

ASSOCIate Online

Achieving Subject Specialist Online Communities
and providing subject support wherever you are

How to... Community Forum

1. The **Community Forum - News, Ideas and Issues** is located in the **Welcome** tab.

2. In this forum members of the specialist community can debate ideas and issues relating to the subject and its pedagogy.

Click on the icon to enter the forum.

The screenshot shows the 'OurSubject' website interface. At the top, it says 'You are logged in as Fiona Smith (Logout)'. Below this are navigation links for 'How to', 'Site Map', and 'Contact'. A banner for '00. Demo Specialism' features a row of five member photos. The main navigation bar includes 'Welcome', 'Networking', and 'Resources'. Under the 'Welcome' tab, there are two icons: a microphone icon labeled 'Community Forum - News, Ideas and Issues' and a person icon labeled 'Podcast'. Below these is an 'item of the week' section with a yellow background and the text: 'This week I would like to draw you attention to the discussion on Additional'.

3. The list of discussions will display here.

The screenshot shows the 'Community Forum - News, Ideas and Issues' page. It includes a 'Jump to...' search box and navigation links for 'How to', 'Site Map', and 'Contact'. A banner for '00. Demo Specialism' is at the top. Below the banner, there is a text box explaining the forum's purpose: 'A Community Forum for posting News, Ideas and Issues. The topics can be on any aspect of the subject specialism – pedagogy; new books, articles and other items of interest; all members can start and contribute to threads.' There is a 'Subscribe to this forum' option. Below this is a table of discussions:

Discussion	Started by	Replies	Last post
What is the role of an ALS?	ASSOC Admin	2	John Greenwich Wed, 19 Aug 2009, 11:10 AM

At the bottom of the table, there is a search bar with the text 'Search forum'.

4. This tells you who initiated the discussion – clicking on the name will take you to that person's profile.

5. This shows you how many replies there have been to the posting.

6. You can search all forum posts by using the **Search** tool.

How to... reply to a posting

The screenshot shows the 'OurSubject' forum interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'How to', 'Site Map', and 'Contact' buttons. Below that, a blue banner reads '00. Demo Specialism'. A sub-header indicates 'Community Forum - News, Ideas and Issues'. A message states: 'This forum allows everyone to choose whether to subscribe or not. Everyone can now choose to be subscribed. [Subscribe to this forum](#)'. A central text box explains: 'A Community Forum for posting News, Ideas and Issues. The topics can be on any aspect of the subject specialism – pedagogy; new books, articles and other items of interest; all members can start and contribute to threads.' Below this is a button 'Add a new discussion topic'. A table lists discussions:

Discussion	Started by	Replies	Last post
What is the role of an ALS?	ASSOC Admin	2	John Greenwich Wed, 19 Aug 2009, 11:10 AM

At the bottom, there's a search bar labeled 'Search forum'.

7. Click on the title of the discussion in which you wish to take part.

The screenshot shows a forum thread. The main post is titled 'What is the role of an ALS?' by ASSOC Admin, dated Wednesday, 15 July 2009, 02:45 PM. The text reads: 'Having ALS (Additional Learning Support) during the classes is a great help but what do you think their role in the class is? Or should be?'. A 'Reply' link is visible. Below it is a reply by ASSOC Moderator, dated Wednesday, 15 July 2009, 02:46 PM. The text reads: 'As the class tutor, the way an in-class support worker is utilised is largely up to you. Good practice would dictate that the teacher and support worker open a dialogue around the best strategies to support a learner or group of learners. Lesson observers would expect to see support assistant's activities written into lesson plans and evidence of two-way communication before and during the lesson. The important thing to remember is that the support assistant is there for the learner and should be used in a way that enables the learner to access the session whilst maintaining their independence. That's the tricky bit; 'How do we support learners to ensure that they make the most of the sessions without making them dependent on the support assistant?' The use of 'tapered' support plans is useful in this respect. That's where the intensity of support diminishes slowly over time and helps the learner gain greater and greater independence.' A 'Show parent | Reply' link is visible. Below that is another reply by John Greenwich, dated Wednesday, 19 August 2009, 11:10 AM. The text reads: 'ALS can start with a small group support programme and then identify users who need more personal care. It is worth having a clear understanding of the lesson plan with the help of the lead teacher so that the support required can be identified early on. This would save time and prepare the learner in advance. In addition, it would make the learner more confident in the subject area and encourage them to be more...'

