

Special Note: Don't be put off by the length of this explanation! This process just takes a few minutes and is well worth doing, but there are several choices to make along the way.

If your course site includes cross-listed sections or if you combine multiple sections into one "meta" course in Moodle, the groups feature can make your life much easier!

How? Here's a sampling of things a group setting makes possible:



- Send **Announcements** to individual sections as well as to all students.
- See just the students in one section when you take roll in an **Attendance** link.
- Manage **Assignments** by section: select one section from the **View/grade all submissions** page to download student work, extend a deadline, or enter grades—without having to sort through all of the students enrolled in the site.
- Create one quiz for all students, but set it up to open and close at specific times for each section.
- Send Quickmail messages to specific CRN's.
- View the grade book and enter grades by CRN.
- Enter events and due dates in the course calendar for specific sections.

Further, if you set up a grouping for each CRN, you can restrict access to one or more items, or even to an entire Moodle module, to a specific CRN group. Dedicating a module to each CRN allows you to post a class schedule, syllabus or other materials particular to that group of students. Only the students enrolled in that group will be able to view and access materials posted in "their" module.

If you are not already familiar with creating groups in Moodle, view this [comprehensive guide](#) available from the [Moodle How-To's](#) page before reading the rest of these instructions. Be sure to review the notes in the Special Consideration for Groups section at the end of this guide to help you avoid bumps in the road.

Process Overview

Below are the overall steps that you will use to set your course up for managing multiple CRNs. Details for each step are on the following pages.

1. Adjust the overall course settings in the course site you intend to use.
2. Create a group for each CRN.
3. Enroll students into their CRN groups as follows:
 - A. For cross-listed courses, refer to class rosters and enroll students in their respective groups.
 - B. For combined courses, add each CRN one at a time and enroll students into that CRN group before adding the next CRN into the course site. Repeat for each additional CRN.
4. Verify/adjust group membership.
5. (Optional) If you plan to maintain separate course materials for individual CRNs or if you plan to use groups for more than just identifying a student's CRN affiliation, create a grouping for each CRN.
6. Apply group settings to activities (6A) and resources (6B).

1. Adjust Overall Course Settings

It's easiest to work in a course with students enrolled from multiple CRN's if you set the course itself up for groups. Having the course designated for groups will prepare the grade book for entering grades by section, and every new activity created in the course will automatically be designated for groups. All new activities created in the course will default to whichever group mode you choose; you can change the group setting for

any item if necessary. In most cases, the group setting will be totally imperceptible to students, but it will allow you to view, download, and grade assignments by CRN. To set up your site for groups:

- Click on **Edit settings** in the **Course administration** block and open the **Groups** option area.
- Set the **Group mode** field to **Separate groups** or **Visible groups** (Figure 1) (see Choose a group type below).
- Leave the **Force group mode** and **Default grouping** fields set to "No" and "None."
- Save changes.**

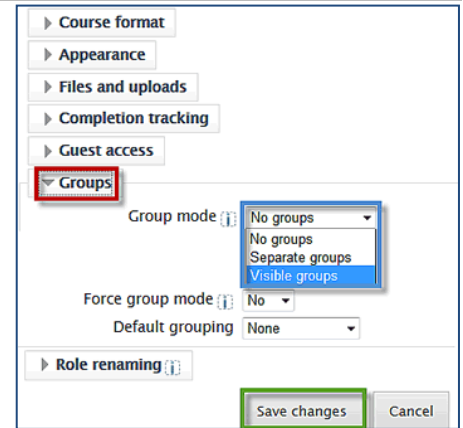


Figure 1: Set Course for Groups

Choose a group type

For most activities and resources, your choice of **Separate** or **Visible** groups makes no difference to you or your students—it just makes it possible to manage student work and grades by section. Which you choose will depend on your needs:

- Cross-listed courses:** If you are teaching a cross-listed course where all of the students will meet at the same time, visible groups will allow students to see the entire course enrollment when they click on the **Participants** list. As you create course content, the only new items that may need adjustment will be discussion forums—for a general discussion intended for all participants, you'll want to change the forum's **Visible groups** setting to **No groups**.
- Combined courses:** If you have combined sections and intend to manage each course independently (where students from one section will not interact with students in another section), separate groups will maintain each set of students in isolation from the rest. Students will only be able to see their classmates in the **Participants** list and will only be able to see the posts their classmates make to any discussion forums.

Note: See page 4 for instructions on changing the group mode for an item, if needed.

2. Create Groups

Follow the instructions in this [comprehensive guide](#) on groups to create a group for each CRN, using the CRN itself or the meeting time as the group name.

TIP: Take advantage of the group description field to note the CRN if you use the meeting time as the group name.

