

Name Registration on the Moodle Platform for Students

Dear students,

at the beginning of a seminar all course participants usually meet in a room, are greeted by the lecturers, receive introductory information regarding organisation and content of the course and finally get to know each other. Name tags are frequently used to make addressing each other easier. It enables us to know, with which name a person would like to be addressed. Currently this first get to know situation with handwritten name tags has to be recreated digitally via online sessions. A new version of moodle now offers a more viable option of name changing, in order to meet the requirements of a possibly most realistic seminar situation.

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1. Background

Why is this so important? During the implementation phase of the modified name registration process the needs of people, who have adopted a personally chosen name differing from the one stated on their ID or birth certificate, were taken into special consideration. Using a new name may be due to various reasons¹, e.g.:

incompatibility of preferred gender identity or expression with given name:

Some people may use a self-chosen name, if the name stated on their ID represents a gender identity that does not match with how they actually identify. (An official name change for this reason is accompanied by high bureaucratic barriers in Germany and not accessible to every person.)

violence: Having experienced violence & abuse that is associated with the name, e.g. childhood abuse. For these people the name remains a constant reminder of the abuse and is therefore a strain on their mental well being.

wanting to escape the political affiliation of one's parents: If the name is indicative of a problematic political affiliation within one's family home, e.g. the name Adolf.

¹ We express our thanks to Prof. Dr. Nivedita Prasad and Prof. Dr. Utan Schirmer for the listing of possible reasons for using a self-chosen name. This should however not be considered an exhaustive list of reasons.

names being the result of political oppression:

Some people bear „official“ names that actually weren't used. An example would be Kurdish parents, who were forbidden from giving their children Kurdish names or did not wish to do so, to protect them from discrimination. About forty years ago there was a brief TEMPORARY regulation, mandating non German parents to give their children German names. These people also bear official names differing from the names they use in their day to day life.

adjustment of names for matters of easier communication:

Some names are perceived as difficult (e.g. pronunciation) in new contexts, people then adjust their names accordingly, in order to not be addressed incorrectly all the time, but also to make communication easier with others. For example the name Nivedita/Nita.

name changes, to prevent racist discrimination:

A person changes their name hoping to reduce the threat of racist discrimination. Possible examples: Shortening Mohammed to Mo or Israel to Isi.

name changes to prevent classist discrimination:

A person, with a name that is possibly indicative of a certain social class (e.g. Kevin, Chantal), may choose a different name with the hope of reducing the possibility of classist discrimination.

name changes, to hear oneself better:

This is the case, when a person with impaired hearing bears a name with soft consonants and vocals (e.g. Ben). Changing one's name to a variant with many long hard consonants and vocals (e.g. Frederick) increases the chance of hearing one's own name when called for.

Other reasons:

Any person, who does not feel comfortable with their official name, because they use a different name (or a shortened version) in their day to day life.






This includes adjustments in the management of Moodle and applies to lecturers and students equally.

We try to be as user-friendly as possible, but unfortunately it turns out that under the given circumstances the real teaching / learning situation cannot be technically converted to online formats in all aspects. We apologize for any inconveniences and associated increased efforts on your part! We hope that what has always been practiced at ASH, the creation and labeling of name tags, as well as all other habits in the implementation of face-to-face seminars, can be practiced again as soon as possible.

Name Registration is described below.

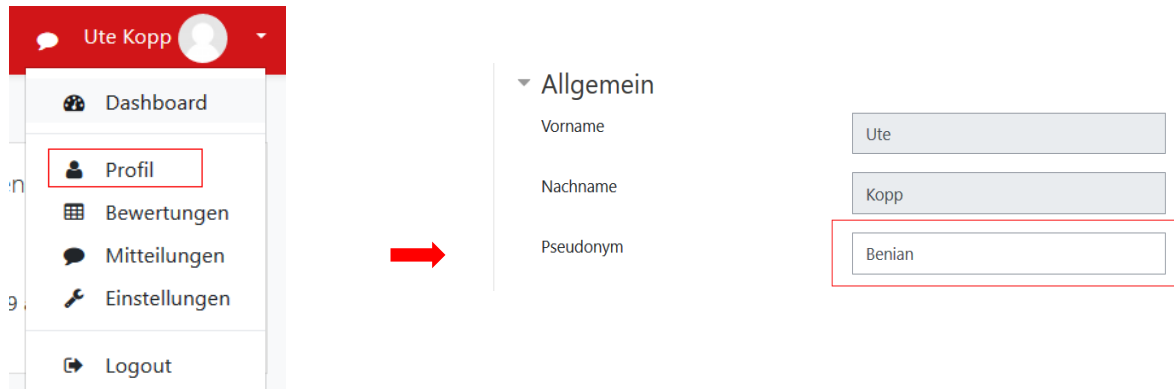
2. Name Registration

From 25.01.2021 the names of the participants of a course will initially be displayed in Moodle in the participant list (left menu bar) as follows:

Pseudonym / Nachname ^	Rollen —	Gruppen —
 Ute Koop	Keine Rollen	Kennenlernen in Kleingruppen
 Ute Kopp	Student*in	Keine Gruppen
 Cato LaLuna	Student*in	Keine Gruppen
 Vivian Schulz	Student*in	Keine Gruppen
 Amber Star	Student*in	Keine Gruppen

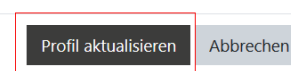
The ad follows the pattern pseudonym / last name. The information is retrieved from the electronic receipt system by default. The entry under "Pseudonym" can be changed, if desired, as described below:

At the beginning of a seminar or when you log in to Moodle for the first time, you enter your name once, with which you would like to be addressed in the course, in the "Pseudonym" input field in your personal profile (top right). The registered name can be freely chosen:








The image shows the Moodle user profile editing process. On the left, a navigation menu for 'Ute Kopp' is shown with 'Profil' highlighted. A red arrow points to the 'Allgemein' section of the profile form. The form contains three input fields: 'Vorname' (Ute), 'Nachname' (Kopp), and 'Pseudonym' (Benian). The 'Pseudonym' field is highlighted with a red box.

Save your entry with "Update profile" at the bottom of the page:



Two buttons are shown: 'Profil aktualisieren' (highlighted with a red box) and 'Abbrechen'.

The names entered in the "Pseudonym"² input field then appears in the list of participants:

Pseudonym / Nachname ^	Rollen —	Gruppen —
 Ute Koop	Keine Rollen	Kennenlernen in Kleingruppen
 Benian Kopp	Student*in	Keine Gruppen
 Cato LaLuna	Student*in	Keine Gruppen
 Vivian Schulz	Student*in	Keine Gruppen
 Amber Star	Student*in	Keine Gruppen

The names entered will then be used in all Moodle activities such as the forum, Etherpad, BBB etc.



The screenshot shows two parts of a Moodle forum. On the left, a box titled "TEILNEHMER (1)" lists "Benian Kopp (Sie)". On the right, a forum thread titled "Textverständnis?" is shown. The first post is by Ute Koop from Monday, September 7, 2020, asking "Hat jemand den Text vom xyz verstanden?" with the answer "U.". A reply by Benian Kopp from Wednesday, January 13, 2021, states "Dies ist meine Antwort."

For your information: All names are visible in lecturers view.

If you have any questions or would like to offer feedback, please contact Ute Koop (ComZ): koop@ash-berlin.eu

Translated into English by: Breandán Drewes (student tutor)

² The term „pseudonym“ is determined by Moodle and cannot be altered. In this context „pseudonym“ refers to the first name you would like to be addressed with in a seminar.