

Moodle – Creating Courses



mSysTech



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1 ABSTRACT

This document is a tutorial for Moodle beginners. It teaches how to initially create a course and some course content. It was created for the [mSysTech](http://www.msystech.eu)¹ project.

¹ <http://www.msystech.eu>

2 CREATING A COURSE

First of all: login to the moodle system. It can be found under the following URL:

<http://msystech.eworks-online.de/>

After logging in, you will see the main page:

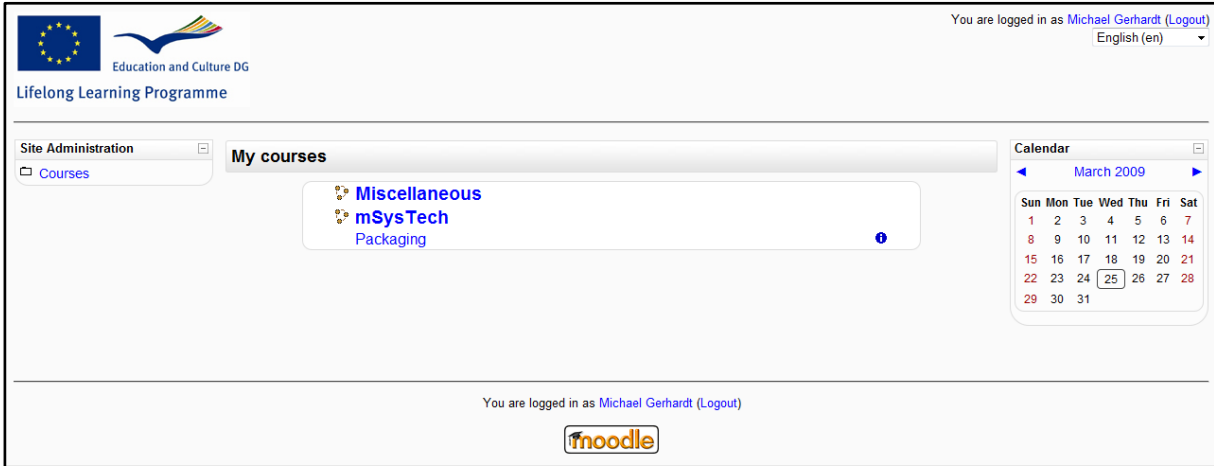


Image 1: Moodle main page

You will find the controls to create respectively edit a course on the left side under “Site Administration”. Now click on “Courses” → “Add/edit courses” → “Add a new course” to create a new course. You will find a form where you have to do some configuration. The important part is the general configuration:

