

Creating a sharing area within groups set up with the Groups tool

As part of your module/unit in Brightspace, you might want to be able to have students share documents with each other. This guide will walk you through the steps necessary for creating a group using the Groups tool in Brightspace, as well as how to set up a file sharing area similar to the 'File exchange' function in Blackboard.

When you are in your Brightspace module/unit area, select 'Groups' from the drop-down menu 'Communication and Collaboration'. (Figure 1)

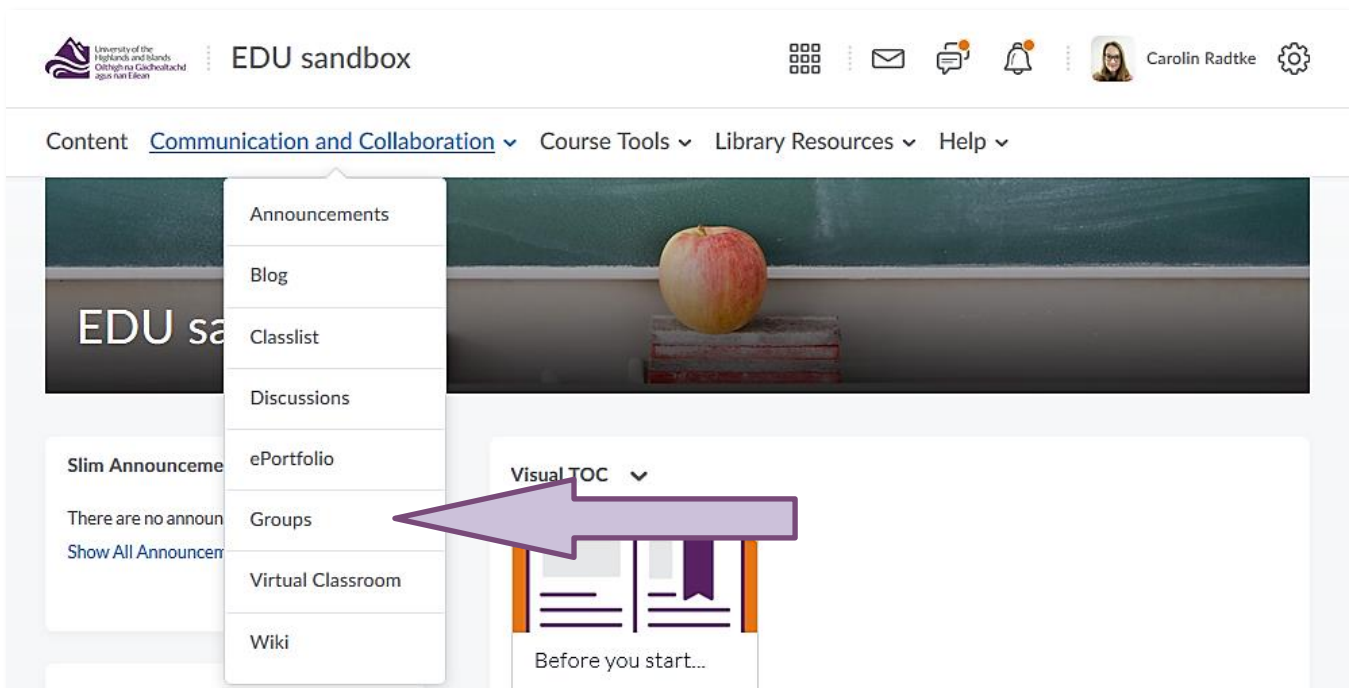


Figure 1: Brightspace module/unit homepage with the Communication and Collaboration drop-down menu

This will take you to the Groups tool in Brightspace. To start setting up a group, click on the blue 'New Category' button. (Figure 2)

