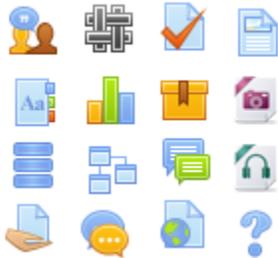# What's new in Moodle 2.6?

## What's new in Moodle 2.6?

It is anticipated that the next Moodle upgrade will be to Moodle 2.6, and although the date has yet to be agreed, we thought that a sneak preview of some of the new and enhanced features might be in order. These features largely fall into one of two categories, namely **improvements to the user interface** and **assessment and feedback enhancements**, although there are also several other useful enhancements.

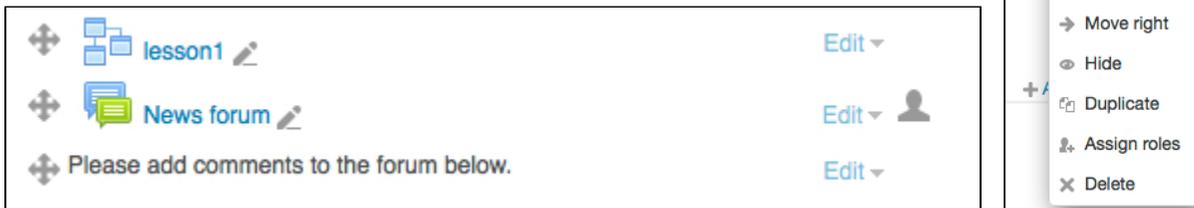### 1 Improvements to the user interface

In Moodle 2.6 there have been a number of enhancements that improve usability for students and staff. Moodle will now respond to the device you are using by automatically scaling the interface to fit the screen size. This is particularly useful if you are accessing Moodle via a tablet or on a mobile phone.

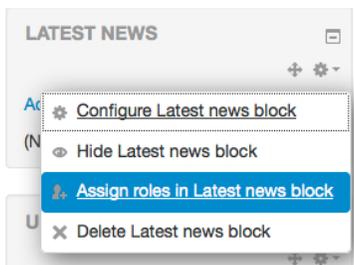insert screen shots - mobile phone and desktop.

The new updated set of icons also provide a cleaner look and feel to the whole interface.
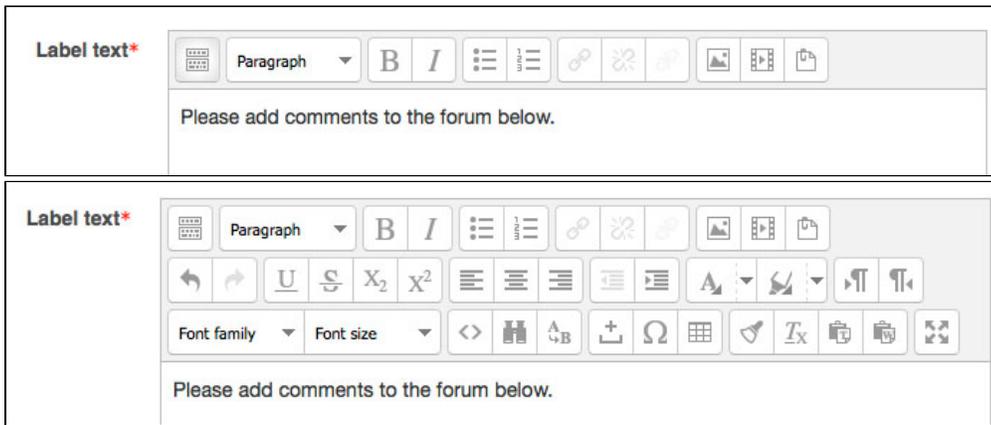
Editing a Moodle course is now much easier. With editing turned on the screen is less cluttered with some of the less frequently used editing icons (including **Delete** and **Update settings**) grouped and accessible from a drop down menu  accessed via an **Edit** link. The more frequently used icons (**Move** ,

**Edit title**  and the **Groups** icon  ) are placed more prominently.

Blocks also have their editing icons accessed via a drop down menu.

The **text editor** has been improved. It now offers better usability on different screen sizes and devices, notably with an expandable toolbar option where you can toggle between one and three rows and a plugin to manage embedded files.

There is a new course format type (single activity display) which sits alongside the existing course formats. In some situations this could really help streamline Moodle navigation. If, for example, you have a need just for a quiz, a book or a forum and nothing else in your Moodle course, you can now set this up on the course settings page via the course format menus.

Having selected the single activity course format you can then choose the activity you want to make the course focus. As a teacher, once you save the course settings page you will be taken directly to the edit settings page for the activity of your choice.

