



Using the discussion tool: threaded discussions, blogs and journals.

Quick guide for all users

For Blackboard Vista 4.x

Discussions refer to a number of forms of online communication. The most common is a bulletin board that allows participants to post messages and responses to form a threaded discussion. The term 'threaded' indicates that a message and all of its related replies are displayed together. This has long been an essential communication tool

The discussion tool gives you the opportunity to have a discussion with your instructor and other students electronically – at a time and place that suits you.

Types of discussions

The type of discussion available for you to access will depend on those chosen by your lecturer. There are three types of discussions:

- **Threaded discussions** – Users post and reply to messages. Replies that are associated with the same post are grouped together, creating message threads that can be expanded and collapsed.
- **Blogs** - A blog allows you to post a chronological series of entries on a particular topic. Other students can then add comments to any blog entry.
- **Journals** – A journal topic is a place for your own writing. Journals can be kept private between the student and the instructor or shared with the class.

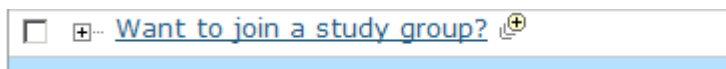
Access a discussion

Access a Discussion by clicking on:

- **Discussions** under **Course Tools** (to access all discussions for this course)
- a discussion icon on a page within your course (to access a particular discussion topic)
or
- a link within a learning module (to access a particular discussion topic).

Open a discussion message

1. Click on the link to open a discussion message.



2. Click on the expand icon  to view replies to this message (the thread).

Reply to a discussion message

1. Follow step 1 above to open a message
2. Click on **Reply**
3. Type your reply
4. Click on **Post**

Create a new discussion message

1. From within a discussion topic, click on **Create Message**
2. Type a **Subject** for your discussion
3. Type your message
4. Click **Post**

Note: if you are typing a long message, it is recommended that you type the message into a word processor and then copy the text and paste into the message box. Using this method makes it easier for you to read through your document and check the spelling before posting.

Create a printable view of discussion messages

Create Printable View allows you to put your discussion messages together into a file that is easy to read, can be saved and printed.

1. Put a tick beside the messages you want to compile and click on **Create Printable View**.
2. The messages will be displayed in a list, with the option to Print or Save.

Need more information?

For more information see: [Using the discussion tool step-by-step guide](#).

References:

Designer and Instructor Reference: Application Pack 2 for Blackboard Learning System – Vista Enterprise License (Release 4) 2006 Blackboard Inc

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