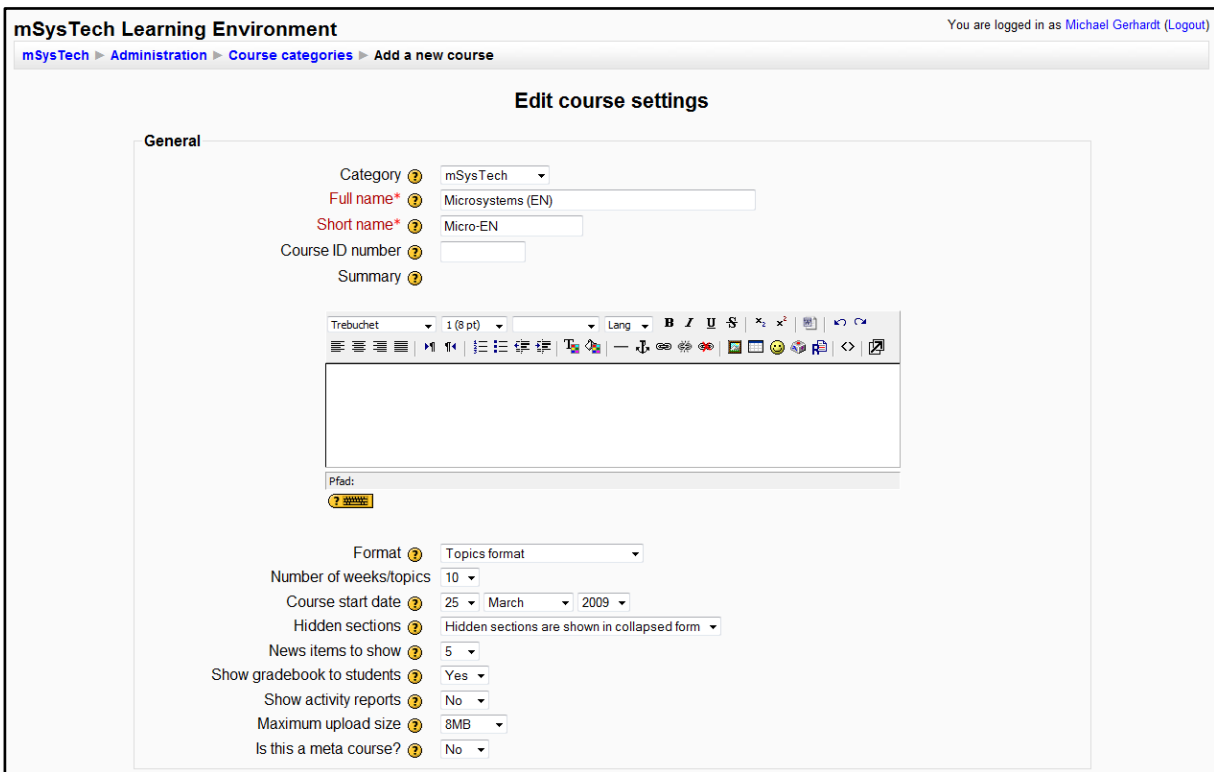


Image 2: Course creation, general configuration

Be sure to choose “mSysTech” as category and to fill in the full and short name. You should also provide a summary, so that people can easily see, what the course is about. The other settings depend on your i.e. the course’s needs.

If you aren’t sure, what setting to choose, just click the small yellow question mark for help. This help is available almost everywhere in Moodle and often very helpful. So you should remember the question mark, if anything is not clear to you.

Don’t be afraid to choose anything wrong. All of those settings can be changed later.

The remaining configuration is as simple as the first part. Most of the settings should be self-explanatory. If not, just use the yellow question mark or try a setting and change it later, if the behavior wasn’t as expected:

The screenshot shows the 'Miscellaneous' configuration page for a Moodle course. The settings are organized into sections:

- Enrolments:** Includes 'Enrolment Plugins' (Site Default (Internal Enrolment)), 'Default role' (Site Default (Student)), 'Course enrollable' (radio buttons for No, Yes, Date range; Yes is selected), 'Start date' (25 March 2009, Disable checked), 'End date' (25 March 2009, Disable checked), and 'Enrolment duration' (Unlimited).
- Enrolment expiry notification:** Includes 'Notify' (No), 'Notify students' (No), and 'Threshold' (10 days).
- Groups:** Includes 'Group mode' (No groups) and 'Force' (No).
- Availability:** Includes 'Availability' (This course is available to students), 'Enrolment key' (Unmask checkbox), and 'Guest access' (Do not allow guests in).
- Language:** Includes 'Force language' (Do not force).
- Role renaming:** A list of roles with input fields: Administrator, Course creator, Teacher, Non-editing teacher, Student, Guest, and Authenticated user.

At the bottom of the form, there are 'Save changes' and 'Cancel' buttons. A red error message states: "There are required fields in this form marked*." The footer indicates the user is logged in as Michael Gerhardt and provides a 'Home' button.

Image 3: Course creation, miscellaneous configuration

Click “Save changes” and the creation of the new course is complete.

Next you can assign roles for this course. This means you can decide, who is a teacher, a non-editing teacher, a student or a guest. These different roles have different rights. Teachers for example can create new course material, while students can only learn, do tests etc.

