

Quiz

Defaults options when creating questions

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Defaults options when creating questions

[Tim Hunt](#)

Wednesday, January 27, 2021, 2:12 PM



Today I was thinking about a feature request from some of our teachers.

They were creating a lot of questions of the same type, which all needed to have the same options, and so they asked "can we have a way to set the defaults we want before we create a batch of questions". That is tricky. It requires an extra screen where you have to go to set the defaults. Where does that fit? It is an extra step in the process, etc.

Then, I remember what the Ordering question type does. When you create an ordering question, it remembers [some of the key settings](#) you chose, and then the next time you create an ordering question, it defaults to using those settings again. This seems like a simple and elegant solution, which just works with no extra screens.

Should we do the same thing for all the other question types? (It seems reasonable to me, but I am not sure, which is why I am asking here.)

Second question: Should we update the stored options any time you edit a question, or only when you are creating a new one? (Ordering does any edit, but I think only for new questions might be better.)

So far, my analysis of the overall suggestion is:

Benefits

- Saves you time if you need to create a lots of similar questions.
- No additional screen or extra setup steps. It just works.
- Easy to implement. (Internally choices are stored as User preferences, which are handled by Moodle core. We just need to remember to implement the privacy API.)

Disadvantages

Not sure if this is a disadvantage, but it was the only think I could think of, so I am going to write it.

- When you make a new question, the default options will depend on the last question you created, not on some fixed set of options. This might possibly confuse people sometimes, but I am not sure.

Please let me know your thoughts.

 Average of ratings: [Useful \(7\)](#)
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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Marcus Green](#)

Wednesday, January 27, 2021, 2:20 PM



Yes, and only for new are my first thoughts. But now you have me thinking that when you create a quiz it should remember the last behaviour you used when you create the next quiz.

Average of ratings: [Useful \(1\)](#) [?](#)

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Tim Hunt](#)

Wednesday, January 27, 2021, 3:52 PM



For now I am focussed on question types. Quite possible, this is a user interface pattern that could be usefully applied more widely, but one step at a time, I think.

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Dominique Bauer](#)

Wednesday, January 27, 2021, 3:07 PM



You could add a checkbox to save the current settings as default.

Average of ratings: [Useful \(2\)](#) [?](#)

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Rick Jerz](#)

Wednesday, January 27, 2021, 3:16 PM



I am not sure, but maybe I don't fully understand the need.

Let's take a multiple-choice question. I create a new MC question. Then, I want to create a similar MC question. Are you suggesting the maybe the next question would retain what I had just created? If so, isn't this similar to "duplicating" a question? How would the new method differ from just duplicating a question?

I also wonder if this might cause more harm than good. A novice instructor would create a new question, and not see that the defaults should be changed.

These are just some of my initial thoughts.

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Tim Hunt](#)

Wednesday, January 27, 2021, 3:51 PM



Sorry, I meant to give an some examples. This would only apply to some of the settings about how the question works. For example:

Of the standard settings, that appear in all question types. I think we would only remember the default for: 'Default mark/grade' and 'Penalty'.

For Multiple choice questions, it would remember: 'One or multiple answers?', 'Shuffle the choices?', 'Number the choices?', 'Show standard instructions' and 'Show the number of correct responses once the question has finished'.

All the things that make the particular question itself (like the question text, choices, feedback, ...) would not be remembered.

Does that make it clearer.

Average of ratings: [Useful\(2\)](#) 

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Mary Cooch](#)

Wednesday, January 27, 2021, 4:28 PM



You sold me on it when you said (quote)

"For Multiple choice questions, it would remember: 'One or multiple answers?', 'Shuffle the choices?', 'Number the choices?', 'Show standard instructions' and 'Show the number of correct responses once the question has finished'." 😊

Average of ratings: [Useful\(1\)](#) 

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Marcus Green](#)

Thursday, January 28, 2021, 2:01 AM



I would like the first option for multiple choice to be pre default to 100%. Despite using the question intermittently since Queen Victoria was on the throne I still press save and it complains I have not entered a mark. I suspect most people start with the correct answer and then create the distractors.

