

While there are just a few settings that need to be considered when you create a forum—Availability, Attachments, Grading, and Common Module Settings—you may find other settings useful in managing forums. See this [guide to creating forums](#) to review basic settings.

Locking and Blocking

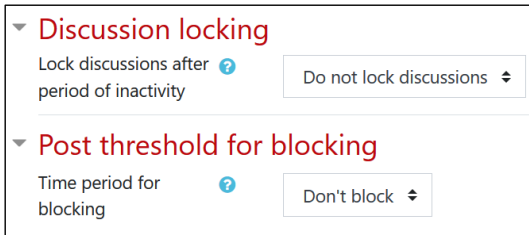


Figure 1: Locking and Blocking

In 99.9% of cases, you will have no need of either of these functions! *Discussion locking* only pertains to inactivity, not to due dates. Setting a *Threshold for blocking* provides a method of blocking students who would otherwise dominate a forum by over-posting. Setting a time period for blocking opens options for how many posts to allow before preventing a student from making a post and/or sending a warning that the threshold is looming.

Subscription and Tracking

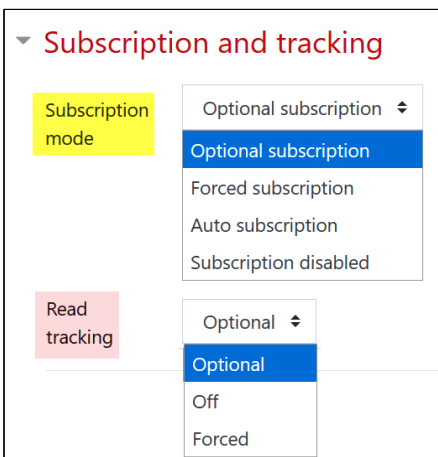


Figure 2: Subscription and Tracking

If you are subscribed to a forum, once you have posted a message to it, you'll receive an email message for each subsequent response posted in the forum. *Optional subscription* leaves it up to each participant to choose if they wish to subscribe, while *Forced subscription* is mandatory and cannot be undone by the student (not recommended, in most cases). The *Auto subscription* mode subscribes everyone, but allows students to unsubscribe if they wish. *Disabling subscription* disallows anyone from subscribing.

Read tracking displays a highlighted count on the course page of new messages that have not yet been read by a user. The *Optional* setting leaves it up to the user to decide if they want new messages flagged. The *Off* and *Forced* settings allow you to make the decision for all users, regardless of their personal preference.

Turnitin Plagiarism Service

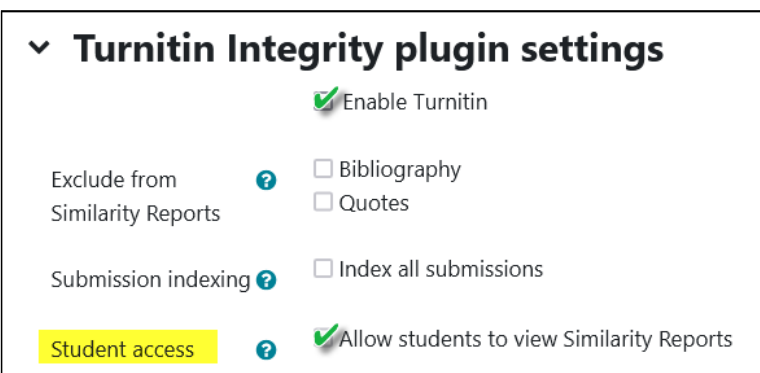


Figure 3: Turnitin Options

Forum posts can be checked for originality by activating Turnitin (Figure 3). *Allowing students to view Similarity Reports* is recommended so that students can verify that they are correctly citing any sources.

Learn more about [Turnitin](#).

