension.
- (d) *Always show description:* If disabled, the Assignment Description above will only become visible to students at the "Allow submissions from" date.

### ***Submission Types Section***

- (a) *Submission types:* Here you can decide how you wish students to submit their work to you. There are four types of assignment submissions as mentioned in the section above:
  - **Online Text:** Students can type their response directly in Moodle using the text editor. It's possible to set a word limit on an online text assignment. Students get a warning if they try to exceed the word limit.
  - **File Submissions:** Students can upload and edit one or more files of any type the lecturer can open. If the student uploads a pdf file, the lecturer can annotate it within the browser, and on saving, the annotated file is made available to the student.
  - **Offline Activity** - If you simply uncheck the above two options then it will result into an offline assignment activity.
- (b) *Word Limit:* If online text submissions are enabled, this is the maximum number of words that each student will be allowed to submit.
- (c) *Maximum number of uploaded files:* Here you can decide the maximum number of files which may be uploaded by each learner. (It might be helpful to display the number in the assignment description).
- (d) *Maximum submission size:* This setting specifies the maximum size per file of each of the files that the students can upload as part of their submission. This maximum upload size may only be equal to or less than the course limit (which in turn may only be equal to or less than the site limit). The maximum size of each file is displayed to students at the point where they upload files.

### ***Feedback Type Section***

- (a) *Feedback comments*: Setting this to yes mean that markers can leave feedback comments for each submission. It enables the Feedback Comments column in the grading table.
- (b) *Offline grading worksheet*: If set to yes, you will have a link to download the grading list as a spreadsheet. Then you will be able to enter grades and feedback comments offline. When the lecturer has completed their grading offline, they can then upload the spreadsheet, confirm the changes and the grades and comments will be transferred over into Moodle's gradebook
- (c) *Feedback files*: If enabled, you will be able to upload files with feedback when marking the assignments. These files may be, but are not limited to marked up student submissions, documents with comments or spoken audio feedback.
- (d) *Comment inline*: If enabled, the submission text will be copied into the feedback comment field during grading, making it easier to comment inline (using a different colour, perhaps) or to edit the original text.

### ***Submission Settings Section***

- (a) *Require students click submit button*: If enabled, students will have to click a *Submit* button to declare their submission as final. This allows students to keep a draft version of the submission on the system.
- (b) *Require that students accept the Submission statement*: An administrator can define a "Submission statement", i.e., a statement where students promise the work is their own and which they must agree to before submitting their work. If the administrator has given lecturers the option of using a submission statement or not, then it will be available in the assignment settings screen. When this setting is enabled, students will have to check a button before they can submit their assignment.
- (c) *Attempts reopened*: This setting allows the lecturer to decide how submissions are reopened. It determines how student submission attempts are reopened. The available options are:
  - Never - The student submission cannot be reopened.
  - Manually - The student submission can be reopened by a lecturer.
  - Automatically until pass - The student submission is automatically reopened until the student achieves the grade to pass value set in the Gradebook (Categories and items section) for this assignment.
- (d) *Maximum attempts*: If a student is allowed to resubmit, this setting will determine how many times they can resubmit before they are no longer allowed to do so. After this number of attempts has been made the student's submission will not be able to be reopened.

### ***Group Submission Settings Section***

- (a) *Students submit in groups*: If this box is ticked, then students are able to collaborate on an assignment. This might involve for example, working in the same online text area, or one student uploading an MS PowerPoint which another student downloads, improves and re-uploads to the common assignment area. A group submission will be shared among group members and all members of the group will see each other's changes to the submission. When grading, the lecturer may choose to give a common grade and feedback to all students in the group or to give individual grades and feedback to each member.