3A. Enroll Users in Cross-listed Sites

- On the main **Groups** page, click on a group name from the list of groups in the left column to select it.
- Click on the **Add/remove users** link.
- Referring to a class roster, select a student's name and click on **◀ Add** to include him/her in the group (Figure 2). As students are assigned to groups, Moodle

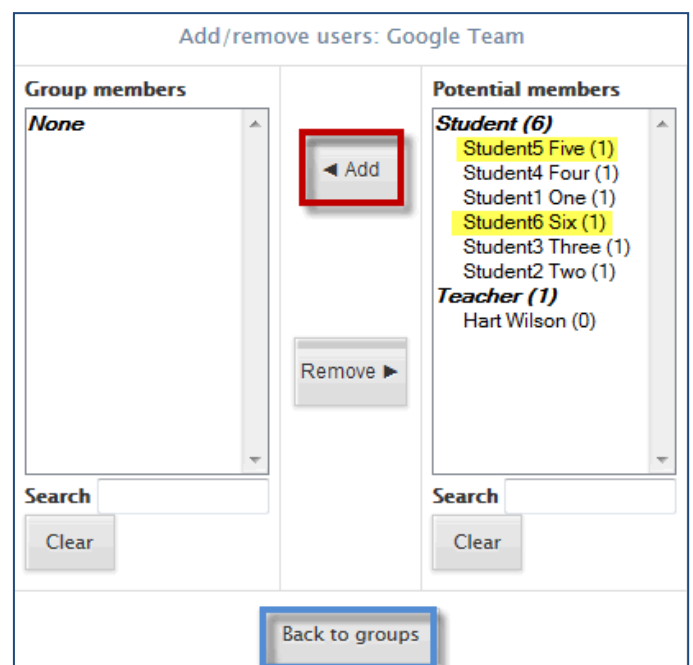


Figure 2: Select & Add Users to Group

will indicate how many groups they belong to (such as (1) in Figure 2).

TIP: To add multiple students at one time, hold the Ctrl key down as you click on each name.

d. Click on [Back to groups](#) after adding students to the group. Select the next CRN group and add the students enrolled in that section.

3B. Enroll Users in Combined Sites

- Before combining your sites, enroll the students in the main course site into the group corresponding to the course CRN. Follow the steps under 3A (above) to add students to their CRN group.
- Create a meta enrollment link for the first CRN you wish to add by following [these instructions](#). If more than one CRN needs to be combined with the main site, be sure to add only one at this time. (It may sound counterintuitive, but adding sections one at a time is where the efficiency comes into this process!)
- In the **Course administration** block, click on **Users > Groups** to return to the main groups page. Note that students in the "home" section all have (1) behind their names, indicating that they belong to one group. The students who have just been added through the meta course link have (0) after their names—they don't yet belong to a group.
- Select the student names that feature a trailing (0) and click on **◀ Add** to include them in the second CRN group. (Hold the **Ctrl** key down to select non-consecutive names.)
- Click on **Back to groups** and verify that each group contains the correct number of students (Figure 3).
- If you need to enroll any additional CRN's, repeat steps b-e above. Be sure to enroll students into each newly added CRN group before adding the next CRN into the course site.

4. Verifying/Adjusting Group Membership

On the main groups page, the number of each group's members is displayed next to the group name. Click on the group name to display the list of students assigned to it (Figure 3).

To add or remove users from a group, click on the group name, then click on **Add/remove users**. To verify that every student is enrolled in a group, click on **Enrolled users** in the **Course administration** block and scan the **Groups** column on the right. Is there a group listed for each student?

Note: You don't need to enroll yourself in groups, as you will be able to view and join in on group activities without being enrolled.