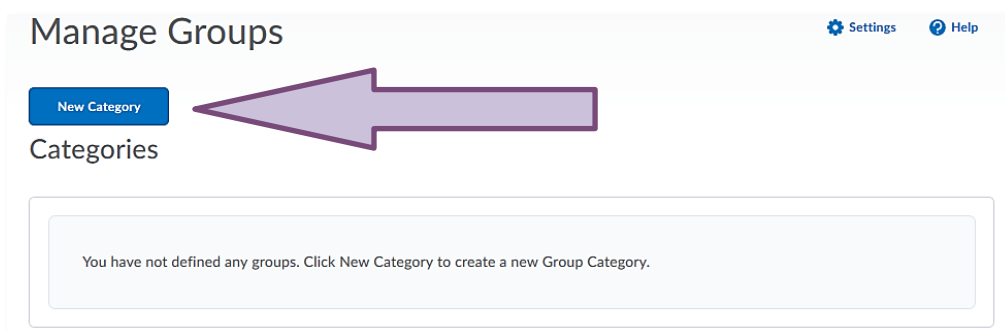


Figure 2: Manage Groups page with the blue New Category button

Give your category a name (1), provide a short description if you would like, and select the enrolment type and number of groups (2). For this example we will give the category the name 'Test File Exchange', and will select '# of Groups – No Auto Enrolments' which means that I will be able to determine how many groups I want to sit in that category (in my example 2), and that students will not be auto enrolled, which means that I will have to enrol them. There are a number of other options, i.e., determining the number of students enrolled on groups, or auto enrolment, but for this example, we will go with 2 groups and the instructor enrolling the students. (Figure 3)

The screenshot shows the 'New Category' page. The 'Category Name' field is highlighted with a purple circle containing the number '1'. The 'Enrolment Type' dropdown is set to '# of Groups - No Auto Enrolments'. The 'Number of Groups' field is highlighted with a purple circle containing the number '2' and is set to '2'. The 'Restrict Enrollments To' dropdown is set to 'No restrictions'. The description field is empty and contains a rich text editor toolbar.

Figure 3: New Category page with title and description box as well as drop-down menus/boxes for the enrolment type and restrictions as well as number of groups

Next, I will be able to select additional options. I could choose to set up discussion areas for the different groups. This means that I could set up discussions with different questions for each of the groups I created. Students would only have access to the discussion topics for their specific group. I can also set up lockers which is a file sharing and exchange area for each of the different groups. Again, students will only have access to the locker areas for the group that they are enrolled on. In addition, I

could set up group-specific assignments, and again, students would only be able to access the assignments and submission area for their specific group. For this example, I will only select to create lockers for my groups. (Figure 4)

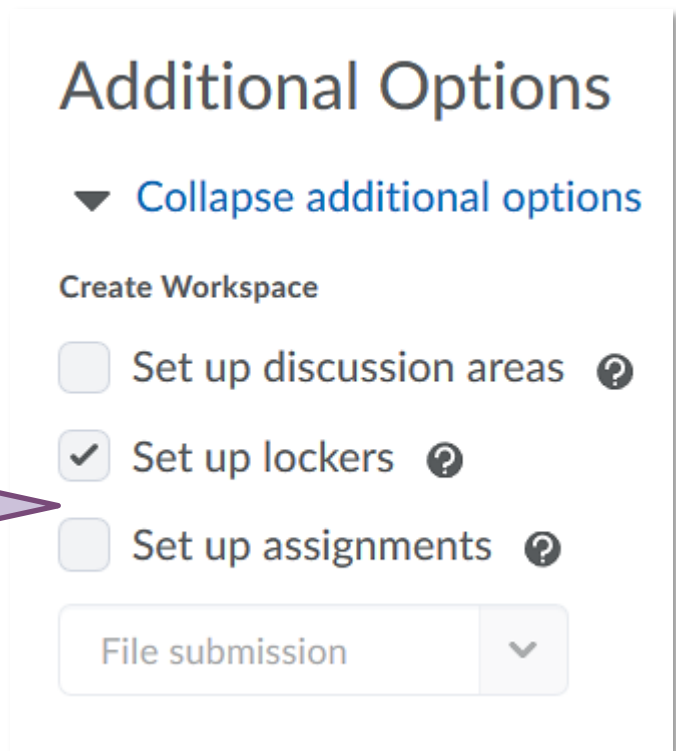
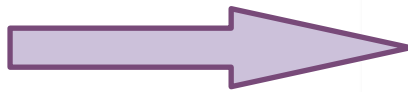


Figure 4: Additional options area for groups, incl. setting up discussion areas, lockers, and assignments



Once you are happy with your settings, click the blue 'Save' button on the bottom of the screen. (Figure 5)

