Quickstart Guide
Discussions

NovoEd

Purpose

In a collaborative online learning setting, discussions create spaces for colleagues to connect, collaborate, reach out for help, reflect on their experiences, and support one another. NovoEd allows for both informal, naturally-sparked discussions as well as intentional discussion activities that can:

- Deepen the learner's understanding of the material
- Encourage the practice of reflection
- Strengthen shared mindsets and reinforce changes in behaviors
- Empower individuals to contribute ideas, insights, and expertise
- Broaden perspectives that might otherwise have been limited to individual experiences
- Engage introverted learners who might be inhibited in in-person learning environments

Discussions provide richer learning experiences that can connect learners across departments, time zones, and experiences. Complex topics lend themselves easily to a discussion, as learners benefit from increased community participation and peer-to-peer interaction in these cases. Building a community with robust discussions helps spur engagement and increase communication.

Incorporating Discussions in the Learning Experience

Where do discussions take place?	Discussion Board	Embedded Throughout the Course Content	
		Course-wide Discussion activity	Team Discussion activity
Description & Characteristics *When might I use this option?*	The discussion board contains all course-wide discussions, whether posted ad-hoc, or as a content-page-embedded discussion activity. -For more organic or informal discussions that you do not wish to call out as a to-do, require for course completion, or incentivize with points -For any topics that might	The discussion activity is embedded within the content, and all learners can participate. -For prompts or topics directly related to a piece of content or an activity (e.g. video, article, assignment), -For when you want all learners to engage in the discussion	The discussion prompt is embedded within the content, and learners are invited to participate in their team workspace. -For prompts or topics on which you want smaller teams to engage in deep dialogue in the flow of learning -For when the cohort is too large, making

	not be directly related to the content	-For when you want to either require or incentivize participation in the discussion by making it an activity	certain discussions less interactive or too unwieldy for a single thread; a team can provide a safer and more comfortable space for discussion
Visibility & Participation *Who can see it and contribute, and where?*	All users can contribute and view original posts, comments, and replies. All posts must be associated with a topic; only course admins can create topics. --- *Access*: Via the quick navigation icon on upper right	Only course admins (builder/instructor) can create the original post. All users can contribute and view comments and replies. --- *Access*: On the lesson page & in the Discussion Board (quick navigation icon on upper right)	Only team members and facilitators can contribute and view comments and replies. --- *Access*: On the lesson page & within the team workspace
Setup *How do I create it?*	Go to Discussions > click + to create a topic (category) or an individual post.	Add a Discussion activity component to a lesson page, and select "Course-wide Discussion". *A Course-wide Discussion activity can be marked as a **To-Do**, associated with **points**, and included in course **completion criteria**.*	Add a Discussion activity component to a lesson page, and select "Team Discussion" (only available once team formation component is added). *A Team Discussion activity can be marked as a **To-Do**, associated with **points**, and included in course **completion criteria**.*

Discussion Topic Ideas

- Introductions* - learners to introduce themselves to the course as a whole.
- Help* - learners ask each other and the teaching team for help, both with the course and about technical problems.
- Content* - discuss the course content arranged by topic or by assignment (or both).
- Instructor Questions / "AMAs" - students can directly ask the instructor their questions
- Applying the Course - learners apply what they are learning in the course to situations outside the course. Encourages the discussion of current events or sharing of media.
  *Note: It is highly recommended to include the first three - introductions, help, and content.

*For more best practices and learning design tips for effective discussions, visit [this](#) article.

Explore More

- [Discussions](#)
- [Adding Discussions to Content Pages](#)
- [How to Set up Discussions](#)
- [Team Discussion Activity](#)
- [Navigating the Discussions](#)
- [Interacting with Discussions](#)
- [Managing Discussion Subscriptions](#)
- [Discussion Content Download](#)
- [Learning Design Best Practices for Discussions](#)