# Message Outputs

When Totara needs to notify the user of something it sends a message, directed through one or more of the enabled and configured message outputs. These message outputs control how a user receives their notification.

Some you will be familiar with, and some you may not have encountered before. The email message output for example takes the notification and emails it to the user, whereas the web notification takes the notification and displays it within the webpage to the user.

Message outputs allows you to configure **Messaging** settings across your Totara Learn site. You are able to turn on/off available outputs and set default outputs, and configuration options for the available outputs.  These options are generally set during the initial installation of your site and do not usually require any further maintenance.

## Manage message outputs

This area can be accessed by a Site Administrator via the **Administration** block within *Site administration > Plugins > Message outputs > Manage message outputs*.

There are five default types of output methods for messaging:

- **Task block notifications:** Displays within the Tasks block
- **Alert block notification:** Displays within the Alerts block
- **Web notifications:** Displays the notification on the webpage
- **Jabber messages:** Send the notification via Jabber
- **Email messages:** Sends the notification to the user's given email address

By default all outputs (except Jabber notifications) are enabled as they need to be configured before activation. To **Disable**/**Enable** an output, use the corresponding eye icon ( , ).  The **Settings** link opens the corresponding configuration page for **Jabber** and **Email** notifications.

Manage message outputs

| Name | Enable | Settings |
|---|---|---|
| Task block | 👁 | |
| Alert block | 👁 | |
| Web | 👁 | |
| Jabber | Not configured | Settings |
| Email | 👁 | |

### Jabber

In order to use Jabber (jabber.org) alongside your Totara Learn site, you will need to enter the details of your Jabber server so the LMS can connect.

| Setting | Description | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| **Host** | The server (full hostname) to connect to send jabber message notifications. | - |
| **Server** | XMPP host ID (can be left empty if the same as Jabber host). | - |
| **User name** | The user name to use when connecting to your Jabber server. | - |
| **Password** | The password to use when connecting to your Jabber server. | - |
| **Port** | Defaults to 5222. | - |

### Email

A range of options are available around email based messages sent by the system.

| Setting | Description | Notes |
|---|---|---|

| SMTP hosts | SMTP stands for Simple Mail Transfer Protocol. The SMTP host is an email relay that will take the email from Totara and send it to users. You will need to set this only if your server does not allow mail relay.  If you leave this field blank, Totara will use the PHP default method of sending mail.<br><br>Most SMTP hosts make use of the default port 25 to for listening email traffic. However, occasionally a non-default port is used. In such cases, entering an SMTP host followed by a colon (i.e. :) and the port number should work. Give the full name of one or more local SMTP servers that Totara should use to send mail (eg 'mail.a.com' or 'mail.a.com;mail.b.com'). To specify a non-default port (i.e other than port 25), you can use the [server]:[port] syntax (eg 'mail.a.com:587'). For secure connections, port 465 is usually used with SSL, port 587 is usually used with TLS, specify security protocol below if required. | - |
|---|---|---|
| SMTP security | If the SMTP server requires a secure connection, the correct protocol type, SSL or TSL, may be set. | - |
| SMTP Auth Type | This sets the authentication type to use on smtp server.  Choose from LOGIN, PLAIN, NTLM or CRAM-MD5. | - |
| SMTP username | If you have specified an SMTP server  and the server requires authentication, then enter the username here. | - |
| SMTP password | If you have specified an SMTP server  and the server requires authentication, then enter the password here. | - |
| SMTP session limit | Maximum number of messages sent per SMTP session. Grouping messages may speed up the sending of emails. Values lower than 2 force creation of new SMTP session for each email. | - |
| No-reply address | Emails are sometimes sent out on behalf of a user (e.g forum posts). The email address you specify here will be used as the 'From' address in those cases when the recipients should not be able to reply directly to the user (e.g. when a user chooses to keep their address private). | - |
| Always send email from the no-reply address | If enabled, all email will be sent using the no-reply address as the 'from' address. This can be used to stop anti-spoofing controls in external mail systems blocking emails. | - |
| Character set | This setting specifies the default charset for all emails sent from the site. | For more information on character sets and encoding, please see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Character_encoding |
| Allow user to select character set | If enabled, users can choose an email charset in their **Messaging Preferences**. | - |
| Allow attachments | If enabled, emails sent from the site can have attachments, such as badges. | - |
| Newline characters in mail | Newline characters used in mail messages. CRLF is required according to RFC 822bis, some mail servers do automatic conversion from LF to CRLF, other mail servers do incorrect conversion from CRLF to CRCRLF, yet others reject mails with bare LF (qmail for example). Try changing this setting if you are having problems with undelivered emails or double newlines. | - |

# Default message outputs

This area can be accessed by a Site Administrator via the **Administration** block within *Site administration > Plugins > Message outputs > Default message outputs*.

The page summarises those **Messaging outputs** available within your Totara Learn site, whether they are **Enabled**, the permissions against each output type and the default setting for **Online/Not online** for each.

Users can change their personal preferences to be something other than the site defaults, however the settings for disabled message providers are not visible to end users on the notification preferences page.



The default preferences menu for each item is identical and allows a Site Administrator to select the relevant permission and default setting when the user is **Online** (logged-in) or **Not Online** (offline). The possible preferences are:

- **Disallowed:** The message of chosen type will never be delivered through the chosen output, the user is not allowed to change the personal preference for this combination of message type and output
- **Permitted:** The message of chosen type is allowed to be delivered through the chosen output, the default preferences can be set by the administrator using the checkboxes below, the user can control this preference on the messaging preferences page (and change the suggested defaults to their preference)
- **Forced:** The message of chosen type will be delivered through the chosen output, the user is not allowed to change the personal preference for this combination of message type and output



# Configuration for users

Once the default message outputs have been configured within the site, a user can configure their specific **Messaging** preferences in their profile settings by selecting their name in the top-right corner, then *Preferences > Notification preferences* (please see User profile for more information). If the particular combination of **Message** type and **Output** has been permitted by a Site Administrator, the user may change and customise their preferences by setting the corresponding boxes to **On**. For example, if online task block feedback notifications are allowed, the user can decide whether this is enabled or disabled.

Importantly users can choose to receive notifications across multiple outputs, including email, web, the task block and the alert block (depending on which methods have been allowed by the Site Administrator for different message types) to help ensure they don't miss anything.



# Message types

Totara Learn current features the following message types:

| Message type | Notes |
| --- | --- |
| Alert notifications | Within the Alerts block. |
| Assignment notifications | When an assignment has been submitted. |
| Warning when your quiz attempt becomes overdue | - |
| Available update notifications | Notice of new releases of Totara Learn code. |
| Backup notifications | Automated backup schedule run completed. |
| Badge creator notifications | Notify creator of a badge when it is awarded to someone. |
| Badge recipient notifications | - |
| Confirmation of your own quiz submissions | - |
| Course creation request approval notification | - |
| Course creation request notification | - |
| Course creation request rejection notification | - |
| Important errors with the site | - |
| Manual enrolment expiry notifications | - |
| Self enrolment expiry notifications | - |
| Lesson essay graded notification | - |
| Personal messages between users | Please see Messaging for more information. |
| Message to confirm that an inbound message came from you | - |
| Feedback reminder | - |
| Warning when an inbound message could not be processed | - |
| Confirmation that a message was successfully processed | - |
| Notices about minor problems | - |
| Notifications of rule subscriptions | - |
| Subscribed forum posts | - |
| Notification of quiz submissions | - |
| Feedback notifications | - |
| Task notifications | Appears with the Tasks block. |