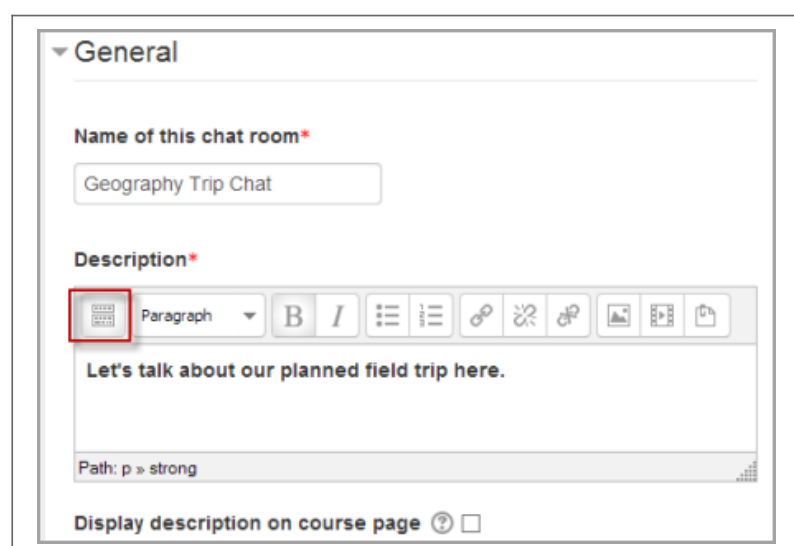# Moodle Chat Activity

The Moodle Chat activity enables participants to have a real-time synchronous discussion in a module. It is especially beneficial when students and staff are not able to meet face to face. Examples of use are:

- Regular meetings of students doing online courses to enable them to share experiences with others on the same course but potentially in a different city (or country)
- A teacher working with students while they are is working off campus
- A student temporarily unable to attend in person chatting with their tutor to catch up with work.
- Students out on work experience getting together to discuss their experiences with each other and their tutor

Adding a Chat activity to your module

General

- In your module, turn editing on and in the section you wish to add your chat, click the "Add an activity or resource" link and choose Chat.
- Give your chat room a meaningful name and provide a description to outline the purpose of the chat activity, when the facility will be available to students i.e. when you will be on the chat. You could also provide some rules relating to chat etiquette.

Chat sessions

Click on Chat sessions to expand the settings and input the time that you will be using the Chat activity.

Next chat time

- The day and hour of the next chat session. This will appear in the calendar so students know the schedule but it doesn't stop them accessing the chatroom at any other time. We would advise not making the chat room available if it cannot be moderated by teachers. To avoid students accessing the chatroom at other times, hide it (with the eye icon or via the common module settings) or use the restrict access functionality in the activity settings – see below for more details.
- **Note:** For courses involving users across different time zones, it is useful to know that the time you set here will be adjusted to match the time zone of the user viewing it.

Repeat/publish sessions

- You can choose whether you publish the times you are available on the chat activity, e.g. repeated at the same time daily or weekly session or just a one-off slot

Save past chat sessions

- Decide whether you will save past discussions in chat sessions. You can decide how many days to save – or save everything by selecting *Never delete messages*

Everyone can view past sessions

- Decide here whether to allow students to view past chat sessions. (Teachers can always view past sessions)

Common module settings

Click to expand this section

Availability

- You can choose to hide the activity until you are ready to use it to avoid students accessing without moderation.

Group mode

- [Click on the guidance here on using groups within Moodle](#)

Restrict access

Click to expand this section

To stop students using chat when you are unavailable you can add date restrictions. Click on add restriction and select Date. Make sure you have a 'from' date and an 'until' date. See the example below;

Click Save and Display to view the Chat

Taking part in a Chat activity

- As you click the chat link on the course page you see three options:
  - Click here to enter the chat now – this takes you to the chat using the chosen site default chat method
  - Use more accessible interface – this gives a simpler chat room without frames and javascript
  - View past sessions – if enabled and the user is allowed to view past chat sessions, they will see a list of past sessions.

Joining in a chat session

- In normal view, the screen is in two parts with the participants on the right, the messages on the left and a box at the bottom into which users type their message and press "Send" to make their contribution:
- Users can change the appearance of the messages by clicking on "Themes" next to the "Send" button. Alongside the default course theme, there are two other available themes. Bubbles or compact.

Beeps

- You can send a sound to other people by hitting the "beep" link next to their name. A useful shortcut to beep all the people in the chat at once is

to type "beep all".

Talk

- If you click the 'Talk' link by a person's name, it will then add their name in the chat box to show your message is directed at that particular person.