HOW TO ACCESS YOUR COURSE DISCUSSION BOARD

You should use the discussion boards on our virtual learning environment, Vision.

Once inside your course, you may have to create a tool link to discussion boards on the left-hand course menu navigation.

To make accessing your course discussion board as easy as possible, we recommend creating a Tool link on the course menu, the left-hand navigation on the course page.

STEP 1. On the left-hand navigation, hover over the + in the upper left corner.

STEP 2. Select Tool link

STEP 3. Write ‘Discussion Board’ in the name box and select Discussion Board in the drop-down menu below it

STEP 4. Ensure that you tick Make available to users option or your students will not be able to see the discussion board.

You should now be able to access your course discussion board on the left-hand menu.

HOW TO USE DISCUSSION BOARDS

Creating a forum

Forums are used within discussion boards to make it easier for students to navigate topics and know where it is appropriate to post.

When you first go into a discussion board no forums will have been created, so you will need to set these up.

You may want to create forums for different topics, units or assessments.
TO CREATE A FORUM:

STEP 1. Click on Create Forum

STEP 2. Give your forum a name in the Name box.

STEP 3. Give a brief description about the purpose of this forum – what should students post here?

STEP 4. As you scroll down, there are a variety of options for the forum which are self-explanatory. You may want to allow students to edit their own published posts.

STEP 4. Once you are happy, press Submit in the lower right-hand corner.

SUBSCRIBING TO A FORUM

You can subscribe to a forum to ensure that you get notified of any posts.

To subscribe to a forum:

STEP 1. Click on the name of the forum

STEP 2. Click on Subscribe

STEP 3. You will now receive an email when someone creates a new thread.
CREATING A THREAD

Threads are used to group together replies to an initial post, like having a conversation.

STEP 1. Click on the name of the forum

STEP 2. Once inside the forum, click on Create thread

STEP 3. Fill in the information. Give your thread a fitting subject name, e.g. “Question about the essay” and write your message in the message box.

STEP 4. Anyone creating a thread can also read the forum description. When you create a new thread, you see the name of the forum and the forum description.

STEP 5. You can attach any files that you would like. This could include screenshots or documents.

STEP 6. Once you are happy, press the black Submit button in the lower right-hand corner. You can also click on Save Draft if you want to come back and edit it later.

STEP 7. You can now see your thread.

REPLYING TO A THREAD

STEP 1. Click onto the thread you want to reply to

STEP 2. You will now see the original post with any replies. At the bottom of each thread, you will be able to see a reply button. It looks slightly different dependent on whether it is the first post or replies, but the options are the same.

STEP 3. Click on reply.
STEP 4. This will give you the option to edit the subject (by default it is RE: [Original subject]) and write a message. You can also attach files.

STEP 5. Once you are happy with your reply, press the black Submit button in the lower right-hand corner or you can save a draft for later.

STEP 6. You can now see your reply and any other posts on the original thread.

TOP TIPS
1. Subscribe to your course forums, so you get an email notifying you when people have posted. This will help you stay on top of discussions.
2. Encourage your students to post common questions on the discussion board, so you don’t have to answer the same question on email several times.
3. Help facilitate discussions by creating threads and encourage your students to participate.

TROUBLESHOOTING
If you are unable to resolve the issue yourself please contact the IT Helpdesk at ISHelp@hw.ac.uk.