



Gem-A

THE GEMMOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
OF GREAT BRITAIN

ON-LINE HANDBOOK 2009

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Introduction and welcome

Welcome to The Gemmological Association of Great Britain (Gem-A) we hope you will find your time studying with us rewarding and interesting.

This on-line handbook is designed to guide and help you with Gem-A's on-line education systems.

Gem-A uses a system called Moodle for their on-line education services. Moodle is a virtual learning environment (VLE). It allows you to access resources unique to your course and interact with other students and your tutor through on-line forums.

The word Moodle is an acronym for:

Modular
Object
Orientated
Dynamic
Learning
Environment.

Logging in to the system

The web address for Gem-A's on-line system is:

<http://e-learning.gem-a.com>

Please note that you do not need to put www in front of this address. You can either use the link provided above, copy and paste, or type this into the address box at the very top of your web browser. The Gem-A website (www.gem-a.com) also has a login for members but this does not give access to our on-line education resources and is a separate web resource.

To make navigating back to this login page quick you can add this page to your favorites

Information on your login and password should have been sent to you by e-mail or given to you by your tutor or another Gem-A representative.

Only registered Gem-A students and members can login to this education site, so please keep your login details and password safe.

Your login should be:

Username: surname (all in lower case)

Password: (your student number)

You can change your password once logged into the system.

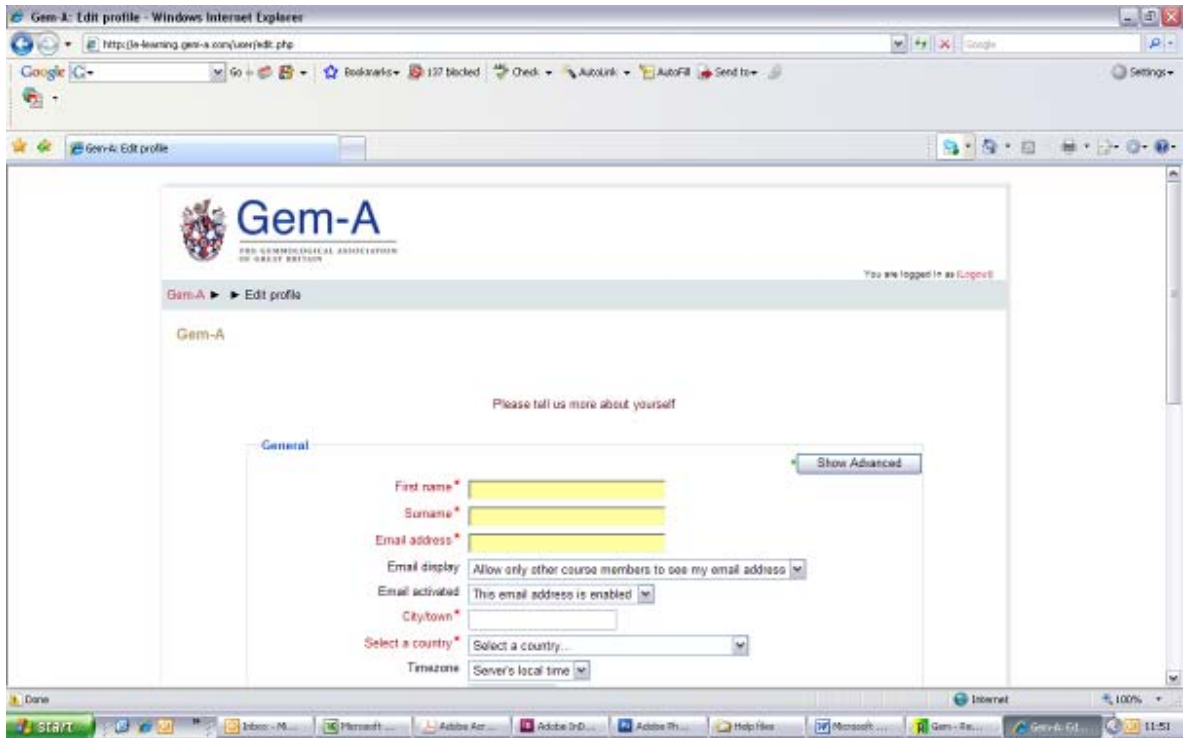
The login page should look like this:



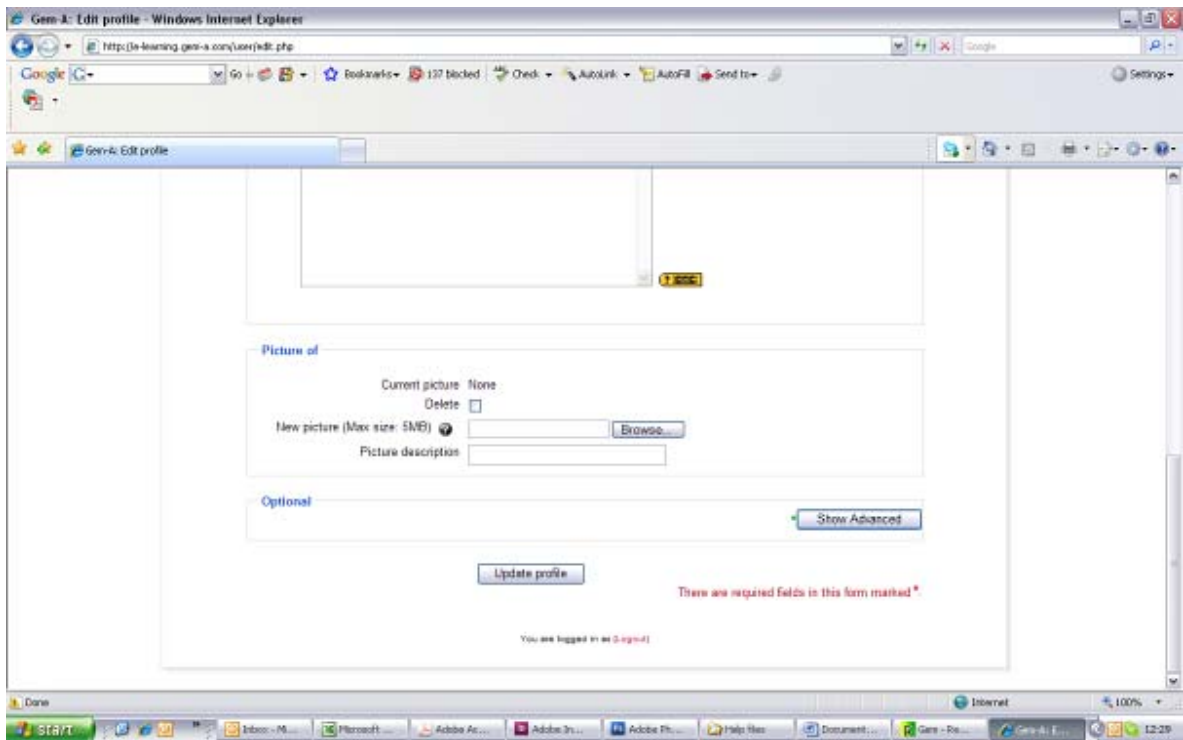
Depending on how you have been set-up on the system you will either be asked to fill in additional information on your first login or you will jump straight to the site policy agreement.

Adding your personnel details at login:

