

Discussion fora

Discussion fora can be very useful for reflection, peer discussion, tutor-led/moderated discussion, and 'e-activities' (for instance, giving students a PBL task to complete). WebCT allows three types of discussion fora:

Threaded, where indentation clearly shows the progress of a discussion thread

Blog, where each post can be commented upon by students, comments following in straight sequence

Journal topic, which is private to an individual student and, optionally, the teacher, and is useful for self-reflection or for individual assessed tasks

Creating a discussion topic

Go into **Build** or **Teach** view

Click **Discussions** under the Course Tools menu

Click **Create Topic**

Choose a forum type and press **Next**

Enter a **title** and optional **description** for the forum. You can also set other options in the form, including grading, peer review, how students can post, and whether posts are identified or anonymous, but for a 'standard' forum just leave these as their defaults

Click **Save**

By default, students will be able to see all discussions by clicking the **Discussion** item in the **Course Tools** menu. To make the discussion more visible to them you can create a discussion icon on a page:

Go into **Build** view

Click on **Course Content** under Course Tools and navigate to the page where you want the icon to sit

Click **Add Content Link**

Choose **Discussions** from the popup menu which will display all discussions in the course

Choose the discussion you want to link to, then click **Add Selected**. An icon for the discussion should appear on the page.

Restricting discussions

You can restrict a discussion forum to a group of students, and/or to a particular date range, in the same way as you can restrict any other course item, by creating [user groups](#) then using [selective release](#).

'Demo student'

Q: Despite being a teacher, when I post a message to a discussion forum in my WebCT course the post appears under the name of "Demo Student". How can I post under my own name?

A: This occurs if you post to a forum in Student View. Change to Teach view, and when you post it should appear under your name.