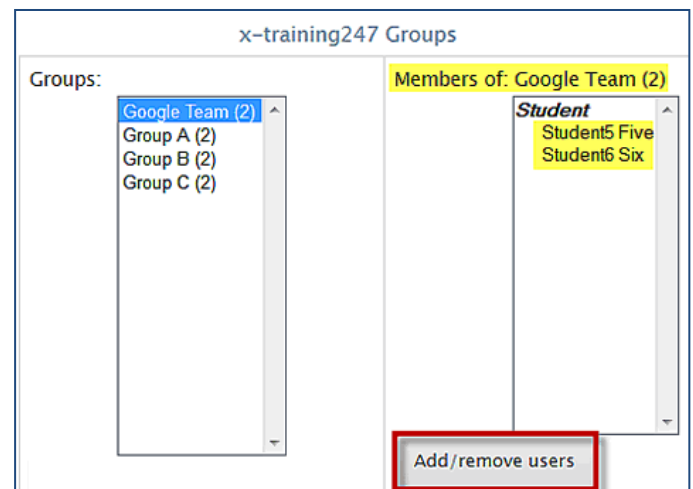


Figure 3: Verify Membership/Add or Remove Users

5. Create Groupings (Optional)

Associating each CRN group with a grouping will make it possible for you to designate course modules, resources and/or activities as available solely to a particular CRN. Groupings will also make it possible to manage small group work more easily. Follow the instructions on page 7 of the [guide to groups](#) to create the groupings that you will need: at a minimum, you'll need one for each CRN (named for the CRN or the time it meets—groupings can have the same names as your CRN groups). [If you also intend to have students conduct group work in Moodle, create a grouping named for the activity (e.g., peer review teams, discussion groups, team project, etc.). Create corresponding groups for the activity as you did for the CRNs in Step 2 above.]

Once your groupings are created, follow the instructions in the guide to associate each group with its respective grouping. (CRN's will have a 1:1 correlation with their groupings, while several project-based groups will be associated with a single corresponding grouping.)

To designate an activity as available only to a particular grouping, see page 8 of the [guide to groups](#). To reserve a section (module) in your course site for a specific CRN, click on the edit summary icon at the top of the section. Open the **Restrict access** options area (Figure 4) and use the drop-down menu associated with **Grouping access** to select the desired group. Save changes.

6A. Apply Group Settings to Activities

As noted earlier, all new activities created in the course will default to Separate or Visible groups, depending on the group mode you selected in Step 1; in most cases, this setting will not affect students.

To verify the group mode for an activity, hover over the item in edit view to display the control icons on the right. Hovering over the **group icon** shown here in Figure 5 will display the current group mode. Click on the icon once to switch group modes, twice to turn off the group setting.

6B. Apply Group Settings to Resources

Resources (files, web links, etc.) do not have group mode icons associated with their control icons, but you can still reserve a resource for a particular group—as long as you have set up groupings as described in Step 5 above.

Open the resource in edit mode and open the **Common module settings** option shown here in Figure 6. Check the box labeled **Available for group members only**, then use the **Grouping** drop-down menu to choose the grouping that you wish to have access to the resource.

Managing Group Activities and Utilities

In addition to the explanations and tips provided above, here are some specific instructions for managing a variety of Moodle features in a combined course site:

Discussion Forums

- To limit a discussion to individual CRNs, set the group type to Separate (see Step 6A). For small group work, designate a grouping for the forum, as well (see Step 5).
- To have students engage with all other enrolled students, change the group type to No groups.
- Any post that you make to "All participants" will not have a **Reply** link attached. Select a group before posting if you want students to be able to reply to your post.
- You can use a Standard forum for general use, Each person posts one discussion, and Q&A forum formats in groups. Single simple discussions and Standard discussion displayed in blog-like format will **not** work.

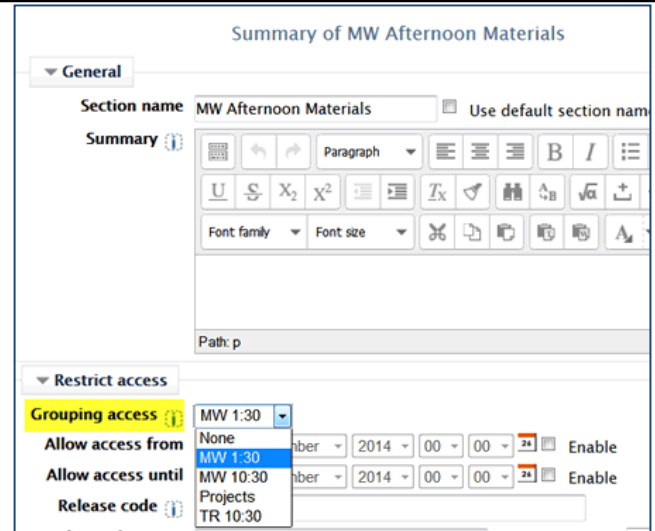


Figure 4: Restrict Access to Section by Grouping



Figure 5: Group Status Icon

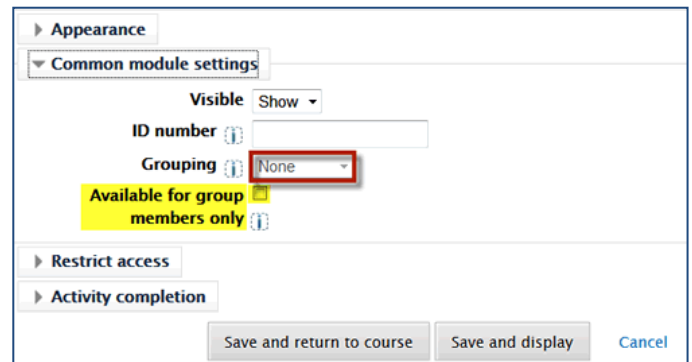


Figure 6: Assign Resource to Grouping

- If you use the Q&A forum format, you **must** select a group name from the **Group** drop-down menu just above the **Save changes** button at the bottom of your post. Post a thread and label it for each CRN so that students know to which thread they can reply.