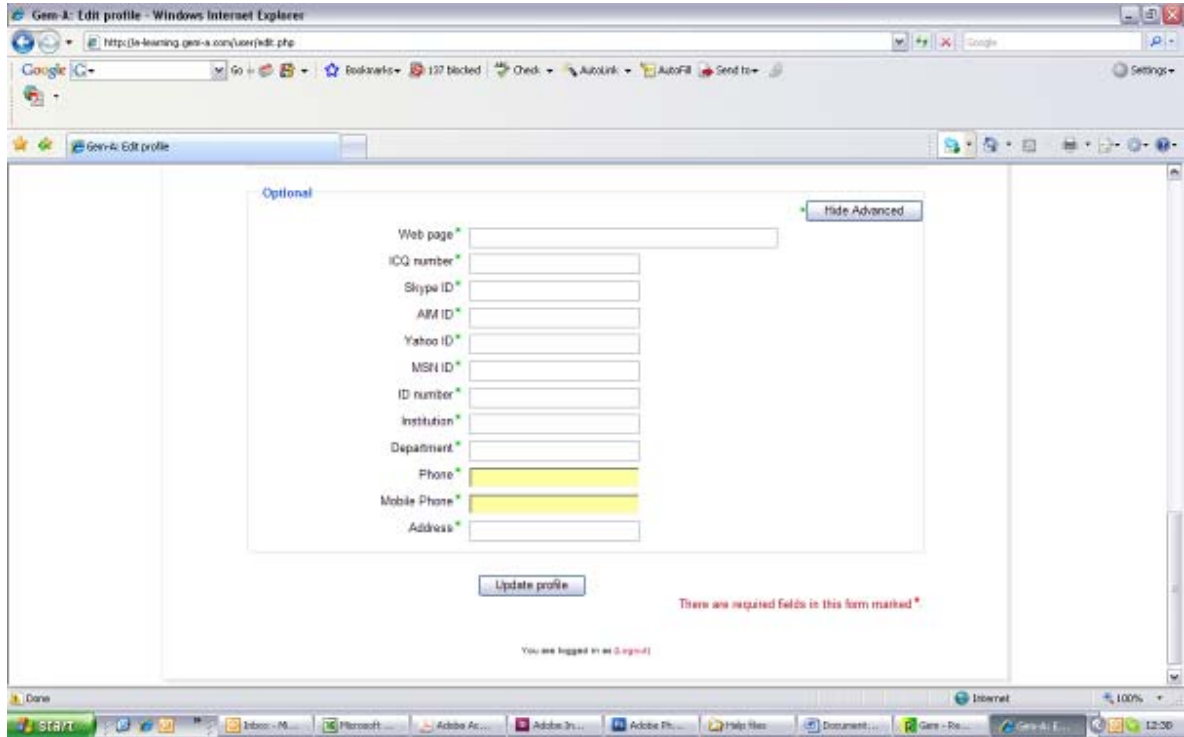
Upon log-in you may be asked to fill in some additional information.



Towards the bottom of this page you will see an area headed Optional – you will need to click on the 'Show Advanced' button.



This will then ask for further details – under ID number please enter your student/member number this will ensure that any information transferred to your Gem-A records are entered under the correct ID.



After you have filled in all your details click on 'update profile'.

Site Policy Agreement

This site policy will only appear the first time you login or if an alteration has been made to the policy. Please read this before going on.



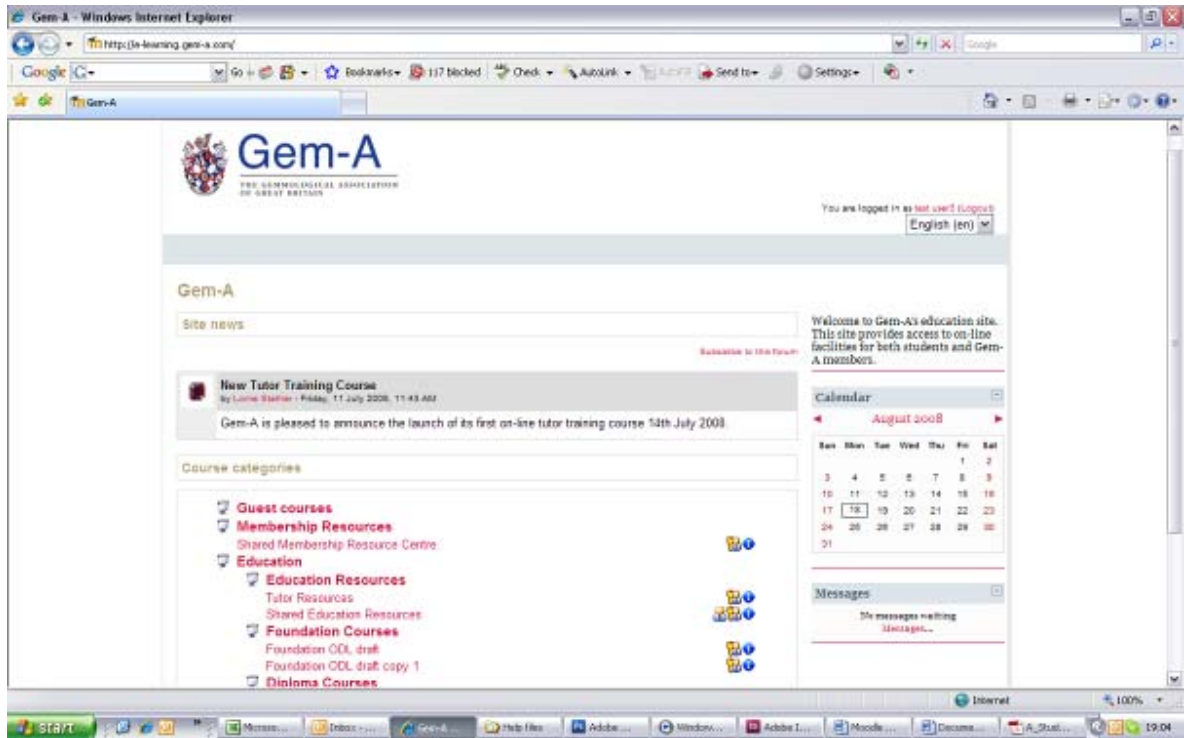
Your profile

On your first login you will then be show a summary of your profile.



You can go into this profile and make alterations if you wish. Information on this can be found under the main *your profile* heading.

From here click on the red coloured text 'Gem-A' in the pale grey/blue bar to get to the home page for this site. After this you will be presented with the home page:



This home page may change in its appearance depending on any news items being show.

Language options

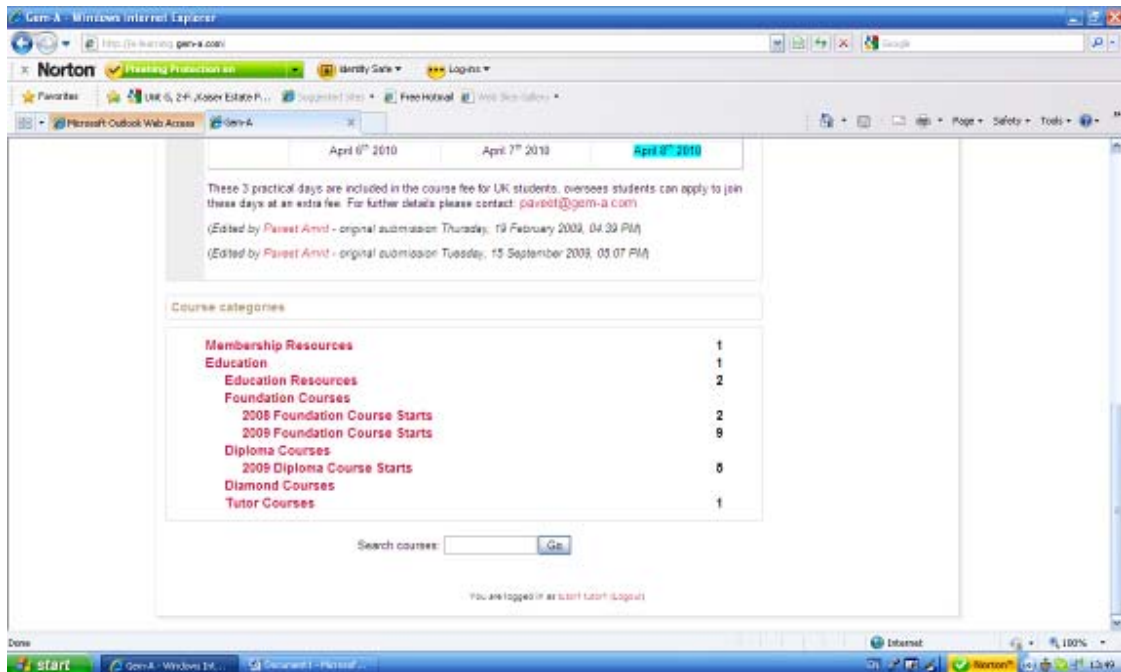
If English is not your first language you have the option of changing the background language by selecting the language bar in the top right hand corner of the main home page.

Please note – this will not change the language of the content unless this language has been translated by Gem-A.

