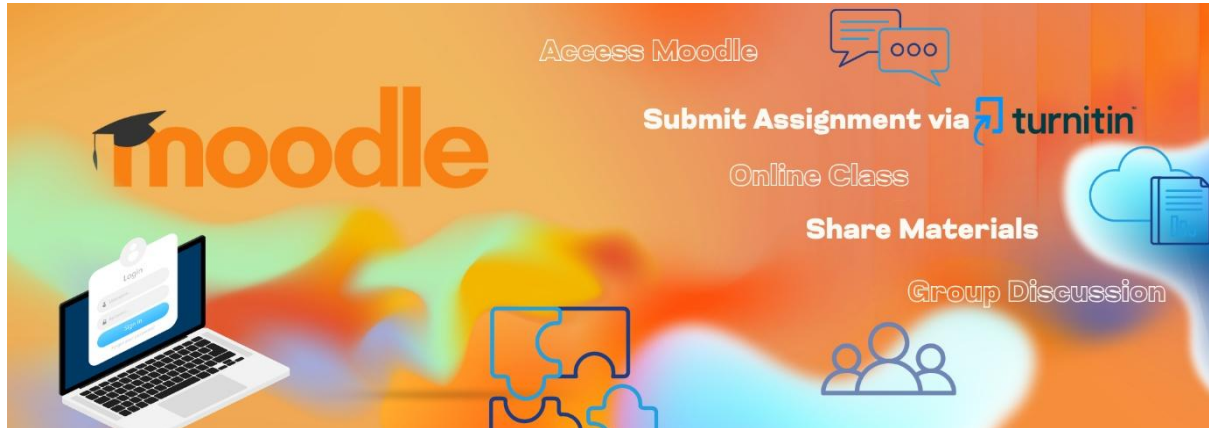


# Moodle: Course Reuse, Import, Back up, and Restore, Course Import Guide



Moodle Help (For Staff): <https://www.lttc.eduhk.hk/moodle/help-staff>

## >>> GETTING STARTED

1. Definition
  - 1.1 Course Reuse
  - 1.2 Import
  - 1.3 Back up
  - 1.4 Restore
  - 1.5 Reset

## >>> HOW TO

2. Back up and reuse courses
  - 2.1 How to Back Up a Moodle Course
  - 2.2 How to Restore a Moodle Course
3. Course Import
4. Question Bank XML Export / Import
5. Key Settings & Limitations

# 1. Definition

## 1.1 Course Reuse

- Definition: A pull-down menu in Moodle course that groups all content (transfer, backup, recovery, and cleanup tools) into a single location.
- What it is: A navigation menu, not a standalone action.

## 1.2 Import

- Definition: A feature that **copies** selected activities, quizzes, resources, or question banks directly from one live Moodle course to another.
- Key characteristic: Direct server-to-server transfer. No backup files (‘.mbz’) need to be downloaded or uploaded.

## 1.3. Backup

- Definition: A process that **exports** a course's structure, resources, activities, and settings into a single compressed, downloadable file (with a ‘.mbz’ file extension).
- Key characteristic: Creates an archival snapshot file that can be stored on a local computer or moved to a different server.

## 1.4. Restore

- Definition: A process that takes an existing. mbz backup file and **unpacks it to build a new course** or add content to an existing one.
- Key characteristic: Requires an ‘.mbz’ file as its input.

## 1.5. Reset

- Definition: A function that clears out student data (such as quiz attempts, submitted assignments, forum posts, and grades) while **keeping all course materials, quizzes, and layout intact**.
- Key characteristic: Cleans a course shell so it can be reused for a new academic term without deleting teacher content.

To help users quickly identify which action they need, follow this simple flowchart:

- "I want to copy a quiz or module from my previous semester's course on the same Moodle site."  
*>>> Use Import (Fastest, no files needed)*
- "I want to save a copy of my course to my computer for safety or archiving."  
*>>> Use Backup (Generates a '.mbz' file)*
- "I have a ".mbz" backup file from another Moodle site or a past semester that I need to load into Moodle."  
*>>> Use Restore (Unpacks a '.mbz' file)*
- "I am teaching the same course again this semester, and I just want to clear out all the old students' work and grades."  
*>>> Use Reset (Cleans out student attempts, keeps course materials)*

| Tool Name | Needs a File?       | Affects Other Courses?            | Primary Purpose                       |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Import    | No                  | Reads from one, copies to another | Quick copying between live courses    |
| Backup    | Creates one '.mbz'  | No                                | Archiving or exporting content        |
| Restore   | Requires one '.mbz' | No                                | Building a course from a backup file  |
| Reset     | No                  | No (Only current course)          | Wiping student data for a fresh start |