Attendance: See [this guide](#) for instructions on creating an Attendance link. When an **Attendance** link is set for separate groups, you can add sessions for a specific group. For instance, where one section meets M-W and another meets T-Th, you would select the first group and create multiple sessions based on that CRN's meeting schedule. After saving those sessions, you would select a different group and create multiple sessions for the next CRN. When you take roll, you'll only see the students associated with that CRN.

Assignments: Using a group mode for an assignment allows you to select one section from the **View/grade all submissions** page so that you can download student work, extend a deadline, or enter grades without having to sort through all of the students enrolled in the site.

CAUTION: You can only set one due date for an assignment, so be sure to take this into account if you create an assignment that will be completed by students in different sections. You can either "grant an extension" to a group of students to enforce a different due date (sample assignment **View/grade all submissions** page shown here in Figure 7) or indicate the due date for each set of students in the assignment description field.

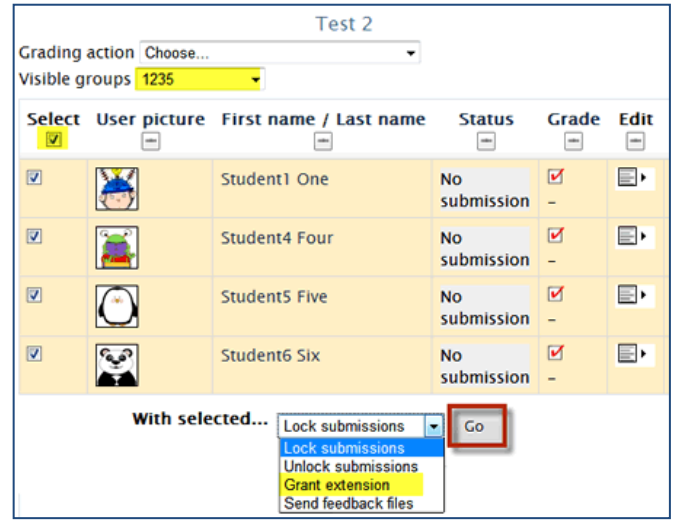


Figure 7: Grant Extension in Assignment

Dedicated Modules: If you set up a grouping for each CRN, you can restrict access to an entire Moodle module to a specific CRN group. Dedicating a module to each CRN allows you to post a class schedule, syllabus or other materials particular to that group of students. Only the students enrolled in the CRN group will be able to view and access materials posted in "their" module. See Step 5 for instructions.

Quizzes: To accommodate different timing for a quiz:

- Open the quiz to access the **Quiz administration** block.
- Click on **Group override**, then **Add group override**.
- Select a group from the **Override group** drop-down menu (Figure 8).
- Check the **Enable** boxes to the right of the open and close quiz date fields, then adjust the dates as needed.
- Click on **Save** or **Save and enter another override**.

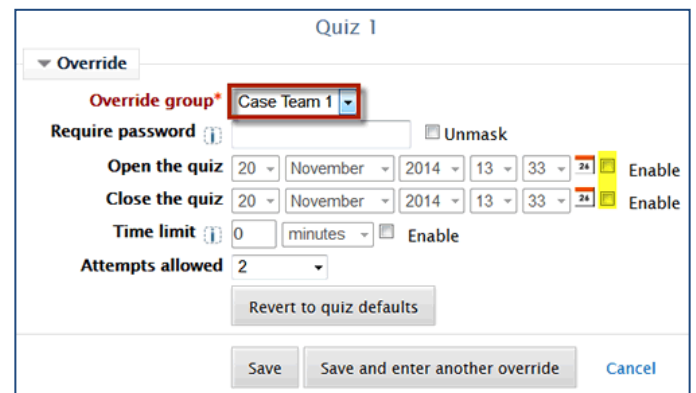


Figure 8: Group Override for a Quiz

Students will see just the dates related to their group; the default quiz settings will not appear in their view.

Special Consideration for Groups

If you are using groups to control access to activities and resources, you need to make sure that everyone enrolled in the site is assigned to a group—if you switch your role to student, you'll find that group-specific items may no longer be displayed because you don't belong to a group. Monitor your enrollment carefully in the first few weeks of the term to make sure each student is enrolled in the correct group.