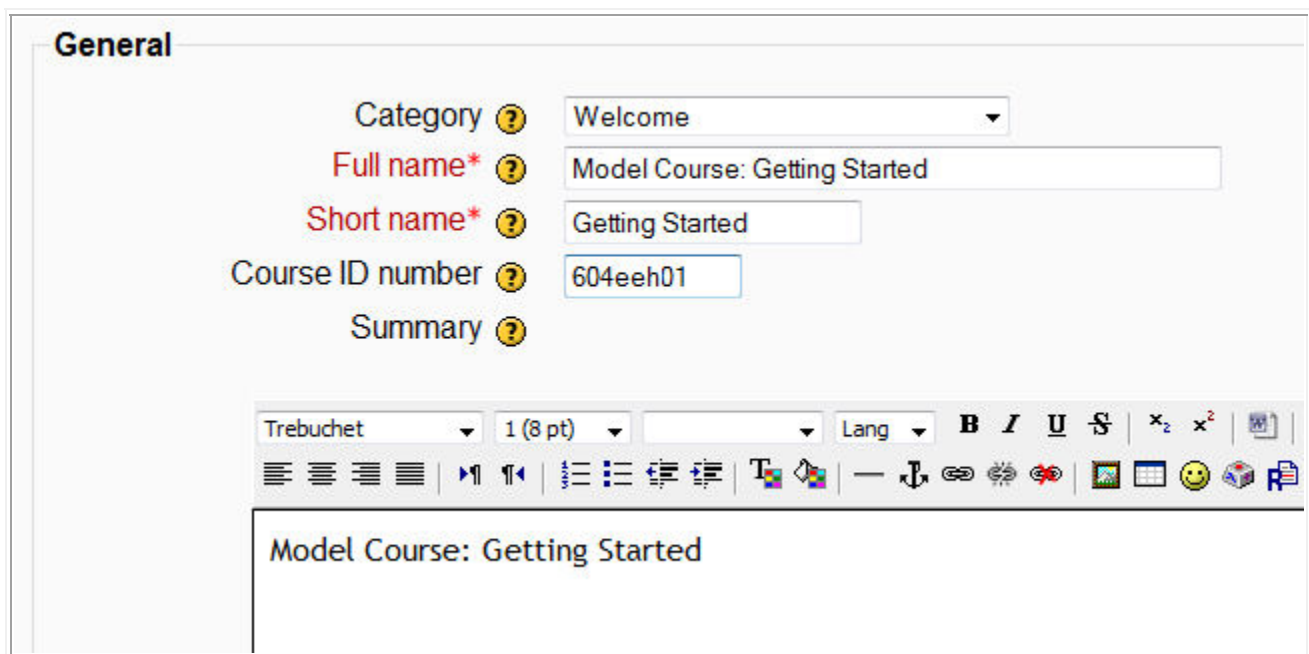# The Settings Page

It is via the Settings Page that you establish and control the basic organization of your site. You must tread with care, however, as there is only one Settings Page, which you and your school's administration must share. Although, as teacher, Moodle gives you the ability to change anything on the page, changing some fields could render your site invisible to your students.