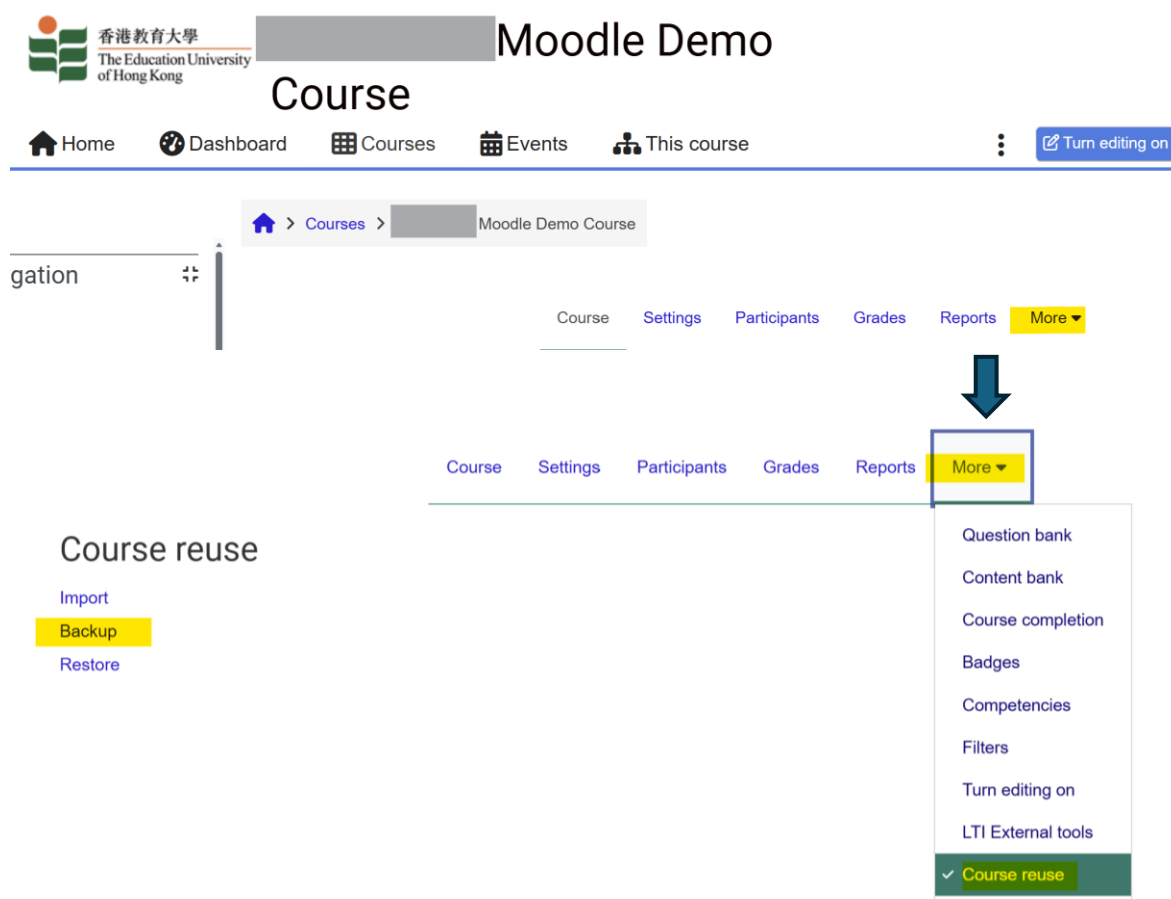
## 2. Back up and restore courses

### Step-by-Step Instructions

#### 2.1: How to Back Up a Moodle Course

Creating a backup generates a compressed file (typically ending in ‘.mbz’) containing your chosen course resources, activities, and settings.

Open the Source Course: Navigate to the course you wish to back up.



