Creating a Glossary

This skill sheet will demonstrate how tutors can create a glossary in Moodle. The glossary activity enables participants to create and maintain a list of definitions (like a dictionary), or to collect and organise resources or information. Glossaries have many uses, such as:
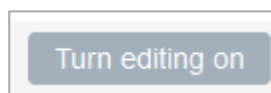
- A collaborative bank of key terms
- A 'getting to know you' space where new students add their name and personal details
- A 'handy tips' resource of best practice in a practical subject
- A sharing area of useful videos, images or sound files
- A revision resource of facts to remember

Instead of creating a glossary on your own, why not have the students create them as they encounter unfamiliar terms? A collaborative glossary can serve as a focal point for collaboration in a course. Each member of the class could be assigned to contribute a term, a definition, or comments on submitted definitions. Definitions can be rated by you and by the students, creating a basic framework for peer assessment. These ratings can then be aggregated to form a final grade which is recorded in the gradebook.
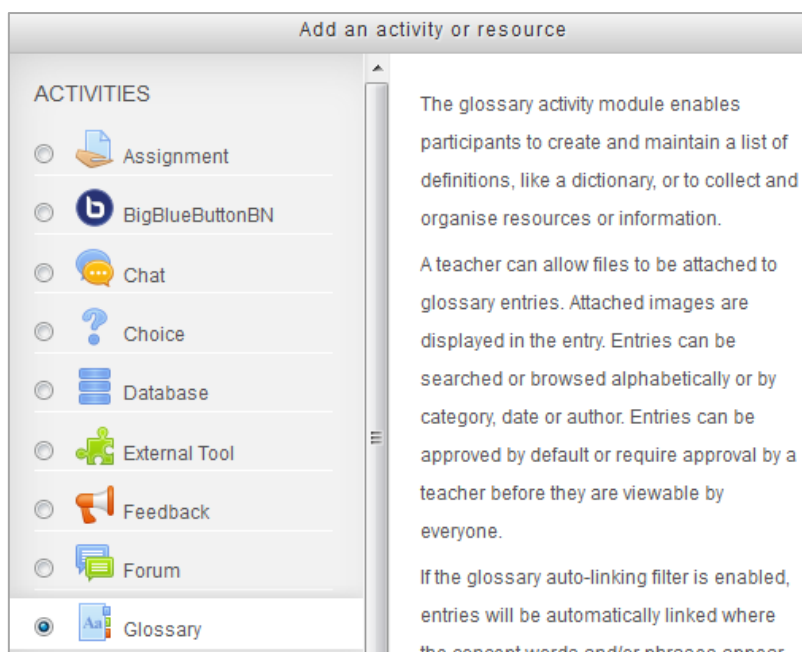
When students are responsible for creating the definitions, they are much more likely to remember the word and the correct definition. Engaging in the process of learning, debating, and refining a glossary can go a long way toward helping students begin using new terms.

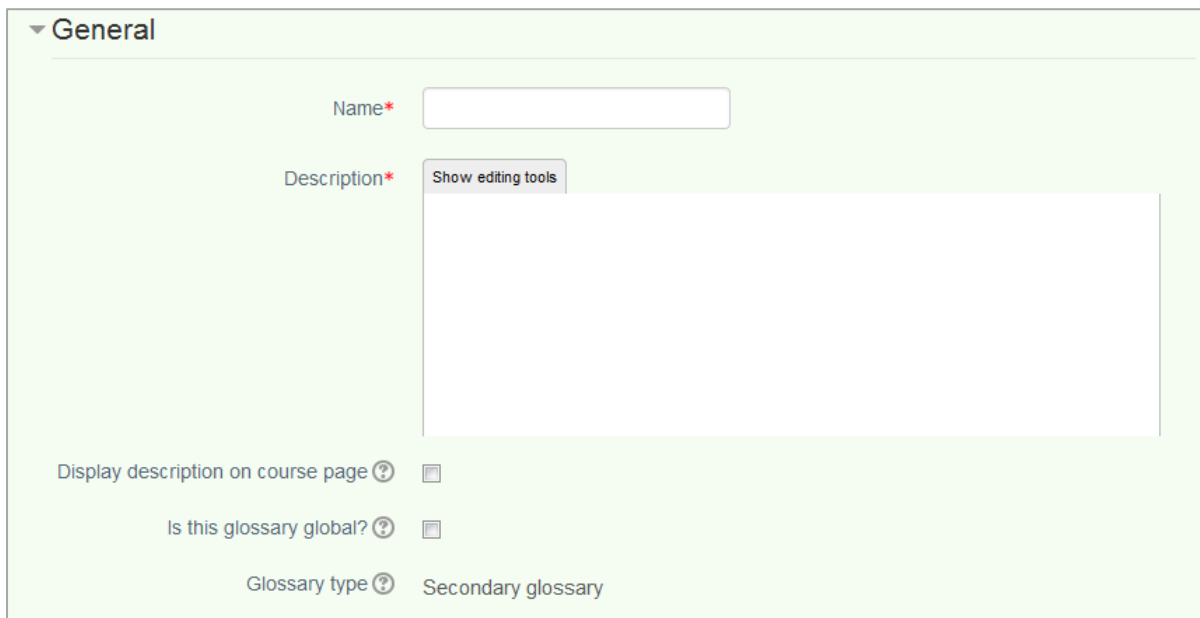Follow these simple steps to create a glossary:

1. Click the **Turn editing on** button (top right of the screen).

   Turn editing on

2. Select the section (topic) of the course you would like to create the glossary in. Now click the **Add an activity or resource** link. The **Add an activity or resource** window will open.

3. Under the Activities heading, select **Glossary** and then click **Add**. This will launch the **Adding a new Glossary** page.
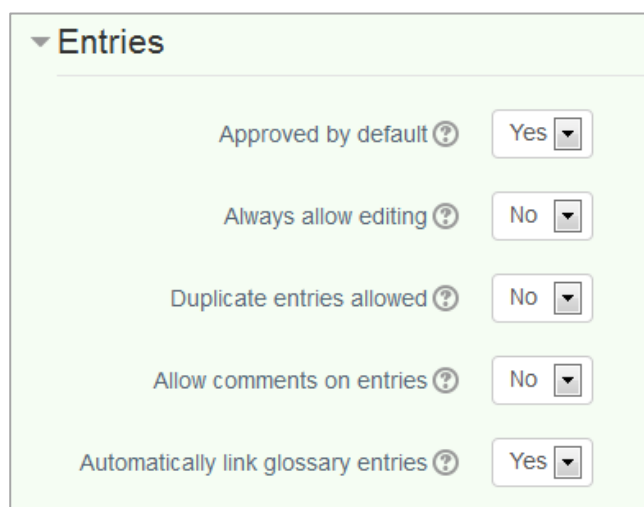
4. Give the Glossary a **Name** – this is the link the students will click on from the main course page to access the glossary.

5. Add a **Description** – provide a summary of the glossary activity. You can make the description available on the course page by selecting **Display description on course page**.

General

Name*

Description* Show editing tools

Display description on course page ⑦ ☐

Is this glossary global? ⑦ ☐

Glossary type ⑦ Secondary glossary

6. Now set the glossary type – you have two options here: a main glossary or a secondary glossary. A main glossary is a glossary in which entries from secondary glossaries can be imported. There can only be one main glossary in a course.

7. Under the **Entries** heading you can determine how entries are managed within the glossary:

- **Approve by default** - If set to no, entries require approving by a teacher before they are viewable by everyone.
- **Always allow editing** - This setting specifies whether entries are always editable or whether students can only edit their entries during a configured editing time (usually 30 minutes).
- **Duplicate entries allowed** - If enabled, multiple entries can have the same concept name.
- **Allow comments on entries** - If enabled, all participants with permission to create comments will be able to add comments to glossary entries.
- **Automatically link glossary entries** – If enabled, the "Add a new entry" form includes the option to automatically link the entry wherever the concept words and phrases appear throughout the rest of the course.

