## Overview

A discussion board forum is an area where participants discuss a topic or a group of related topics. Within each forum, users can create multiple threads. A thread includes the initial post and all replies to it. You can create forums and threads to organise discussions into units or topics relevant to your unit.

Forum settings allow you to use the discussion board in different ways. For example, to control a forum, an instructor creates all threads, moderates, and grades the posts. For a student-led discussion, you can allow students to create new threads with the option of posting anonymously. You can also create "post first" forums where you ask students to respond before they can read their classmates' posts.
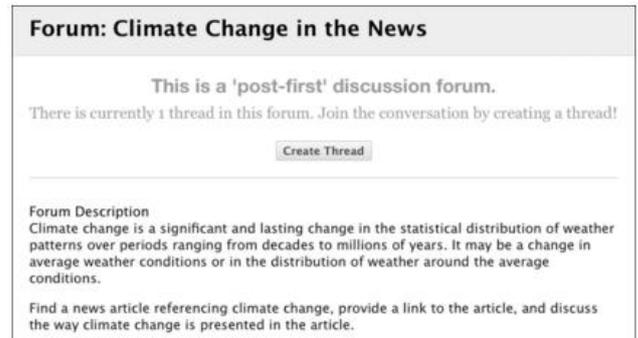
Create a forum

1. From a unit click on the **Unit Tools** in the Control Panel (below the left hand unit menu) and then **Discussion Board**.
2. Click **Create Forum** on the action bar.
3. On the **Create Forum page**, type a **name** and **optional instructions** or a **description**. On the main discussion board page, the description follows the forum name.
4. In the **Forum Availability** section, click **Yes**.
   - *You can create forums ahead of time and set the availability to No until the discussion is ready to start.*
5. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Display restrictions do not affect the forum availability, only when it appears.
6. Select the **Forum Settings** based on your specific needs.
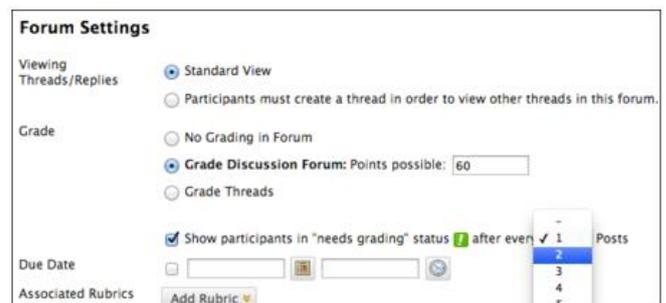
View threads / Replies settings

7. To promote originality, creativity, and a variety of responses, you can choose **Participants must create a thread to view other threads in this forum**, which is the post first setting. Students must respond before they can read their classmates' posts.

   In **Standard View**, users can see all previously created threads in the forum.

8. You can create a graded forum or thread and a column is created automatically in the Grade Center.

- Click **Grade Discussion Forum** and type a point value to evaluate participants on performance throughout a forum.

- Click **Grade Threads** to evaluate participants on performance in each thread.

- If you are grading posts and want to retain the posts as they were at the time of grading, clear the check box for **Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts**.

- If you enable grading for the forum, select the check box for **Show participants in needs grading status** and select the number of posts from the drop-down list. Applying this setting displays the needs grading icon in the Grade Center and places the posts in the queue on the **Needs Grading** page after users make the specified number of posts. If you select a grading option and do NOT select the check box, the needs grading icon does not appear in the Grade Center and posts do not appear on the Needs Grading page.

If you choose three posts from the drop-down list and a user submits two, the in progress icon appears in the Grade Center cell and the discussion board until the specified number of posts is met.

9. **Click Submit.**

On the Discussion Board page, the new forum appears at the bottom of the list.

Email alerts for new discussion posts

When you enable email subscription, students can receive email alerts for new posts or replies. You can allow students to subscribe to an entire forum or to specific threads within a forum.

1. Access a forum's contextual menu and click **Edit**.
2. On the **Edit Forum page**, select the **Subscribe** options:
3. **Allow members to subscribe to threads**: Users can select specific threads within the forum.
4. **Allow members to subscribe to forum**: Users can subscribe to all threads within the forum.
5. **Include body of post in the email**: Displays the message text and a link to reply to the message in the email notification.
6. **Include link to post:** Displays a link to the message in the email notification.
7. Click Submit.

Note: When receiving a discussion board post/thread alert you must click on the link to return to the discussion board in order to reply. Replying the email will not add a response to the discussion board. Updates for discussion board posts can be access from the Global Navigation menu in the top right hand corner of the myBU page.

Further support

- Further resources and support are available in the TEL Toolkit: www.bournemouth.ac.uk/tel-toolkit

- Any technical issues should be reported to the IT Service Desk. (01202 9) 65515.

- Blackboard resources: https://en-us.help.blackboard.com/Learn/9.1_2014_04/Instructor/080_Collaboration/010_Discussions