

Help documentation for editing Moodle wikis

This document, written by Steve Draper (Feb. 2015), is some notes on how to use the editor for creating wiki content in Moodle2 and its wiki "activity". It is only to get you started: I assume more skilled students can find their own help for further points.

A. **Basic idea:** Go to your group's wiki, press the "Edit" tab, and can immediately type in text to the edit window. As soon as you save the edits (button at the foot of the page), anyone can see the modifications to your wiki page.

You can enlarge the edit window by dragging its bottom right hand corner. After typing in text, you can add , formatting (e.g. bold, heading style) by using the mini-icons (see below).

I have pre-created your page with sample text etc., which you can immediately add to, modify, or delete.

B. **Your work is preserved:** Versions, saving, and undo-s. Moodle keeps a record of all the versions you ever save. You can inspect these via the History tab, which saves all versions. You can inspect any one by clicking on the version number (col.2). You can restore this version as the one to use by clicking on "Restore this version" at this point.

You can compare any two versions by selecting those two using the radio buttons in col.1, then clicking on the button "Compare selected". (Pressing the View tab jumps back to the latest version.)

If two people in the same group do parallel edits and then save them, you will get into the position where combining them has to be done using versions, and "compare versions", and cutting and pasting bits from one version into the one selected or restored to be the latest one. It is thus almost impossible to lose work, although at the cost of some work sorting out and combining rival versions.

C. **Prepare your writing** in Notepad (above all, so that any trouble with using Moodle doesn't lose you significant work); then copy-paste it into the Moodle wiki editor.

However it sometimes confuses the wiki editor if you paste in anything other than plain text. If you use Word, then Save-As your work as "plain text"; and paste in only that to the wiki, doing the formatting afterwards in the wiki editor, not in Word.

D. **Editing and formatting:** is done using the mini-icons. For instance, to make a word **Bold**, select the word with the mouse then click the "B" mini-icon. To make a line into a heading, select the text then click down on the "A A" icon, and choose which heading style you want.

If you click on the top-left icon, it shows (hides) more icons.

Correcting format problems. If you pasted in some formatting from Word and it seems a problem, select the text, click on the "Tx" (clear Formatting) icon. However this only copes with some problems. For a really, really thorough cleanup, select the suspect text and as much around it (before and after) that doesn't need any special formatting, and do all 3 of these things in turn, twice over: On the headings menu, select "paragraph"; miniIcon "Remove formatting" (Tx); miniIcon "Cleanup messy code" (paintbrush). Then restore anything you actually wanted e.g. "Heading 3".

HTML editing. In the expanded set, the "<>" icon switches from a WYSIWYG editor to one that shows the underlying HTML code. If you already know HTML, this can be useful; otherwise not. (If you get in a mess, this is what I will use to try to sort out some problem on your wiki page.)

Note however that in this moodle version, you may insert any HTML code, save the edit, and have it all work fine: and yet as soon as the next edit starts, hidden code "cleans" away your code in effect going back to where you were. This mechanism deletes all anchors (<A name='myAnchorTag') so anchors cannot be used now.

E. **Section headings.** As mentioned, you can create these using the "Headings" icon. (Headings are automatically inserted into the Table of Contents (TOC) when you save and exit the editor; at least for "large" headings (in HTML <H3>.)

I have pre-created your page with a "large" heading title such as "Group 23. The meaningful life".

Some of you have changed topics and must edit this, others may well wish to adjust the title from the original phrase. This is fine, but remember one thing: on the web, unlike in a printed book, users often "parachute" in (e.g. following a link someone else posted) and do not always know what page this is. I therefore believe you need to label every web page so readers can be sure what page it is. So retain your group number, and at least start the title with a sensible topic name, not a joke. Don't title the page "Happiness on an iceberg" if the original was "9. Weather" (although there is nothing wrong with "9. Weather: Happiness on an iceberg").

On the top moodle page for this course, I have create a list (index) of topics for everyone's convenience in clicking direct to the wiki page they want. Only I can edit this, so if you change your topic title drop me an email to update this index.

Due to what I view as a bug, the top of your page above the TOC has, annoyingly, a "title" saying "-" which we cannot remove. Try to ignore it, and put a meaningful large heading of your own below it, as discussed. You can include links to web pages elsewhere (in or outside of Moodle).

- F. **ToC (table of contents).** This is automatically created, but by very simple software. The most frequent problem is that manual formatting of the title-text confuses it. To clean it up, see "Correcting format problems" above: in particular, selecting the heading that isn't appearing (and perhaps surrounding text) use the "Remove formatting" mini-icon; then select the exact text and (re-)apply the heading menu. You may need to use all 3 clean up actions above first if just one doesn't work. TOC problems may begin with some format copied in from Word but then duplicated by copy-pasting inside the wiki; or just with formatting created inside the wiki but not wanted inside the heading.