Also, because Moodle is an open-source program used in many different situations around the world, there are sections of the Settings Page which have no bearing on your own establishment's use of Moodle. Most notably, the sections having to do with enrolment are probably not used.
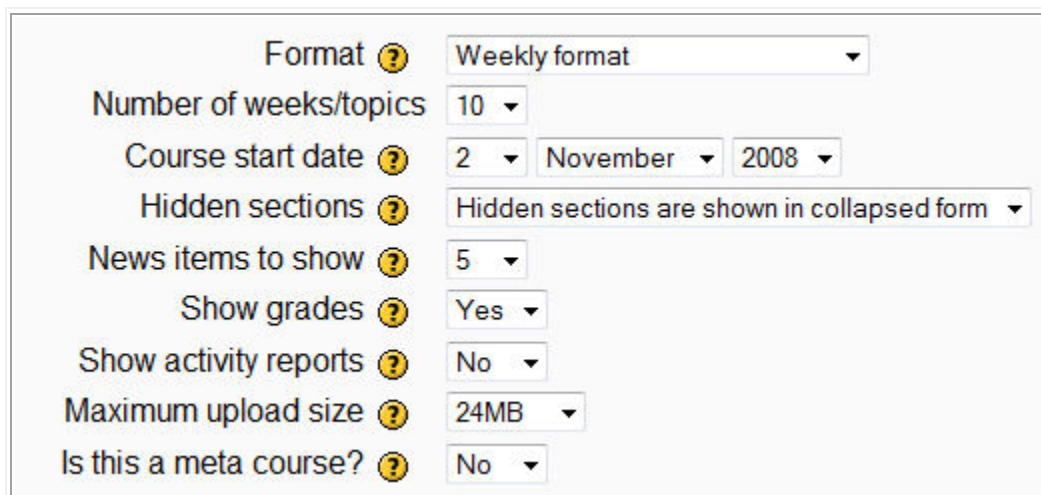
General

The contents of the first five fields are most likely determined by your school administration and should not be altered. Your school has probably established a set of categories into which sites should be placed. The exact nomenclature used for site names is often very rigid, since it must match exactly what external software, such as your Student Registration Database, expects to find.

Apart from the fields above, there are a number of controls that you may find useful:

Under **Course Format** you can choose between "Weekly" or "Topic" layout. (The other types of organization are for specific purposes covered here.). With "Weekly" layout, the dates of each week appear in the course content boxes. With "Topic" layout, each box is empty and you must supply your own titles. Note that the weekly layout is quite rigid. If you need to skip weeks or wish to have more than one content box per week, you would best be served by choosing topic format and entering the dates manually.

It is with Number of Weeks or Topics that you indicate how many content blocks you wish to have. You can always increase the number later, but be careful when reducing the number: The blocks to be removed from the end should be empty.

'Course start date is very important when you select "Weekly" layout, as the dates posted will start with the day-of-the-week selected. If the class begins on a Thursday, it is preferable to put in the date of the previous Sunday. Otherwise, the weeks posted will be Thursday to Wednesday weeks.

Hidden sections: Student may see hidden sections in greyed-out form or they may be completely invisible to students.

News items to show: If you leave the function block "Latest News" on the screen, this setting controls how many items will be listed there.

Show grades: Moodle offers quite a comprehensive on-line grade book. Nevertheless, many schools use a different system for reporting interim grades to students (Omnivox, for example). In this case, you may elect to have the "Grades" link not appear for the students. You will still have access. In fact, you still require access in order to collect grades from any interactive activities you may set.

Show activity reports: You will always have access to the activity reports. This setting allows students to view the history of their own activity on your site.

Maximum upload size: The maximum size of any file to be uploaded is determined by your site administrator. Nevertheless, you may *reduce* this setting if you wish. You may be allowing students to submit binary files as part of their *Wiki* pages, for example. (If you school grants acess to your Moodle file space via another software package, such as Webdav, then this setting will have no effect on those transfers.)

Is this a meta-course?: a meta-course is a different kind of site. You should always leave this value at its default. Talk to your administration about the uses of meta-courses. They must be the ones to establish them.

Enrolments

All the settings having to do with registration and enrolments are typically non-operative in a large college setting, as these functions are usually handled by software tools outside of Moodle.

Groups

The imposition of global groups is an advanced function, and it is best to leave these parameters alone.

