Ed Discussion is a question-and-answer discussion board accessed through a Blackboard course or through SSO by following the URL https://edstem.org/us/.

It facilitates collaborative interaction among students and is designed to model face-to-face group discussions allowing for the creation of complex questions and answers.

Questions can be posed by both students and instructors, and answers can generate additional follow-up questions and answers, adding clarity and depth to the original post. Instructors have the ability to endorse or reply to student answers increasing the appetite for student collaboration.

Contents
Ed Discussion Support & FAQs ................................................................. 1
Logging in to Ed Discussion (student and staff) ........................................ 2
  How to login via SSO ........................................................................... 2
  How to login to Ed Discussion via LTI .................................................. 2
How to install Ed Discussion on a Blackboard course .................................. 3
Configuring General Settings .................................................................. 3
  Setting the board name, course code and term. ...................................... 3
  Adding users to a discussion board ....................................................... 4
Configuring Ed Discussion Boards ............................................................ 7
  Discussion Features ............................................................................. 7
  Adding categories to a discussion board ............................................... 7
Thread Templates .................................................................................... 9
Saved Replies and Moderation .................................................................. 9
Configuring Code within the Discussion Board ....................................... 11
Configuring Advanced Settings ............................................................... 12
  Archiving a Discussion Board .............................................................. 12
Role Labels in Discussion Boards ............................................................. 12
Logging in to Ed Discussion (student and staff)

How to login via SSO

To login to Ed Discussion via SSO, navigate to https://edstem.org/ and select 'US & Canada' from the dropdown and enter your full Imperial email address. This must be the full email address, not your username or an alias of your Imperial email address.

How to login to Ed Discussion via LTI

To login to Ed Discussion via LTI, navigate to the relevant Blackboard course and select the Ed Discussion LTI link.

The LTI link should appear as above, but the name of the link may vary based on the decision of the course creator. Once selected, Ed Discussion will open in a new window. Clicking on the link will enrol first time users on to the discussion board. User's role will be determined to match that of the one they have in Blackboard. (Students will be enrolled as students; instructors, markers, and course admin will be enrolled as Instructors.)
How to install Ed Discussion on a Blackboard course.

To install Ed Discussion on a Blackboard course, navigate to the relevant course, ensure edit mode is on and select Ed from the 'Tools' dropdown as displayed below.

![Ed Discussion ToolsDropdown](image)

Once the LTI has been selected there will be an option to name the LTI link, along with availability settings. Any changes made to Ed Discussion will need to be configured in the LTI itself rather than in Blackboard.

Configuring General Settings

To begin configuring an Ed Discussion board, follow the login information above to navigate to the correct Ed Discussion board. When you have opened the relevant board select the cog in the top right hand corner of the screen. From here you will be able to fully configure your course.

Setting the board name, course code and term.

When you create an Ed Discussion Board through the Blackboard LTI, the name of the board, course code and term will be set automatically and determined by the naming conventions of the Blackboard course.

![Ed Discussion General Settings](image)

The above screenshot displays what can be seen when editing the code, name, year, and session. The same screen will appear for both. In both the LTI and SSO versions of Ed Discussion this section is fully customisable. The name and code can be modified without breaking the LTI link.
Adding users to a discussion board

There are a couple of ways to add users to a discussion board, including accessing via Bb course, users being manually uploaded via CSV or enabling a join link that can be emailed to users.

Within the general settings page of each Ed Discussion Board there is an option to enable a join link as seen below.

It is not recommended to enable a join link, as enrolment to the course is then not regulated.
Adding users to an SSO accessed discussion board.

To add users via CSV, users full names and email addresses will need to be entered into CSV format and then pasted into the tool as shown below (this again can be found in the general settings of each course)

There is the option to select a single role for a group of users being added to the course. Currently there is only the option to upload users sharing the same role at any one time, so you will not be able to upload a CSV with a mix of students and instructors. If you are uploading a set of students and instructors, these will need to be done separate to each other.