The other common problem is to get the error message "duplicate heading". If the error message says what the heading text is e.g. "Conclusion" then you really have used the same name for a heading twice: just edit one of them e.g. to "Final conclusion". If it doesn't, it really means you have some invisible empty-text headings which show nothing in the text but confuse the ToC software. Most often they are immediately before or after the useful heading: so select the blank spaces you suspect and apply "paragraph" on the Headings menu to it, to clear them. (This problem comes from people selecting a heading from the menu when their mouse has only selected a point, not a stretch of text; then doing this several times until they realise their problem. This leaves empty-text headings which don't show up in the wiki; but confuse the ToC software.

- G. **Links to other web pages.** You can create links to outside pages: I included one in the sample text on your wiki page. To do more of these:

- Find and store the URL of the outside page (see below)
- Type the link text into your page
- Select (highlight) that text with the mouse
- Click the mini-icon on the top row with the chain (a small window pops up)
- Paste the URL of the remote page into the pop-up.
- I recommend that you tick the box "open in new window",
- Click "Create link".

First find out the URL (address) of the page you want to link to and save it (e.g. in Notepad): in another window visit the page you want; click in the browser's address bar, select all, copy and paste the URL e.g. "http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/healthy-living/is-bhutan-the-happiest-place-in-the-world-6288053.html" in the example link I put on your page.

Then on your page, type in the link text that the user will see e.g. "Is Bhutan the happiest place in the world?"; select it with the mouse; click on the mini-icon with the chain.

To correct a problem with a link, select the link-text on the page and again click on the chain icon, and you may be able to correct the URL. However if anything doesn't go well with this: select the link-text plus a few characters each side of it and press the "broken chain" icon: this destroys the link. Then more carefully select the link text, click the chain link, and enter the right URL.

In normal web pages it is possible to jump to different points on the same page, using a link. Here, you can't do that because you cannot insert any "anchor points" to mark where a link jumps to on a page.

H. **Pictures** To insert a picture:

- Find and store the URL of the picture (see below)
- Click to indicate where you want it inserted on your page;
- Click the mini-icon on the top row "Insert/edit image"; and
- Paste in the URL of the picture which it is best that you have already found and stored.

Only I am allowed to copy pictures into moodle, but you can all refer to pictures elsewhere on the web. If you create a picture e.g. from a camera in your mobile, you could store (upload) it on to the web e.g. in Facebook or elsewhere, as long as anyone has permission to view the web page it is on.

To get the URL of such a picture, go to the web page that shows it, right-click on the picture, and select "Copy image address"; and save it on some page or notepad.

To change the picture's size on the page, insert the picture and then click on the picture (still in the editor) which will highlight. You can then drag a corner to change its size. To some extent, you can drag it round the page to change its position. (If you can, select "constrain image" so that when you change the picture's size, it keeps the same height-width ratio.)

If you select the picture and use the text alignment icons, the picture will go there and text will flow round it; or get the same effect when you click the mini-icon "Insert/edit image" (perhaps after selecting the image again on the page), and in that popup dialogue box, select the "appearance" tab and use the "Alignment" menu.

Select the picture and re-click on the insert-image icon: you can control whether the picture shows a border, and empty padding space around it.

An image can be a link: i.e. insert an image; then select the image on your wiki page and use the "chain" mini-icon to insert a link so that clicking on the image jumps to another page.

I. **Creating sub-pages.** You can do this. The documentation is in the online Moodle help at:

https://docs.moodle.org/22/en/Using_Wiki#Adding_more_pages

- To create a new page, type the new page name enclosed in double square brackets, for example [[Page 2]].
- This will then appear on your first page in red; clicking on it allows you to create the sub-page with some content.

You can delete sub-pages by going to your wiki's top page; click the tab "Administration"; click the "List all" button; and then click the X on the line listing the sub-page.

The sub-pages will only appear in the ToC of the top page IF, but only if, you make the link to it also a Heading (and not too small/low a heading type).

If you edit a sub-page's name in the main text in any way, it seems to start a new sub-page and lose contact with what you had. You can however eventually repair this if necessary by opening tab "Map" for the page, where you can see a list of (sub)pages even if orphaned; and you can copy links from there into your main page so that it now points again to the orphaned sub-page.

J. **Also:**

K. No control of new-win with video embed. Nor with sub-pages?

How to reduce size of embedded video frame.