How the Moodle rollover is happening for 2020

Dear Colleague,

This email has been sent out to Directors of Education, Directors of Student Experience, School Managers, Heads/Directors of relevant Support Services, and leads/Directors for non-standard courses. Please cascade this email to colleagues as appropriate. A copy will be posted on the Flexible Education Hub.

Please read this entire email before accessing the new Moodle 20/21 environment.

How the Moodle rollover is happening for 2020

In order to provide the Moodle 20/21 environment to colleagues early for developing and building their courses for the next academic year based on the Flexible Learning Model launched today at the Flexible Education 2020 Symposium, IT Services have changed how we are performing the upgrade, rollover, and archive of Moodle for this year.

To allow for the continuation of alternative assessments and non-standard (courses which bridge the standard academic year) course teaching currently taking place for 19/20 we have provided a new Moodle instance for 20/21 where we have already copied in all the courses from 19/20. In addition, Moodle has been upgraded from version 3.6.3 to 3.8.3 as well as several plugins, provisioned the Panopto block in all courses, and have rolled over all standard courses for 20/21.

This environment is live and ready for you to begin redeveloping your standard Moodle courses that ran in 19/20 in preparation for academic year 20/21. Any newly validated courses between now and the start of the new academic year will appear in 20/21 Moodle in the usual way. For standard courses with a January start, we will be performing a mini rollover later this year and communication will be forthcoming as to the process and exact date.

How to access the new Moodle 20/21 Environment for building your course

The temporary address for the new 20/21 environment is: https://rhu-vle-2020.bloom.ulcc.ac.uk/ Please use your normal Moodle logon to access this environment.

(Note: after we complete rollover in mid-July, this address will revert to https://moodle.royalholloway.ac.uk).

As there will be two live environments for users between now and mid-July, we have added a warning pinned to the top of the Moodle 20/21, to remind you to check to ensure you are in the right place for your specific task at all times, as below:
All functionality is available on Moodle 20/21 (e.g. Panopto, Turnitin, and Talis reading lists) with the exception of any activity where Moodle sends out an email. This will be turned on when we move to Moodle 20/21 as our main ‘live’ environment.

Information on what is new in 3.8.3, the upgraded version of Moodle, will be available on the Flexible Education Hub next week. Please keep checking the Hub, as it will be the go-to place for everything related to flexible learning and teaching.

**Non-standard courses**

These are courses that run outside of the normal academic year timetable, e.g. International Study Centre, Kaplan, and staff CPD courses, Yu Zhang and I are liaising directly with programme leads/directors to devise a plan for how these will be moved to the new Moodle 20/21 by the deadline of mid-July. **Therefore, if your course is a non-standard one, unless you have explicitly been told that you can start building on Moodle 20/21 by your programme Lead/Director, please refrain from doing so.**

**In summary**

Between now and mid-July, we will then have two ‘live’ Moodle environments:
- Moodle 19/20 (current one) where alternative assessments and non-standard teaching will continue and use the same address as before: https://moodle.royalholloway.ac.uk/ - students should only be accessing this version.
- Moodle 20/21 which will be used for building courses and some CPD training. **No students should be asked to access this site.**

By mid-July, the rollover process will have been completed for all standard and non-standard courses (date TBC), and we will then move formally over to the Moodle 20/21 environment which will be our only ‘live’ environment for users.

The 19/20 environment will be soft archived at this point be given an archived address, and then hard archive (read only) process will be done as per usual in September 2020.

**Where to find help**
If you have any technical issues, please contact the IT Service Desk. Please indicate that you are using the Moodle 20/21 environment.

If you have any pedagogical questions about how to redesign your course for the flexible model or how to use Moodle for teaching, learning, and assessment, please contact the E-Learning Team.

Best wishes,
Melissa Phillips
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