

# Uploading multiple courses

Although it is possible to manually create courses in the system, you may wish to create courses via a file upload, especially if you want to create multiple courses at once. It is possible for Site Administrators to do this, as well as anyone with the **tool/uploadcourse:uploadcourses** capability which by default is the **Manager** and **Course Creator** roles (when assigned at system level).

Any Managers or Course Creators with the right permissions will be able to create courses, they will also be able to delete a course (even if they do not have the capability **course:delete** set to allow).

## Upload courses

To upload one or more courses:

1. Go to *Site administration > Courses > Upload courses*.
2. Either drag and drop the CSV file, or click the **Choose a file** button to select the file in the [file picker](#).
3. Select appropriate import [settings](#) carefully, then click the **Preview** button.
4. Check there are no errors in the preview.
5. Scroll down and configure the [course process settings](#) and [default course values](#).
6. When you are happy, click the **Upload courses** button.
7. You will be presented with a confirmation screen where you can click **Continue** to conclude the upload.

When using the web interface, use the **Preview** option to see if any errors were detected in the previewed rows. If you proceed with the upload and there was something wrong detected with a course, it will be ignored.

It is also possible to use the command-line tool **admin/tool/uploadcourse/cli/uploadcourse.php**.

## Example file

Below is an example of an upload file, where the course short name, full name, and category are all set. Note that there are no spaces between the items.

```
shortname,fullname,category
courserestored,Course restored,1
courserestored2,Course restored 2,1
courserestored3,Course restored 3,1
courserestored4,Course restored 4,1
```

In the above example the first row (shortname,fullname,category) sets out the column headings.

The first entry (or column) in each proceeding row is then the course shortname, so in this example the course shortnames are: courserestored, courserestored2, courserestored3, courserestored4.

The next column is the full name for the course, this is what would be displayed at the top of the course. In this example the desired full names are: Course restored, Course restored 2, Course restored 3, Course restored 4.

In this example the last column is the course category, which always uses the category ID rather than the category name. So for this example the category ID is 1 which is used for a category called Miscellaneous (although you can't tell that from the example as you only use the category ID and not the name). Categories must already exist in order to use them in a course upload. If you put a category ID that does not exist you will receive an error, **Could not resolve category by ID** during the upload preview, meaning that any courses in that category will not be created.



Whatever other fields you include (see below) the file requires the fields **shortname**, **fullname**, and either **category**, **category\_idnumber**, or **category\_path**.

## Creating the text file

The text file to upload courses must be a CSV file. When creating your file you can use the following columns.

## Course properties

Most of these settings are available in the [course settings](#). Note that some of these settings can be enabled or disabled using either 1 (enabled) or 0 (disabled). This is useful if you want a certain setting enabled for some of the courses you are uploading but not all of them. If you do not want to change the default setting for any of the courses you are uploading then you would simply not include the field in the file, as none of the fields controlled in this way are mandatory to include in the file.



Field names must be lowercase.

Field name	Description
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fullname	The course full name.
shortname	The course short name.
idnumber	The course ID number.
category	The ID of the category in the Totara database. This takes precedence over <b>category_idnumber</b> and <b>category_path</b> .
category_idnumber	The <b>idnumber</b> of the category to add the course to.
category_path	The full path of the category to which the course will be added. If you have a top-level category with the <b>shortname</b> 'Engineering' and a subcategory called 'Machine Learning' to which you want to add the course, then you would set <b>category_path</b> to 'Engineering / Machine Learning'.
visible	If using traditional visibility, set this to <b>1</b> to make the course visible, and <b>0</b> to make it hidden.
audience visible	If using audience-based visibility, the following values apply: <b>0</b> for enrolled users, <b>1</b> for enrolled users and selected audiences, <b>2</b> for all users, and <b>3</b> for no users.
startdate	The date on which the course starts, e.g. dd/mm/yyyy.
enddate	The date on which the course ends, e.g. dd/mm/yyyy.
summary	The course summary.
format	The course format. This must be a valid format that has been enabled on your site.
theme	The name of the theme the course will be forced to use.
lang	The default language for the course.
newsitems	The number of news items to display in the news block when used.
showgrades	Set to <b>1</b> to enable learners to view the gradebook, and <b>0</b> to hide the gradebook.
showreports	Set to <b>1</b> to enable activity reports, and <b>0</b> to hide them.
legacyfiles	Set to <b>1</b> to enable legacy course files, and <b>0</b> to leave it disabled (recommended).
maxbytes	Set the maximum upload size (in bytes) for files within the course. Set to <b>0</b> to use the site limit.
groupmode	Set the group mode for the course. Use <b>0</b> for no groups, <b>1</b> for separate groups, and <b>2</b> for visible groups.
groupmodeforce	Set to <b>1</b> to force the group mode, and to <b>0</b> to allow activities to choose the group mode.
enablecompletion	Set to <b>1</b> to enable completion tracking for trackable roles, and <b>0</b> to disable completion tracking.
completionstartoneenrol	Set to <b>1</b> to start tracking completion when a user is first enrolled, or set to <b>0</b> to only start tracking completion when required by a trackable event.
coursetype	The course type. Set to <b>0</b> for e-learning, <b>1</b> for blended, <b>2</b> for seminar.
tags	A comma-separated list of tags to add to the course.

## Import options

These settings take precedence over the **Course process** parameters, which relate to what happens to the course such as renaming, templates, and resets.

