Every Moodle@Carleton user has their own home page within the system which can be personalized to include any number of Moodle elements or useful links. To access your personal home page, go to http://moodle.carleton.edu/my. The first time you access this page, the only thing that will appear will be a list of courses or course categories, depending on whether or not you are currently enrolled in any courses. This list will always form the main body of the page and cannot be changed. However, elements can be added to both the left and right columns on the page.

To customize your home page, click on the Edit this page button at the top-right of the page.

**Adding a Block**

Moodle uses the word “Block” to refer to each of the elements you can add to your home page. When you turn editing on, a block will appear with the title Blocks and a pull-down labeled “Add…”. This configuration block is used to add new blocks to your page. Click on the pull-down to view a list of the various types of blocks that can be added to your page (see below for more information on each type of block). To add a block, simply select it from the list. You can change the position and, in some cases, configuration of each block using the controls which appear below the title.

**Blog Menu Block**

Moodle@Carleton comes with simple blogging capabilities, and each user account has its own blog by default. The Blog Menu provides you with links to add and view your own blog entries, view entries from other users that have been made visible to anyone on the system, and to set preferences.

**Calendar Block**

Apart from its normal function, the Calendar will highlight important dates with respect to the courses in which you are enrolled, such as assignment due dates or exam dates. If you move your mouse over a highlighted date, the details of the event will be displayed along with any corresponding links.

**Courses Block**

The Courses block is the same as the Course Categories / My Courses block that appears on the Moodle@Carleton home page, listing all courses in which you are enrolled. While the main body of your personal home page also lists your current courses, it also includes a list of all assignments associated with each course. Adding the Courses block to your page may seem redundant, but it may provide a faster method of linking to a course than scrolling through the main body of the page.

**HTML Block**

An HTML block is an empty block to which you can add information such as plain text or links. It is essentially a miniature web page in itself. To add content to it, click on the Configuration button. This will take you to a page where you can enter a title for the block and create content using a web-based editor which behaves much like a simplified word processor.

**Latest News Block**

This block may only have limited use on a personal home page. On a course page, it will display the latest topic entries for that course. On a personal home page, it will display the latest topic updates and system announcements posted to the Moodle@Carleton home page.

**Messages Block**

The Messages block behaves similarly to an online chat tool such as Yahoo!Messenger. When another Moodle@Carleton user sends you a message, a link will appear in the Messages block displaying a link to that person. Depending on both your Moodle@Carleton and browser settings, if you are viewing your home page when the message was sent, the system may open a chat window automatically. If you are not signed in to Moodle@Carleton when the message is sent, you can configure the system to forward the message to you via e-mail.

To configure the settings for your messages, or to send a message to another user, click on the Messages... link at the bottom of the block. A pop-up window will appear with three tabs.

- The Contacts tab shows a list of Moodle@Carleton users
that you have added as contacts.

- To send a message (start a chat session), simply click on the name of the person you want to contact. To add a new contact, use the Search tab.
- To remove a person from your contacts list, click on the Remove Contact button.
- To view a transcript of previous chat sessions with a contact, click on the Message History button.

- If the person you want to contact is not in your contacts list, you can use the Search tab to find and add them. Enter in the name of the person, specify any additional criteria, then click on the Search button. The page will update to show a list of participants who match your search criteria.

- To send a message (start a chat session), simply click on the name of the person that you want to contact.
- To add someone to your contacts list, click on the Add contact button.
- To block someone and prevent them from sending you messages, click on the Block contact button. To unblock someone, click on the Unblock contact button.
- To view a transcript of previous chat sessions with a contact, click on the Message History button.

- The Settings tab allows you to configure how you receive messages and message notifications. If you change your settings, remember to click on the Save my settings button at the bottom of the page.

Random Glossary Entry Block

The random glossary block can be used to display random entries from a glossary, which usually take the form of dictionary style definitions. However the flexibility of Moodle’s HTML editor allow users to adapt this block for other purposes such as ‘Quote of the Day’ or a random picture gallery that changes each time the page is refreshed.

Participants will only be able to take advantage of this feature if one or more of the courses in which they are enrolled actually makes use of a glossary.

Remote RSS Feeds Block

The Remote RSS Feeds block allows you to add RSS feeds to your home page.

RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds provide web content in the form of headlines or summaries which link to the full version of the article or content on it’s host site. Most news networks, such as the BBC, have RSS feeds available.

To add and configure RSS feeds, click on the Configuration button.