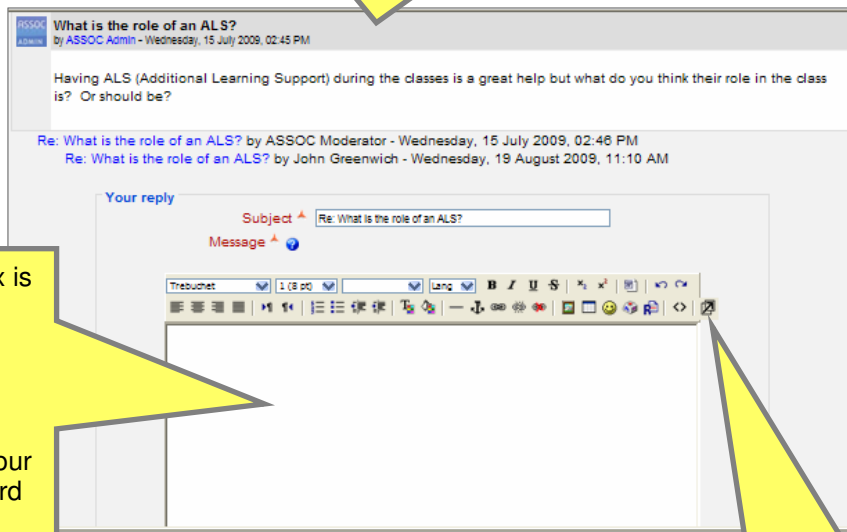
8. Click on Reply.

9. You can reply to any of the postings, not just the original one.

Show parent is a tool that you can use if a forum posting has had many responses – clicking on **Show parent** will automatically show you the posting to which this is a reply.

In this case, the reply is to the original posting.

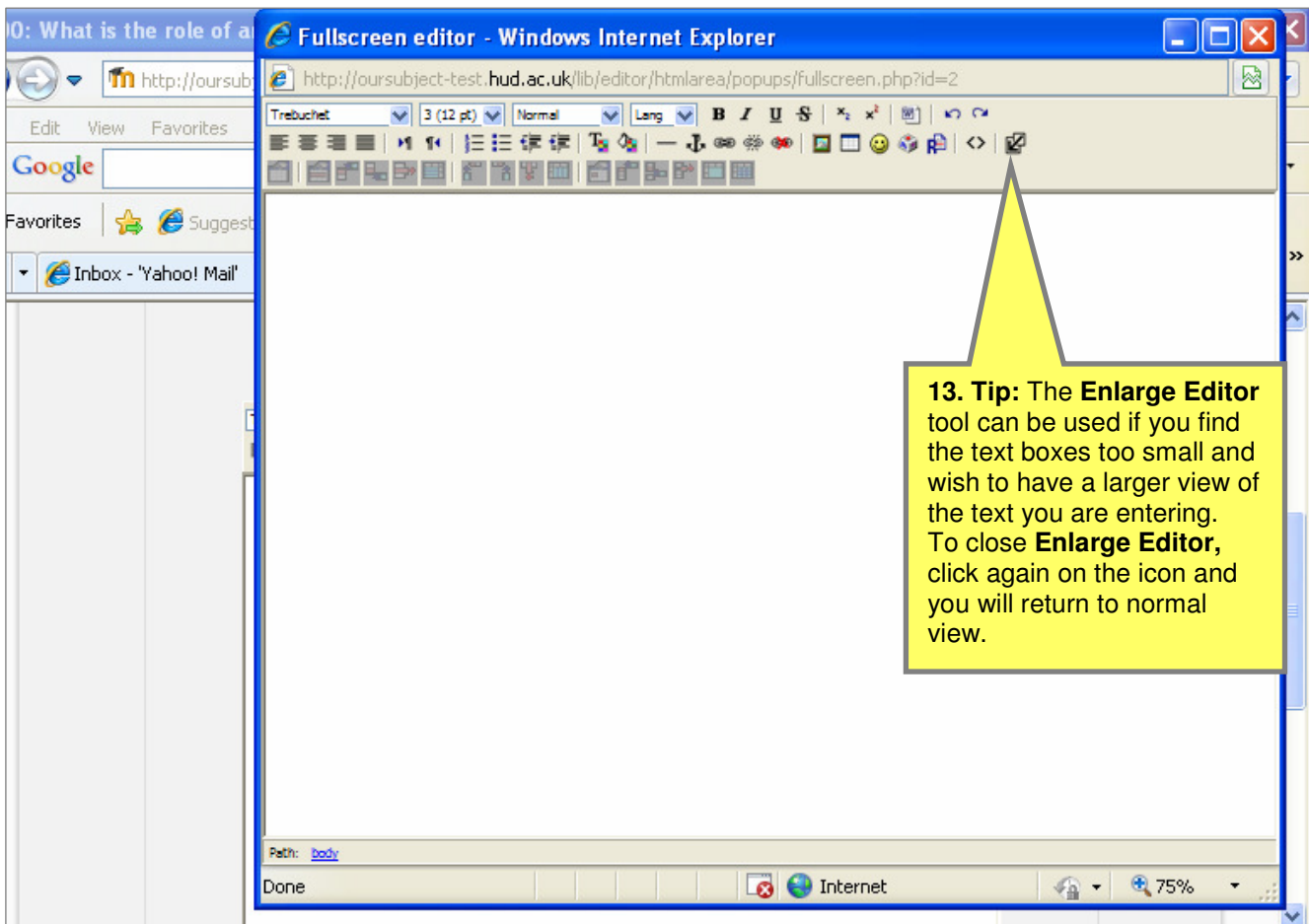
10. The following screen will appear, showing you all the details of the posting to which you are replying.