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Luiggi Sansonetti](#)

Thursday, January 28, 2021, 2:21 AM



Hello to all

Or maybe we can create question templates with the different presets and put an explicit tag to encourage duplication.

Average of ratings: [Useful\(1\)](#) 

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Rick Jerz](#)

Thursday, January 28, 2021, 9:30 AM



Interesting suggestion, Luiggi.

At GlobalMoot Spain 2019, in the ending session where Martin asks the audience for their most desired feature, I recall that "Activity Templates" came out #1. For example, if somewhere were to add a Quiz, they could pick their favorite quiz template. I don't know whatever happened to this audience suggestion?

So your suggestion about having question templates seems to parallel the idea of activity templates.

Average of ratings: -

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Tim Hunt](#)

Friday, January 29, 2021, 1:50 AM

Agreed. I made [MDL-70738](#) for you.

Average of ratings: [Useful \(2\)](#)

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Melanie Scott](#)

Friday, January 29, 2021, 9:14 AM

Me, too! I almost always use 4 or more choices but it defaults to 3, so I have to add. Having it remember I want 4 would be nice.

Average of ratings: -

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[AL Rachels](#)

Friday, January 29, 2021, 12:51 PM

As a work around, I used to always just duplicate a question of the type for which I wanted to create a new one. Then just changed the question name, question text, and question answer texts and score. I actually had bare-bone-versions of each question type so it was very easy to make changes to the actual question text and answers.

Average of ratings: [Useful \(1\)](#)

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Tim Hunt](#)

Friday, January 29, 2021, 2:07 PM

Ah! I did not think about the number of choices. That is a really good point.

However, which version of Moodle are you using, and which question type. Moodle has given 5 blanks for new multi-choice questions for a very long time ([MDL-11310](#)).

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Melanie Scott](#)

Monday, February 1, 2021, 8:04 AM

Honestly, I so rarely build quizzes these days...now, I recommend other people build quizzes and I giggle and point (when they put essay questions on and can't figure out why the quiz isn't graded...). Maybe that makes me a mean person...

It is possible I'm just remembering all the 1.9 & 2.X years where I did have to do that and built a lot of quizzes and supported others in quiz building. Or...maybe I'm thinking of [Lesson](#) choices? They are NOT the same. I'm on 3....8?

Getting ready for another upgrade.

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions



[AL Rachels](#)

Monday, February 1, 2021, 9:45 AM

I agree. I only used an essay question ONCE in a quiz. When I realized how many extra clicks it took to grade all of them, I never used a quiz essay question again. Switched to using the Journal for essays, and if I was still teaching, now I would use the Diary plugin for essays.

From my experience in doing QA testing for each new release, I have tested the essay question a couple of times, and it has not gotten any better. I think it might be nice if you could grade them in a fashion similar to the Journal or Diary, where you have a whole class or group or answers shown at one time on a long page, or at least be able to jump directly to the next students answer with just one click.

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions



[Rick Jerz](#)

Monday, February 1, 2021, 10:27 AM

Agree. Seldom do I use essay questions. I am one who believes that a powerful feature of an LMS is to provide an easy way for students to learn on their own. So I prefer unlimited quiz attempts using T/F and MC question types. I call these self-assessments, as a way of saying that these "quiz" are learning exercises, and not assessment. For exams, yep, one attempt. But now essay questions.

Al, for my Student Information Survey (quiz), all questions are "essay." But I grade these "by question" using the Manual grading feature. This provides me a method of seeing the "whole class or group" replies in one place. Is this what you mean?

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions



[Melanie Scott](#)

Tuesday, February 2, 2021, 8:00 AM

And you know, if I'm going to ask for an essay, I'll put it in assignment (or Journal or Diary--assignment is core, so that's what I use). And then they can [upload](#) documents and what all. Easy and they don't have to wait on someone to find out if they passed--yes, two [activities](#) but I'm okay with that.

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions



[Rick Jerz](#)

Tuesday, February 2, 2021, 10:21 AM

Melanie, I don't use essay questions, but I appreciate you mentioning Journal and Diary assignments. Where does one find a Journal or Diary assignment? I looked and didn't see it. Thanks.