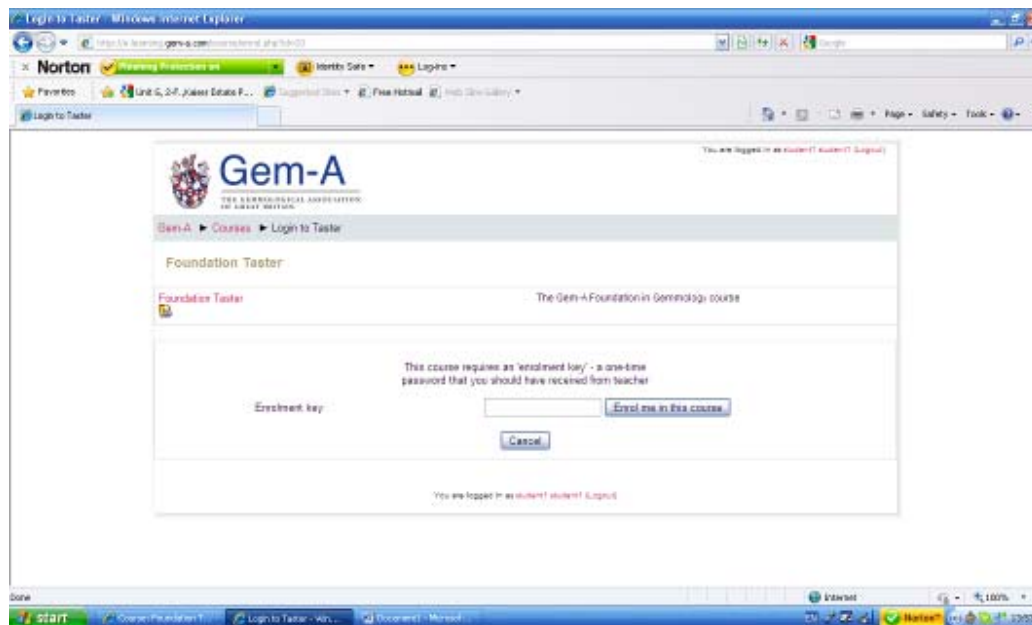


Enrolling in a course

A list of course categories and courses can be seen on the left hand side in red text of the main home page, you may need to scroll down the page to see this. If you have enrolled in a specific course with Gem-A you should have been given the course category, title and enrolment code either by Gem-A or your course tutor.



For example: Education, Foundation taster:



The first time you enter this course you will need to enter the enrolment key; this is the password for the course and should not be shared with anybody else outside of your Gem-A registered course.

Please note that some courses have a date restriction and you may not be able to log-in to the course until the specified start date, or after the closing date.

Once enrolled you will see the home page for this course.



Course and site navigation

The course page is laid out in three columns: the left and right hand columns are for short-cuts and information, the centre area is the main course area and contains the course materials. This area is headed 'Topic outline'.

The 'Topic outline' section shows a series of boxes that with content for each section of a course. The number of boxes in each course vary with the content of each course.



Navigation

To navigate within the site you can use the 'Breadcrumbs' - this is a line positioned below the course title showing your location within the course site. In the example above your location is:

Gem-A ► Taster

You can now retrace your steps in the opposite direction to return to where you started. For example if you wanted to return to the site home page with the list of course contents you could click:

Gem-A

If you were in a resource, for example a forum, called 'Course Message Board', your breadcrumbs might look like:

Gem-A ► **Taster** ► **Forums** ► Course message board

To return to the main course page you would click:

Taster

Links

Text appearing in red such as provide links to the resources available in this course:

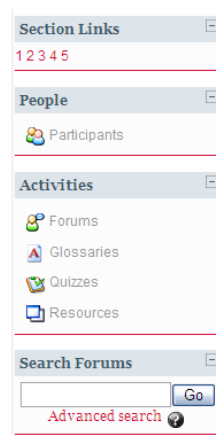
 [Course message board Forum](#)

You will also find that some areas of text are highlighted in grey and have red text: these are also quick links to other areas or resources within the course or site. For example the in the text below:

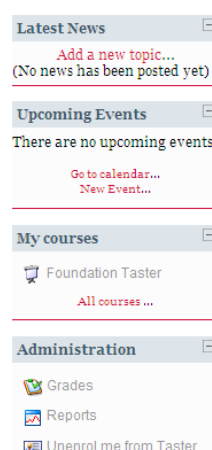
Before you try Assignment 2 you might want to have a go at the [weight estimation quiz](#).

The side columns also provide a quick way to navigate around your course page and other areas of the site.

Left hand side:



Right hand side:

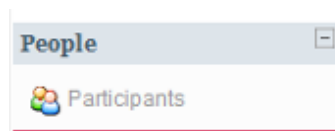


For example the section links provide a quick link to the topics in the middle section of the home page.

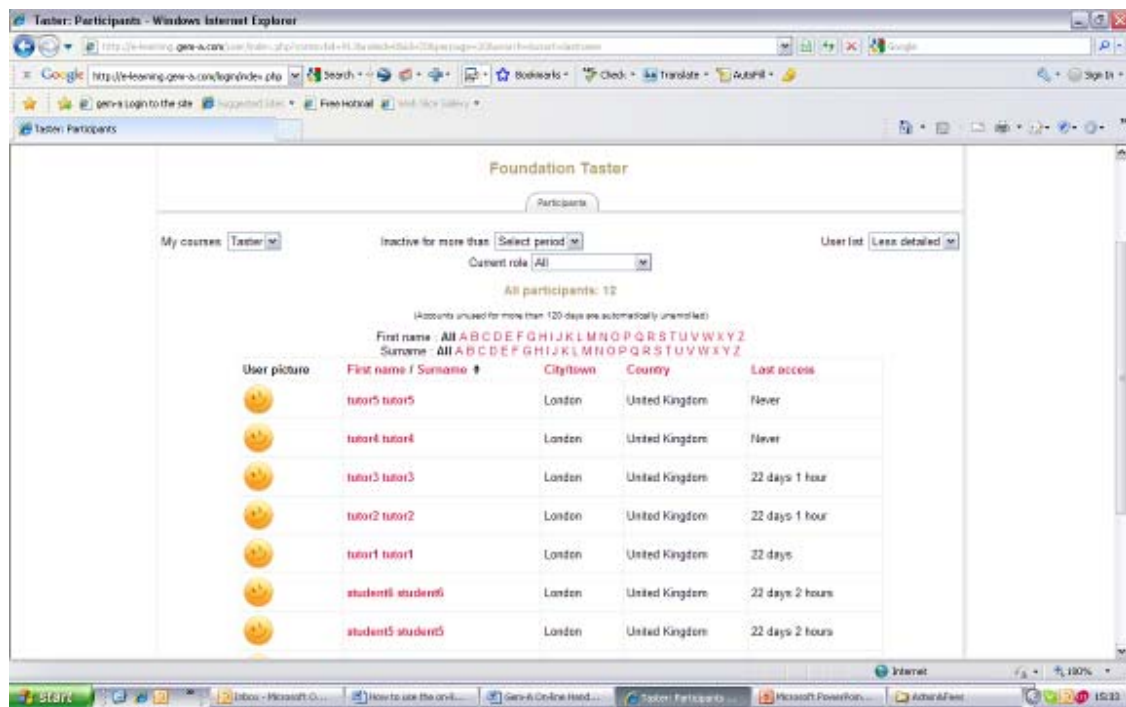
The other resources these side panel link to are described in more detail under their individual headings.

Participants

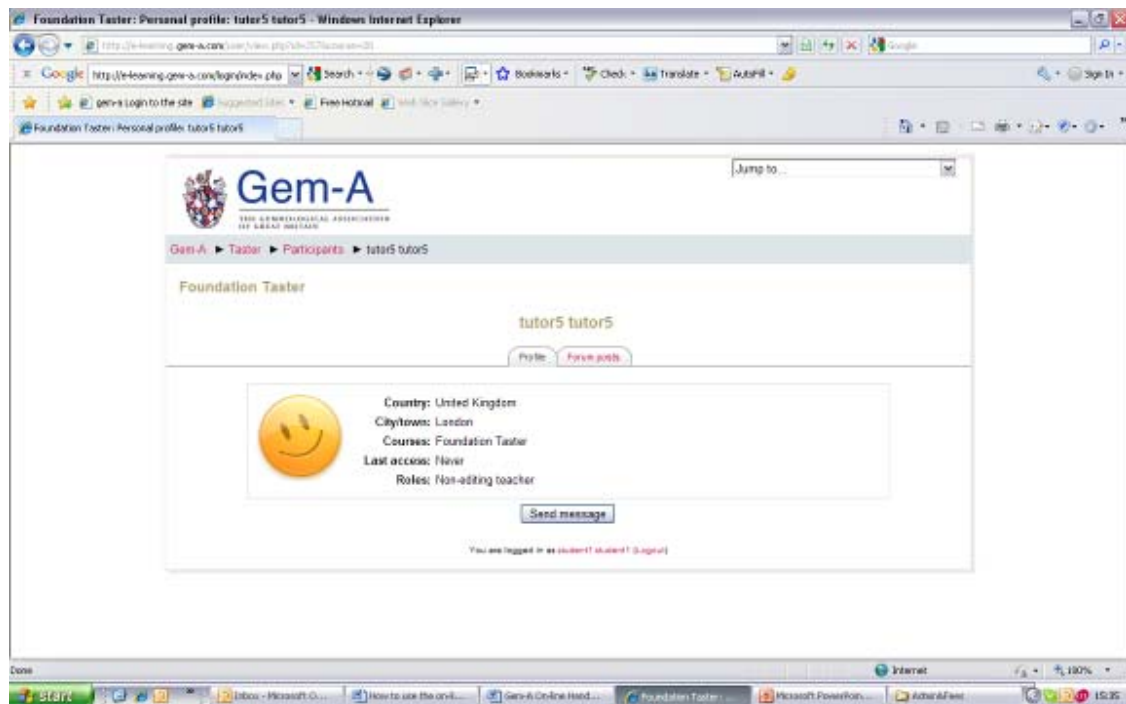
From the 'People' block you can view information about the other students on the same course as yourself and your tutors. You can also access and edit your profile from here.