The screenshot shows the Moodle course interface for 'Moodle Demo Course'. The top navigation bar includes links for Home, Dashboard, Courses, Events, and This course, along with a 'Turn editing on' button. The breadcrumb trail shows 'Home > Courses > Moodle Demo Course'. The course navigation bar includes links for Course, Settings, Participants, Grades, Reports, and a 'More' dropdown menu. A blue arrow points to the 'More' dropdown menu, which is expanded to show a list of options: Question bank, Content bank, Course completion, Badges, Competencies, Filters, Turn editing on, LTI External tools, and 'Course reuse' (which is highlighted with a green checkmark). On the left side of the page, under the 'Course reuse' section, there are three buttons: 'Import', 'Backup' (highlighted in yellow), and 'Restore'.

Access the Backup Tool: Click the **‘More’** tab in the course navigation bar (or the Gear / Course Administration menu depending on your theme) and **select Course reuse → Backup**.

⚙ Administration ⚙

▼ Course administration

- ⚙ Settings
- ✎ Turn editing on
- ⚙ Course completion
- > Users
- ▼ Filters
- > Reports
- ⚙ Gradebook setup
- > Badges
- > Question bank
- ⚙ LTI External tools
- ▼ Course reuse
- ⬆ Import
- ⬇ Backup
- ⬆ Restore

## Step 1: Initial Settings

**Check or uncheck general elements you wish to include** (e.g., Include activities and resources, Include question bank, Include blocks, Include filters).

### Backup ▾

Make a copy of this course, including all content and activity to date. You can use the backup file to restore the course.

1. Initial settings ► 2. Schema settings ► 3. Confirmation and review ► 4. Perform backup ► 5. Complete

### Backup settings

- ☐ IMS Common Cartridge 1.1
- Include enrolled users ☒ 
- Anonymize user information ☒ 
- ☐ Include user role assignments
- ☒ Include activities and resources
- ☒ Include blocks
- ☒ Include files
- ☒ Include filters
- ☐ Include comments
- ☒ Include badges
- ☐ Include calendar events

*Tip: Standard teaching staff usually leave student data/enrolments unchecked to produce a clean course backup. Moodle has a default check setting unless teaching staff has a personal reference to check or uncheck.*

Click **'Next'** (or click Jump to final step if you want to perform the backup immediately using default selections).

- ☐ Include user completion details
- ☐ Include course logs
- ☐ Include grade history
- ☒ Include question bank
- ☒ Include groups and groupings
- ☒ Include competencies
- ☒ Include custom fields
- ☒ Include content bank content
- ☐ Include user's state in content such as H5P activities
- ☒ Include legacy course files

[Jump to final step](#)
[Cancel](#)
[Next](#)

## Step 2: Schema Settings

Select or deselect specific topics, sections, or individual assignments/quizzes you want included in this backup file.

*Tip: **Deselect "Course Announcements"** on the Schema Settings page during the backup process. To avoid restoring past announcements can accidentally resend old, irrelevant broadcast emails. And to avoid duplicate Announcement Forums as every new Moodle course shell comes with a built-in, system-generated Announcements forum by default.*

[Course](#)
[Settings](#)
[Participants](#)
[Grades](#)
[Reports](#)
[More ▼](#)

---

Backup ▼

---

Make a copy of this course, including all content and activity to date. You can use the backup file to restore the course.

1. Initial settings ► **2. Schema settings** ► 3. Confirmation and review ► 4. Perform backup ► 5. Complete

Include:

| Select                              |                         |           |     |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----|
| All / None (Show type options)      |                         |           |     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | General                 | User data | ✗ 🔒 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Course Announcements 🗣️ | -         | ✗ 🔒 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Topic 1                 | User data | ✗ 🔒 |

Click **'Next'**.

## Step 3: Confirmation and Review

Review your selections.

Backup ▾

Make a copy of this course, including all content and activity to date. You can use the backup file to restore the course.

1. Initial settings ► 2. Schema settings ► 3. Confirmation and review ► 4. Perform backup ► 5. Complete

### Filename

Filename



backup-moodle2-course- moodle\_demo\_cour

### Backup settings

|                                  |   |   |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| IMS Common Cartridge 1.1         | × |   |
| Include enrolled users           | × | 👤 |
| Anonymize user information       | × | 👤 |
| Include user role assignments    | × | 🔒 |
| Include activities and resources | ✓ |   |
| Include blocks                   | ✓ |   |
| Include files                    | ✓ |   |
| Include filters                  | ✓ |   |

Set or edit the output Filename if desired (leave the '.mbz' file extension intact).

Click **'Perform backup'**.

## Step 4: Complete

Backup ▾

Make a copy of this course, including all content and activity to date. You can use the backup file to restore the course.

