

Ideas to Refresh Your Moodle Course Based on the Moodle Minimum Presence Standards

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PURPOSE

This job aid describes the Moodle Minimum Presence Standards and shares ideas to refresh your course.

BACKGROUND

Moodle, Assiniboine's approved Learning Management System (LMS), is the central landing spot for Assiniboine curriculum. Moodle provides administration, instructors, students, and staff with a consistent experience with curricular assets. The central landing point for an Assiniboine course is the Moodle course page, a page within Moodle that is created for a course or a specific section of a course. Where instructors are using a different Learning Management System, the same standards apply.

Moodle Minimum Presence Standards provide a consistent student experience and ensure that students can access the critical information and curriculum assets they need to be successful. The standards also provide a standard for faculty guidance in course design, development, and delivery.

HOW TO

Keeping your Moodle course page fresh, clear, and learner-friendly is an important part of setting your students up for success. On the next page, you will find a table that includes each Moodle Minimum Presence Standard and

- A description to clarify its purpose
- Concrete ideas to help you refresh or improve that aspect of your course page

This resource is designed to support both new and experienced instructors. Whether you're preparing for a new term or looking to enhance your current teaching practices, this job aid will give you practical, meaningful ways to ensure your course is accessible, organized, and engaging. You don't need to make all the changes at once! Choose what fits your context and build from there. Even small updates can make a big difference in how students navigate your course and experience your teaching presence.

This information is available in alternate formats upon request. Please contact cli@assiniboine.net.

Remember: clear structure, timely communication, and a strong sense of instructor presence can significantly enhance learner engagement and success. Let this table guide your efforts in creating a welcoming, inclusive, and easy-to-navigate learning environment in Moodle.

Standard	Description	Ideas to Refresh Your Course
1. The Moodle course page contains getting started information that recommends how to navigate the Moodle course page successfully.	<p>Learners need to know how to proceed when they first access a Moodle course page. Provide clear instructions and recommend ways for students to successfully navigate the Moodle course page and get started in the course.</p> <p>This information can be presented as a welcome message. By welcoming learners to the course and providing context for what they will be learning, the instructor sets a tone for success from the start of the course. The welcome message is an opportunity to establish instructor presence and provide enough guidance to ensure that learners will get off to a good start in the Moodle course page. In essence, this is the learners' first impression of the instructor, and the course. Your welcome message may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A concise description of the course, which includes the course topic and learning content. • Guidance on how to be successful in the course. • What to do first to get started in the course. • How to navigate the course. <p>You may want to include this information in a Getting Started section of the Moodle course page. Your message(s) may be text-based, video, or other. For text-based messages keep in mind that font type and size impact the readability of the text and accessibility. To make sure all students can access the information, consistently use a sans-serif font (e.g.,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the course access memo (see standard #10), indicate to learners the first thing they should do when they enter the Moodle course page. Example: Once you enter the Moodle course page, go to the Getting Started section. • Hold a virtual meeting session to welcome learners and explore how and where to get started in the course. • Create a Getting Started video that welcomes learners to the Moodle course page and explains how and where to get started. • Create a FAQ that addresses questions you've received in the past. • Support successful navigation in how you design your Moodle course page. Visual clues and simple notations, like "start here", and "before you move on" help guide learners through course learning materials and activities.