11. The text box is for you to enter your reply.

Tip: To avoid typing/spelling errors, create your posting in a Word document, use spell check and then copy and paste your reply into the text box.

12. **Tip:** This is the **Enlarge Editor** icon – if you click on this a new window opens.



13. **Tip:** The **Enlarge Editor** tool can be used if you find the text boxes too small and wish to have a larger view of the text you are entering. To close **Enlarge Editor**, click again on the icon and you will return to normal view.

Re: What is the role of an ALS? by ASSOC Moderator - Wednesday, 15 July 2009, 02:46 PM
 Re: What is the role of an ALS? by John Greenwich - Wednesday, 19 August 2009, 11:10 AM

Your reply

Subject + Re: What is the role of an ALS?

Message +

Text: body

I'd just like to add one point to this discussion. I have observed many classes where learners had an ALS worker and in some sessions I have seen the teacher in charge of the class direct their comments and/or instructions to the ALS worker and not the learner! So, it's important to remember that the learner is at the centre of the learning, not the ALS worker!

Format HTML format

Subscription Send me email copies of posts to the forum

Post to forum

There are required fields in this form marked *

14. Type (or copy and paste from Word) your reply into the text box.

15. Read your reply carefully and, when you are happy with it, click on **Post to forum**.

Your post was successfully added.

You have 30 mins to edit it if you want to make any changes.

([Continue](#))

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16. The following message will appear.

Note: You have half an hour to make any changes to your posting.

You can either click on **Continue** or wait a few seconds – the screen below will automatically appear.

As the class tutor, the way an in-class support worker is utilised is largely up to you. Good practice would dictate that the teacher and support worker open a dialogue around the best strategies to support a learner or group of learners. Lesson observers would expect to see support assistant's activities written into lesson plans and evidence of two-way communication before and during the lesson. The important thing to remember is that the support assistant is there for the learner and should be used in a way that enables the learner to access the session whilst maintaining their independence. That's the tricky bit: 'How do we support learners to ensure that they make the most of the sessions without making them dependent on the support assistant?' The use of 'tapered' support plans is useful in this respect, that's where the intensity of support diminishes slowly over time and helps the learner gain greater and greater independence.

Show parent | Reply

Re: What is the role of an ALS?
 by John Greenwich - Wednesday, 19 August 2009, 11:10 AM

ALS can start with a small group support programme and then identify users who need more personal care. It is worth having a clear understanding of the lesson plan with the help of the lead teacher so that the support required can be identified early on. This would save time and prepare the learner in advance. In addition, perhaps it would make the learner more confident in the actual session and encourage them to be more independent.

Show parent | Reply

Re: What is the role of an ALS?
 by Fiona Smith - Thursday, 3 September 2009, 11:52 AM

I'd just like to add one point to this discussion. I have observed many classes where learners had an ALS worker and in some sessions I have seen the teacher in charge of the class direct their comments and/or instructions to the ALS worker and not the learner! So, it's important to remember that the learner is at the centre of the learning, not the ALS worker.

Show parent | Edit | Delete | Reply

17. Your posting will appear like this.

Note: Only your own posting has the options **Edit** and **Delete**. You can only edit or delete your own postings.

However, moderator can edit and delete all postings.

How to... start a new discussion topic

18. Click on **Add a new discussion topic**.

19. Give your discussion a title.

20. Then type, or copy and paste from Word, the details of your discussion topic.

Remember: You can use **Enlarge Editor** to see a larger view of the text you are entering.

21. When you are happy with your posting, scroll down the page and click on **Post to forum**.

Your post was successfully added.
 You have 30 mins to edit it if you want to make any changes.
 ([Continue](#))
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22. The following message will appear. You can either click on **Continue** or wait a few seconds – the following screen will automatically appear.