Figure 5: Save and Cancel buttons at the bottom of the screen

Next, you will see a summary of what you have just created. I can see that I have created 2 groups as well as 2 lockers. Click on the blue 'Done' button to continue. (Figure 6)

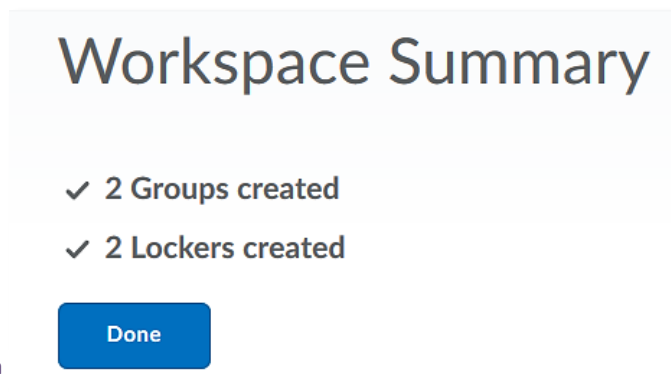


Figure 6: Group set-up summary and Done button

Next, you will be taken back to an area where you could further edit the category, i.e., by adding further groups (1; Figure 7), or by also creating an assignments and/or discussion area for each group (2). You will also be able to see the lockers for your two existing groups (3). (Figure 8)