When students click the link to a single activity Moodle course they will be taken directly to that activity.
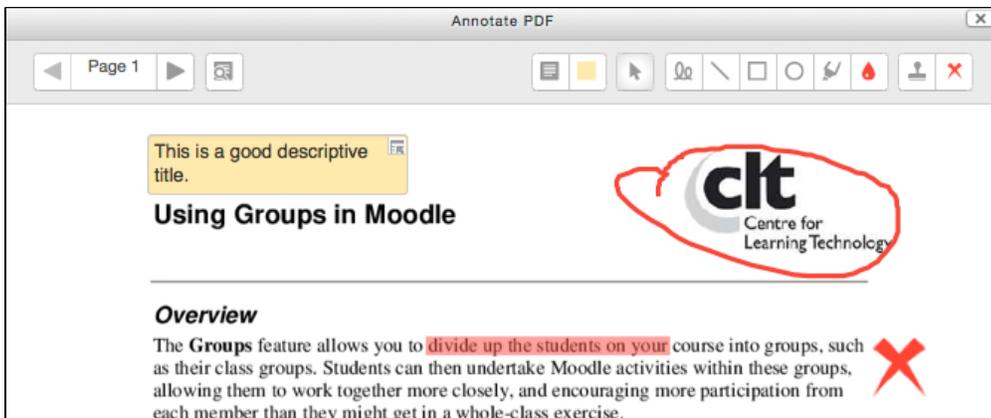
The single activity format replaces the SCORM format available in previous versions. If you want to use SCORM format in Moodle 2.6, simply use the single activity format and choose SCORM package as the type of activity.

## 2 - Assessment and feedback enhancements

When using Moodle for online submission and feedback of assignments there are several features that build on the enhancements introduced in Moodle 2.4. In particular there is additional control when **managing the work-flow** around marking large numbers of student assignments. On the Moodle 2.6 submission status page you can now see and set the marking status (*In Marking, Marking Completed, In Review, Ready for Release, Released*) of individual student submissions. These **work-flow** status settings help act as place-holders in the feedback and marking process.  For example the '*In Review*' status setting can be used to denote that moderation is in progress and the '*Ready for Release*' status when moderation is complete. Grade release to individual students can be controlled by setting the '*Release*' status. It is also possible to manage a marking team by **allocating markers** to individual students. The work-flow and marker allocation features can be enabled when creating a new assignment by choosing these options under the Grade settings.

| First name / Surname | Status | Marker | Grade |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yannick Yellow | Submitted for grading In marking | Mrs Black | ✎ - |
| Bob Blue | Submitted for grading Marking completed | Mr Brown | ✎ 100.00 / 100.00 |
| Wendy White | Submitted for grading In review | Miss Green | ✎ 70.00 / 100.00 |
| George Grey | Submitted for grading Ready for release | Ms Violet | ✎ 80.00 / 100.00 |

Moodle 2.6 now offers the facility for **on-screen marking of assignments** submitted as .pdf, without the need to download them. This utility can be turned on from the individual student grading screen and could offer significant efficiency gains when marking scripts. A variety of comments and annotations can be added including; text comments, freehand annotation and your own pre-defined "stamps" (such as a tick, cross or symbols such as sp or typo). A particularly important feature is the ability to save text comments for re-use. The saved comments form a comment bank which is a potentially powerful way to improve marking efficiency and equity.



If you use the Moodle quiz activity then you may be interested the new certainty based marking feature in Moodle 2.6. **Certainty Based Marking** (CBM) involves asking students not only the answer to an MCQ or short answer question, but also how certain they are that their answer is correct. The score gained for a question is modified depending on the certainty rating a student assigns their answer. For students a test with CBM is much more informative and promotes deeper learning, rewarding students who know which answers they do know and who acknowledge when they are uncertain. It 'punishes' students who are never confident, or who claim confidence for incorrect answers.



END

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## 5.1 Marking workflow

This feature offers:

- A display the status of the submission being graded
- Selective release of grades to students
- Allocation of markers to students
- Moderation of grades before release

The workflow features can be enabled when creating a new assignment by scrolling down to the Grade settings and changing **Use marking workflow** to **Yes**. If you also want to use **Marking Allocation** then change this to **Yes** as well. You can use Workflow without Allocation but not vice versa.

When these features are turned on you will see additional columns appear when you access and mark student assignments. The **Marker** column lets you allocate a marker to each student and the **Status** column allows you to note where in the marking process each student assignment is. When the status is set to **Marking completed** or beyond, then the Allocated Marker cannot be changed. When the status is changed to **Released** then the grade becomes visible to the student.

## 5.2 Annotating PDF assignments without download

On screen marking of PDF assignments is another great enhancement in 2.6. This feature offers:

- Commenting on PDF files submitted by students
- Annotation directly in the browser
- No need to download files

You can turn PDF annotations on from the individual student grading screen. (insert image)

The following types of annotations can be used:

- Text comments
- Freehand annotation
- Your own pre-defined "stamps"
- You can also build up a comment bank as you go along.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MgsA-9qMBdY&feature=share&list=PLxcO_MFWQBDe8RRnGjoUDqbcm9PSlIoWn&index=1

**Certainty Based Marking source**

**http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lapt/**

## 6. Change your mind about student entries in a glossary or database

To be more specific, the ability to disapprove glossary or database activity entries from students that have previously been approved. If you approved an entry by mistake in future you can easily reverse it.

http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxcO_MFWQBDe8RRnGjoUDqbcm9PSlIoWn