1. Initial settings ► 2. Schema settings ► 3. Confirmation and review ► 4. Perform backup ► 5. Complete



Make a copy of this course, including all content and activity to date. You can use the backup file to restore the course.

1. Initial settings ► 2. Schema settings ► 3. Confirmation and review ► 4. Perform backup ► 5. Complete

The backup file was successfully created.



Continue

Wait for the **green success message**, then click **'Continue'**.

Restore ▾

Use a backup file to restore a previous version of a course, or to create a new course.

## Upload a backup file

Backup file



Choose a file...

Maximum size for new files: 2 GB



You can drag and drop files here to add them.

Restore

Required

## Course backup area

Backup files for this course.

There are no backup files for this course yet.



Manage course backups

## User private backup area

Private backup files for all courses, with anonymised user information.

| Filename                                          | Time | Size   | Download | Restore |
|---------------------------------------------------|------|--------|----------|---------|
| backup-moodle2-course- moodle_demo_course- nu.mbz |      | 4.4 KB | Download | Restore |

Manage private backups

You will be taken to the **‘Course backup area’**, where you can click **‘Download’** to **save the ‘.mbz’ file to your computer for safe keeping or transfer.**

## 2.2 How to Restore a Moodle Course

**Restoring imports content from a ‘.mbz’ backup file** into either a brand new empty course shell or an existing course.

### Step-by-Step Instructions

#### Access the Restore Menu:

**Go into the destination course shell where you want the content restored.**

Click **More** → **Course reuse** → **Restore**.

> Courses > moodle Demo Course > Course reuse

[Course](#)
[Settings](#)
[Participants](#)
[Grades](#)
[Reports](#)
[More ▾](#)

#### Course reuse

[Import](#)
[Backup](#)
[Restore](#)

## Step 1: Upload or Choose File

**Drag and drop your '.mbz' file** into the upload box (or select a file from your *Course backup area* / *User private backup area*).

**Restore** ▾

---

Use a backup file to restore a previous version of a course, or to create a new course.

Upload a backup file

Backup file Choose a file... Maximum size for new files: 2 GB

  
You can drag and drop files here to add them.

**Restore**

Required

Click **'Restore'**.

## Step 2: Confirm

Review the backup details, course settings, and list of included items to ensure it is the correct file.

[Home](#) > [Course administration](#) > [Course reuse](#) > [Restore](#)

[Course](#) [Settings](#) [Participants](#) [Grades](#) [Reports](#) [More ▾](#)

**1. Confirm** ▶ 2. Destination ▶ 3. Settings ▶ 4. Schema ▶ 5. Review ▶ 6. Process ▶ 7. Complete

### Backup details

|                |                                                               |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Type           | Course                                                        |
| Format         | Moodle 2                                                      |
| Mode           | General                                                       |
| Date taken     | Thursday, 30 July 2023, 14:44:44                              |
| Moodle version | 4.5.4 (Build: 20250414)<br>[2024100704]                       |
| Backup version | 4.5<br>[2024100700]                                           |
| URL of backup  | https://moodle.eduhk.hk<br>[48b6d286d415c6688c158c04307c84ad] |

Click **'Continue'** at the bottom.

## Step 3: Destination

Select where you want to restore the course:

1. Confirm ► 2. Destination ► 3. Settings ► 4. Schema ► 5. Review ► 6. Process ► 7. Complete

### Restore into this course

☒ Merge the backup course into this course  
☐ Delete the contents of this course and then restore

[Continue](#)

### Restore into an existing course

☒ Merge the backup course into the existing course  
☐ Delete the contents of the existing course and then restore

Select a course

| Course short name                           | Course full name                            |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Moodle_Student_WS     | Learning with Moodle LMS (Student Workshop) |
| <input type="radio"/> S1 Moodle Demo Course | S1 Moodle Demo Course                       |
| <input type="radio"/> S1 Moodle Demo Course | S1 Moodle Demo Course                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Testing Course D      | Testing Course D                            |
| <input type="radio"/> Testing Course D      | Testing Course D                            |
| <input type="radio"/> Testing Course D      | Testing Course D                            |

[Continue](#)

**You can either choose:**

**Merge the backup course into this course:** Adds the content into your current course without deleting existing material.

**OR Delete the contents of this course and then restore:** Overwrites/wipes existing content in the destination course before adding the restored content.

Click **Continue**.

## Step 4: Settings

Select which elements to import (e.g., activities, blocks, filters).