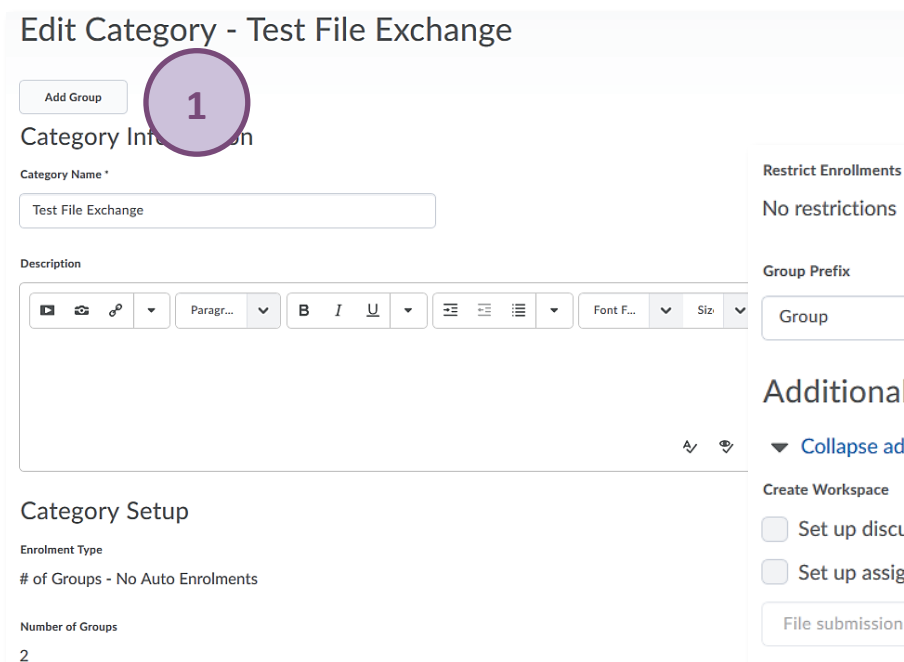


Figure 7: Edit category area with option to add further groups

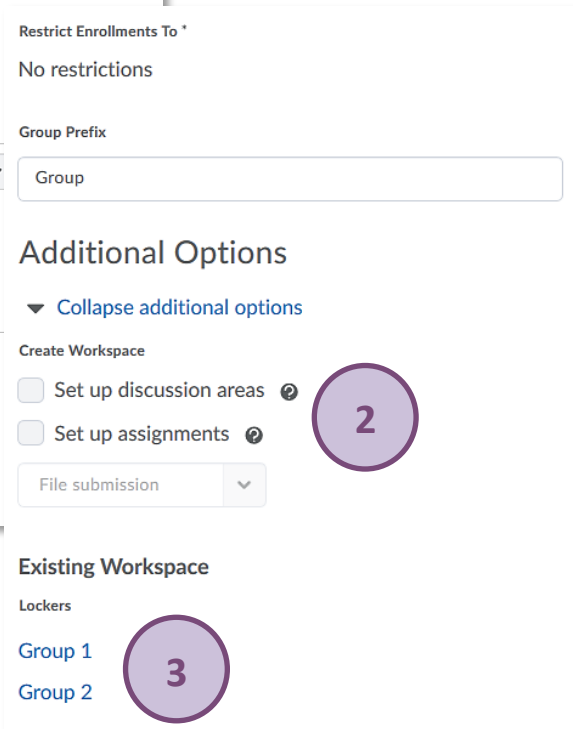


Figure 8: Updated additional options area

If you click on one of the group names shown under Lockers in Figure 8, you will be taken to the locker area of that group and could upload files, create new files using the HTML editor, add new folders or email group members. (Figure 9)

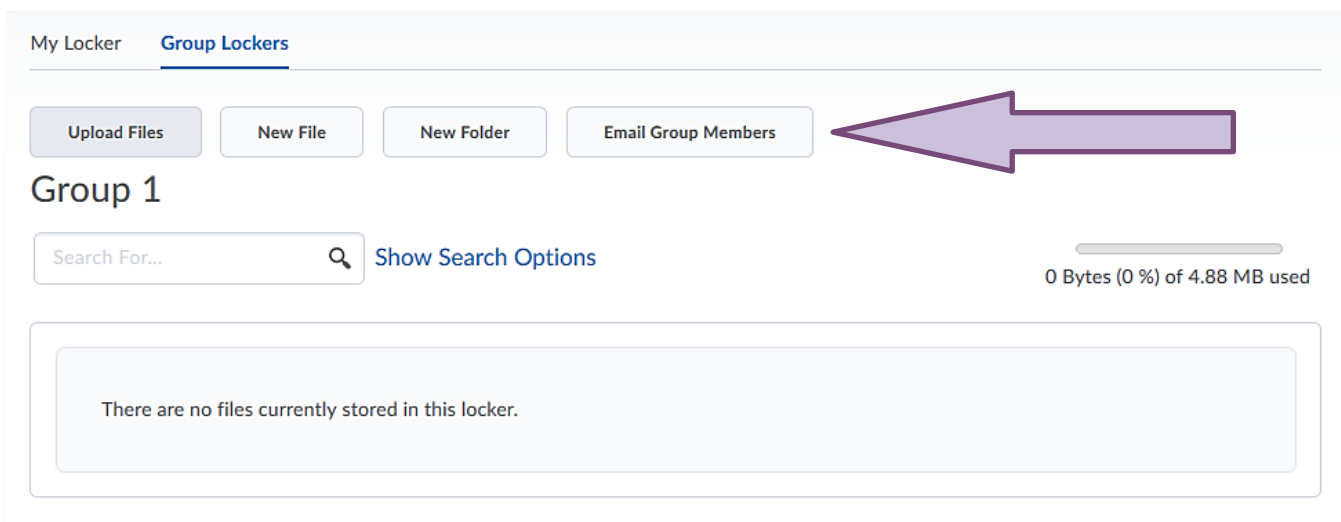


Figure 9: Homepage of the locker area for Group 1

Before being able to email group members, though, you will first need to enrol students on the groups. To do so, go back to the Groups tool, where you will now see your group category (1) as well as both groups you created (2). In the overview, you will see how many and which members are enrolled in a group (3), as well as information on assignments, discussions and group files in the locker (4) area if you have enabled these features. Since I have only enabled the locker for these groups, I will not see any information under assignments and discussions, but can enter the locker area by clicking on 'Group Files' (5). (Figure 10)