	<p>Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman) that is at least 12 point. For video messages, upload to Microsoft Stream and enable autogenerated captions. Using Automatic Speech Recognition technology, Microsoft Stream will provide text for the spoken audio. To add your message(s) to the Moodle course page, add a PAGE resource, and then add the message. Make it easy for students to find it by locating it in the Getting Started section.</p>	
<p>2. The Moodle course page an instructor profile that includes instructor introduction, contact information, guidelines for contacting, and availability for individual consultation.</p>	<p>Learners appreciate and benefit from learning who their instructor is. When learners understand the background of their instructor, the “distance” between instructor/learners is mitigated. It is important that learners feel the instructor is easily accessible, and willing to communicate consistently throughout the course. In addition to providing this information in the course outline, including an instructor profile page in the Moodle course page opens opportunities for learners to contact and interact with the instructor. Interaction guidelines can be included along with contact information and should indicate when and how the instructor prefers to be contacted. Include in your instructor profile:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor name and pronouns, and how the instructor is to be referred to. • Instructor Assiniboine contact information. • Guidelines for contacting the instructor (e.g., mode, response time). • Office hours and location (virtual or in-person). • A visual representation of the instructor (e.g., real photo, cartoon, video). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a video that highlights your background and achievements in the field, and relate that knowledge and experience back to what the learners will learn in the course. • Create an “All About Me” instructor page with links to your professional highlights and personal interests. • Include a page that explains what learners can expect from the instructor (feedback expectations, login frequency, discussion participation). This can help learners feel at ease with understanding a particular classroom management style, especially in the online environment. • Give learners permission to communicate directly and set parameters for when you are available for contact.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the instructor's education and experience connect to the course content. • Insight into the instructor's philosophy or approach to teaching this course, such as the role of the instructor in the course. <p>Your message(s) may be text-based, video, or other. For text-based messages keep in mind that font type and size impact the readability of the text and accessibility. To make sure all students can access the information, consistently use a sans-serif font (e.g., Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman) that is at least 12 point. For video messages, upload to Microsoft Stream and enable autogenerated captions. Using Automatic Speech Recognition technology, Microsoft Stream will provide text for the spoken audio. To add your message(s) to the Moodle course page, add a PAGE resource, and then add the message. Make it easy for students to find it by locating it in the Getting Started section.</p>	
3. The Moodle course page contains the completed course outline in an accessible format (PDF recommended).	<p>A printable and accessible copy of the course outline should be posted to the Moodle course page. PDF format is recommended because it is readable and printable (but not editable) and can be used on all devices and operating systems.</p> <p>To add your course outline to the Moodle course page, add a FILE resource, and then upload the PDF.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it easy for students to find the course outline by locating it in an easily identifiable location, such as a Course Information section. • Consider adding a video message, explaining the course outline. This helps provide clarity and interpretation of the course outline for the students.
4. The Moodle course page contains sections that organize resources and activities into a subject-based (units, topics), time-based (week-by-week), or	<p>The Moodle course page should be laid out so that learners can easily navigate and progress through a logical sequence and pace. This is achieved through consistency in layout and delivery of information types in regular order within learning modules. Organize</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create your first module and have a colleague review it and offer suggestions for feedback. Then use this module as a template to create the other modules in your course. • Use meaningful headings that reflect the subject matter covered.

resource-based (resource and activity) layout.	<p>course content, activities, and assessments into subject-based (units, topics), time-based (week-by-week), or resource-based (resource and activity) sections.</p> <p>The key factor in the organization of a Moodle course is page consistency - from the overall color scheme and page design to the layout and structure of learning modules, assignments, and resources. By consistently sequencing online course overviews, content, learning activities, interactions, learners can routinely access what they need within each module, and anticipate where to find new course materials. It is recommended that you include a short introduction to the topic, unit or module, and indicate what materials need to be reviewed, and what activities and assignments need to be completed. Remember to include due dates for every assignment and activity. This will help your learners stay on track! Providing topic, unit or module overviews help learners can stay on track and succeed in their learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a course design style checklist to keep track of consistent styles and content characteristics in your course. If you use a standard style header in one module, this will help you carry the style through to other modules.
5. The Moodle course page contains copyright permissions, if needed.	<p>Faculty and staff may have to request permission to use copyrighted materials from their owners in different circumstances, including those which fall outside of the realm of Fair Dealing. The Copyright Support Library Guide provides education and guidelines on this matter, including when and how to request permission. A template for requesting copyright permission is available in the guide. To store copyright permissions, add a copyright folder, that is hidden to students, in your Moodle course page.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore The Copyright Support Library Guide to better understand how copyright law works and how best to remain compliant in the academic setting.
6. The Moodle course page contains a discussion forum for	<p>A great starting point in building class community is to have students introduce themselves. Providing a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kick off the discussion forum with your own post. This models for students how to self-introduce.