Restrict Access

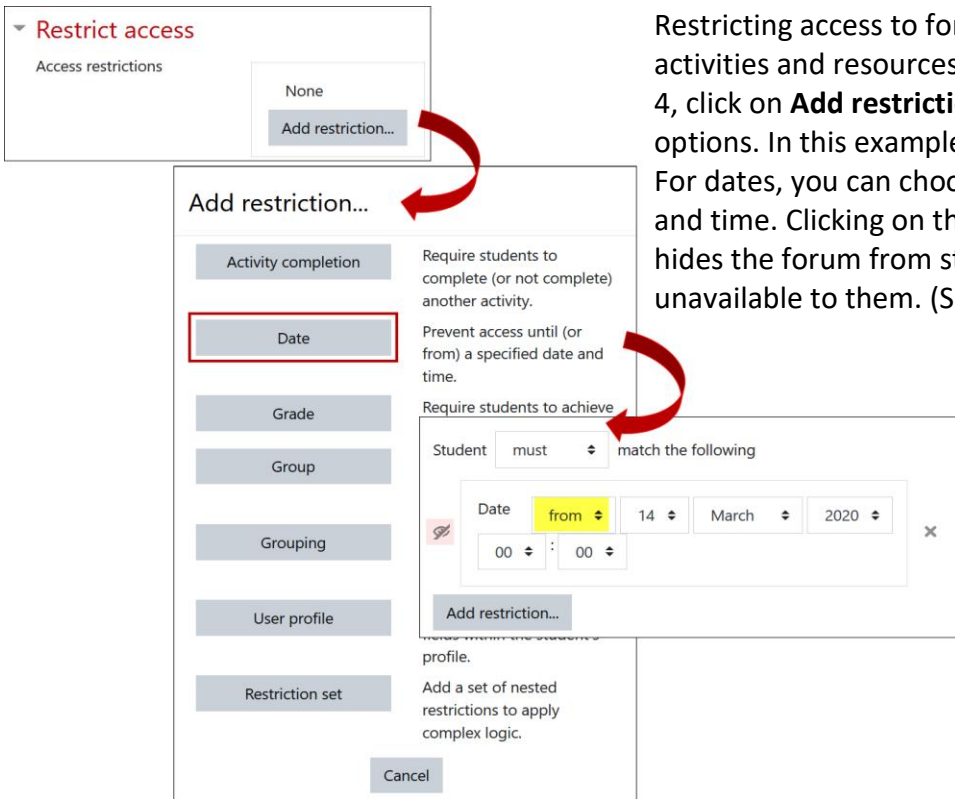


Figure 4: Restrict Access by Date

Restricting access to forums works as it does for all other activities and resources in Moodle. As shown here in Figure 4, click on **Add restriction** to display and select restriction options. In this example, a *Date* restriction has been created. For dates, you can choose either **until** or **from** a specific date and time. Clicking on the eyeball to the left of the restriction hides the forum from students as well as making it unavailable to them. (See Figure 6 below.)

Note: With forums, it's important to understand that restricting access affects students' ability to open the forum from the course page, **not** their ability to make a new post. Restricting the forum makes the entire forum unavailable, not just reply links. Use the cut-off date option in the *Availability* options area to eliminate new posts.