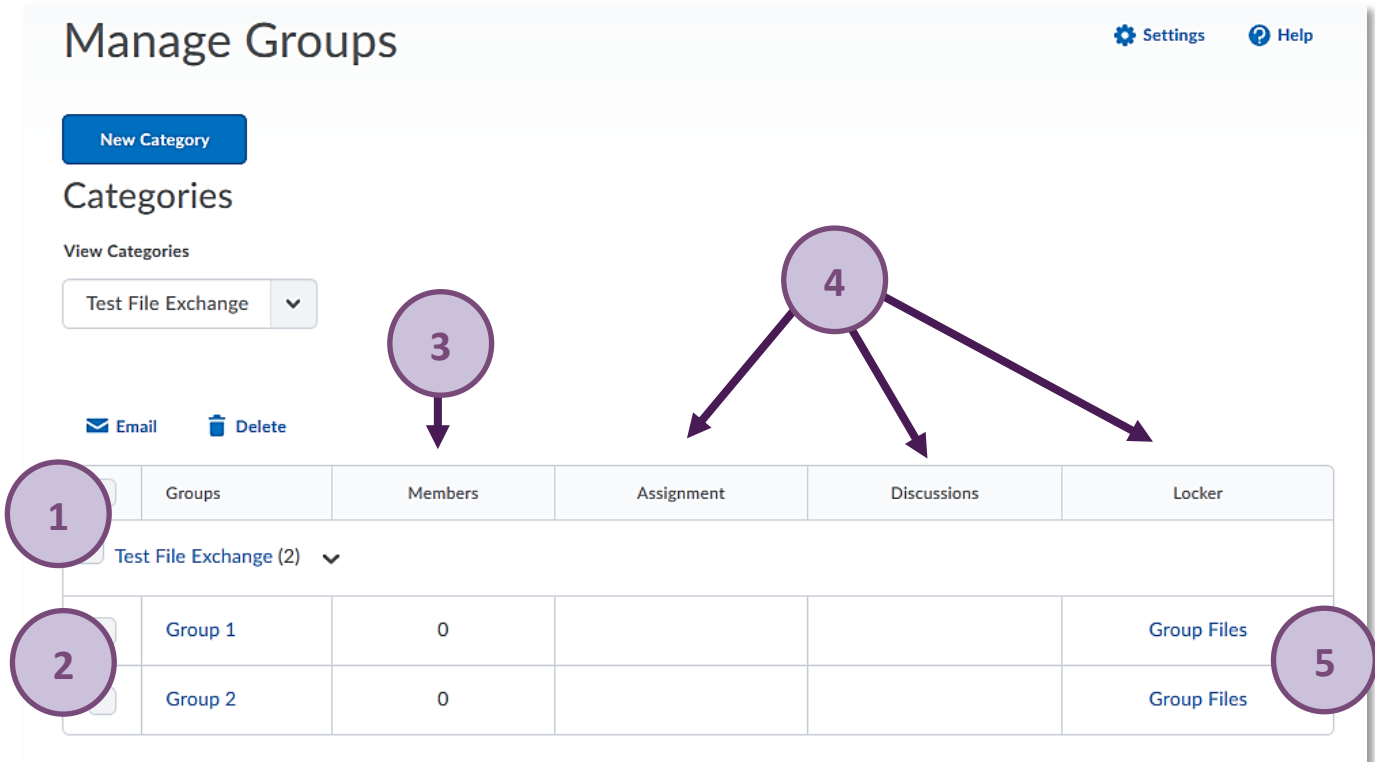


Figure 10: Updated Manage Groups area

To enrol users, click on the group name. (Figure 11)

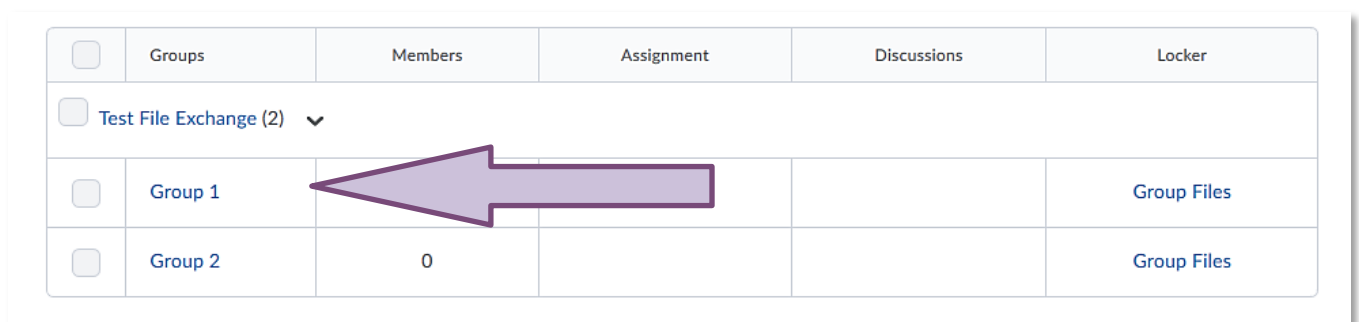


Figure 11: Category and Group names

Once you are in the group, click on enrol users to add users to the group. (Figure 12)