Field name	Description
delete	If set to <b>1</b> (and the course exists), it will be deleted.
rename	If set to <b>1</b> (and the course exists), its <b>shortname</b> will be updated from the CSV file.
backupfile	An absolute path to a backup file to import into the course.
templatecourse	The <b>shortname</b> of a course to import content from.
reset	If set to <b>1</b> (and the course exists), it will be reset during this process.

## Role renaming

During the course upload, you can rename some roles by using the format **role\_[shortname]** for the column heading, and then the new course short name in the course row. For example:

```
role_student,role_editingteacher,role_teacher
padawan,master,jedi
```

This would rename the Learner role (role\_student) to **padawan**, the Editing Trainer role (role\_editingteacher) to **master**, and the Trainer role (role\_teacher) to **jedi**.

Field name	Description
role_*	For renaming roles in the course, * is the role <b>shortname</b> from the defined role in the database.

## Course format options

Field name	Description
numsections	The number of course sections (for the <b>demo</b> , <b>topics</b> , and <b>weeks</b> formats).
hiddensections	For the <b>demo</b> , <b>topics</b> , <b>weeks</b> formats only.
coursedisplay	For the <b>demo</b> , <b>topics</b> , <b>weeks</b> formats only.
numdiscussions	For the <b>social</b> format only.
activitytype	The type of activity for a course using the <b>single activity</b> format.

## Enrolment options

Some fields can be constructed to enable and configure enrolment methods. The fields must be named in the format **enrolment\_[number]** for the enrolment method name, followed by the format **enrolment\_[number]\_property** for its properties.

Field name	Description
enrolment_**	To set enrolment options, the first wildcard (*) is a digit representing the enrolment instance, and the second wildcard is the name of the setting to set. The following settings can be used: <b>delete</b> , <b>disable</b> , <b>startdate</b> , <b>enddate</b> , <b>enrolperiod</b> , <b>role</b> , and other options presented by the enrolment instance type.

For example, you might have:

```
enrolment_1,enrolment_1_role,enrolment_2,enrolment_2_startdate
manual,learner,self,20170629
```

In this example, the file is setting **enrolment\_1** as the manual enrolment method, and the default role as **learner**. Then, **enrolment\_2** is set to the self-enrolment method, with a course start date of 2017-06-29 (or the 29th June 2017).

This information would all come after the mandatory course **shortname**, **fullname**, and **category**, meaning a full example might be:

```
shortname,fullname,category,enrolment_1,enrolment_1_role,enrolment_2,enrolment_2_startdate
courserestored,Course restored,1>manual,learner,self,20170629
courserestored2,Course restored 2,1>manual,learner>manual,20170530
courserestored3,Course restored 3,1,self,editingtrainer,self,20181212
courserestored4,Course restored 4,1,self,learner>manual,20180107
```



Upload courses is not yet compatible with all enrolment methods.

## Notes about behaviour

The course upload tool uses the restore functionality when you provide it with a backup file, and it does not turn on the **Overwrite course configuration** option. Settings such as **completionprogressonview** and **numsections** are not carried from the backup to the course for this reason. The course upload tool does not force **Overwrite course configuration**, because half of the settings come from the uploaded CSV file already. It does not take the course settings from the backup unless you check the **Overwrite course configuration** option.

When providing a backup to use as a template for uploaded courses, the course settings are not taken. They must be provided by the CSV file through the permitted parameters.

If you are using a course backup file and restore it as a new course, you will find that it restores as you expect it to. If however, you navigate to an existing course and select **Restore into this course**, it will then use the default settings for the restore. You will find when complete that the existing course has retained its settings (**completionprogressonview** for instance), and not taken those from the backup.

## Upload settings

The settings below will appear after you click the **Preview** button, they allow you to configure the desired settings for the course upload.

### Import options

To prevent unexpected behaviour, you have to specify what you want the tool to be able to do.

Setting	Description	Notes
<b>Upload mode</b>	This allows you to specify if courses can be created and/or updated.	-
<b>Update mode</b>	If you allow courses to be updated, you also have to tell the tool what to update the courses with.	-
<b>Allow deletes</b>	Whether the delete field is accepted or not.	-
<b>Allow renames</b>	Whether the rename field is accepted or not.	-
<b>Allow resets</b>	Whether the reset field is accepted or not.	-

### Course process

This allows you to specify actions to be taken for every course uploaded.

Setting	Description	Notes
<b>Shortname template</b>	If you are creating courses without a shortname, you can use this field to automatically generate a shortname. This field accepts two placeholders: %i for the ID number, %f for the summary.	-
<b>Restore file</b>	A backup file (.mbz) to import in the course after create/update. This means the full path to your course, for example <b>/home /yourtotara/public_html/totara27/transfert/backup.mbz</b> . If you are unsure of this, look at <b>include_path</b> in <i>Site administration &gt; Server &gt; PHP info</i> .	-
<b>Restore from course</b>	The shortname of a course to import content from after create/update.	-
<b>Reset after upload</b>	Whether to reset the course after creating/updating it.	-

### Default course values

Those are values that can be set in the web interface for all the fields that are not specified in the CSV file. Note that they are always used when creating a course, but only when specified during update.

### Increasing speed

When importing the content of a backup file, or another course, you are advised to enable the setting **keeptempdirectoriesonbackup**. This will considerably speed up the process of the upload if you are importing multiple times from the same source.

## Totara Academy



The Totara Academy has a whole course dedicated to using [Courses and categories](#) in Totara Learn.