Average of ratings: [_](#)[Report to moderator](#)[Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Reply](#)

Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Emma Richardson](#)

Tuesday, February 2, 2021, 12:42 PM



They are plugins, Rick.

Average of ratings: [_](#) [Report to moderator](#)[Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Reply](#)

Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Rick Jerz](#)

Tuesday, February 2, 2021, 1:18 PM



Okay, thanks Emma.

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Melanie Scott](#)

Wednesday, February 3, 2021, 8:13 AM



Yup...as Emma said...which was why I specified Assignment being in Core. I prefer using core stuff to plugins as I don't like worrying about future support or upgrading and having my plugin stop working. I can't really compare the new Assignment to the old...not sure which I use but it's super easy. You can type-in text or upload files or a combination. You can have them submit and not allow updates or allow revisions any time. You can grade and have them resubmit and add new comments. It's cool.

One of our current courses requires submission of several documents and (before I came) participants would email their submissions to the instructor. But if the instructor gets hit by a bus or is out or has a problem with their computer/email or a [spam](#) blocker eats the message or just plain misses the message...it was pretty chaotic. Now they submit their stuff in Assignment and it is there. I can grade it, the instructor can grade it. If we both get hit by a bus, the next person who runs the class can grade it. Simple.

And I'll add, Wiki is kind cool too, if you want collaboration or version tracking. But people have to learn to use it (I once built a wiki to teach people how to use wiki, which was pretty hilarious) and it isn't easy. My only complaint about Wiki is how complicated it is to use. Once you know what you're doing, it is awesome. But this is totally off the Quiz Question topic...so I'll stop.

Average of ratings: [Useful \(2\)](#)[Report to moderator](#)[Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Reply](#)

Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Beatriz Rojo](#)

Friday, February 5, 2021, 2:31 AM



Melanie, what is the problem in your city with the buses? 😊

Average of ratings: [Report to moderator](#) [Permalink](#) [Show parent](#) [Reply](#)

 **Re: Defaults options when creating questions** 
[Melanie Scott](#)
 Monday, February 15, 2021, 3:30 PM

God! That gave me a laugh. As far as I know, no one has been hit by a bus in my city. But I've been to Philadelphia and Houston and Denver and...many other places where I have no doubt it happens. The zip code for the city I work in is 66612 and well, we joke about the 666...I just figure anything can happen in a city like that.

I use the bus analogy because at my old job there was no one who actually understood my job or what I did. And no one wanted to learn the in-and-outs of Moodle (meaning anything, let alone admining) and I told them that if I got hit by a bus (or something dreadful happened) they would be in a really bad spot and I needed someone to be backup for me. When I accepted my current job...well, they looked a bit like they had been hit by a bus and were, in fact, in that really bad spot because they did not listen. And I heard stories for the next 18 months about the terrible spot they continued to be in from the training/LMS perspective...for that and other reasons. I *think* they've got things figured out now.

Average of ratings: [Useful\(1\)](#) [Report to moderator](#) [Permalink](#) [Show parent](#) [Reply](#)

 **Re: Defaults options when creating questions**  
[Rick Jerz](#)
 Friday, February 5, 2021, 7:54 AM

I will add that I really like the ability to [download](#) the students' Assignment file submissions, along with a grading sheet, and grade assignments "off-line." After grading, I simply upload the grading sheet, and I am done.

Average of ratings: [Useful\(1\)](#) [Report to moderator](#) [Permalink](#) [Show parent](#) [Reply](#)

 **Re: Defaults options when creating questions**    
[Marcus Green](#)
 Monday, February 1, 2021, 10:24 AM

"Honestly, I so rarely build quizzes these days"
 Why? I don't teach at all and I create quizzes just because they are great (obviously mainly with Gapfill and Wordselect because they are so awesome)

Average of ratings: [Useful\(1\)](#) [Report to moderator](#) [Permalink](#) [Show parent](#) [Reply](#)

 **Re: Defaults options when creating questions** 
[Melanie Scott](#)
 Tuesday, February 2, 2021, 7:58 AM

Quiz is awesome. I don't not use it because I don't like it or don't support it or...whatever. I'm just not building a lot of courses. I manage courses and other people make content decisions. I provide options

[context](#) and training in use. I consult. Cool cool.