Clicking this link will show you the 'Participants page':



From this you can click an individual name to look at this person's profile:



If you want to send a message to this person you can do so using the *Send message* button under the profile.

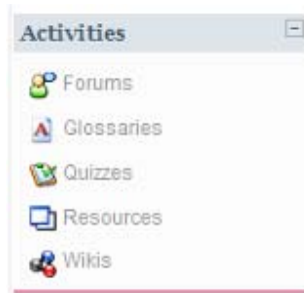
You can also update your own profile clicking your name:




For more details on this please go to *Updating your profile*.




Forums

In the 'Activities' block on the left you can view all the forums available on this course page by clicking the Forums option:





From here you can click the forum you wish to visit, or, you can jump to the forum from the main course page whenever you see the forum symbol .

-  **Course news**
-  **Course message board**
-  **How-to guide to using this site**

To post a new thread in a forum

Click the forum's link then click the "Add a new discussion topic" button at the top of the list of threads.

- Give the thread a title in the Subject heading.
- Type your post in the Message section.
- Check your post for errors then click the "Post to forum" button at the bottom. You will have 30 minutes to edit your post after posting.
- Be sure to change the Subscription setting to reflect your preference—if you want to receive emails of every post to the forum, set it to "Send me email copies of posts to this forum." If not, set it to "I don't want email copies of posts to this forum." Some forums may have been set by the tutor to force you to be subscribed or to not allow you to be subscribed, in which cases this option will not appear.

To reply to a thread

- Click on the name of the thread in the forum, and click the "Reply" link at the bottom right of the post to which you want to reply. The fields are the same as they are for making a new thread.

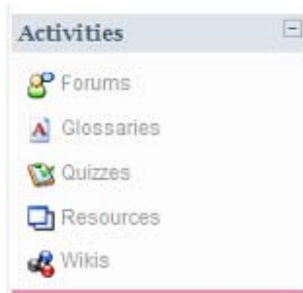
You can change whether you're subscribed to a given forum at any time by clicking on the name of the forum, then clicking the "Subscribe/Unsubscribe me from this forum" link in the top right of the window. You can also change your forum settings in *your profile*.


Some courses may use groups. If you want to see the forum posts for a particular group, select the group name from the drop-down menu that will appear on the forum's page. Depending on how the forum is configured, you may be able to see only those posts made by members of your group(s).

Please note: your forums are monitored by your tutor and any inappropriate entries may be deleted, please see the site policy for further guidance on this.

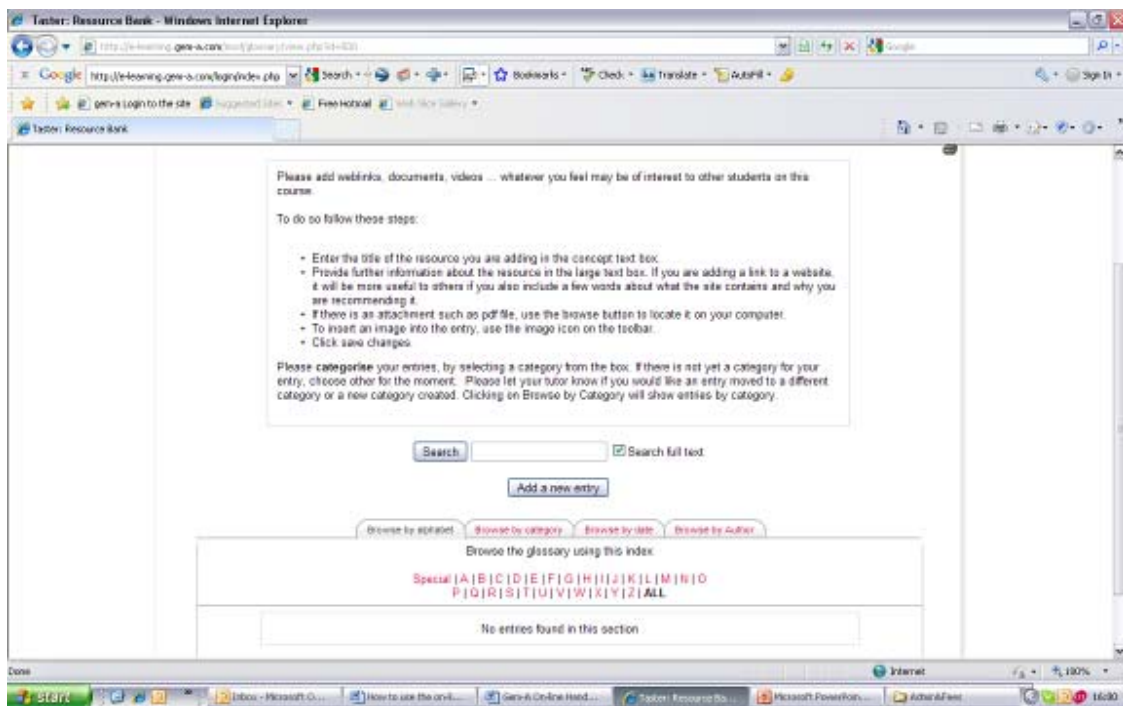
Glossaries

In the 'Activities' block on the left you can view all the glossaries available on this course page by clicking the Glossaries option:



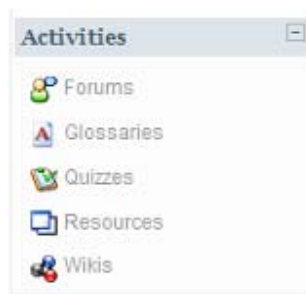
You can link directly to a glossary whenever you see the symbol .

The instructions for each glossary should be given on the introductory page, for example:

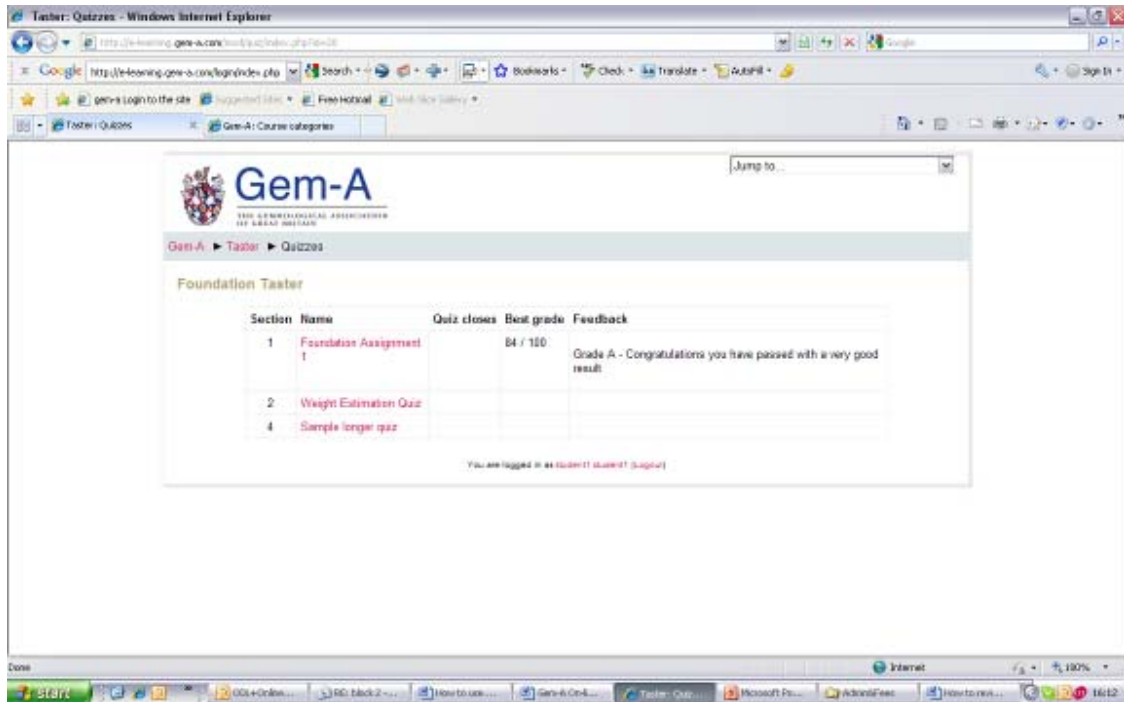



Quizzes and assignments

In the 'Activities' block on the left you can view all the quizzes available on this course page by clicking the Quizzes option:



The quiz page gives you information as to the closing date for your assignment as well as the grade you achieved if you have already completed this assignment and a link to each of the assignments.

