

Guidance for online course participants: Exploring the EUMETSAT MOODLE PLATFORM

<http://training.eumetsat.int>

April 2018

V2

This resource aims to provide a quick Moodle orientation to all learners of online courses hosted on the [EUM Moodle platform](#), focusing on some of the main features (course blocks, profile, forums and navigation), as well as system requirements and a few tips on how to behave in forums.

1. Get familiar with the course blocks	2
2. Use the “Breadcrumbs” to Navigate	2
3. Customise your profile.....	3
4. Messaging	3
5. Using Forums	3
6. System requirements and recommendations	4

WELCOME TO THIS QUICK GUIDE ON USING MOODLE!

About this guide: This quick guide aims to provide you with a quick orientation to using the Moodle platform in this online course. It focuses on some of the main Moodle features (course blocks, profile, forums and navigation), as well as system requirements and a few tips on how to behave in forums. Have a look at this guide even if you are familiar with the EUMETSAT Moodle platform, to make sure you have a good starting point.

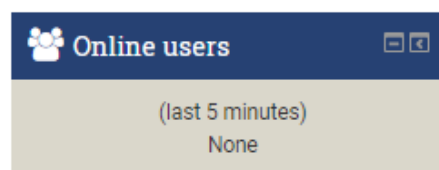
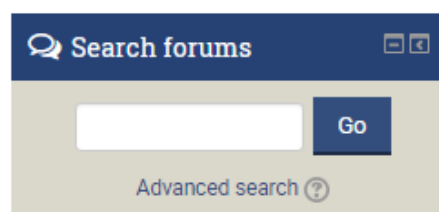
If you are reading this, you are mostly likely already on the EUMETSAT Moodle platform - a course management system that will host the course discussion forums, learning resources and activities of various kinds.

If you have any questions or issues using the platform, do not hesitate to contact your trainers on the course or drop us an email at training@eumetsat.int.

1. Get familiar with the course blocks

On the left-hand side of the main course page you will notice several blocks. One example is the **Navigation** block which enables you to jump from the current location on the site to another section within the course, saving you time. In addition, it will provide you with a list of all course **Participants**. Depending on the course, you might also see additional blocks, such as a **Resources** block with learning material, or a **Course completion** block which allows you to track your progress within the course. Additional blocks you might see here are **Latest comments** or **Recent activity**.

At the top of each block is the option to hide (or "dock") the block. Hidden blocks can be found on the left side of the interface and restored to their original location, if desired.



2. Use the “Breadcrumbs” to Navigate

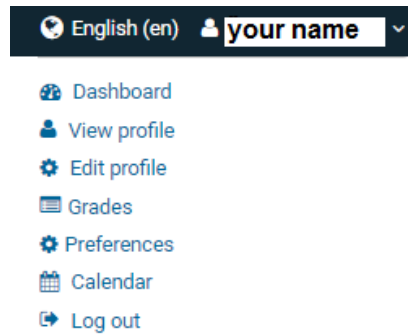
When you navigate around the Moodle site, and within a course, using the “**navigation bar**” is an essential skill. The navigation bar is sometimes referred to as the “**breadcrumbs**” because it is like leaving a trail of breadcrumbs to find your way home. The navigation bar is almost always visible near the top of the screen.

In the example below, you are currently viewing the course forum, and if you would like to go back to the main course page, all you need to do is select the course title ‘IE-SAC2017’ within the red bar which represents the navigation bar.

Your Course forum

3. Customise your profile

On the top-right-hand side of each page you will see your name. Hover over with your mouse to open a useful menu which will provide you with access to your **Dashboard**, your **Profile settings** and among others, a list of **Preferences**. Here is where you can change your password, set your forum preferences and many more.



4. Messaging

On the opposite side of the screen, on the left-hand side, you will notice the **Messages** option, which allows you to send and receive messages within the Moodle platform.

5. Using Forums

Most of the course online communication will take place within forums where everyone can contribute. Unlike a chat room, in forums you do not need to be online at the same time to communicate with others - this also means you should not expect an immediate answer from fellow participants or course instructors.

While at times it is perfectly good to just tell another participant or facilitator 'thanks' for a good idea or that you agree, many posts should do more. The best posts should contribute to the discussion by sharing your perspective or sharing a relevant experience. You are expected to:

- Only post thoughtful responses
- Stay on topic (or start a new discussion, if appropriate)
- Be constructive rather than critical in your responses (remember that readers cannot hear your tone of voice or see your expressions)
- Use respectful, appropriate language
- For technical postings, clarify words that may cause confusion
- Provide timely responses

While the **Course Forum** will most likely be used for general, logistical questions, keep in mind that **separate forums** will likely be used to focus the discussion to certain topics. Help by keeping the discussions focused and easier to follow.

Simply click "**Add a new discussion topic**" to ask a new question or make a statement to the entire class. Remember to **read previous postings and replies to be sure that your questions have not already been asked or addressed by others**.

TIPS

- ❖ You have the option to edit your own postings if you find you have not written what you intended, or need to clarify it.
- ❖ Every time a message is posted in a forum, you will receive an email alert. However, attached documents or images included in the text will not be directly available in the email. To access them, you must connect to Moodle. Also, in order to answer a forum post you received by email, click on the "Reply" link at the end of the message which will forward you to the forum on the Moodle site. Don't use the Reply feature of your mailing software or your answer will be lost.
- ❖ If your inbox is being flooded by forum emails, you can change the Forums settings in Preferences (see Point 3 Customise your profile).
- ❖ Read more on [netiquette](#).

6. System requirements and recommendations

At times, you will be invited to watch a video, open an image or an animations, download a PDF or upload your own documents. Here are some aspects to pay attention to the following requirements and recommendations.

- A stable Internet connection is recommended. The course will work on PC, Mac or mobile devices. You should be able to use any of the most common browsers (Chrome, IE, Firefox, Safari). More on supported browsers: https://docs.moodle.org/dev/Moodle_3.1_release_notes#Browser_support
- Many resources will be available for download. Search for options to print out, such as "Print this chapter" or "Print this book" in the administration block.
- To access pdf, you will need to use a software like Acrobat Reader (<https://get.adobe.com/fr/reader/>) or activate the Acrobat plugin in your browser.
- Files will often open new popup windows. Your browser settings should be set up to allow popups & cookies. Activate also JavaScript, Flash and the Acrobat reader plugin.
- Maximum upload size cannot **not exceed 100MB** in order to save disk space on our Moodle server.
- If you want to share a video, drop it on a site like Vimeo or YouTube, and just share the link. For more than a few pictures, use Flickr, Pinterest, Picasa, etc. and share the link. Videos offered in this course will mostly be hosted on Vimeo.
- We might arrange a synchronous video/ audio conference. For this purpose, we are likely to use Webex. In order to participate in good conditions, plan a quiet room and a headset. Make sure you come online in Webex 10-15 minutes to test your system.