Imposing global groups is **not the same thing** as using the "Groups" link under "Administration" to set up work groups and to assign your students to them.
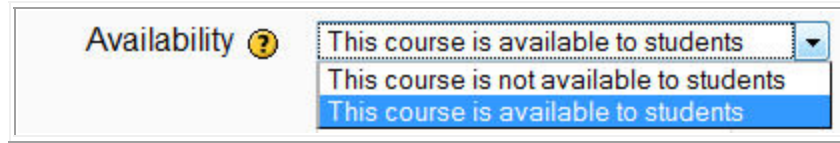
Availability

Availability: You can at any time temporarily deny access to your site by your students. You may be giving a take home exam, for example. Be careful not to select this in error, and remember to re-establish access when done. When access is denied, the link to your site appears greyed out.

Enrolment Key: By means of the enrolment key, you can grant access to your site to those not normally registered. In most establishments, students registered in your course are also automatically registered in your Moodle site. This function is for other students. You may change the enrolment key at any time. This will not affect those who have already used it to self-register. (It may affect guest users, however!).

Using the enrolment key for self-registration is more difficult at institutions where students cannot access the full course menu and/or the course search functions. Students must typically be able to locate your course before they can elect to self-register.
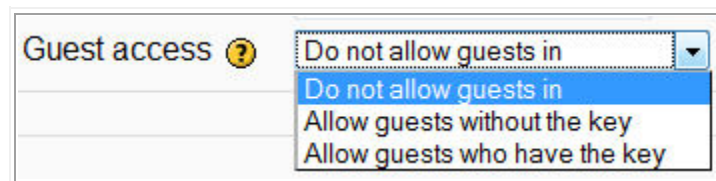
When you are looking at the opening page of your site, the address bar in your web browser should display an address on the model of:

```
http://www.rk-idees.ca/Moodle/course/view.php?id=86
```

The address of the server will be different, but the key portion is at the end: .../view.php?id=NNN
where NNN represent the Moodle server's number for your site. Providing students with the direct address of your site allows them to bypass any opening menus. Should they need an enrolment key in order to self-register, they will be asked for it the first time in. (Note, however, that they must already have student accounts on your Moodle server! Most installations do not allow strangers to generate their own accounts.)

Guest Access: By default, guest access is not allowed. You may change this setting any time you wish. Note that the "Enrolment Key" serves a double function: You can use it to limit access to those "guests" of which you approve. Visitors are not registered. They can view all elements of the course materials, but they cannot participate in any interactive activities. Changing the "Enrolment Key" has the immediate effect of barring any guests who do not have the new key. Note also that, your school must also permit guest access to the Moodle server itself, otherwise your enabling it for your site will have no effect.

Language

Forcing a language: Moodle is a multi-lingual environment. Typically users (teachers and students) may elect to work in any of the languages which are installed on the server (Dozens of languages are available!). All the menus, dialogue boxes and messages from Moodle will be delivered in whatever language is selected.

This may not be the ideal situation for certain courses. A language teacher, for example, may wish to force students to work in the target language while they are within the course site.

Language

Force language   Do not force ▼

Force language   Do not force ▼
                  Do not force
                  English (en)
                  Français - Canada (fr_ca)

Roles

Users can have different roles, depending on the site. In one site a user could be a teacher and in another site the same user could be a student. Certain roles are pre-established by Moodle. Others can be added locally. The permissions accorded to each role are under the control of the site administrator.

You may, however, change the *term* used in your site to designate a given role. For example, you may decide to call yourself a "facilitator" and your students "participants".

Role renaming ⑦

Administrator
Course creator
Teacher
Non-editing teacher
Student
Guest
Authenticated user

Role renaming ⑦

Administrator
Course creator
Teacher   Facilitator
Non-editing teacher
Student   Participant
Guest
Authenticated user

Saving your Settings

When you are confident that you have chosen the setting you wish, do not forget to click on the "Save" button! You may return to update the setting as often as you wish.

It can occur on Moodle dialogue pages that one clicks on "Save" and nothing happens. Clicking multiple times has no positive effect. Look over the screen again for any red boxes which may surround obligatory fields that you may have forgotten to fill in. (All fields flagged with a red asterisk are required.) Do not leave the page without saving for you will lose all your changes!