Activity Completion

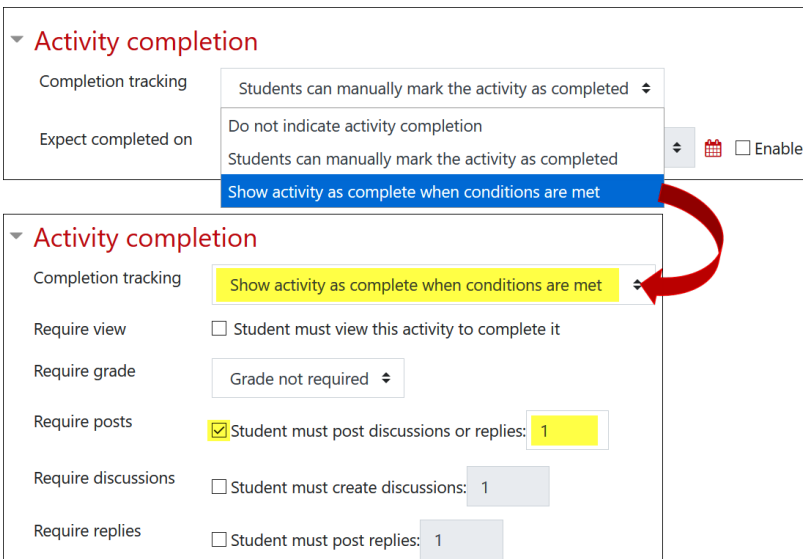


Figure 5: Conditional Completion Tracking

One of the most useful features for any Moodle activity is setting conditions for completion (Figure 5). By default, students can check off a completion box. Setting conditions for completion tracking ensures that students have actually done something in order for the completion box to be checked off.

For forums, required conditions include posting a number of discussions or replies, creating initial discussion threads, and/or making replies.

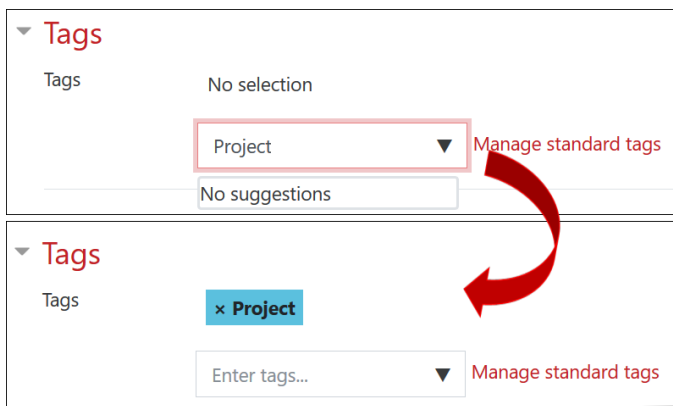
The requirement will be displayed on the course main page and inside the forum when it's opened (Figure 6). Learn more about [completion tracking](#). Make your life easier by [identifying your own default conditions](#) for forums in a given course and skip this step for any forum you create in that course.



Figure 6: Forum Displayed on Course Page

Forum Advanced Settings

Tags



The screenshot shows two stages of the Moodle Tags settings. In the top stage, the 'Tags' field is empty with 'No selection' and 'No suggestions' displayed. A red box highlights the 'Project' dropdown menu, and a red arrow points to the 'Manage standard tags' link. In the bottom stage, the tag 'Project' has been added, shown as a blue pill with an 'x' icon. The input field now contains 'Enter tags...' and the 'Manage standard tags' link is still visible.

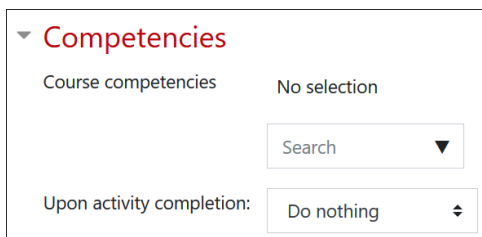
Figure 7: Tags

Moodle allows you to provide links to resources and activities by using **Tags**. If you tag an item with an appropriate key word (or words) and add a *Tags block* in your course, the tag will appear in the block. Clicking on a key word in the block will display links to all of the items in your course that you have tagged with that key word.

To add a tag, type the key word(s) in the **Tags** field, then press **Enter**. Add more tags or scroll down to save your settings.

Learn more about [tags](#).

Competencies



The screenshot shows the Moodle Competencies settings. It includes a 'Course competencies' section with a 'No selection' dropdown and a 'Search' dropdown. Below that, the 'Upon activity completion:' section has a dropdown menu set to 'Do nothing'.

Figure 8: Competencies Options

Competencies are an advanced feature that has not been implemented site-wide. Contact the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning for more information.

See these additional guides to working with forums:

- [Create a Forum](#)
- [Forum Types](#)
- [Whole Forum Grading](#)
- [Ratings Forum Grading](#)
- [Managing Forums for Groups](#)
- [Tips for Forums](#)