1. Confirm ► 2. Destination ► 3. Settings ► 4. Schema ► 5. Review ► 6. Process ► 7. Complete

### Restore settings

Include enrolled users ☒   
 Include enrolment methods    
 Include user role assignments ☒

☒ Include permission overrides  
☒ Include activities and resources  
☒ Include blocks

Click **'Next'**.

## Step 5: Schema

Select/deselect specific items or sections if you only want part of the backup.

1. Confirm ► 2. Destination ► 3. Settings ► **4. Schema** ► 5. Review ► 6. Process ► 7. Complete

Course settings

Overwrite course configuration

Course name Testing Course 

Course short name Testing Course 

Course start date 

Select  
All / None (Show type options)

|                                               |           |    |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------|----|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Section 0 | User data | No |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Topic 1   | User data | No |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Topic 2   | User data | No |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Topic 3   | User data | No |

Click **'Next'**.

## Step 6: Review & Perform Restore

Scroll down to verify all selections, then click **'Perform restore'**.

1. Confirm ► 2. Destination ► 3. Settings ► 4. Schema ► **5. Review** ► 6. Process ► 7. Complete

Restore settings

Include enrolled users 

Include enrolment methods No

Include user role assignments 

Include permission overrides 

## Step 7: Complete

Once the progress bar finishes, click **'Continue'** to view your restored course.

Course Settings Participants Grades Reports More ▼

1. Confirm ► 2. Destination ► 3. Settings ► 4. Schema ► 5. Review ► **6. Process** ► 7. Complete

The course was successfully restored. 

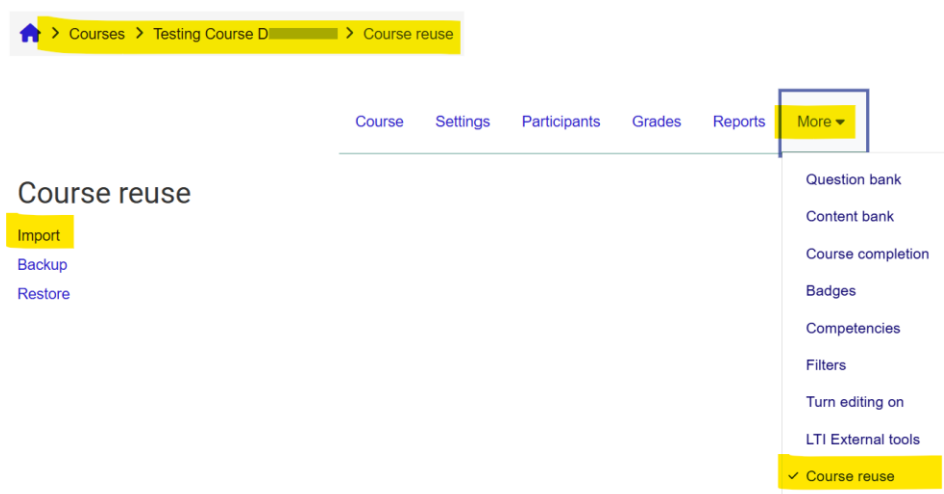
Continue

## 3. Course Import

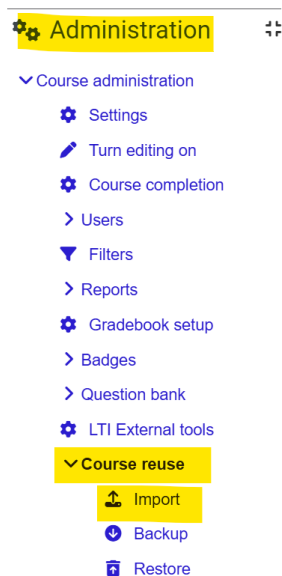
### Step-by-Step Instructions

#### Step 1

Go to the destination (new) course.



Click the More tab in the top navigation bar (or the Gear icon / Course Administration menu depending on your theme) and select Course reuse or Import.



## Step 2

Search for and **select the source course** ( or the old course containing the desire activities). Click **‘Continue’**.

[Course](#) [Settings](#) [Participants](#) [Grades](#) [Reports](#) [More ▾](#)

Import ▾

Import items from other courses, such as activities, blocks or calendar events. No user data will be imported.