Edit Group - Group 1

Enrol Users View Enrolment

Edit Group

Group Name *
Group 1

Group Code *
grp_70274_1

Description

Save Cancel

Figure 12: Edit Group area with Enrol Users and View Enrolment buttons at the top

Enrol Users - Test File Exchange

Add Group

Enrolments

Category
Test File Exchange

Display
Group 1

Search For... Show Search Options

Advanced Search Options

Last Name, First Name, Username, Org Defined ID	Group 1 Users: 1
Test, Edu, EDUbrighttest, EDUbrighttest	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Figure 13: Enrol Users area with classlist on the bottom of the page

This will take you to the enrolment page, where you will see the classlist of your module/unit with all students enrolled in it (1). At the moment, there is only one student in my course, and I will enrol that student on Group 1 by checking the box next to its name (2). When you are done, click on the blue 'Save' button. (Figure 13)

Note: You can enrol students on multiple groups within one category if you would like to do so.

What students will see

When students enter the Groups tool through the 'Communication and Collaboration' drop-down menu, they will see the categories and groups they are enrolled on. Similar to instructors, they will be able to see who else is enrolled on their specific group, could email the other members and can access the group locker area via 'Group Files'. (Figure 14)

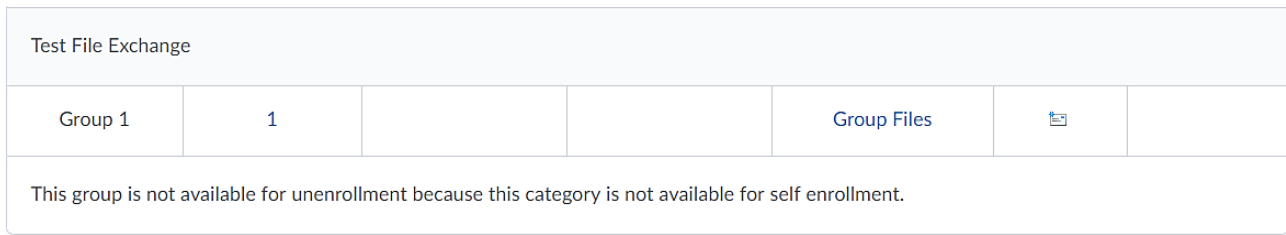


Figure 14: Student view of their group area

Once they enter the group files area, they will see the same as the instructors. They will be able to upload files, create a new file, create a new folder or email the group members. (Figure 15)

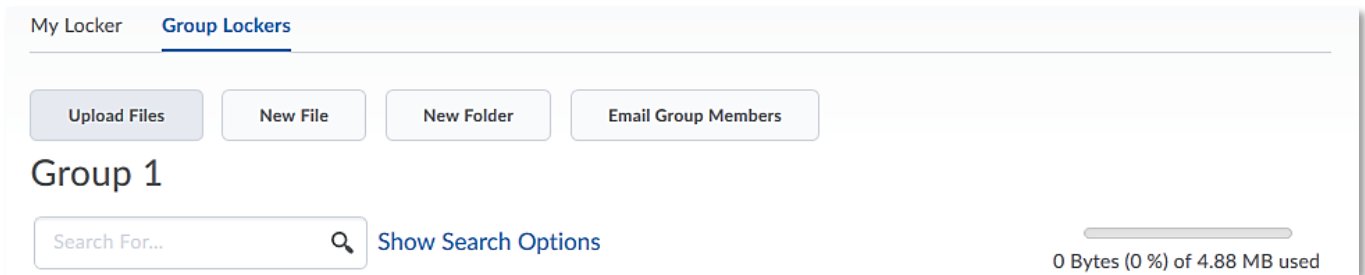


Figure 15: Student view of the file sharing area in Group 1