- (b) *Require group to make submission:* By default, if a student is not in a group they can still submit an assignment. However, this setting may be changed in Site administration > Plugins > Assignment > Assignment settings so that if student is not in any group, or no groups have been made, then Moodle will display a message You're not a member of any group; please contact your lecturer , and the student will not be able to submit the assignment.
- (c) *Require all group members submit:* If enabled, all members of the student group must click the submit button for this assignment before the group submission will be considered as submitted. If disabled, the group submission will be considered as submitted as soon as any member of the student group clicks the submit button.
- (d) *Grouping for student groups:* If a particular grouping is selected here, then the gradebook will display any other groups and non-grouped students in the "default group", while naming the group(s) that are in the chosen grouping. If "none" is selected, then the gradebook will display the names of all groups and put any non-grouped students in the "default group".

### ***Notifications Section***

- (a) *Notify graders about submissions:* If enabled, you will receive a message whenever a student submits an assignment, early, on time and late.
- (b) *Notify graders about late submission:* If enabled then you will receive a message whenever a student submits a late assignment.
- (c) *Default setting for "Notify students":* This setting will set the default value for the "Notify students" checkbox on the grading form.

### ***Grade Section***

- (a) *Grade:*
  - Select Points or Scale from the dropdown. If you will not be giving a grade for the assignment, choose No Grade.
  - Then select your points or chosen scale.
- (b) *Grading Method:* Choose the advanced grading method that should be used for calculating grades in the given context. There are 3 options:
  - Simple direct grading (entering a grade or scale item)
  - Marking guide
  - Rubric

To disable advanced grading and switch back to the default grading mechanism, choose 'Simple direct grading'.
- (c) *Grade Category:* This setting controls the category in which this activity's grades are placed in the gradebook. Any custom Grade Categories that have been created within your site or course will be listed here and will be available for selection. Select the required Grade Category to add this assignment as a Grade item within this Category.
- (d) *Blind marking:* If this setting is enabled, then you will not see the names of students who have submitted their assignments. Instead, you will see randomly generated Participant numbers. However, after grading the assignment, it is possible for you to see who submitted what by clicking on "Reveal student identities" in the Assignment settings.

- (e) *Use marking workflow*: When set to Yes, you will be able to specify the stage they are at in their grading of individual assignments. One advantage of using marking workflow is that the grades can be hidden from students until they are set to 'Released'. The actual list of steps are:
- Not marked (the marker has not yet started)
  - In marking (the marker has started but not yet finished)
  - Marking completed (the marker has finished but might need to go back for checking/corrections)
  - In review (the marking is now with the lecturer in charge for quality checking)
  - Ready for release (the lecturer in charge is satisfied with the marking but wait before giving students access to the marking)
  - Released (the student can access the grades/feedback)
- (f) *Use marking allocation*: If marking workflow is set to Yes, it is possible to enable marking allocation. This means that you can select other lecturers to grade or review the submitted work of specific students. Colleagues can monitor progress through the displayed marking workflow states.

### ***Save the Assignment***

- Click "Save and return to course" button to make your assignment available.
- The assignment will appear in your course page. It will also be added to your course calendar and will appear in the Upcoming Events block to remind students when it's due.
- To see how your assignment appears for your students, select Student from the "Switch role to" drop-down menu in the top-right corner of the course page, next to the "Turn editing on" button. The "Return to my normal role" link at the bottom of each page restores your lecturer status.

## **4.5 Assignment Permissions**

The assignment module has a number of permissions. A few of them are discussed below:

- (a) ***Export own submission*** - This allows a user to export their own assignment submissions to a portfolio. This capability is allowed for the default roles of manager, lecturer, non-editing lecturer and student.
- (b) ***Grade assignment*** - This allows a user to see submissions, add comments to and grade assignments. This capability is allowed for the default roles of manager, lecturer and non-editing lecturer.
- (c) ***Submit assignment*** - This capability allows a user to submit an assignment. This capability is allowed for the default role of student only.
- (d) ***View assignment*** - This allows a user to view assignments. This capability is allowed for the default roles of manager, lecturer, non-editing lecturer, student and guest.