1. **Course selection ▶** 2. Initial settings ▶ 3. Schema settings ▶ 4. Confirmation and review ▶ 5. Perform import ▶ 6. Complete

### Find a course to import data from:

Select a course Total courses: 7

| Course short name                           | Course full name                            |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Moodle_Student_WS     | Learning with Moodle LMS (Student Workshop) |
| <input type="radio"/> S1 Moodle Demo Course | S1 Moodle Demo Course                       |
| <input type="radio"/> S1 Moodle Demo Course | S1 Moodle Demo Course                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Testing Course D      | Testing Course D                            |
| <input type="radio"/> Testing Course D      | Testing Course D                            |
| <input type="radio"/> Testing Course D      | Testing Course D                            |
| <input type="radio"/> Testing Course D      | Testing Course D                            |

## Step 3

On the Initial settings page, **ensure that both Include activities and resources and Include question bank are checked**. Click **‘Next’**.

**Import**

Import items from other courses, such as activities, blocks or calendar events. No user data will be imported.

1. Course selection ► **2. Initial settings** ► 3. Schema settings ► 4. Confirmation and review ► 5. Perform import ► 6. Complete

**Import settings**

- ☐ Include permission overrides
- ☒ Include activities and resources
- ☒ Include blocks
- ☒ Include files
- ☒ Include filters
- ☐ Include badges
- ☒ Include calendar events
- ☒ Include question bank
- ☒ Include groups and groupings
- ☒ Include competencies
- ☒ Include custom fields
- ☒ Include content bank content
- ☒ Include legacy course files

[Jump to final step](#)[Cancel](#)[Next](#)**Step 4**

On the Schema settings page:

Click None at the top to uncheck everything.

**Import**

Import items from other courses, such as activities, blocks or calendar events. No user data will be imported.

1. Course selection ► 2. Initial settings ► **3. Schema settings** ► 4. Confirmation and review ► 5. Perform import ► 6. Complete

Include:

**Select**  
**All / None (Show type options)**

- ☐ **General**
- ☐ Course Announcements 🗣️
- ☐ Online lesson 📖

- ☐ **Topic 1**
- ☐ tii test2 🔗

Check the Section header where the quiz lives (e.g., General or Topic 1) and specific Quiz you want to copy. Click **'Next'**.

## Step 5

Review the selection (it will show green checkmarks next to your quiz), then click **‘Perform import’**.

1. Course selection ► 2. Initial settings ► 3. Schema settings ► **4. Confirmation and review** ► 5. Perform import ► 6. Complete

Import settings

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Include permission overrides     | ✗ |
| Include activities and resources | ✓ |
| Include blocks                   | ✓ |
| Include files                    | ✓ |
| Include filters                  | ✓ |
| Include badges                   | ✗ |

Click **‘Next’**, review your choices, and click Perform import.

*Tip: if there are warnings, please refer to below:*

### Teacher role warning

*‘The Teacher role in the backup file cannot be mapped to any of the roles that you are allowed to assign.’  
Moodle is simply letting you know that it skipped copying user role.*

### Question Bank Context / Category Warnings

*‘The questions category ‘X’, originally at system/course context in backup file, will be created at a question bank module context...’*

*Text copied and pasted from external programs (like Microsoft Word or formatted web pages) in the old course contained hidden background formatting code that Moodle had trouble reading.*

### Orphaned Activities / Section Count Discrepancy

*‘Activities have been placed in an extra section.’ (or sections appearing with a light-grey **“Orphaned”** tag).  
The course you imported from had more topic/week sections (e.g., 12 sections) than your new destination course shell (e.g., 8 sections).*

## 4. Question Bank XML Export

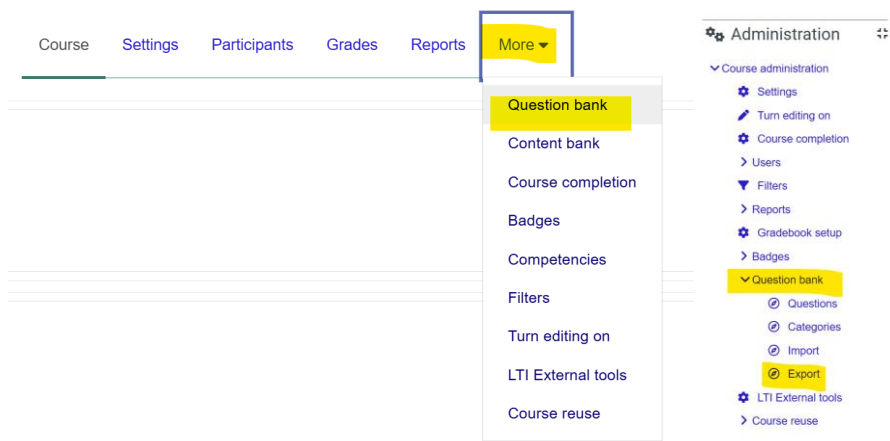
### Step-by-Step Instructions

Best if teaching staff only want the questions, if you are sharing with another teaching staff, or if the courses are on entirely separate Moodle sites.

