Why use Moodle?

Moodle is UCL’s centrally supported digital learning environment. As a portmanteau of resources, interactivities, assessment processes and cohort management, a Moodle space is a digital representation of your module. Making use of its sequencing, layout, and targeted communications can help you to orient students and bring them into contact with texts, materials and each other in purposeful ways.

Moodle has a wide range of activity and resource types to support learning and teaching, including:

- **resources** (readinglists@ucl, files, links and embeds, glossary).
- **interactions** (forums, wiki, peer marking).
- **groupwork** (wiki, database, forums).
- **assessment and feedback** (peer marking, quizzes, assignments, a wide range of feedback, gradebook).
- **administration** (groups, calendar, reports and data, gradebook, questionnaire).

Moodle is available to all at UCL, subject to their agreement to observe the UCL Guidelines for e-learning communication tools. Staff editing Moodle are expected to observe the UCL Connected Learning Baseline, a set of minimum standards to ensure that all students can use every Moodle space.

Some ideas on how to use Moodle

1. **Tutors and students together in course spaces**

   Moodle is divided into course spaces. Within these courses tutors can share materials, manage communications and set up activities. Students can access the materials, and take part in the activities and communications.

2. **Design for learning**

   The tools in Moodle are designed with sound learning principles in mind. Moodle is constantly being improved by a global community of teachers and technologists, the result is an environment tailored to aid the practical everyday tasks of running courses and flexible enough to support innovative teaching methods.

3. **Link to UCL services**

   There are many great resources online at UCL and your Moodle courses can link to these. Examples include; Lecturecast, library resources (reading lists, past exam papers and quick searches), the common and personal timetable and student registrations in Portico.

4. **Sharing resources with your students**

   You can distribute lecture slides before or after the session, or perhaps you’re using Lecturecast and want to share the recordings. There may also be additional resources, such as course handbooks, websites, links to readings, information for students and maybe even videos, audio files and images - all these can be shared via your Moodle course.

5. **Facilitate group work.**

   Group work is notoriously hard to facilitate and administer, especially when physical and personal boundaries seem to get in the way. Moodle can help by splitting cohorts into online groups, each having their own areas in which to talk and share files. Groups can also be graded in assignments by different tutors or even have entire areas of the course hidden for one and visible to another.

6. **Online access - anywhere.**
Everything on Moodle can be accessed via most web browsers on most devices which can connect to the internet. You or your students could be sitting in a seminar room and using resources together, or be miles apart and still looking at the same page.

7. Break away discussions.

When you run out of discussion time in a face to face session, Moodle forums can be used to continue (or start more) online. Setting up an area for online communication takes little time and once they get started, they offer an unparalleled way of communicating. Students and staff can spend time formulating thoughtful responses and dig into deep discussions, involving anyone who wants to contribute.

8. You're in control of the content.

Moodle breaks courses into topics and inside each topic are elements of a course. These form a structured pathway through the learning and teaching materials. Individual items, entire topics or even the whole course can be made hidden/visible so you are in control who what is displayed to the students, what's still 'in development' or even things which you just don't want to show yet.

9. Share the workload

There's no limit on the number of tutors or administrators which can help within a Moodle course. Perhaps you share some of the teaching, or maybe you're lucky enough to have an administrator to help out. Moodle has a way of dealing with this, and offering the right level of functionality to the right people - all within your control.

10. As much or as little as you like

Online teaching and learning is a new way of thinking about education and how it's delivered. It's actually not that different to traditional face to face methods but there are some things you can do and other things you can't. Asking and answering questions is possible. Sharing resources is quick. Activities and exercises can be carried out in a more diverse and broader environment. For more ideas and support please contact the Digital Education team.