Entries

Approved by default ⑦ Yes ▼

Always allow editing ⑦ No ▼

Duplicate entries allowed ⑦ No ▼

Allow comments on entries ⑦ No ▼

Automatically link glossary entries ⑦ Yes ▼

8. Under the **Appearance** heading you can configure the appearance of the glossary:
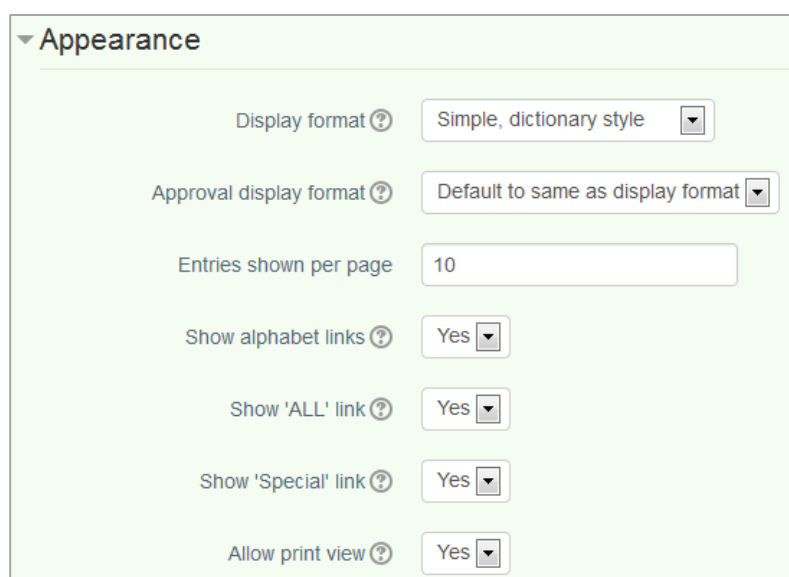
- **Display format** - There are 7 display formats:
    - **Simple, dictionary style** - No authors are displayed and attachments are shown as links
    - **Continuous without author** - Entries are displayed one after another without any separation apart from the editing icons
    - **Full with author** - A forum-like display format showing the author's data and with attachments shown as links
    - **Full without author** - A forum-like display format without authors and with attachments shown as links
    - **Encyclopedia -** As for "Full with author" but attached images are shown inline
    - **Entry list** - Concepts are listed as links
    - **FAQ** - The words QUESTION and ANSWER are appended to the concept and definition respectively

- **Approval display formats** – You can change the format for when you are approving glossary entries

- **Entries shown per page** – You can specify the number of entries shown per page

- **Show alphabet links** – If enabled, participants can browse the glossary by letters of the alphabet

- **Show 'ALL' links** – If enabled, participants can browse all entries at once

- **Show 'Special' links** – If enabled, participants can browse the glossary by special characters, such as @ and #.

- **Allow print view** – If enabled, students are provided with a link to a printer-friendly version of the glossary. The link is always available to teachers.

9. Under **Grade**, you can assign the glossary to a category in the gradebook. If you don't have any categories setup in the gradebook the only option available is 'uncategorised'.

10. The options under the **Ratings** header determine how the glossary entries can be rated. First of you should see a list of user roles that can rate glossary entries. Don't worry if student isn't listed there – we have a separate skill sheet on how to give students permission to rate glossary entries. The other options under the **Ratings** header are as follows:

- **Aggregate type** – The aggregate type defines how ratings are combined to form the final grade in the gradebook.
  - **Average of ratings** - The mean of all ratings
  - **Count of ratings** - The number of rated items becomes the final grade. Note that the total cannot exceed the maximum grade for the activity.
  - **Maximum** - The highest rating becomes the final grade
  - **Minimum** - The smallest rating becomes the final grade
  - **Sum** - All ratings are added together. Note that the total cannot exceed the maximum grade for the activity.
  - If "**No ratings**" is selected, then the activity will not appear in the gradebook.

- **Scale** – The scale which glossary entries are rates against

- Finally, you can restrict ratings to entries within a particular date range. Select the checkbox and then specify the dates.

11. To finish scroll to the bottom of the page and click the **Save and return to course** button. The glossary will now be available in your Moodle course.

You may be interested in our additional skill sheets on Glossaries:

- How to add a glossary entry
- Changing user permissions – allowing students to rate and comment on their peers entries
- Adding a comment and rating glossary entries

Below is an example of how the Glossary activity can be used in conjunction with the 3E element of the TEL Quality Framework.

Enhance	Extend	Empower
Adopting technology in simple and effective ways to actively support students and increase their activity and self-responsibility.	Further use of technology that facilitates key aspects of students' individual and collaborative learning and assessment through increasing their choice and control.	Developed use of technology that requires higher order individual and collaborative learning that reflect how knowledge is created and used in professional environments.
Create a primary glossary of key terms related to a specific academic discipline. Have the entries auto-linked throughout the Moodle course.	Create a secondary glossary for each theme or topic which students have to populate by doing their own research.	Have students rate and comment on each other's glossary entries – students should justify the rating by responding to the entry with a comment. The most highly rated terms get promoted to the primary class glossary.