By default the creator of the course will be the only teacher and there will be no other roles assigned:

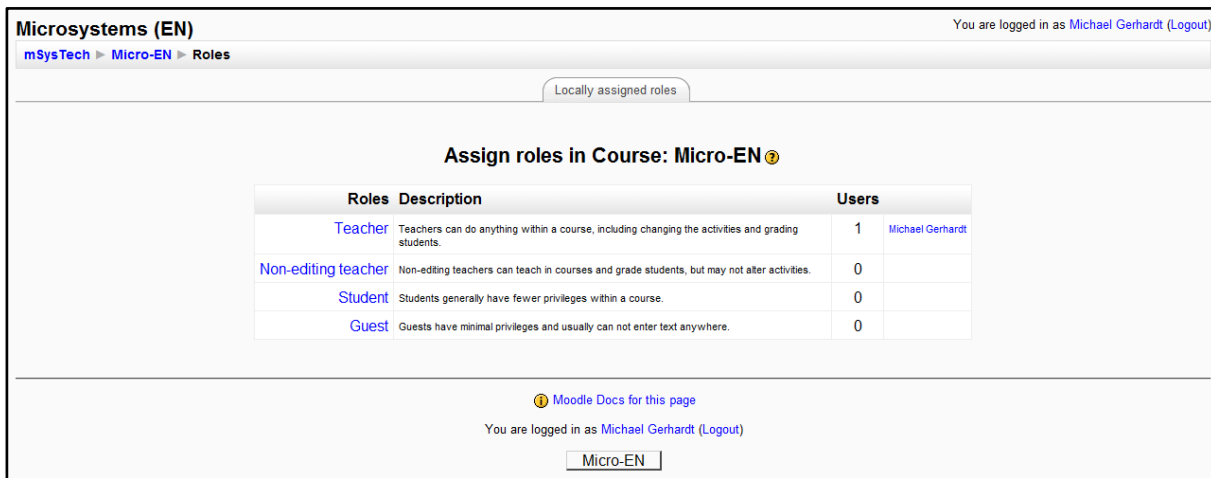


Image 4: Roles overview

Click on any role, like “Teacher”, and you will get to a page, where you can assign the roles:

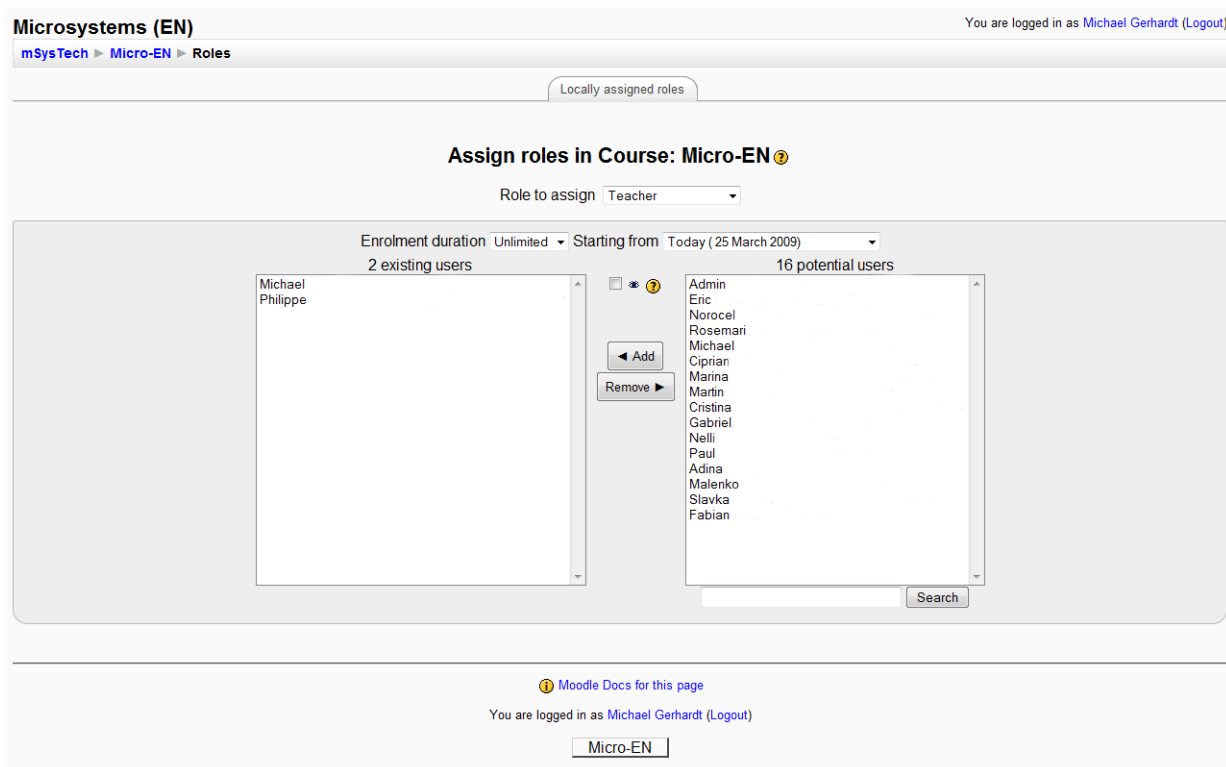


Image 5: Role assignment

You can assign the roles for “Teacher” and then choose any other role from the drop down list and repeat the assignment for every other role.

Now you have successfully created a course and adjusted all the important settings. You can continue with the next chapter, which will show you, how you can create course contents.

3 CREATING COURSE CONTENT

There are a lot of different content types in Moodle and you can even enlarge the number of available types by adding extensions to the Moodle installation. But for a start the built-in types should fit our needs. There was only one extension installed, which allows us to use the “book” module. This is a very useful module, that’s why we decided to use this extension.

Generally you can create any kind of content when you’re on the overview page of the course. You can click “Turn editing on” on the left side to switch to editing mode. In the topic you want the content to be created click “Add a resource...” or “Add an activity...” and choose the content type that should be created.

3.1 Creating a web page

The most simple kind of course content is a web page. As you can guess from the name, it is a single page with information. Click “Add a resource...” → “Compose a web page” to create a web page. On the following page, you can insert all the information for the web page and the content.

Moodle’s web pages are just like any other web page on the internet. They can contain almost every type of media like images, Flash animations, Java applets etc. You can also use any kind of formatting offered by the Moodle WYSIWYG² editor:

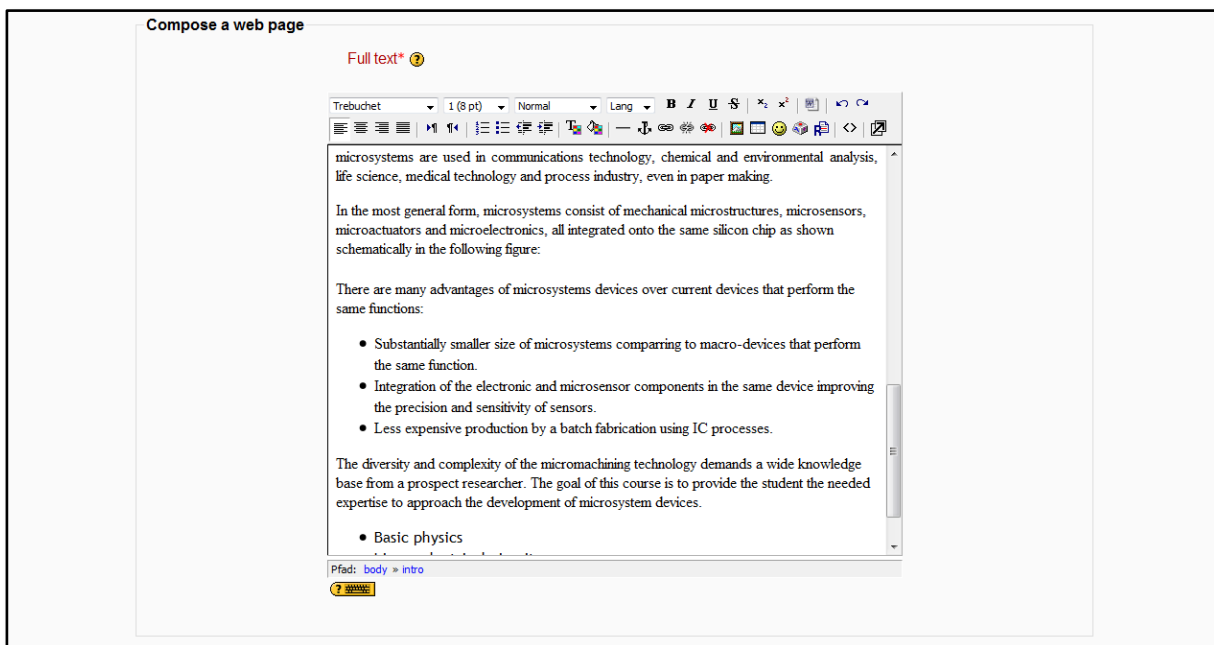


Image 6: Composing a web page

A web page should be used only for small content like introductions. “Real” content like entire tutorials (as they were named in “NanoTrain”) shouldn’t be created as web pages.

² What you see is what you get

3.2 Creating a book

More complex and structured content like the “NanoTrain” tutorials should be created as books. A book is a structured learning unit with a two level hierarchy i.e. chapters and subchapters.

You can create a book by clicking “Add a resource...” → “Book”. You will see a page, where to define some meta information, but not the real content:

The screenshot shows the Moodle interface for editing a book. The breadcrumb trail is: mSysTech > Micro-EN > Books > Theory of diffusion > Editing Book. The user is logged in as Michael Gerhardt. The form is titled "Updating Book in topic 1" and is for a book named "Theory of diffusion". The form includes a "Name*" field with the value "Theory of diffusion", a "Summary*" field, a rich text editor with the content "Theory of diffusion", and a "Pfadt:" field. Below the editor are settings for "Chapter Numbering" (set to "Numbers"), "Disable Printing" (checkbox), and "Custom Titles" (checkbox). Under "Common module settings", there is a "Visible" dropdown set to "Show" and an "ID number" field. At the bottom, there are buttons for "Save and return to course", "Save and display", and "Cancel". A red message at the bottom right states "There are required fields in this form marked*".

Image 7: Creating a book

You now have to define the real content (i.e. the chapters) of the “book”. Switch to editing mode and click on the name of the newly created “book”. This is where the “book” content is created.

One very big advantage of “books” is, that you can import several HTML files and that Moodle automatically creates one chapter for each file, ordered alphabetically by the file name. As you have to upload the files first, it is recommended to gather them in a ZIP file, upload this single file and unzip the content directly in Moodle. Now you can choose the directory, where the HTML files are, as the import directory and Moodle will automatically create the chapters. Of course you also can create the chapters manually.

3.3 Creating a quiz

In Moodle quizzes are tests for the students. A quiz may have a lot of different question types. Most of the question types are automatically graded as you provide Moodle with the correct answer(s), but some must be graded manually, e.g. “Essay”.

Creating a quiz is as simple as creating any other content. Just switch to editing mode and click “Add an activity...” → “Quiz”. Then you have to provide some information about the quiz, concerning the timing, the limiting of attempts, the grading etc. The form you have to fill should be self-explanatory, if not, use the yellow question marks.

After creating the quiz, you have to create the questions. This part is a bit complicated because first you have to create the questions and then assign them to the quiz(ze)s they should be asked in. So, if you start in the course overview window, click on the quiz you want to add questions to. Click on the “Edit” tab. You will find a split window: On the left side there is the section “Questions in this quiz” and on the right side you will find the “Question bank”. You start creating questions by adding them in the “Question bank”. Click “Choose...” (beside “Create new question”) and then choose the question type. If you don’t exactly know what to choose, try “Multiple Choice” for a start.

You will see a form with a lot of fields you have to fill in. Let’s start by having a look at the “General” section:

The screenshot shows the Moodle interface for adding a multiple choice question. The page title is "Adding a Multiple Choice question" and the user is logged in as Michael Gerhardt. The breadcrumb trail is: mSysTech > Micro-EN > Quizzes > Theory of diffusion - Quiz > Editing Quiz > Editing a Multiple Choice question. There is an "Update this Quiz" button in the top right.