learners to introduce themselves and interact.	discussion forum in your Moodle course page, provides a virtual space for students to interact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and post guidelines for interaction within the discussion forum.
7. The Moodle course page contains an Announcements Forum.	The Announcements Forum is a central place to share announcements with your students. The Announcements Forum archives all the posts for future reference.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the announcements forum to communicate messages to the whole class. Create a communication plan for your course that outlines when and how you will use the Announcements Forum (e.g., start and end of the week post).
8. The Moodle course page contains a set-up Moodle gradebook.	<p>Learners need feedback and guidance to stay on track, especially in online courses. Having a course gradebook that is easy to navigate provides learners with the guidance they need in order to determine and follow a pathway in their course.</p> <p>Online gradebooks provide instructors with the opportunity to automate, customize, and share grades and feedback with learners. The gradebook helps keep learners on track and informed will promote success and motivation in the online space.</p> <p>By providing easy access to an up-to-date gradebook, instructors give learners the ability to check in on their progress continuously throughout the course term. The added functionality and reporting features enable faculty to review and analyze the gradebook, as well as create reports on learner progress and course completion.</p> <p>Learners will also benefit by seeing what assignments and other graded activities they have not yet turned in.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a short video overview of how to access and navigate the gradebook for your learners. Encourage learners to check the gradebook after every assignment has been graded to be sure that they can access their grades and any associated feedback. Note: The format of the gradebook should align with your course outline.
9. When teaching the course, I review, edit, and test the Moodle course page before students access it.	Before the Moodle course page “goes live” it is important to check that everything is ready for the students. This is a proactive way to reduce barriers and remedy issues that may arise later.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily switch to a student role. This allows you to view the Moodle course page as your it would appear to your students. This allows you to confirm that your Moodle course page, activities, resources, and hidden items are set up how you

		<p>wanted. Once in this role, go through the course as if you were a student.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go through your Moodle course page and open all the URLs. This allows you to catch if any URLs (links) are broken or incorrect. A broken link goes to a webpage that is no longer available. You will need to replace the broken link with a working one. An incorrect link can occur when you accidentally use the incorrect URL.
10. When teaching the course, I make it simple for students to enroll and get started on the Moodle course page.	<p>Learners need to know how and where to get started in Moodle. This information can be provided in a course access memo that is emailed to students before or on the first day of the course.</p> <p>Note: To access the Moodle course page, students will need their Assiniboine College computer account information. This is provided in an email from Assiniboine's Information and Technology Services (ITS). If a student has not received their Assiniboine computer account information, they should email the IT Service Helpdesk: ITServiceDesk@assiniboine.net and include their name and student number.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a course access memo that contains the direct link (URL) to the course and the enrolment key. In the memo, explain to learners what to do once they enrol in the Moodle course access page.
11. When teaching the course, I outline expectations for interaction, including professionalism, class guidelines, and timing and frequency of contributions on the Moodle course page.	<p>Expectations for assignments, class participation, testing, due dates, and attendance requirements should all be clear to the learner. Adult learners expect and benefit from understanding the parameters and rationale of the learning activities in a course up front. Outlining clear expectations for timing and frequency of contributions, as well as what type of standards should be upheld when working on particular activities helps learners to be successful and reduces frustration caused by ambiguity. For blended</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clear guidelines for synchronous and asynchronous elements of the course. Reference netiquette information and respectful conduct expectations. Clearly outline the expectations for Forum participation, for example, the timing and number of contributions. Clearly outline expectations for attendance and participation in synchronous sessions held using Zoom.

