Journals

Journals are a personal online place for private communication between a student and their teacher. Journals can also be used for self-reflection by students with the ability for a student to post their opinions, ideas and concerns about their learning as well as discussing and analysing unit learning materials.

Journal entries can also be made accessible to all site users, where teaching staff and students can view all entries. This type of journal, a site journal, allows students to read the contributions of others, and build upon the ideas contained within.

You can assign marks to journal entries or use them just for communication. In either instance, a student can make multiple entries for one journal topic. The functions in the content editor can be used to format text and include images, links, multimedia, mashups and attachments in their entries.

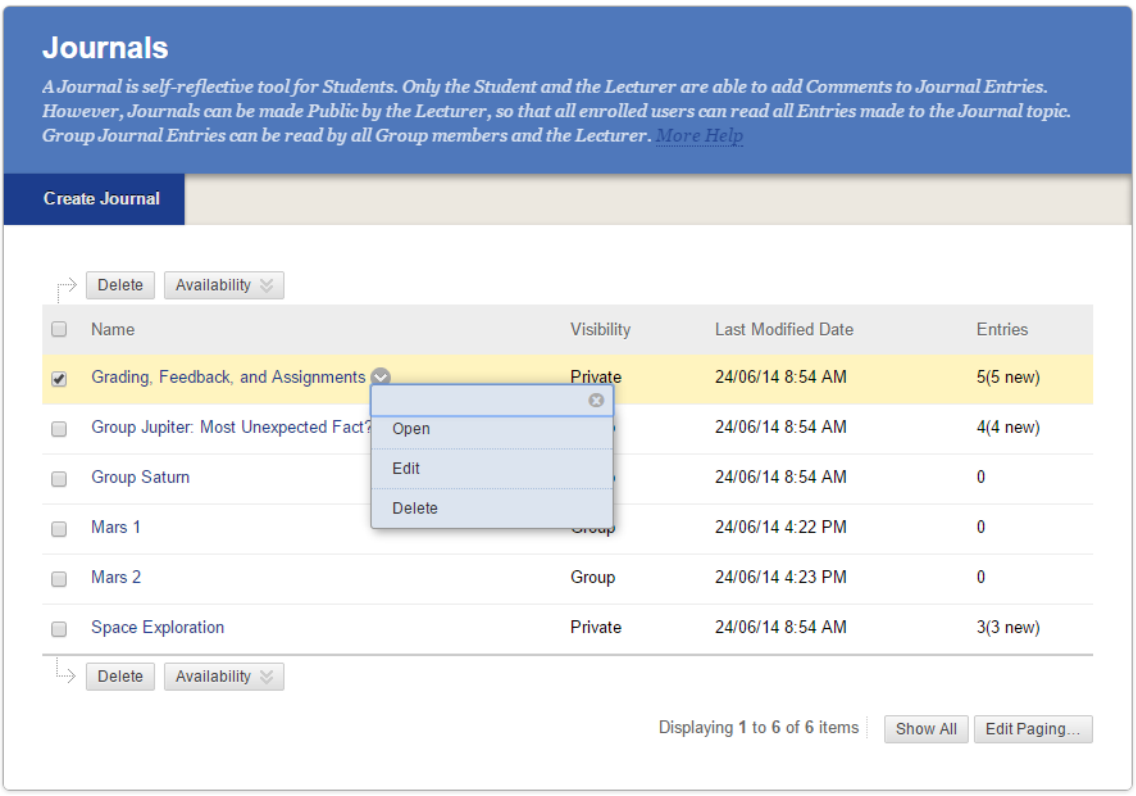
Journals are also available as a group tool option where members of a group can view and comment on each other's entries as well as communicate with teaching staff as a group.

Typically, students access the journals tool from the **Tools** link on the Site Menu.

Only teaching staff can create journals.

Creating journals

In order to create a journal, the Journal tool is used. The Journal tool is accessed by either selecting **Tools** in the Site Menu, then selecting **Journals**, or by selecting **Site Tools** in the Control Panel, then selecting **Journals**. This will open the **Journals** page which displays all journals in the Learning Site, their visibility (public or private), their last date of modification and how many entries have been made. Journals can also be made unavailable or deleted on this screen.



To create the new journal, select the **Create Journal** button. This opens the **Create Journal** page where you can set the journal›s initial configuration. The available options include:

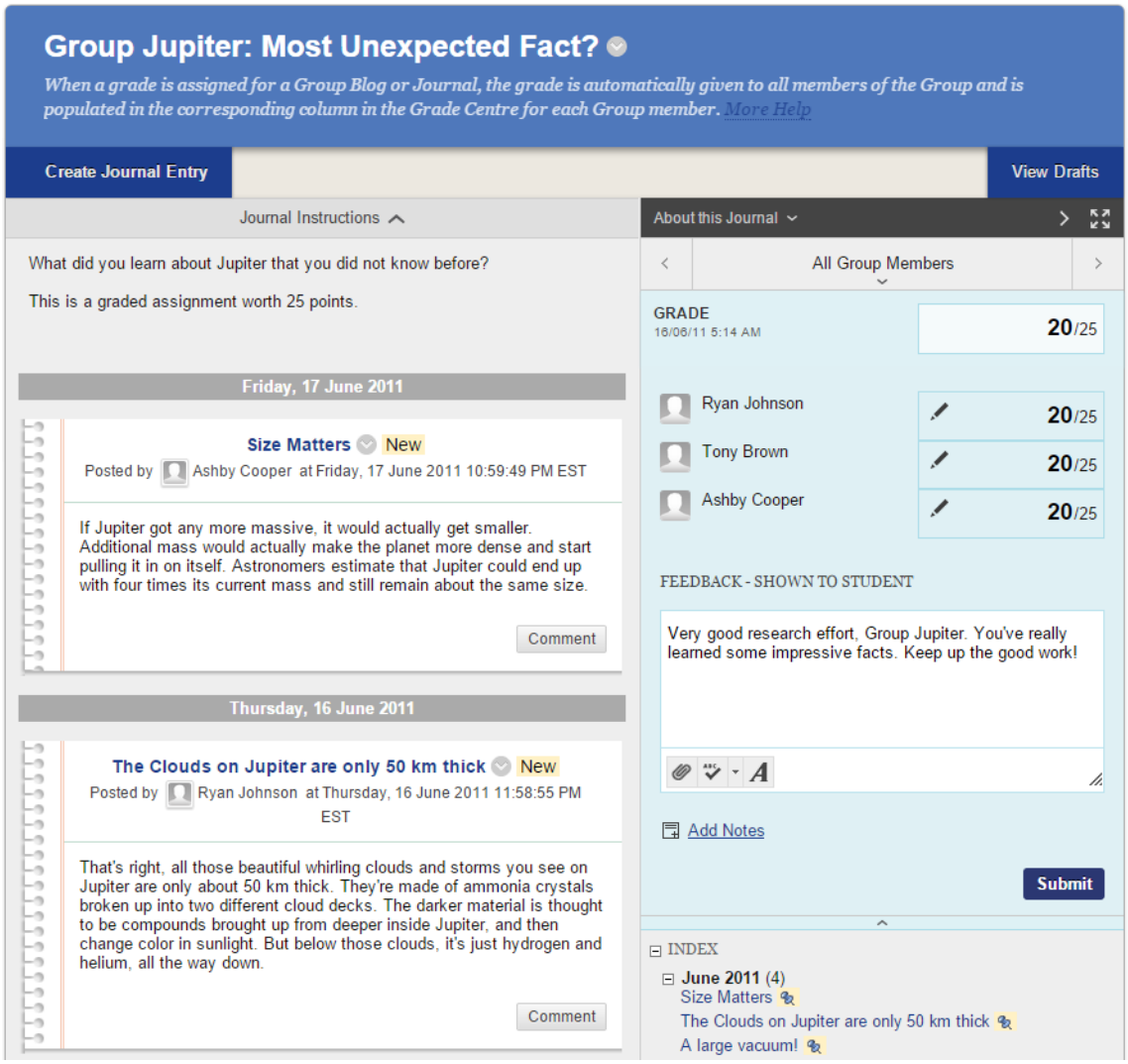
- **Journal Information:** Where the name of the journal and its instructions are entered. Instructions can include text, images, links, multimedia, mashups, and/or attachments.
- **Journal Availability:** Whether the journal is available to students.
- **Journal Date and Time Restrictions:** Whether the journal is only available for a specific period.
- **Journal Settings:** You can control whether users can edit and delete their journal entries and comments, and whether the journal is public (viewable by other site users).
- **Grade Settings:** Whether the journal is assessable and, if so, what its grading settings are.

When you have set the journal settings appropriately, select **Submit** and the new journal will appear on the Journals page.

You can edit a journal's settings or delete it by selecting the downwards arrow icon next to the journal name and select **Edit** or **Delete**.

Viewing journals

When a journal is selected, its page opens, showing the journal name, instructions, all entries and a link to any comments made for each entry. There are also buttons for creating journal blog entries and commenting on entries and a journal index where you can quickly jump to entries that are further down the page. When the journal is assessable, then teaching staff will have access to an area for grading, providing feedback and adding notes. This information is stored in the Grade Centre. Entries can be edited and deleted or marked as new by selecting the downward arrow next to the title of the entry and selecting the appropriate option.



When a journal is private, only teaching staff and the student can see the entries and make comments. Each student has a different journal, accessible by expanding the list of users and selecting the specific student.

The difference between private journals and individual blogs

Private journals are similar in form to individual blogs, with the individual student being the only one (apart from teaching staff) allowed to create entries. The difference between a private journal and an individual blog is that a private journal is only accessible by the student who created it and teaching staff, whereas all students can read an individual blog and post comments to the blog entries.

Further information

Journals – from Blackboard Help.

How to Create a Journal – Blackboard video on YouTube: Watch Video