# Gradebook Set-up: Unweighted Grades

Moodle's gradebook offers an excellent way of communicating to students how well they are doing in your course. It is also an efficient way to manage grades and makes calculating final grades a snap. Graded activities that you create in Moodle are automatically added to the gradebook, making it even easier to record grades.
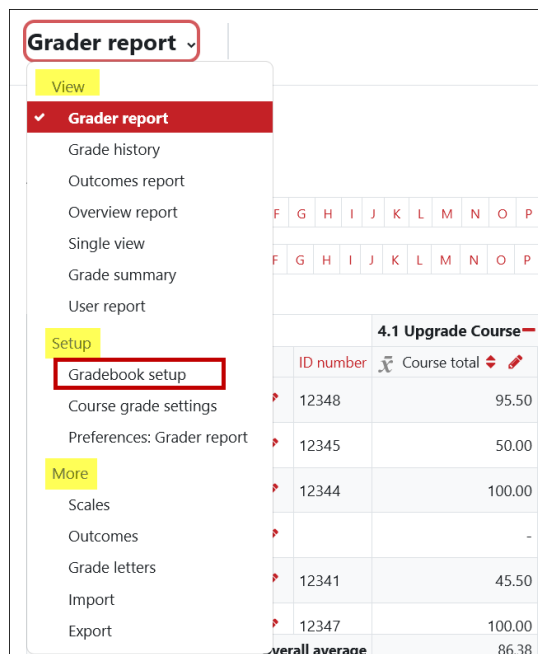
If you don't weight your grades, setting up your course gradebook is very easy. Each point assigned to an item in your gradebook carries the same weight as every other point. Moodle refers to this as "Natural" grading.

Getting Started: Access the Gradebook

To get to your gradebook, click on the **Grades** link at the top of your course page.
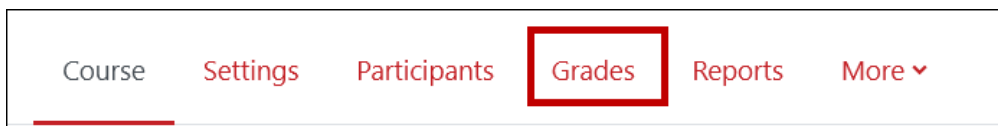

Create Categories

In the gradebook, use the pull-down menu in the upper left corner to locate the **Gradebook setup** link. We recommend creating categories to organize the graded activities in your course.

Click on **Add category** to create the first kind of activity that you plan to grade. In the **New category** dialog box, enter a name for the category. **TIP**: Keep both category and item names short—the length of each name sets the column width in the gradebook.

The **Aggregation** field indicates how scores will be calculated in the category. By default, new categories are set for *Simple weighted mean of grades*. Use the pull-down menu to select **Natural**, then **Save changes**—you don't need to adjust any of the other default settings.
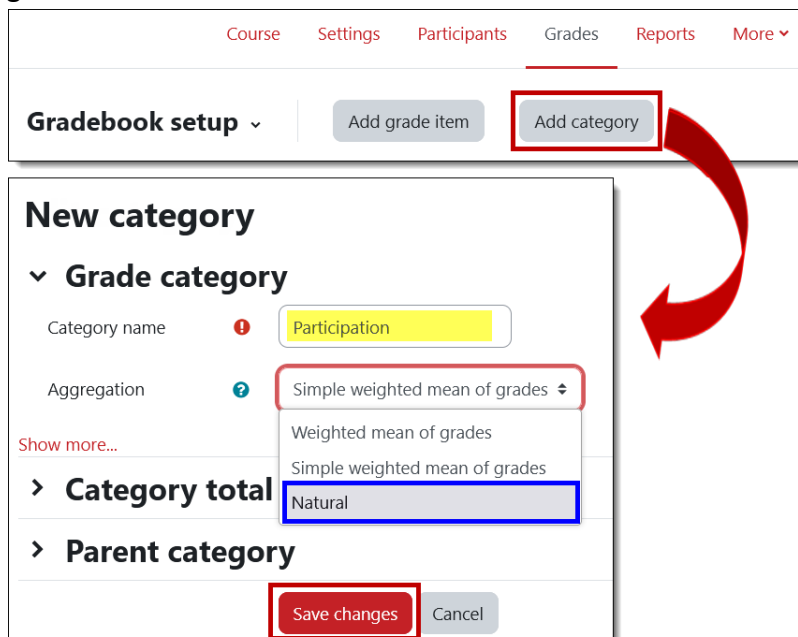
Repeat these steps until all types of activities that you intend to grade are represented.

When you're done, the gradebook might look something like the example on the following page.

Move icons. To reposition a category or item, **click** on its related move icon (they don't drag and drop, unfortunately!), then select the location where you want the element to go and click in the row.