### Export from Source Course:

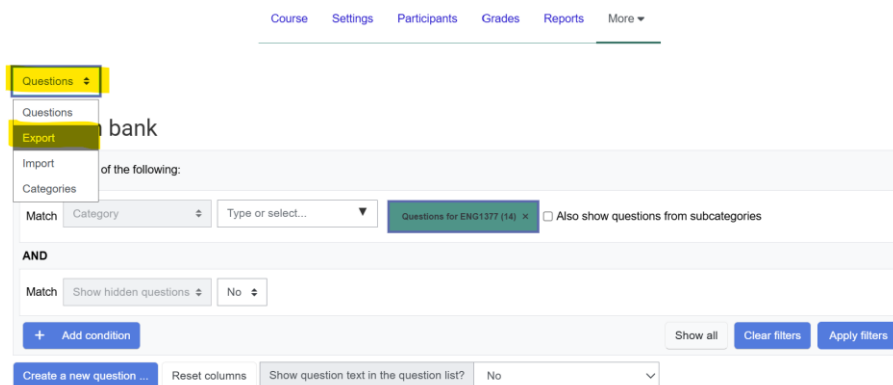
## Step 1

Access the Backup Tool: Click the **'More'**, go to **'Question bank'**, choose **'Export'**.



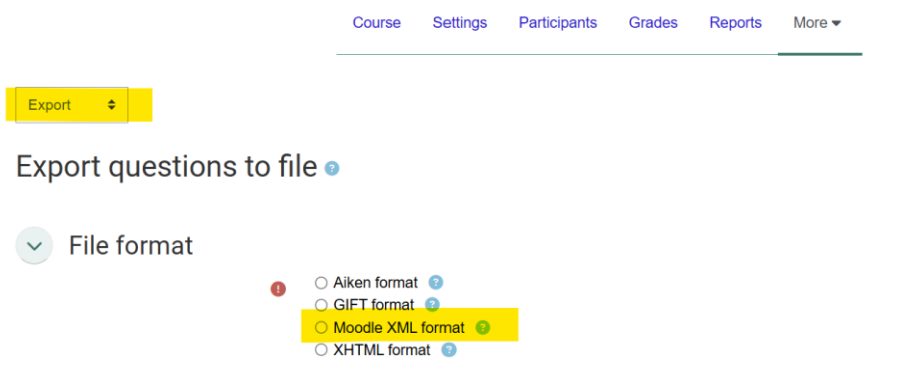
## Step 2

Under **'Question'** tab, choose **'Export'**.



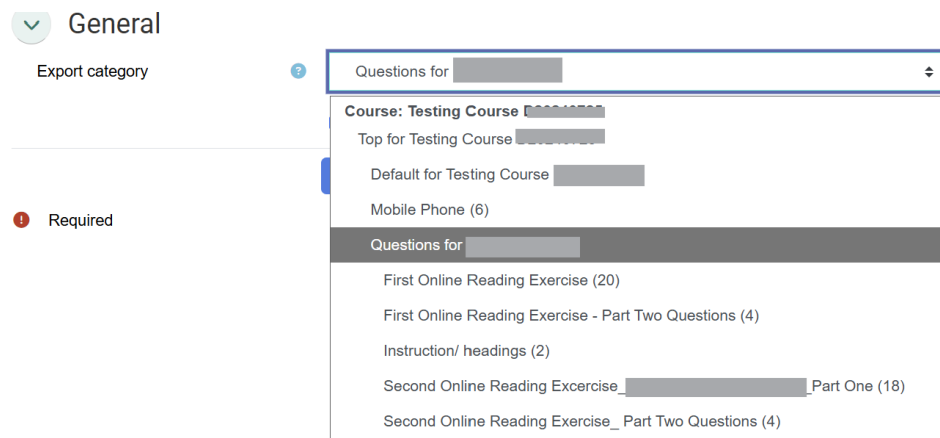
## Step 3

Select **'Moodle XML format'**.



## Step 4

Select the category containing your quiz questions and click **‘Export’** questions to file.