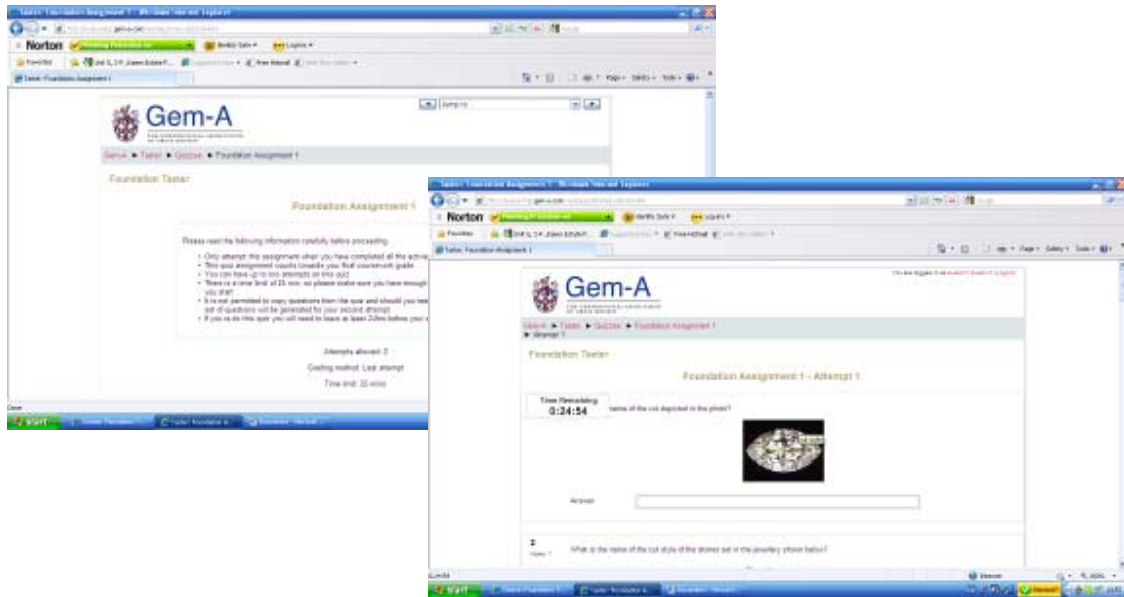


From here you can click the quiz you wish to visit, or, you can jump to the forum from the main course page whenever you see the quiz symbol .

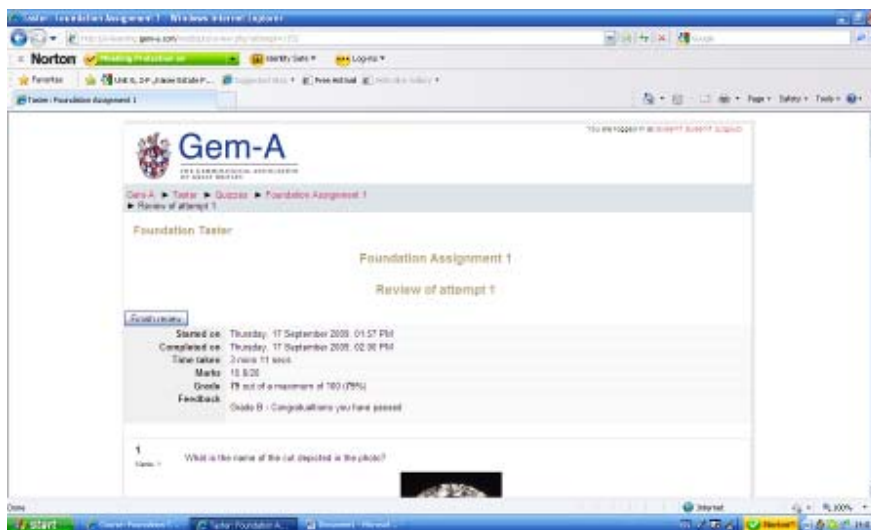
A separate document giving advice on quizzes is available and should be read before students start there first quiz/assignment.

Taking a quiz or assignment

Go to the quiz and follow the instructions on the introductory page,



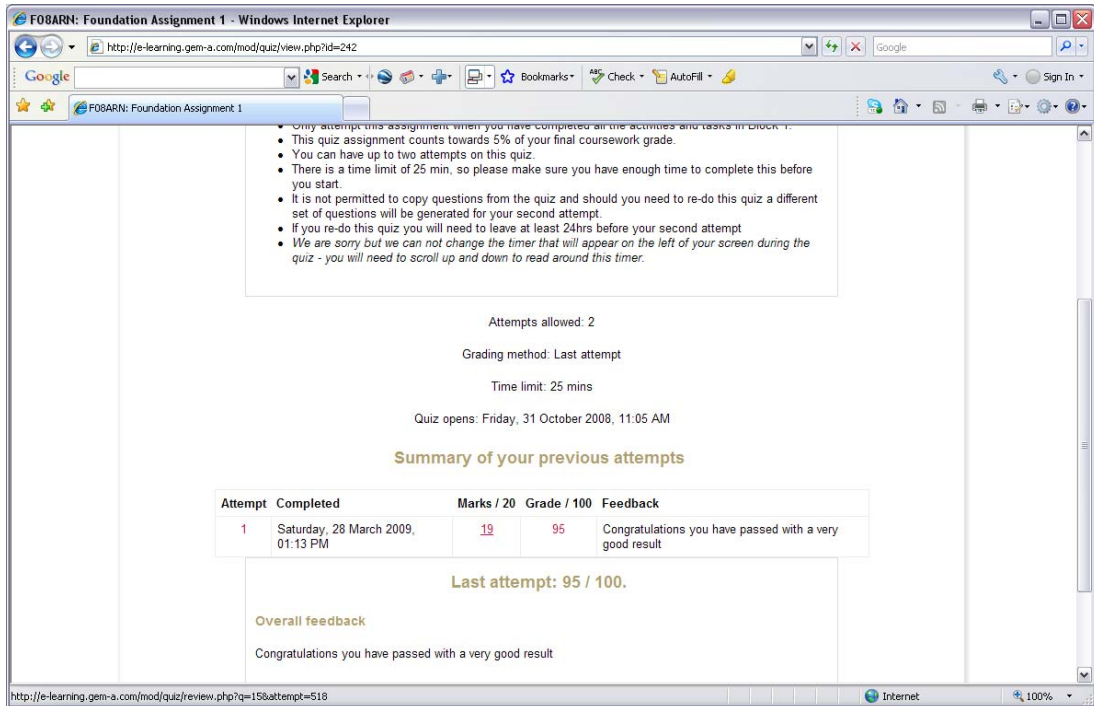
For short answer quizzes keep the answers brief. The computer will mark what it can but a tutor still needs to moderate the quiz so some adjustment in the marks may happen later.