What I do build, I build in [scorm](#), which is...sigh. And a lot of the people I build scorm content for want their questions/quizzes in the scorm (even though they get no effective data back on effectiveness or, well, anything)--they think it is easier. I wish I could use H5P (it is so cool and flexible and easy) but the reporting is so...ick. When reporting is worse than scorm...well.

Average of ratings: [Useful \(4\)](#)



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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Tim Hunt](#)

Friday, January 29, 2021, 1:54 AM



Let me see if I can summarise the opinions expressed here so far. I hope that I have not misrepresented anyone. If so, please clarify your position.

In favour

Marcus: "Yes, and only for new"

Mary: "You sold me"

Shirley did not post, but rated many of the posts as 'Useful'. I'm taking that as a 'Yes' vote.

Tim. (I suggested it)

Not sure

Rick: I am not sure

Against

No one 😊

In favour of something else

Dominique: "add a checkbox to save the current settings as default"

Luigi: "maybe we can create question templates", to which Rick replied that people have been suggesting templates for things in Moodle for years (and I add that no-one has managed to implement them).

My conclusion

None of the opinions expressed so far cause me to change my mind. So I, or more probably one of my colleagues at the OU, will probably try to implement this for Moodle 3.11, at least for the most-used question types. But I will continue to read any additional opinions expressed here.

Thanks everyone for your feedback.

Average of ratings: [Useful \(3\)](#)



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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Joseph Rézeau](#)

Friday, January 29, 2021, 4:29 AM



Hi Tim,

You wrote "... at least for the most-used question types".

Does this mean that the authors of *contributed* question types would have to implement this new feature themselves?

Average of ratings: [Useful\(1\)](#) 

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Marcus Green](#)

Friday, January 29, 2021, 6:18 AM



'Does this mean that the authors of contributed question types would have to implement this new feature themselves?'
If so I would be happy to implement for my Gapfill and Wordselect q types. I think this is a really nice "quiet" addition to ease of use.

Average of ratings: 

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Tim Hunt](#)

Friday, January 29, 2021, 2:11 PM



I think this will require a small change (in edit..._form.php) for each question type that wants to do this. Once we have done the first one or two, I'll try to remember to post a link to the change here, so people can see and copy.

(I could say "go and look at how qtype_ordering does it already", but I think there are some minor details of how they do it, which I would do differently. That might just be 'not invented here' syndrome.)

Average of ratings: [Useful\(1\)](#) 

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Luiggi Sansonetti](#)

Friday, January 29, 2021, 8:26 AM



There is so much to do to make a better use of the question bank in Moodle to build reusable template categories for example
But this requires a lot of structuring and support, no doubt.

And there are also (this is the strength of Moodle) so many little tricks and/or plugins for bulk modify, duplicate...

Moodle has such a strong and tightly knit community that solutions will come quickly!

Thanks all dev and passionate moodlers



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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Rick Jerz](#)

Friday, January 29, 2021, 1:29 PM



I second what you are saying, Luiggi.

Yes, always room for improvement. However, Moodle's quiz engine far surpasses the other major LMS quiz engines. And it also does much better than many stand-alone quiz creation software.

I have never seen a "programmer" (like Tim) from any other major LMS propose changes, as Tim does. Yes, I agree that the Moodle community is strong, but I am not sure about tightly knit. It's a worldwide community, which doesn't fit my definition of tightly knit, if you know what I mean. My guess is that Tim's suggestion went out to thousands of Moodle users here on Moodle.org.

Average of ratings: [Useful \(1\)](#)

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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Emma Richardson](#)

Friday, January 29, 2021, 6:35 AM



Sorry Tim, I must have missed this originally. I am all for anything that saves teachers some time!

Average of ratings: [Useful \(1\)](#)



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Re: Defaults options when creating questions

[Rick Jerz](#)

Friday, January 29, 2021, 8:06 AM



Yes, I agree with the change. Some of the other changes, such as templates and a checkbox, can come later.

Maybe we can work on the directions for this change that will make it into Moodle's docs.

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