	courses, provide clear guidelines for in-person and online participation.	
12. When teaching the course, I communicate class announcements using the Moodle Announcements Forum.	Announcements made in the in-person classroom or during live/synchronous online sessions should also be posted in the Moodle course page. This ensures all students have access to important course information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a communication plan for your course that outlines when and how you will use the Announcements Forum (e.g., start and end of the week post).
13. When teaching the course, I upload or provide access to class handouts on the Moodle course page.	Class handouts and assignment handouts provided in the in-person classroom or during live/synchronous online sessions should also be uploaded or linked to in the Moodle course page. This ensures all students have access to important course information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a folder or section in your Moodle course page that contains all class handouts.
14. When teaching the course, I regularly log onto the Moodle course page to monitor student progress and identify concerns.	<p>Monitoring learner progress allows the instructor to provide timely guidance and help keep students on track for success.</p> <p>In Moodle, instructors have the ability to monitor student progress using activity reports. Activity reports help instructors identify learners who have not engaged in the Moodle course page. It also provides valuable information on how far learners have progressed in the course. In Moodle, instructors can also access a participation report. This report allows the instructor to see who has participated in an activity. The participation report allows the instructor to send a message to all learners who have not finished a specific activity or task. Using the information from the activity and participation report, instructors can reach out to students as provide individualized support, as needed. Reach out with guidance and resources as needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a plan for how often you check the Moodle course page. Schedule this time in your calendar or set reminders. Construct templates or statements that can be used as needed (e.g., a check-in statement for students who have not accessed the Moodle course page by the end of the first week). Learn about the resources available to ACC students, so you are able to make a strong referral to them. Schedule progress meetings to check in with your learners via phone or videoconferencing. Collaborate with the Student Success Advisor, Learning Curve, and Library to offer tailored supports and resources (e.g., workshops).
15. When teaching the course, I actively participate on the Moodle course page by	Online instructor presence is active interaction and engagement with learners, that creates learner perception that the instructor is with them during	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send emails or post announcements in Moodle that share important reminders, recap learning, or help keep students on track.

reading and posting in Forums and keeping the gradebook up to date.	the learning process. It is maintained through active and visible engagement with learners throughout the course. Email, forums, and course communication elements provide a great opportunity to demonstrate instructor presence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the discussion forum. • Post a weekly recap that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarizes what was learned that week • Provides clarification on assignments and activities • Responds to frequently asked questions • Remind students of important dates that are coming up • Encourage students and recognize their contributions to the course.
16. When teaching the course, I Use Moodle Forums, synchronous videoconferencing sessions, and/or other digital tools to facilitate online learner-to-instructor and learner-to-learner interaction.	Provide opportunities for learners to interact and learn from each other. By requiring learners to engage with each other, the design of such activities requires them to assume more responsibility for their own learning. This often leads to a deeper level of engagement. The instructor's role changes more to facilitator, moderating and evaluating the quality and quantity of interaction between learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use icebreakers that allow students to get to know each other. • Have learners work in groups to create presentations using a collaborative presentation tool. • Create a collaborative forum where learners can engage by sharing and discussing course-related resources. • Integrate case studies that involve group scenarios into discussion forums. Have learners role-play out the scenario and then reflect on the decisions of their classmates. • Implement strategies that provide elaborated feedback, encouragement, and providing correct answers. • Facilitate focused discussion on course topics. • Create a Question and Answer forum, and encourage students to answer questions if they know the answer.

SUPPORT

If you have any questions, please feel welcome to reach out to the Centre for Learning and Innovation team at CLI@Assiniboine.net

ATTRIBUTION

This work, “Moodle Course Standards Toolkit” is a derivative of "[OSCQR Rubric, Dashboard, and Process](#)" by the [Online Learning Consortium](#) used under [CC BY 4.0](#). “Moodle Course Standards Toolkit” is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#) by Assiniboine College.

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