Weights. *Don't panic when you see fields in your gradebook for weights!* You are not weighting your grades—Moodle is just showing you how much each item contributes to the course total. These numbers will change throughout the term as graded items are added to the course.

Course total Edit link. To make a change in the course aggregation method or adjust how total grades are displayed, use this topmost **Edit** link. The other, bolded link is misleading—all you can do with any **bolded Edit** link is hide the category (and all it contains). In the **Grade display type** field, choose **Real (letter)** to show the current letter grade along with the total points earned.

Category Edit links. The edit links associated with categories allow you to change the name of a category or adjust the aggregation method or display style. As with the course total link, the unbolded Edit links allow you to make changes to the category while the **bold Edit links** only offer show/hide options.

Select boxes. Every element in your gradebook will have a selection box associated with it in the **Select** column. When you select an item, you can use the **Move selected items to** option at the bottom of the page to relocate the item to another category (see next page).

Note that the course total is zero at this point—as you create graded items in your course, the total points in your course will increase. (Be sure to see the note at the end of these instructions regarding what students see when they check their grades.)

Assigning Items to Categories

Graded items created from the **Add an activity or resource...** link (such as quizzes, assignments, and forums) will automatically be entered in the grade book as you create them. Now that you have categories set up, you can assign a graded activity to a category as you add it to your course. In the **Grade** options area, use the pull-down menu in the **Grade category** field to assign an item to the appropriate category.
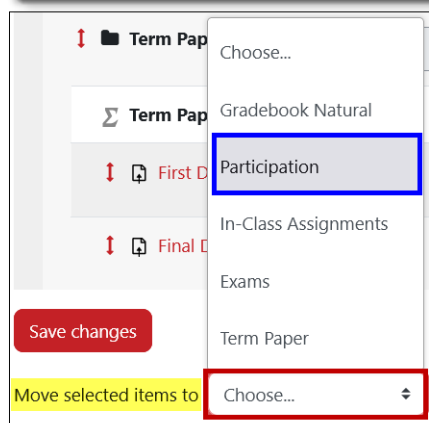
Rearranging Items

Creating categories when you already have items in your gradebook can present a minor challenge. Looking at the illustration below, at first glance, it looks like the Attendance item is part of the **Participation** category because it's right beneath it. Actually, the **Participation** category has no items in it and the Attendance link is stranded on its own without being assigned to a category. How can you tell? If you look closely, you'll see that both of the **Move** icons are vertically aligned—that means both items are at the same level in the gradebook hierarchy. We need to move that Attendance link into the **Participation** category.

It's easy to move existing grade items where they belong:

1. Click in the **selection box** in the righthand column of any item you wish to move.

2. Scroll down to the **Move selected items to** field at the bottom of the page, then use the pull-down menu to select the **category** where you want the item to go.

Moodle will move the item automatically—you don't need to click on anything else to move it.

Note: Click on **Continue** any time the **Recalculating grades** notice appears.
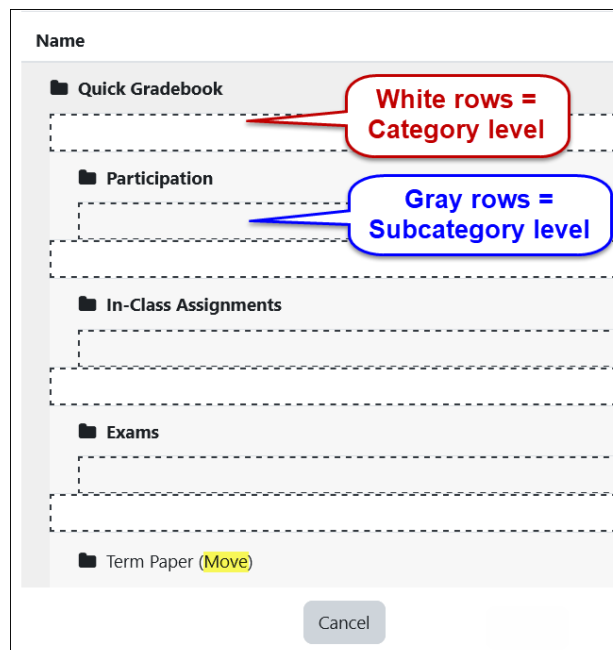
Once the item has been moved to its category, it will appear indented beneath the category total as shown in the lowest image of the illustration at left, and the category total will reflect the addition of the item.

Rearranging Categories

Speaking of moving, you might find that you need to rearrange the categories in your gradebook.

To reposition a category, click on the **Move** icon to the left of the category name. You'll see a series of rows throughout the gradebook. Click on the row that represents the postion where you want the category to appear. (Choose the row carefully—placing a category in a gray row below another category transforms it into a subcategory.) In a moment, you'll see the category in its new position.

You can also reposition an individual item within a category by using its move icon and selecting its destination.

