Participating in forum discussions

You can access forums from the link within the contents section of the VLE area. Forums are denoted by the icon displayed on the right.

A list of all the forums in the VLE area (underlying image) can also be accessed by clicking the **Forums** link in the *Activities* block (typically located on the right side of the VLE area homepage).

General forums

Forum	Description	Discussions	Unread posts	Track	Subscribed	Email digest type
Announcements	Tutors use this forum to communicate important information about the VLE area. Students will also receive a copy of this information in their University mailbox. This is a one-way forum which means that students are not able to respond to posts in this forum. **Please make sure the VLE study-unit …**	1	0	Yes	Yes	Default (No digest)
Study-unit Q&A	This is the place where we can post questions about the course. If you see a question that you can answer, please go ahead and reply. We need to ensure that no question or request for help goes unanswered.	2	0	Yes	Yes	Default (No digest)

Learning forums

Topic	Forum	Description	Discussions	Unread posts	Track	Subscribed	Email digest type
Participating in forum discussions	Discussion: What do you understand by 'evidence'?	Before proceeding to the readings, please explain, in not more than two short paragraphs, what you understand by the term 'evidence'. Please click on the question below and then click 'Reply' to give your answer.	1	0	Yes	Yes	Default (No digest)

The *Forums* page displays information about each forum, including title, description and number of discussions.

Reading forum discussions

To read a forum discussion:

1. Access the forum, as indicated above.

   A listing of the forum's discussion topics (also known as threads) is displayed, with the most recent updated topic at the top. For each topic, information is displayed, such as the participant who started the topic, the amount of messages (replies) within that topic, along with the information on the most recent message (the participant's name and post date).

2. To view a topic, click its title under **Discussion**. You will now see all postings made in that discussion topic.

## Study-unit Q&A

Forum   Don't track unread posts

This is the place where we can post questions about the course. If you see a question that you can answer, please go ahead and reply. We need to ensure that no question or request for help goes unanswered.

Search forums   🔍   **Add discussion topic**

Discussion	Started by	Last post ↓	Replies ✔
Unable to view Panopto recording	Dummy Stud... 5 Oct 2023	Dummy Stud... 5 Oct 2023	2
Timetable query	Dummy Stud... 11 Oct 2022	Dummy Stud... 11 Oct 2022	1

3. A discussion topic may be displayed in four different ways. Click the drop-down menu at the top of the discussion thread to select a display type. By default, a thread displays replies in nested form.

> Display replies in nested form ⇳
> Display replies flat, with oldest first
> Display replies flat, with newest first
> Display replies in threaded form
> Display replies in nested form

- **Display replies flat, with oldest first** - The discussion will be displayed in one line and in chronological order from the oldest to the newest

- **Display replies flat, with newest first** - The discussion is displayed in one line and in chronological order from the newest to the oldest

- **Display replies in threaded form** - Only one post is displayed (normally being the one starting the discussion). Replies are reduced to the headlines (including author and date of release) and indented to the right. Any replies to the same post are indented in-line with each other.

- **Display replies in nested form** - All posts are displayed in full format. Replies are shifted towards the right so that only replies to the same post are in-line with each other.
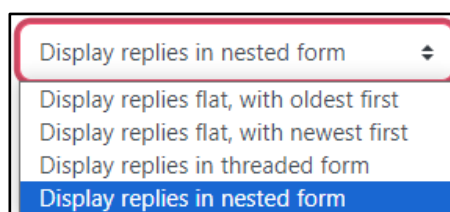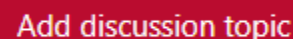
Note:

- With replies displayed flat, the thread's starting post is always displayed at the top. Oldest / newest sorting is only relevant for the replies.
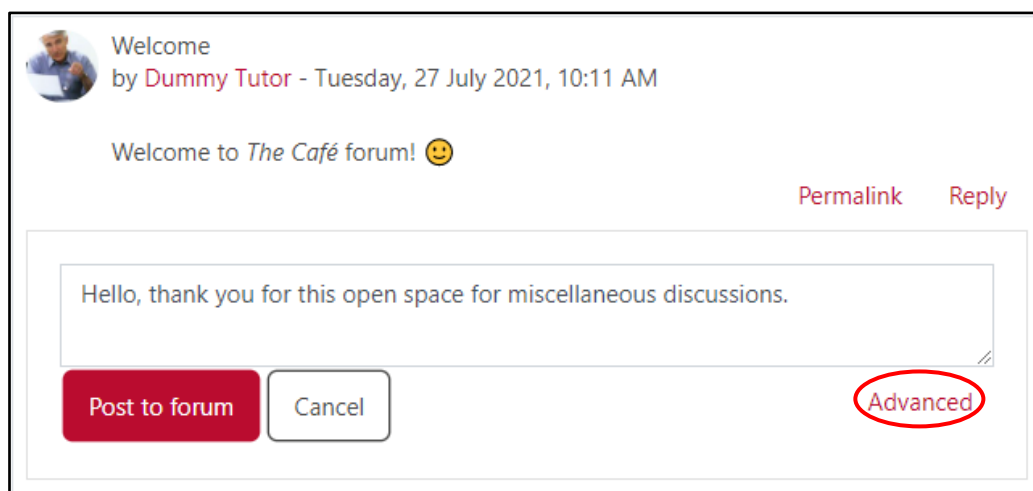
Posting & replying

Posting or replying to a message is similar to composing an email. You can start a new topic by clicking the **Add discussion topic** button (if available) on the forum's main page.

