



Teaching with Technology Tip

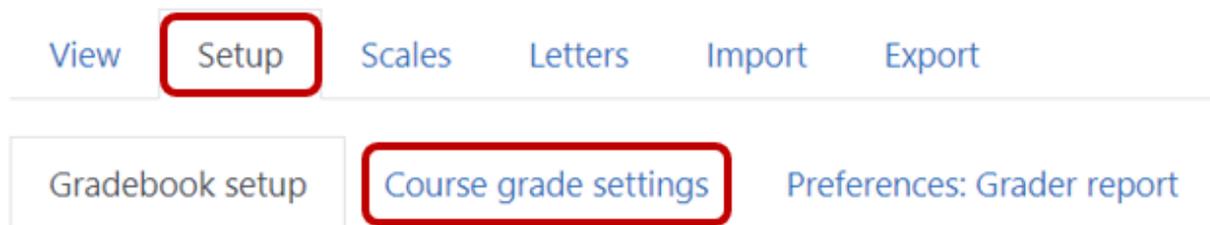
CREATING AN EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND GRADEBOOK

Making the Gradebook a Better Experience for Learners

Moodle offers many options for how we display grades to users. Altering the default settings can often provide students with a better experience—one that's easier to navigate and can more immediately inform students of their progress.

Course Grade Settings

The **Course grade settings** area can provide several ways for faculty to customize their gradebooks to make them more navigable for students. To begin, click on **Grades** then **Setup** then **Course grade settings**.



Moving the Overall Grade Calculations to Where Students Can See Them

Open the **General settings** section. From the **Aggregation position** dropdown menu select **First**. This simple step moves the overall course grade to the top of the gradebook; it also moves the category totals to the top of each category. Now, instead of students scrolling to the very bottom of the Moodle gradebook to know their overall course grade, they will be able to immediately see that total when they open the course gradebook.



Decluttering the Student Gradebook Experience

In the **User report** section, it's possible to change what gradebook information appears in the student user view. Many of these settings are established by default, but can be altered to easily communicate with students about their grades. Below are some recommendations to consider changing:

1. If you are displaying grades simply by points, consider adding a column showing students the percentage they achieved on an assignment. To enable this column, select **Show** from the **Show percentage** dropdown menu.
2. Consider removing information about the weight an item contributes to the final course grade. Especially in a category with a large number of grades, this information isn't always necessary or

particularly useful to students—in fact, they often don't even know or understand what it means. To eliminate this column from the student user view, choose **Hide** from the **Show weightings** dropdown menu.

3. If you are displaying grades by points and/or percentages, consider adding a column that displays the letter grade earned. The letter grade corresponding to a percentage is often the exact information a student is seeking. To add a column that displays letter grades to students, select **Show** from the **Show letter grades** dropdown menu.
4. Consider hiding the percentage that a student's earned grade contributes to their overall grade. This information is a calculation based on the student's grade on an item in reference to the weight assigned to the item. Students usually don't use this information, and they more often don't understand what it even means. To eliminate this column, select **Hide** from the **Show contribution to course total** dropdown menu.
5. If you are displaying grades to somehow include the percentage earned, considering eliminating the column that displays the points possible range for each grade. To make use of this information, students would have to do the math, taking their points earned and dividing it by the maximum possible—which is essentially creating a percentage grade. Instead, simply providing that percentage grade somewhere is a more useful to students. To eliminate this column, choose **Hide** from the **Show ranges** dropdown menu.

▼ User report

Show rank		Default (Hide) ▾	
Show percentage		Default (Hide) ▾	1
Show grades		Default (Show) ▾	
Show feedback		Default (Show) ▾	
Show weightings		Default (Show) ▾	2
Show average		Default (Hide) ▾	
Show letter grades		Default (Hide) ▾	3
Show contribution to course total		Default (Show) ▾	4
Show ranges		Default (Show) ▾	5