Creating "Manual" Items

To enter grades for an assignment that isn't associated with an activity link in Moodle, create a *manual grade item*. In the **Gradebook setup** page, click on **Add grade item**.

- Enter a **name** for the item and the ==maximum== number of points possible (up to 500).
- Check the box for **Extra credit** if appropriate. (Learn more about extra credit in Moodle.)
- In the **Grade category** field, use the pull-down menu to select the category that represents the activity.
- **Save changes**.

Manual grade items are represented by a open black box as shown in this example.

Note that the **Edit** link for the new item has a **Duplicate** option!

Change the Points Set for an Item

There are two ways to adjust the total possible for a graded item, depending on where the item was created:

1. For activities like assignments, forums, and quizzes, changes must be made on the main course page where they were created. (**TIP**: Click on the activity name to open it from the gradebook rather than going back to the course main page and looking for it.) See these instructions for adjusting points for assignment links.
2. Items created in the gradebook manually can only be changed in the gradebook.

Note: Total points possible for *Attendance* activity links **cannot** be adjusted if you have taken attendance for a session. Contact the CATL for assistance if you find yourself in this situation.

The illustration on the next page shows what your gradebook might look like after adding graded activities and a manual item to your course.

In the example, the **total points possible** (590—so far) are displayed at the top of the page. (Having the total there means that students' total scores appear right next to their names in other gradebook views, so you can see how they are doing without having to scroll way over.)

As for the totals in the **Weights** column, *just because you can see these numbers, it doesn't mean that your grades are being weighted!* These figures illustrate the actual weight each category contributes to the total possible score, as well as the percentage each item within the category represents of that figure. As items are added and removed during the term, these weights are automatically adjusted to total 100% of the points possible.

Gradebook Set-Up: Unweighted Grades

Your gradebook is ready to go! See our other guides linked below for entering grades, assigning extra credit, and more!

More about the total points possible… While the total possible points *you* see represent all the graded items in the gradebook, in the *student grade view*, the total points possible will change throughout the term as grades are entered—ungraded items don't count towards the total possible (by default). The total the student sees will reflect the total points possible of all items graded **so far** for <u>that</u> student. As a result, you may have students who see different course totals, depending on which items you have graded for them.

Now that you know how to set up your gradebook, you might be interested in learning about these related topics:

- [Assign Extra Credit or Bonus Points](#) — [Sample Calculations](#)
- [Change Points Possible for an Assignment](#)
- [Create and Grade Assignments: Complete Guide](#)
- [Display Letter Grades in Gradebook](#)
- [Download the Gradebook](#)
- [Drop the Lowest Score](#)
- [Enter Grades Using "Single View"](#) — [Single View Video](#)
- [Grade Forums Using "Whole Forum" Grading](#)
- [Grade Forums with Ratings](#)
- [Gradebook Overview](#)
- [Set Grade to Pass](#)

Gradebook setup

Name	Weights❓	Max grade	Actions	Select
📁 **Gradebook Natural**		-	Edit ⌄	☐ All
∑ **Course total**		590.00	Edit ⌄	
↕ 📁 **Participation**	☐ 16.949	-	Edit ⌄	☐ Participation
∑ **Participation total**		100.00	Edit ⌄	
↕ 👥 Attendance	☐ 100.0	100.00	Edit ⌄	☐
↕ 📁 **In-Class Assignments**	☐ 15.254	-	Edit ⌄	☐ In-Class Assignments
∑ **In-Class Assignments total**		90.00	Edit ⌄	
↕ 📄 Exercise #1	☐ 22.222	20.00	Edit ⌄	☐
↕ 📄 Exercise #2	☐ 22.222	20.00	Edit ⌄	☐
↕ 📄 Exercise #3	☐ 22.222	20.00	Edit ⌄	☐
↕ 📄 Exercise #4	☐ 22.222	20.00	Edit ⌄	☐
↕ ☐ Peer Review Session	☐ 11.111	10.00	Edit ⌄	☐
↕ 📁 **Exams**	☐ 50.847	-	Edit ⌄	☐ Exams
∑ **Exams total**		300.00	Edit ⌄	
↕ ☑ Midterm #1	☐ 33.333	100.00	Edit ⌄	☐
↕ ☑ Midterm #2	☐ 33.333	100.00	Edit ⌄	☐
↕ ☑ Final Exam	☐ 33.333	100.00	Edit ⌄	☐
↕ 📁 **Term Paper**	☐ 16.949	-	Edit ⌄	☐ Term Paper
∑ **Term Paper total**		100.00	Edit ⌄	
↕ 📄 First Draft	☐ 50.0	50.00	Edit ⌄	☐
↕ 📄 Final Draft	☐ 50.0	50.00	Edit ⌄	☐

Save changes

Move selected items to   Choose... ⬍