Add discussion topic

In most cases you will be replying to an existing post.

1. Click the **Reply** link (allocated at the bottom right of each post) to reply to a message.

2. Edit the **Subject** field if required.

3. Type in the content of your reply in the **Message** text box.

4. Optionally, you may attach a file (e.g. MS Word document, PDF, etc.) to your reply by dragging it from your computer to the designated 'drag-and-drop' upload area. Note that to attach a file you must first click the **Advanced** link.
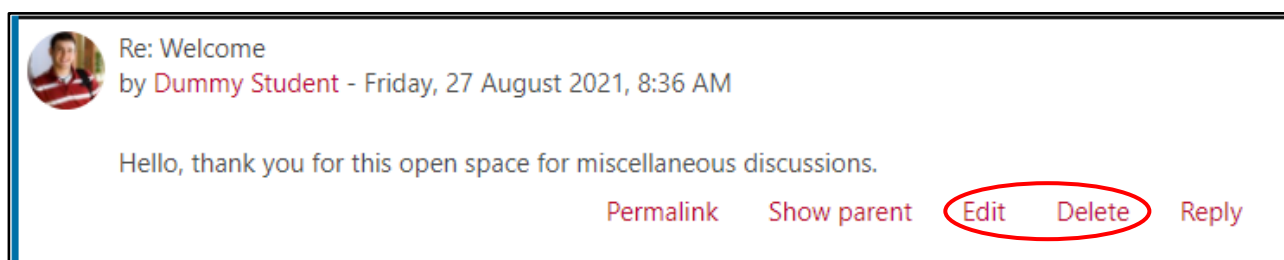
5. Click the **Post to forum** button.

After posting your message, you are given a 30-minute time window to edit or delete your post. This is very helpful if you hit the **Post to forum** button too soon or spot a mistake after posting. Links to **Edit** or **Delete** your post are available at the bottom of your submitted post for the 30-minute period.


Note:

- When you copy text from MS Word and paste this to the editor, it is suggested that you then press the **Clear formatting** I_x button (available within the *Format* menu) to remove unnecessary HTML tags.

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Forum subscriptions

You are also given the option to manage forum subscriptions.

When subscribed to a forum, you will receive an email message in your University / JC mailbox each time somebody posts a message or a reply. This makes it easy to keep track of what's happening in the forums without constantly logging in. By default, such email messages are sent 30-45 minutes after the post is made in a forum.

To subscribe to a forum you are currently viewing, click the **Subscribe to forum** button.
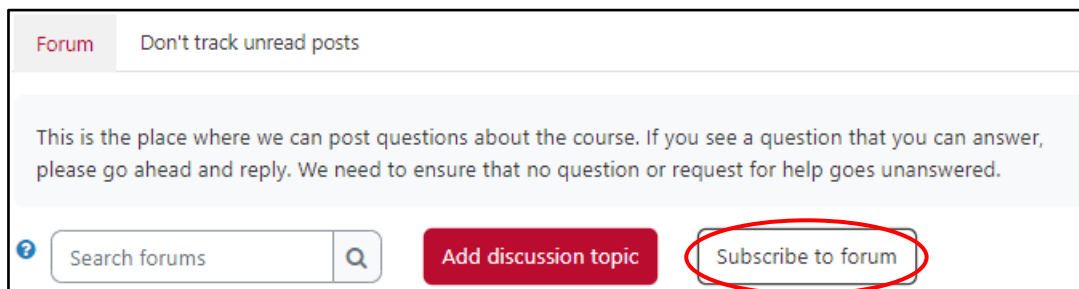
Subscribe to individual discussions

In a forum with *Optional* or *Auto subscription*, you can also choose which discussions to subscribe to. It is not necessary to receive emails for all distinct threads within a particular forum. To subscribe to a particular discussion, click the toggle icon ⬜ available under the **Subscribe** heading. When the toggle icon is red 🔴, it indicates that you are subscribed. To unsubscribe from a particular discussion, click the toggle button.

Enabling email digests

By default, the VLE will send an email message for every forum post. Although preferred by some users, others might get overwhelmed by all the messages cluttering their mailbox, especially if subscribed to multiple forums.

For this reason, you may enable email digests for your profile, so that the VLE only sends one email a day. This email, which is typically received after 1700hrs (Central European Time), will include all the new posts made throughout the past 24hrs in forums you are subscribed to in all your VLE areas.

To enable/change the email digests:

1. Click your **User** menu (top-right corner).
2. Select **Preferences**. The *Preferences* page will be displayed.
3. Click the **Forum preferences** link.
4. From the **Email digest type**, select your preferred option.
5. Click the **Save changes** button.

Announcements forum

The *Announcements* forum is a special forum for general announcements. This forum is automatically created for each VLE area and, by default, it is placed in the top of the contents section.

Only your tutors may add posts or reply to posts in the *Announcements* forum. By default, all participants in a VLE area are subscribed to the *Announcements* forum, thus all will receive an email message in their University / JC mailbox.