23. You will see your posting on the list when you return to the forum.
 If you wish to edit or delete your post, you can do so by clicking on the title of the post. The following screen will appear.

OurSubject >> 00 >> Community Forum - News, Ideas and Issues

This forum allows everyone to choose whether to subscribe or not
 Everyone can now choose to be subscribed
[Unsubscribe from this forum](#)

A Community Forum for posting News, Ideas and Issues. The topics can be on any aspect of the subject specialism – pedagogy, new books, articles and other items of interest; all members can start and contribute to threads.

[Add a new discussion topic](#)

Discussion	Started by	Replies	Last post
Are we creating dependent learners?	Fiona Smith	0	Fiona Smith Thu, 3 Sep 2009, 12:34 PM
What is the role of an ALS?	ASSOC Admin	3	Fiona Smith Thu, 3 Sep 2009, 11:52 AM

Search forum

OurSubject

00. Demo Specialism

OurSubject >> 00 >> Community Forum - News, Ideas and Issues >> Are we creating dependent learners?

Display replies in nested form

Are we creating dependent learners?
 by Fiona Smith - Thursday, 3 September 2009, 12:34 PM

I have been reading the work of Ecclestone, who makes a good case for suggesting that we are in danger of creating dependent, rather than independent, learners, through the rise of what she calls 'therapeutic education'. (Kathryn Ecclestone & Dennis Hayes (2009) *The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education*. London. Routledge). The 'fragile learner' that our current system can produce can be dependent on the systems and individuals in education. I heard her speak and she said that, during induction, we are very quick to tell our students about the support systems that are in place should they encounter difficulties, thereby planting the seed of difficulty rather than encouraging the learners to relish the challenges with enthusiasm and a positive attitude. What does anyone else think about this? When you look critically at how you introduce students to the subject and how those students are taught, are they in danger of becoming fragile learners?

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Search forum

24. Click on **Edit** to make amendments, corrections etc.
Remember: You have 30 minutes in which to do this.

25. If you wish to delete your posting, click on **Delete**.
Don't worry about deleting items by accident - you will always be asked if you are sure whether or not you want to delete anything.
Remember: You have 30 minutes in which to do this.

Practitioners and the Community Forum

If you are a:	Utilisation of the Community Forum
Teacher Educator	<p>1 Demonstrate tutor activity: either post a new topic or a reply to an existing topic on the Community Forum. Display this to trainees to encourage them to utilise their own specialist Community Forums.</p> <p>2 Start a session with a Forum: periodically, use the first 15 minutes of a session to encourage trainees to read and engage with their own specialist Community Forums.</p> <p>3 Encourage trainees to use their Forum contributions to evidence achievement of ITE assessment criteria: For further details, see <i>OurSubject and LLUK Units of Assessment: Information and Guidance for Teacher Educators and Initial Teacher Education Trainees</i>.</p>
Practitioner applying for A/QTLS (Professional Formation)	<p>Community Forum contributions in which subject specialist pedagogy is discussed could be utilised as evidence for Personalised Element 1 – Subject Currency.</p> <p>Evidence of membership of and contribution to ASSOCiate Online demonstrates engagement with a wider community of practice, which could be used as evidence for Personalised Element 5 – Reflective Practice.</p>
Practitioner collating CPD activity records	See Case Study below.
ITE trainee	Community Forum contributions can be utilised as evidence of achievement of many ITE assessment criteria, e.g. engaging with a wider community of practice, updating subject specialist knowledge, utilising new and emerging technologies. For further details, see <i>OurSubject and LLUK Units of Assessment: Information and Guidance for Teacher Educators and Initial Teacher Education Trainees</i> .

Case Study – ASSOCiate Online and CPD

Sue is a Skills for Life practitioner with an Adult and Community Learning provider, specialising in the teaching of Numeracy. She had a pedagogical dilemma about the teaching of the concept of prime numbers to a Level 2 Numeracy group. She posted her thoughts on this in the Community forum, briefly outlining the strategies that she had employed and the difficulties her learners had encountered. Other practitioners replied and suggested alternative strategies, which Sue critically evaluated. She then tried some of these strategies out in her classes. Her students responded particularly well to one of the strategies and their understanding, and hence their results, improved. She printed off the records of the Forum discussion and briefly wrote up the process to include this information in her CPD records for the IfL. In doing so, Sue met the tripartite conditions that comprise the IfL's definition of CPD; that is, that the practitioner must be able to provide evidence of:

1. critical reflection on activity;
2. impact on practice;
3. impact on learners' achievement and success.