Moodle - versions, migrations and implications:

what's what, what's coming and what's not!

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was -> is -> will be

An overview of the University of Glasgow VLE - Moodle - the way it is supported, what has happened in the recent past and what might be expected over the next 12 months

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Moodle

- Open Source VLE
- Written in PHP
- Active user community

- Now adopted by the Open University
- Supports learning and teaching in all faculties

Moodle web site (http://moodle.org/)

OU involvement has implications in terms of development direction and speed given the resources that they have.

whilst Moodle is in all Faculties, it is by no means used in all departments

Learning & Technology Unit

Support for moodle

- GUIDE
- [LTC](http://www.gla.ac.uk/learn/) (http://www.gla.ac.uk/learn/) e-Learning Unit
- LTC Learning and Technology Unit

... working closely with the Computing Service as a service provider and with local moodle Administrators

Central Moodle support is now provided by the Learning and Technology Unit of the Learning and Teaching Centre. The LTU is led by James Currall and the Computing Service provides service and infrastructure services to support the LTU, but LTU is the one-stop-shop.

There is a Moodle Administrator community and we are working to develop 'Communities of Practice' for academic and related staff

Moodle: the story so far

2006/7

- moodle version 1.5
- 53 Different moodle s

... and then in June ...

- reduced moodle count to 21
- Upgraded to moodle version 1.8

Reduction in the number of Moodles is primarily to make life easier for students who have a separate 'identity' in each Moodle. It also reduces the amount of time required to upgrade Moodle across the University.

1.5 -> 1.8 : the **Big** Jump

Why?

- Open University development
- Provide stable environment for session
- Single version for all students

Down Side

- Not cutting edge
- Upgrading a bigger job

There were those that were very keen for Moodle to be upgraded every time new facilities were released, but that would leave the platform in a constant state of flux for both academic staff and students.

One change of version per year in early summer will be the pattern.

1.8 -> 1.8.2+ the little jump

Why?

- A set of problems with Roles and Enrolment

Specifically:

- Local admin backup and restore of courses
- Local admin management of sub-categories
- The person 'in charge' of a course
- Messages about enrolment keys

The work to prepare this upgrade and the upgrade itself were essential to give local administrators back facilities that inconsistencies in the way that roles were implemented had robbed them of.

New Features (1.5 -> 1.8)

- Roles
- Database module
- Unicode
- Question banks and quiz improvements
- Moodle Network and Hub
- Multiple groups
- Accessibility

More details of these can be found at: Moodle release notes (http://docs.moodle.org/en/Release_Notes)

This Session (2007/8)

- New users
  - LBSS migration from Virtual Classroom
  - New departments in a number of Faculties
- Trends
- PDP and MyStuff (http://www.open.ac.uk/mystuff/?page_id=4)
- Plagiarism, TurnItIn (http://turnitin.com/static/plagiarism.html) and Indiana (http://education.indiana.edu/%7Efrick/plagiarism/)

A number of initiatives in the University are driving the LTC/LTU agenda over the next year or so, but we

see 2007/8 as being an important year for Moodle.

Trends

- Most students will be exposed to ![moodle]
- More ![moodle] features
- More image, audio and video material
- Questionnaires and Feedback

... ![moodle] will become a mainstream part of learning and teaching in the University (as reinforced by the more general comments in this area made in David Beards's presentation.

PDP and MyStuff

PDP is a 'big thing' across HE and FE and is likely to grow, although at the present time it is still finding it feet as a concept.

In the University, support for PDP is shared between faculties and departments, Learning and Teaching Centre, Careers Service, etc.

PDP and MyStuff

The OU has put quite a lot of money and effort into both Moodle development and producing MyStuff as a response to the PDP agenda.

Plagiarism

Education

Comparing work with a range of sources

Help with gathering source references and citation

There are a number of strands to plagiarism and no one approach will solve the problem.

1. In the education area, each Faculty is to make a tailored version of the Indiana Quiz based on material suitable for their students, the LTU have made a 'copy

(http://moodle2.gla.ac.uk/learn/moodle/course/view.php?id=93)' of the Indiana Quiz in Moodle, as a starting point.
  2. LBSS has been doing some pilot activity in using TurnItIn and this will extend to other Faculties during the coming session
  3. zotero release candidate 2 is now available along with a Word plug-in that makes citation very straight-forward

The Future?

Crystal balls are not very reliable in technology and perhaps less so in open source development.

Future Releases

1.9 (now in beta)

  - Gradebook
  - Events (and other) APIs
  - Tags
  - Improved Question Bank and Quiz
  - Group enhancements
      - groups of groups
      - groups across courses

It is unlikely that we will upgrade to version 1.9 unless development of version 2.0 stalls badly.

Future Releases

2.0 (next summer)

- More APIs (portfolios (http://www.mahara.org/) and repositories)
- Conditional Activities
- Community Hub (http://docs.moodle.org/en/Community_hub)
- Even more Group enhancements

Conclusions

- Activities in learning technology require partnerships
  - Faculties
  - Local Support Staff
  - IT Services
  - Other Services
  - Senate Office
- Moodle now mainstream in learning and teaching
- A stable platform must be provided
- Moodle support needs to be coherent

Moodle Roadmap link (http://docs.moodle.org/en/Roadmap)

Past, Present, Future

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