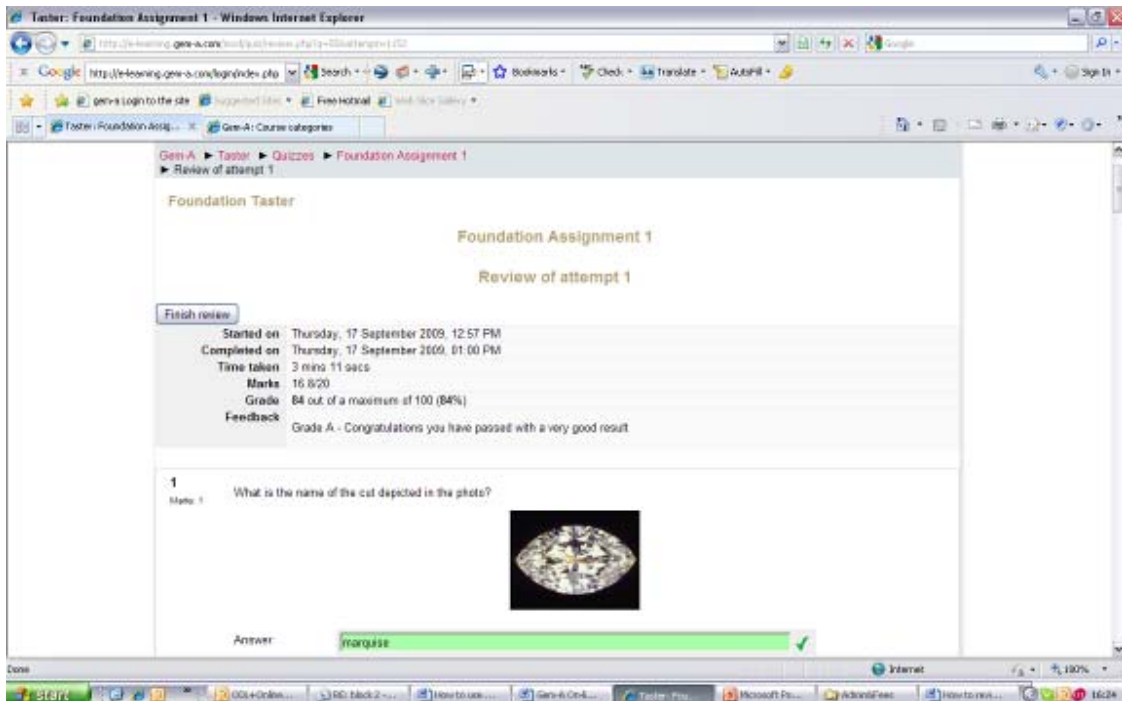
Reviewing a quiz or assignment later

To see your tutor comments on a quiz you need to go to the quiz either using the main link or through the quizzes summary page.

On the quiz page you need to click the marks or grade given in red, this can be found below the instructions box:

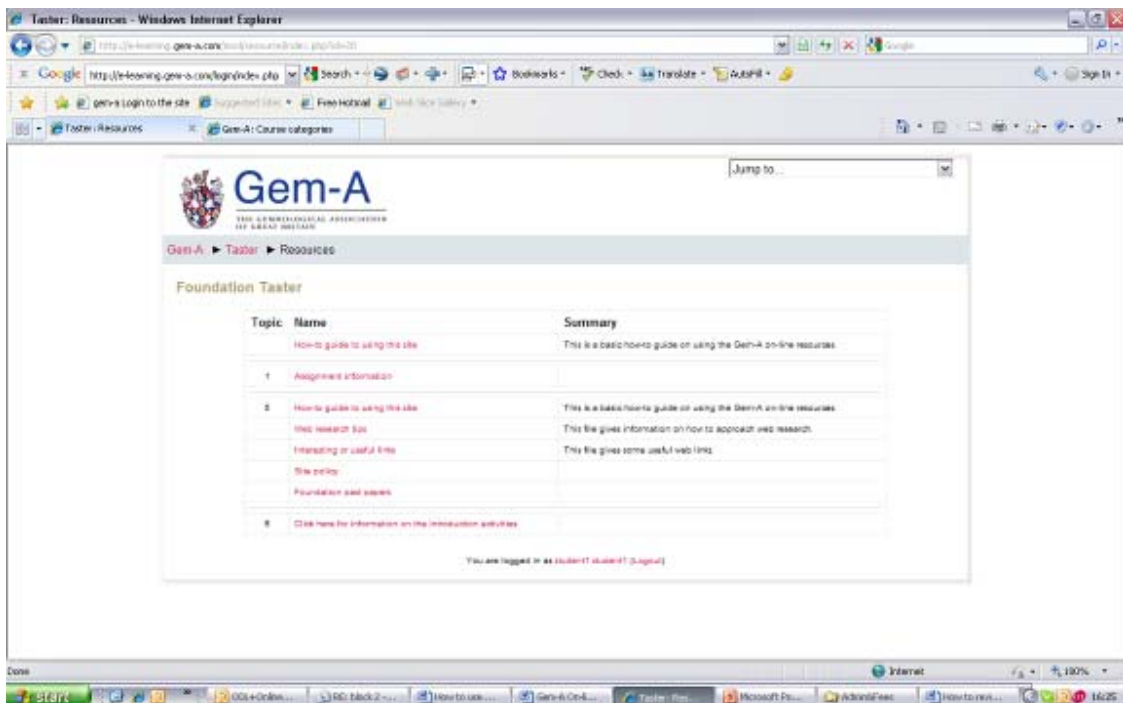
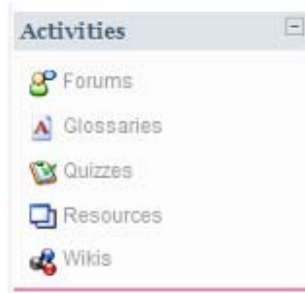


This will take you to the quiz review where you can look at individual questions. All quizzes are reviewed by your tutor before a final mark is transferred to Gem-A.



Resources

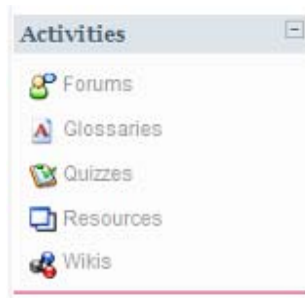
In the 'Activities' block on the left you can view all the resources available on this course page by clicking the Resources option:




This includes things such as pdf's , word files  and directories .

Wikis

In the 'Activities' block on the left you can view all the glossaries available on this course page by clicking the Wikis option:



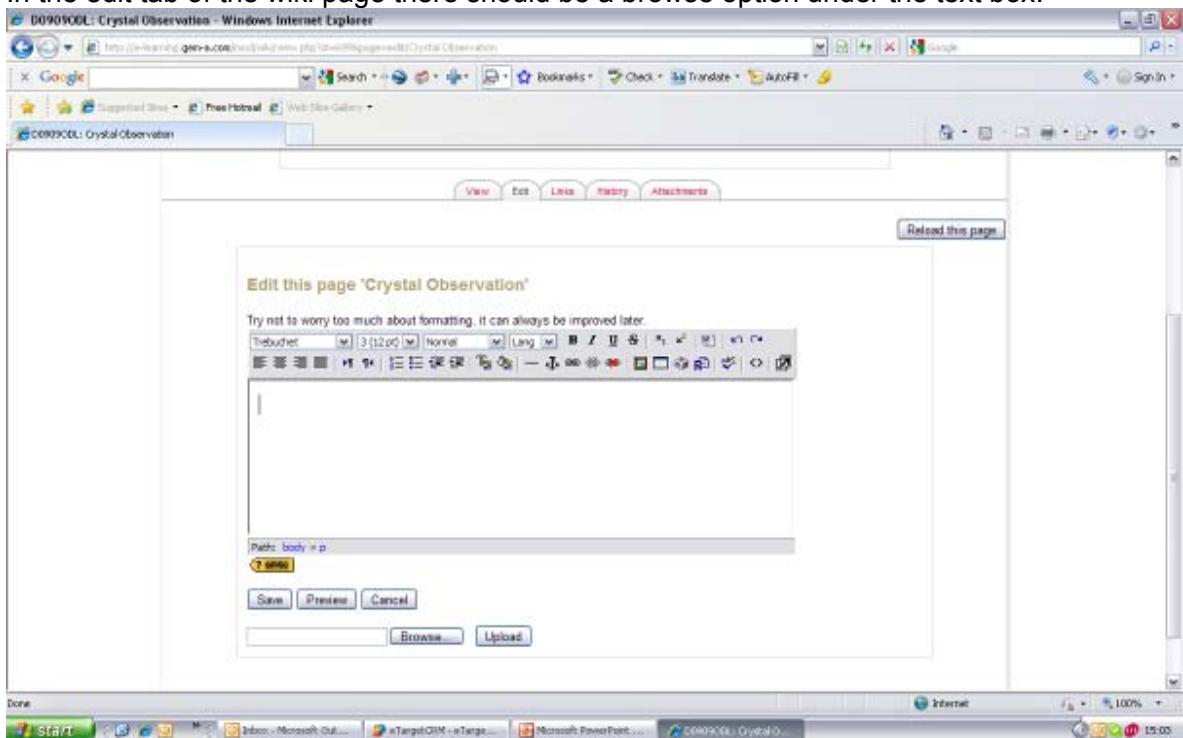
You can link directly to a wiki whenever you see the symbol 

Wikis come in various different formats for example:

- Student wiki – this is only viewable by the individual student and the tutor and gives the student the ability to create a document that can be saved and edited.
- Group wiki – this is open to anybody on the course and can be used for the creation of group documents.