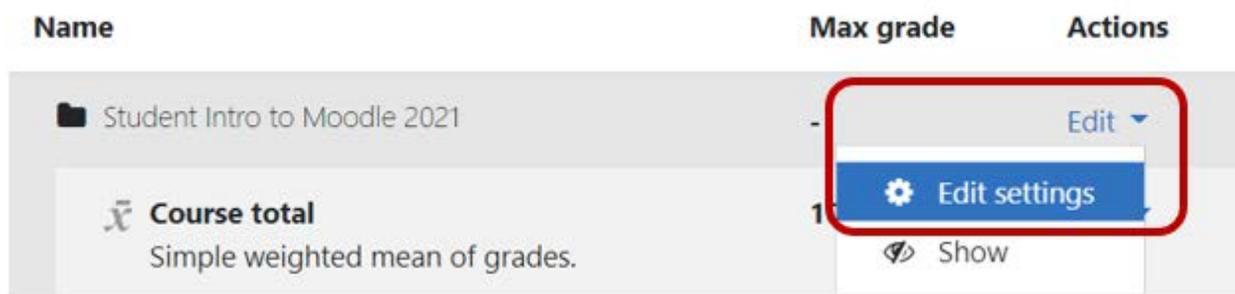
Other Customizations to Consider

You will notice that Moodle uses default naming conventions for certain items within a gradebook, particularly aggregated grades for the course and categories. For instance, the gradebook's name will always default to the course name and the cumulative grade defaults to "Course total." However, instructors can customize those names to better reflect course goals and improve gradebook navigation for students.

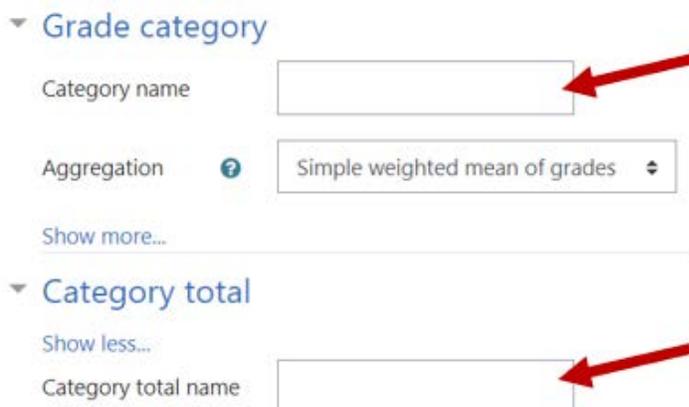


Changing the Name of the Gradebook and Course Total

From the general gradebook, select the **Setup** and **Gradebook setup**. Then from the top-level dropdown **Edit** menu, select **Edit settings**.



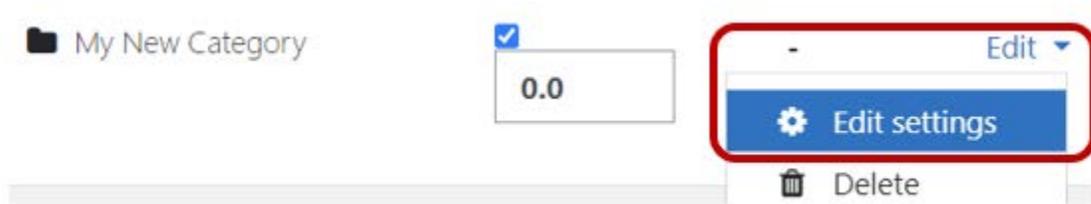
In the **Grade category** section, notice that the **Category name** is blank. In that box, add a meaningful name, one that lets students know they are looking at the course gradebook. In the **Category total** section, the **Category total name** will also be blank. Again, consider entering something like "Course Cumulative Grade" or "Overall Course Grade" so that students immediately understand what they're looking at.



A screenshot of the Moodle gradebook setup form. The "Grade category" section has a "Category name" input field with a red arrow pointing to it. The "Aggregation" dropdown is set to "Simple weighted mean of grades". The "Category total" section has a "Category total name" input field with a red arrow pointing to it.

Changing the Name of Category Totals

Just as you can change the course gradebook and “Course total,” you can also change how each category is displayed to students. Within the **Setup** and **Gradebook setup** tabs, click on the **Edit** dropdown menu for the category and select **Edit settings**.



Under the **Category total** section, click on **Show more...** Notice that the **Category total name** is empty. You can rename the category to precisely reflect how you want students to understand the category. Instructors can even add in the weight of that category toward the final grade (especially if the “grade weights” column has been eliminated from the user view).

▼ Category total

Show less...

Category total name

Homework: 20% of Final G