To change a user’s role in course you can edit their role in the list of existing users as shown below:

To edit a user’s role in the course, simply select their role in the 'Role' column and a drop down of all available roles will appear. Current available roles include:

- Student
- Mentor
- Tutor
- Staff (TA)
- Admin (Instructor)
Role names can be changed and information on how to do this can be found further down the page under Advanced Settings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Default badge</th>
<th>Admin</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Tutor</th>
<th>Mentor</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manage the course admin page</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add/remove/modify users</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change roles</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to analytics</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reveal anonymous</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create staff-only comments</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make announcements</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a megathread</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pin threads</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorse threads</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write an @mention</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be tagged in an @mention</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edit/delete any threads/comments</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edit the category of any thread</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lock a thread</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a private thread public</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline thread</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See all private threads</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See the user’s tutorial</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept answer on any thread</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept answer on their own thread</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create private threads</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edit/delete own threads/comments</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Adding user via the Blackboard LTI accessed discussion board**

When any user enrolled on a Blackboard course accesses the Ed Discussion LTI link, they will automatically be enrolled on to the Ed Discussion board. Their role will be allocated based on their role within the Blackboard course.

Alternatively there is an additional option to sync all users from Blackboard to the Ed Discussion board using the 'Sync with LMS' button. This button gives you the option to sync everyone, or to only sync students.
Configuring Ed Discussion Boards

REMEMBER TO SELECT SAVE AFTER MAKING ANY CHANGES.

To configure the posting settings of individual boards, from the settings cog in the righthand corner. Once the general settings page opens, then select 'Discussion' from the menu on the left.

Discussion Features

A variety of discussion features can be turned on and off using the buttons as displayed in the screenshot below:

Adding categories to a discussion board

Users can add or edit discussion board categories. This can be done by entering the category titles into the category box in Discussion settings, and subcategories can be added in the same way by using the TAB key to indent.
There is also the option to force users to select a category before posting. Once categories have been created, they will be displayed in the discussion board as seen in the screenshot below:
Thread Templates

Thread templates can be added to categories or subcategories. Thread templates appear when a user posts a new thread in the category where the template is enabled.

Thread templates are completely customisable using the rich text editor, although the call outs option is particularly useful for structuring clear templates.

Saved Replies and Moderation

Similarly to thread templates, saved replies and declined thread replies can also be added.

Save replies are fully customisable and can be used for generic feedback to save time. These can be enabled and disabled, so saved replies can be stored but the option can be disabled if there are not needed in the course.
The moderation functions in Ed Discussion allow for a 'new threads require approval' option to be turned off and on, and also allow for standard replies to any declined threads.

When threads are declined, they will only be visible to instructors and the user who posted the declined thread. Declined threads will appear to the user as shown in the screenshot below.
The user who declined the thread will not be displayed, instead the posted will be listed as 'TITLE_OF_THE_DISCUSSION_BOARD Bot'.

**Configuring Code within the Discussion Board**

Ed Discussion used runnable code in the discussion boards. This can be customised to provide the most relevant code for the course being taught.

In the screenshot below 'Snippet Languages' allows for programming languages to be entered, if left blank then all languages will be available. There is also the option to set a default snippet language, as well as to select which languages can be syntax highlighted. Once these customisations are put in place, the user should select 'save' at the top of the screen.
Configuring Advanced Settings

REMEMBER TO SELECT SAVE AFTER MAKING ANY CHANGES.

To configure the advanced settings of individual boards, from the settings cog in the righthand corner. Once the general settings page opens, then select 'Advanced' from the menu on the left.

Archiving a Discussion Board

Within Ed Discussion, staff have the option to archive individual courses. When discussion boards are archived, they become read only, but are still accessible to all enrolled users. Discussion boards can be un-archived at any time.

Role Labels in Discussion Boards

In each discussion board, role labels can be adjusted to be in keeping with the language used in the module. For example, Staff could be updated to Teaching Assistant.

A full list of role permissions can be found here: https://edstem.org/help/getting-started#appendix-roles