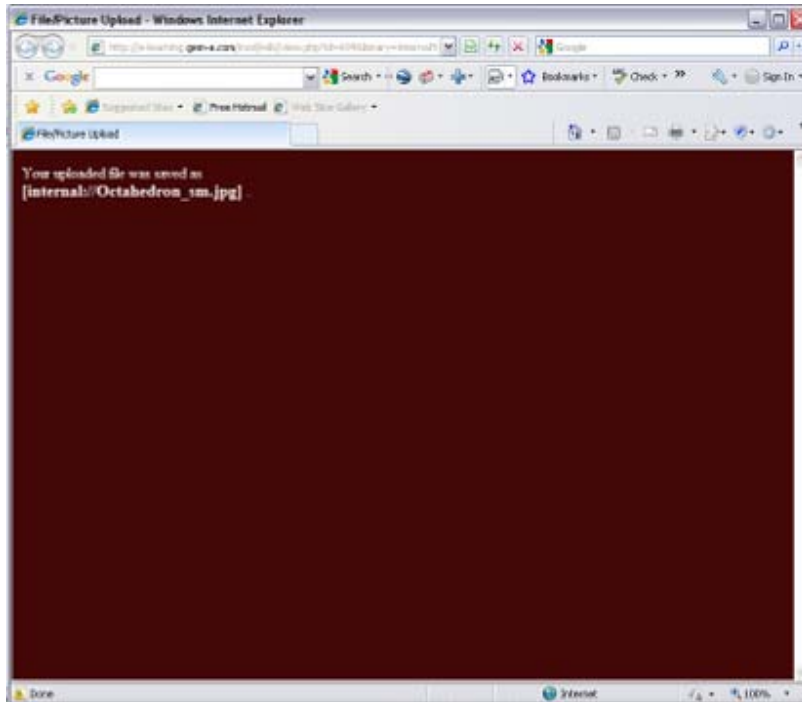
Adding images to the wiki pages

In the edit tab of the wiki page there should be a browse option under the text box:

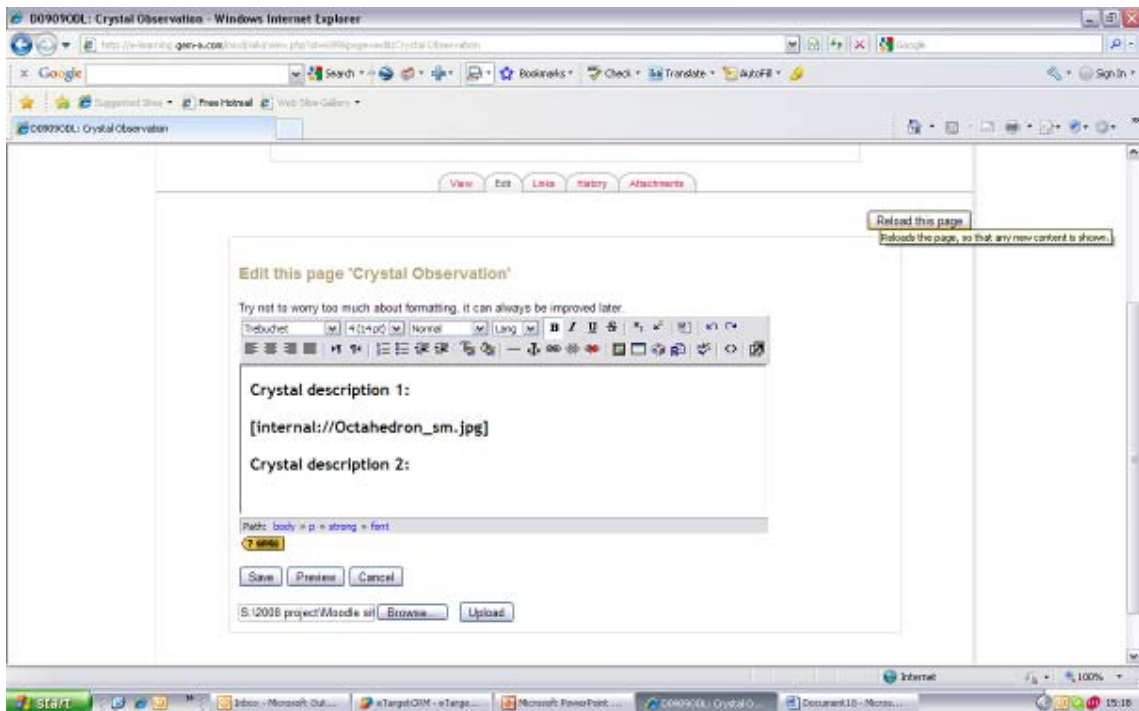


This browse box will let you select an object from your own computer. Once selected you need to upload this file.

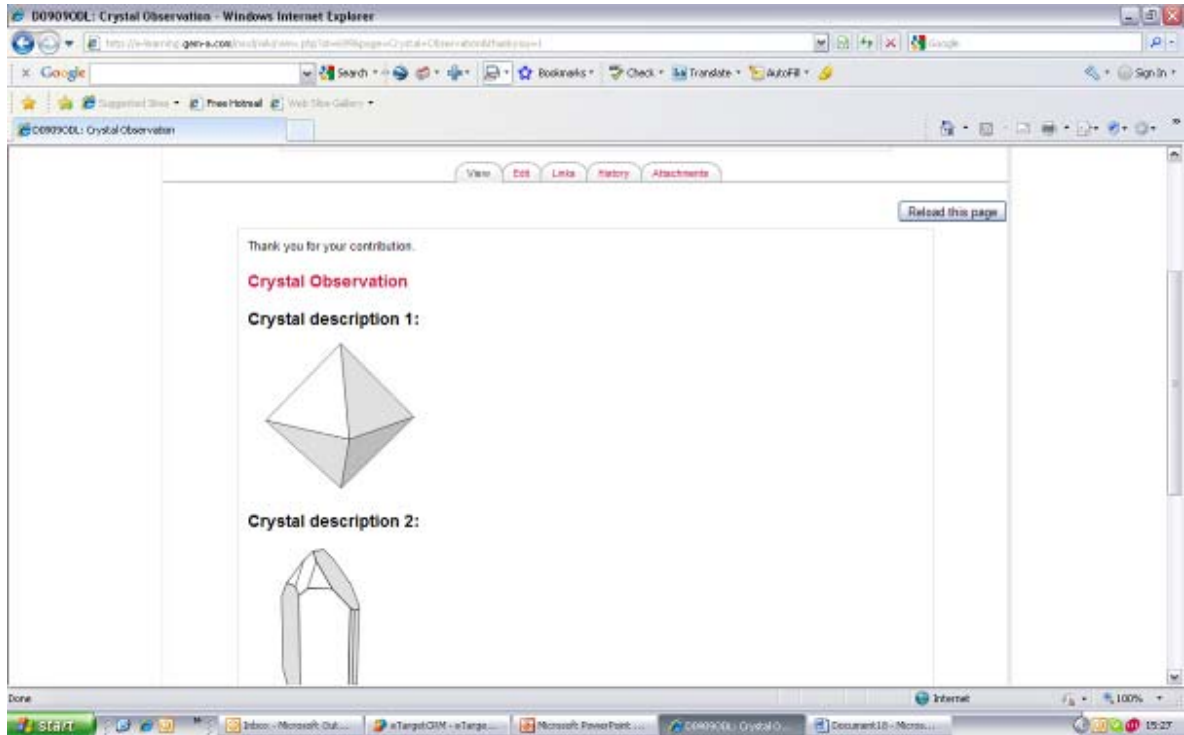
This will produce a burgundy screen with the file name for your image:



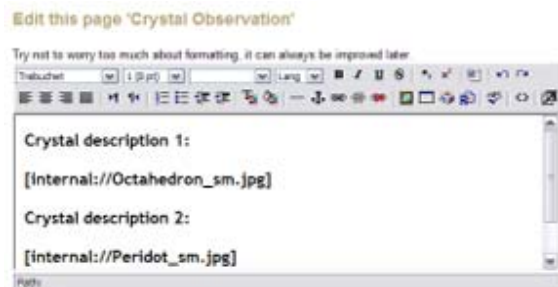
You need to copy this image name and close this pop-up window. Then paste this image name where you would like your image to appear.



You can continue to add images using this process. When you are ready you need to save this page and this is when the image itself will load into the page and be viewable:



If you wish to add further images you need to go back into edit and repeat this process. You will note that if you return to the edit page you will only see the image names:



This process can be used to upload jpeg or gif images – but will not accept all picture formats, if after uploading the files the screen remains blank this means the file is not compatible with this upload function. You will need to re-save your image as for example a gif.