The "General" section contains the following fields and options:

- Category:** Default for Microsystems (EN)
- Question name*:** Question 1
- Question text:** A rich text editor containing the text "What is the definition of diffusion?". The path is "body".
- Format:** HTML format
- Image to display:** None
- Default question grade*:** 1
- Penalty factor*:** 0.1
- General feedback:** (empty)
- One or multiple answers?:** One answer only
- Shuffle the choices?:**
- Number the choices?:** a, b, c, ...

Image 8: Creating a multiple choice question, general information

The most important part in this section is the question text. This is the question the students will be asked when they do the quiz. Another pretty important field is the “One or multiple answers?” field, which determines whether the student can choose one or more answers. The other fields can be left to their default values for a start. If you need more information about some fields, click the yellow question mark.

Now you can configure the possible answers, using the “Choice” fields:

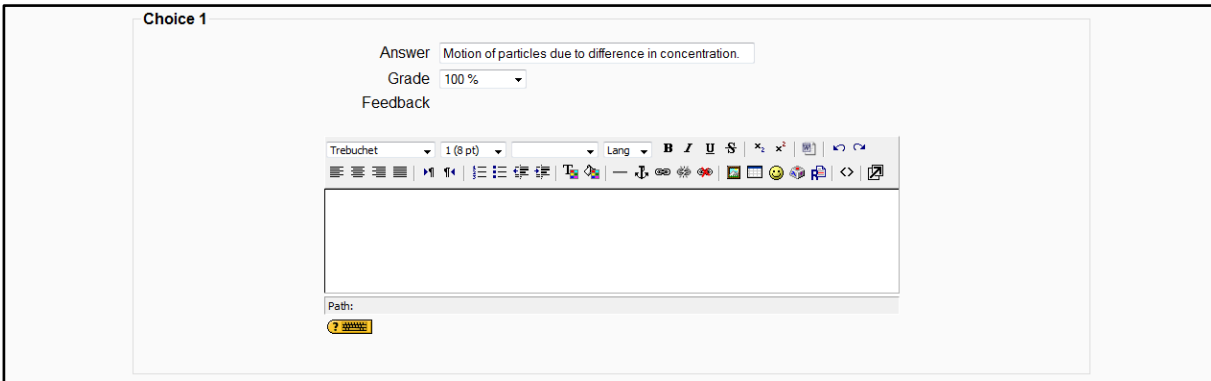
The screenshot shows the Moodle quiz editor interface for configuring a single choice question. At the top, there is a section labeled "Choice 1". Below this, there are three input fields: "Answer" with the text "Motion of particles due to difference in concentration.", "Grade" set to "100 %", and "Feedback" which is currently empty. Below these fields is a rich text editor with a toolbar containing various icons for text formatting (bold, italic, underline, strikethrough, link, unlink, list, indent, outdent, undo, redo) and other functions. The editor's content area is empty. At the bottom of the editor, there is a "Path:" label and a small yellow question mark icon.

Image 9: Creating a multiple choice question, choice

The answer is the answer the student will see and possibly choose. The grade is the ratio of the score for this question the student will achieve, when he chooses this answer – normally a right answer should have 100 % and a wrong answer none. In the feedback field you can provide a small text the student will see when he chooses this answer.

You can even add more answer possibilities by clicking “Blanks for 3 More Choices”.

The rest of the form is for general feedback for this question and can be left as is for a start.

When you return to the edit page of this quiz, you will see that there is a new question in the “Question bank”. But it doesn’t belong to the quiz yet. You have to add it to the quiz by clicking “<<” or selecting it and clicking “Add to quiz”.

Now you have successfully created a quiz!

You can find more information about the different question types when you click the yellow question mark beside the “Create new question” → ”Choose...” part in the “Question bank” or by clicking here:

<http://msystech.eworks-online.de/help.php?module=quiz&file=questiontypes.html>

4 FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information see the links below:

- General Moodle documentation : <http://docs.moodle.org/>
- Moodle teacher documentation : http://docs.moodle.org/en/Teacher_documentation