The screenshot shows the 'Export category' dropdown menu in Moodle. The menu is open, displaying a list of categories for the 'Testing Course'. The categories listed are:

- Course: Testing Course
- Top for Testing Course
- Default for Testing Course
- Mobile Phone (6)
- Questions for
- First Online Reading Exercise (20)
- First Online Reading Exercise - Part Two Questions (4)
- Instruction/ headings (2)
- Second Online Reading Exercise\_ Part One (18)
- Second Online Reading Exercise\_ Part Two Questions (4)

The 'Questions for' category is highlighted in grey.

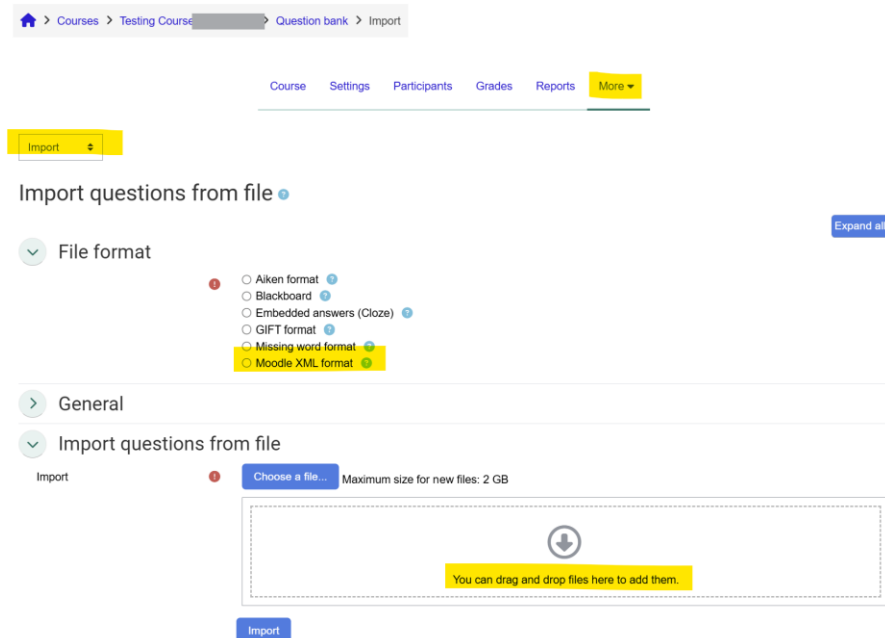
## Import into New Course:

### Step 1

Go to the new course's **‘Question bank’** → **‘Import’**.

### Step 2

Select **‘Moodle XML format’**, upload the XML file, and click **‘Import’**.



The screenshot shows the 'Import questions from file' page in Moodle. The page has a breadcrumb trail: Home > Courses > Testing Course > Question bank > Import. The 'Import' button is highlighted in yellow. Below the breadcrumb trail, there are tabs for Course, Settings, Participants, Grades, Reports, and More. The 'Import' tab is selected. The 'File format' section is expanded, showing a list of file formats: Aiken format, Blackboard, Embedded answers (Cloze), GIFT format, Missing word format, and Moodle XML format. The 'Moodle XML format' option is selected and highlighted in yellow. Below the 'File format' section, there is a 'General' section. The 'Import questions from file' section is expanded, showing a file upload area with a 'Choose a file...' button and a 'Maximum size for new files: 2 GB' warning. The file upload area is highlighted in yellow. Below the file upload area, there is an 'Import' button.

### Step 3

Re-create Quiz: Create a new Quiz activity in the destination course and add the newly imported questions from the Question Bank.

## 5. Key Settings & Limitations to Keep in Mind

### Quiz Settings Carried Over:

Time limits, attempt rules, layout, grading methods, and shuffle settings will carry over automatically.

### Start and End (Open/Close) Dates:

These will carry over as they were set in the original quiz. If the new course runs in a different semester/term, you must **update the open/close dates manually in the new quiz settings**.

### Question Bank Transfer:

Using **'Course Import'** automatically copies over the underlying questions along with the quiz shell. If the quiz uses **'Random Questions'** pulled from specific categories, ensure those categories exist or are included in the transfer, or the random selection links will break.

### User Data:

Student attempts, responses, marks, and historical grades from the original course **do not carry over** (which is intended for fresh course runs).

### Role Permissions:

You need **'Editing Teacher' permissions** in both courses to use the built-in Import tool.