My Courses

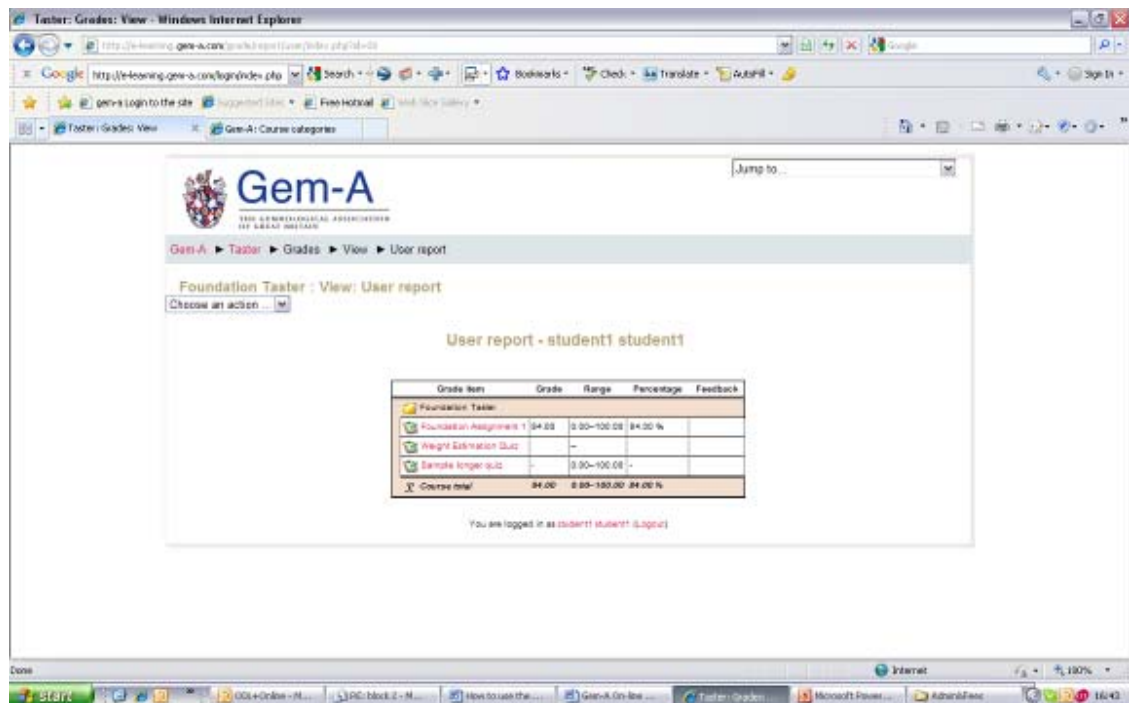
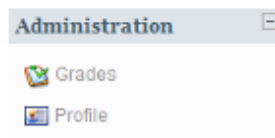
You can move to one of the other courses that you are enrolled on by selecting the name of the course from the list in the 'My courses' block which can be found on the right hand side of your course page.



If you want to return to the main list of course categories to locate a new course to enroll on then click on 'all courses' link at the bottom of the 'My courses' block.

Grades

You can check your own grades for activities you have completed by clicking on the Grades link in the Administration block.

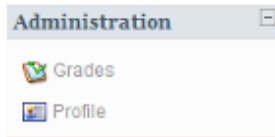


Grade item	Grade	Range	Percentage	Feedback
Foundation Taster				
Foundation Assignment 1	84.00	0.00-100.00	84.00 %	
Weight Estimation Quiz	-			
Sample longer quiz	-	0.00-100.00		
Course mark	84.00	0.00-100.00	84.00 %	

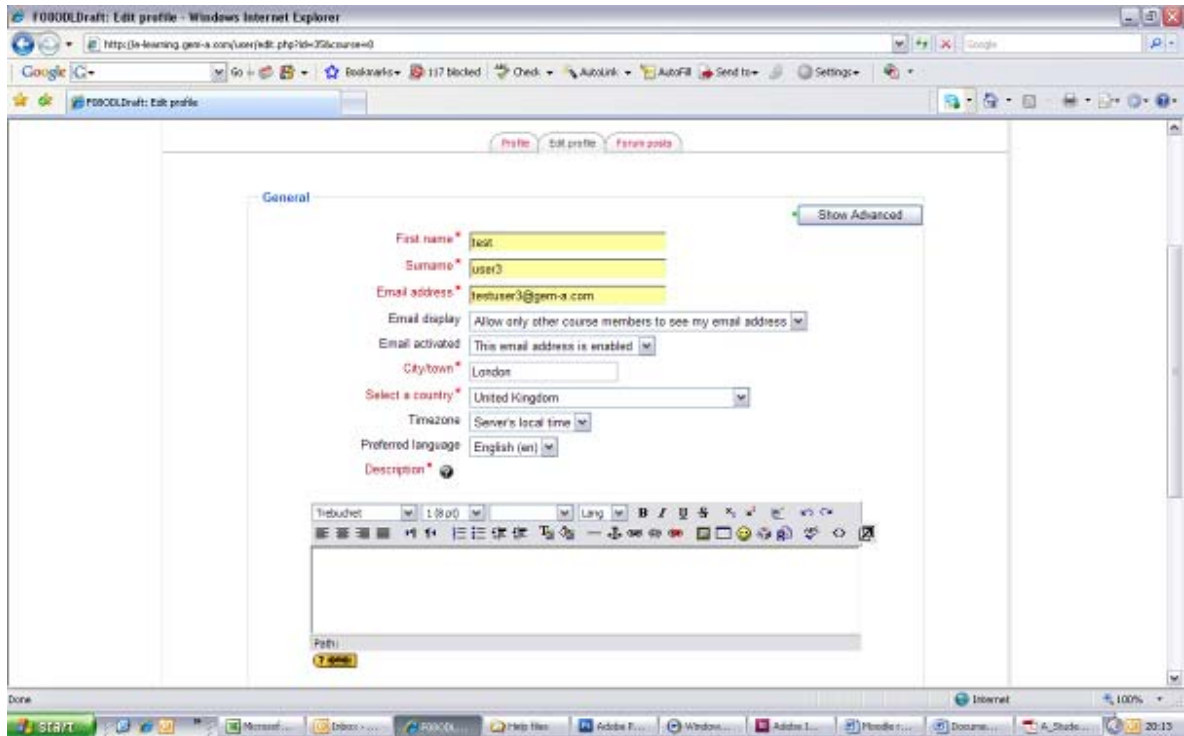
You are logged in as student1 (student1@spartan)

Your profile

You may edit your profile by clicking on your name anywhere it appears or you can use the link in the Administration block.



Click on the Edit Profile tab to make any changes to your profile. You will be presented with the page shown in the image below. Fill out the information you wish to include in your profile.



Although not all fields are required you will need to enter fields indicated with field names in red text. When you are finished with the changes click the Save Profile button.

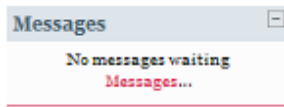
Several settings that are accessible from your profile can be customized. To see some of these you may need to click the 'Show Advanced' button in the top right corner. Some of the more useful ones are:

- Email format: Emails sent from Moodle can be sent in "Plain text format" or "Pretty HTML format". HTML format includes images and the Moodle colour scheme in emails, but the file size of messages will be slightly larger.
- Email digest type: You may choose to receive all emails from Moodle in one daily message.
- Forum auto-subscribe: If you select the "Yes..." value you will be subscribed to any forum to which you post a message.
- Forum tracking: If set to "Yes...", unread forum messages will be highlighted so you can easily see which messages are new.

Your user icon

If you would like to include a user icon with your profile use the Browse button next to the "New Picture" field to locate a picture on your own computer. Please use either GIF or JPG format and keep the picture small (about 100x100 pixels max with a file size less than 500 KB). Again, remember that this profile is accessible to all members of the Gem-A community - your tutors and everyone else will be able to see this icon. The same caution is applicable to any personal description you might include.

Messages



Users of this site can use the messages area to communicate with other users including students, tutors and administrators, but please be aware that Gem-A may monitor any messages sent using this system.

Additional Tools

The 'Calendar' block may be available on some course pages. This can highlight a number of different types of events



The types of events that may appear on the calendar are:

- Global events - those that are of interest to every user of this site
- Course events - those that are of interest to all members of this course only
- Group events - those that are of interest to members of course sub groups (Sub groups may be defined within the course participants for things like group project work)
- User events - those that are of interest to the individual member

Other Tools you may find come across depend on the settings for each individual course. For example:

- Latest news
- Remote RSS feeds
- Upcoming events
- Recent activity
- Online users

Gem-A education resources available

The e-learning has a central resource area for students and tutors this can be found under:

- [Education Resources](#)
 - [Shared Education Resources](#)

The enrolment code for this page is: edu001

This area contains the following general resources:

- Exam forms
- Past papers
- Examiners reports
- A shared education forum called the 'Coffee Shop'
- Information and help documents
- Additional resources including articles and web links