## 4.6 Managing Assignment Submissions

- Click on the assignment name in your course page to view your students' submissions. You will see the assignment name and details and a table underneath with details of participants, submitted number of assignments and the submissions which needs grading.
- Click on "**View/grade all submissions**" under the table which show all assignments that have been submitted.
- The assignment submissions page, as shown in Figure 4.2, displays the grading table which contains columns of information about the student, the status of their submission, a link to grade their submission, a link to each submission and feedback comments and files. The list may be sorted by clicking on a particular heading.

By default, 10 submissions are shown per page, though this may be changed at the bottom of the page.

NEERING ► Department of Agricultural Engineering ► Postgraduate ► Year 1 ► AEN6211 ► Topic 1: Rural Infrastructure Development Planning ► Assignment 1 ► Grading

### Assignment 1

Grading action: Choose...

act	User picture	First name / Surname	Department	Institution	Status	Grade	Edit	Last modified (submission)	File submissions	Submission comments	Last modified (grade)	Feedback comments	Feedback files	Final grade
		Eddie Lusambo	Agricultural Engineering	University of Zambia	Submitted for grading Graded	80.00 / 100.00	Edit	Wednesday, 18 November 2015, 11:03 PM	Assignment 1 Model Answers 2015.docx	Comments (1)	Wednesday, 18 November 2015, 10:41 PM	<P>This is a very good essay on		80.0 % (80.0)
		Mukuwa Mukwangole	Agricultural Engineering	University of zambia	No submission	/ 100.00	Edit	Wednesday, 18 November 2015, 10:41 PM		Comments (0)	-			-
		Luqman Ebow Daud	Agricultural Engineering	University of zambia	No submission	/ 100.00	Edit	Saturday, 14 November 2015, 1:59 PM		Comments (0)	-			-

Notify students: Yes

[Save all quick grading changes](#)

Figure 4.2 Assignment submissions

## 4.7 Grading Assignment Submissions

On the grading table page, you can grade the assignments submissions of all students.

### Filtering submissions

A dropdown menu accessed from the 'Options' section allows you to filter submissions so you can for example quickly see which students have not submitted yet.

## ***Quick grading***

Under Options (scroll to bottom of the page) you can determine your preferences for the number of assignments you wish to display per page. This is also where you can turn on quick grading. Quick grading allows you to enter grades and a feedback comment (if enabled in Assignment settings) directly into the grading table. Quick grading is not compatible with advanced grading and is not recommended when there are multiple markers.

To quick grade submissions:

- You can enter grades and feedback comments using quick grading. It is now possible to enter grades in decimal format.
- Enter the grades
- Scroll to the bottom of the grading table and click 'Save all quick grading changes'
- A confirmation screen will appear.

Note that you will not be able to return a feedback file to your students.

## **4.8 View of Grades and Comments by Students**

Students can see their grades and comment in two ways:

- First, they can click on the assignment link again. They will see their grades and comments below the submission block.
- Alternatively, they can click on the Grades link in the course Administration block. They will see the grade for the assignment and can then click on the assignment name to get the written feedback.

## **4.9 Effective assignment practices**

The two most basic assignment types, offline and upload, are so generic you may find it difficult to use them effectively at first. You may find it useful to think about them as two separate modules sharing a common interface.

### ***Uploaded assignments***

Uploaded assignments are probably what most people expect when they think about assignments. You can use these assignment types for any sort of digital content. Most instructors use assignments to collect essays and other word-processing assignments. You can also use them to collect other types of student work. Students could upload PowerPoint slides prior to a presentation. Students could take a digital photograph of a sculpture or mechanical project and submit it for evaluation. As long as the file is smaller than the upload maximum, you can create assignments for any sort of digital content. Consider the types of work products you want your students to produce during your course. How many of them could be digital files submitted using an assignment?

### ***Offline assignments***

Offline assignments are useful for recording grades for real-world activities. You can use this tool to record scores or feedback for student presentations, class participation, performances, sculptures, or any other non-digital performance. You can create a scale to give non-numeric feedback if you do not want to give a numeric score to a creative performance.