How to create sections for differentiating content in your course

Introduction

Sections in a Canvas course are subsets of users that have been organised for administrative purposes. Sections can be used to:

- create announcements that are only visible for a subset of students
- send a conversation message to a subset of students
- offer subsets of students different (due dates for) assignments, discussions and quizzes.
- offer subsets of students different modules or pages
- filter the gradebook by section.
- create groups that only contain students from the same section
- create calendar events in the course with different date/time for each section, or events for one section only

SECTIONS ARE ENTIRELY DIFFERENT FROM GROUPS. GROUPS ARE USED FOR COLLABORATING AND SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS ON BEHALF OF A GROUP. THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE WITH A SECTION.

When a Canvas course is created, the course has one default section with all users (students and teachers) in that section. In a course that is linked to OSIRIS, the name of that section is '.All users'. You cannot remove people from this section. In a course that is manually created (not linked to OSIRIS), the name of that section is the same as the name of the course.

This document explains how you can create additional sections that you can use for your administrative purposes.

The process outlined

1. Create a section
2a. Add students to a section in the standard Canvas way
2b. Add students to a section with the export users option
3. Use your newly created sections

Step by step instruction

1. Create additional sections within your course by <u>following the steps in this Canvas guide</u>. The sections you create are empty. It is important to communicate newly created sections within your course to your fellow lecturers and everybody who assists in the course, since these sections give extra options when for example posting an announcement.

After this step, there are two options for adding students to the sections:

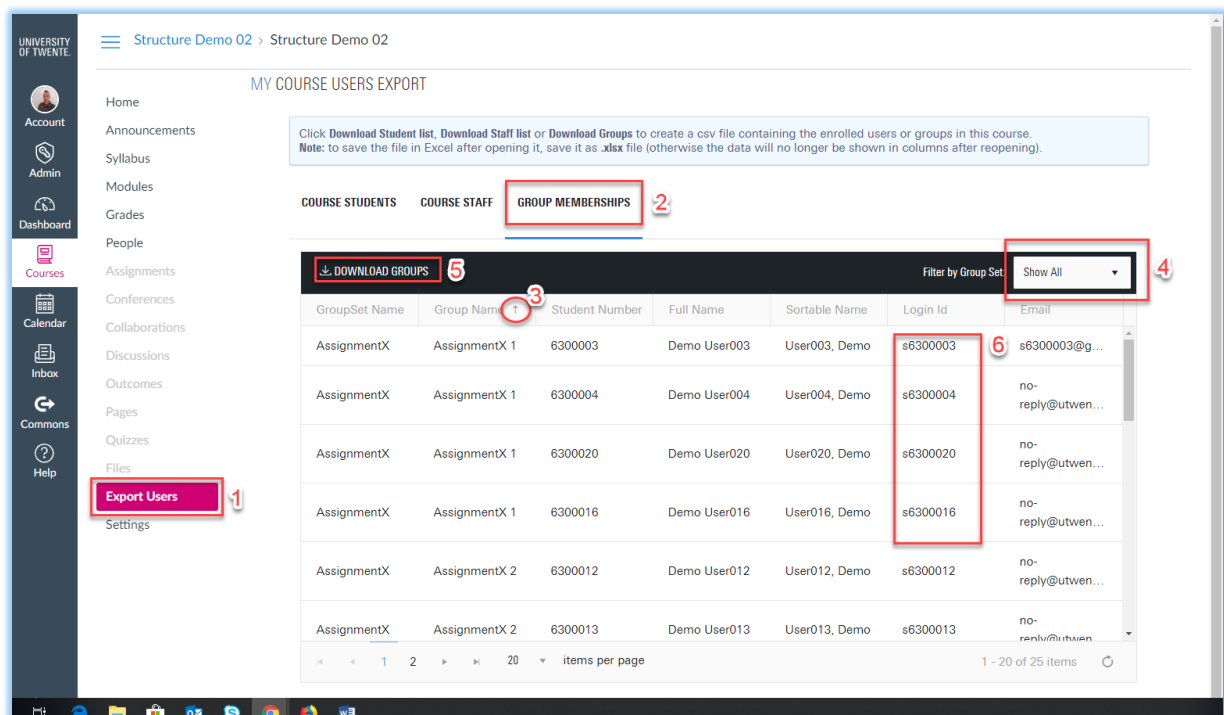2a: The standard Canvas way, suitable for small classes

2b: An alternative way, suitable for large classes

2a. Add students to a section from **People** in the Course menu by following the steps in this Canvas guide. This is the standard Canvas way. When you follow this procedure, students are not required to accept enrollment in the additional section. This procedure is student friendly but since it has to be done for each student it will take a lot of time with large classes.

2b. Adding students to a section can also be done in 'batches' with a list of student login id's. This list can first be exported from your Canvas course with the **Export Users** option in your Course menu. If you don't see this option you can turn it on under **Settings** in the tab "Navigation". Note: Export Users is not available for TA's and students in the course.

The next steps show an example in which students are added to sections based upon group memberships: how you can export your group memberships, copy the student login id's from a group and add these students to a desired section on the People page.
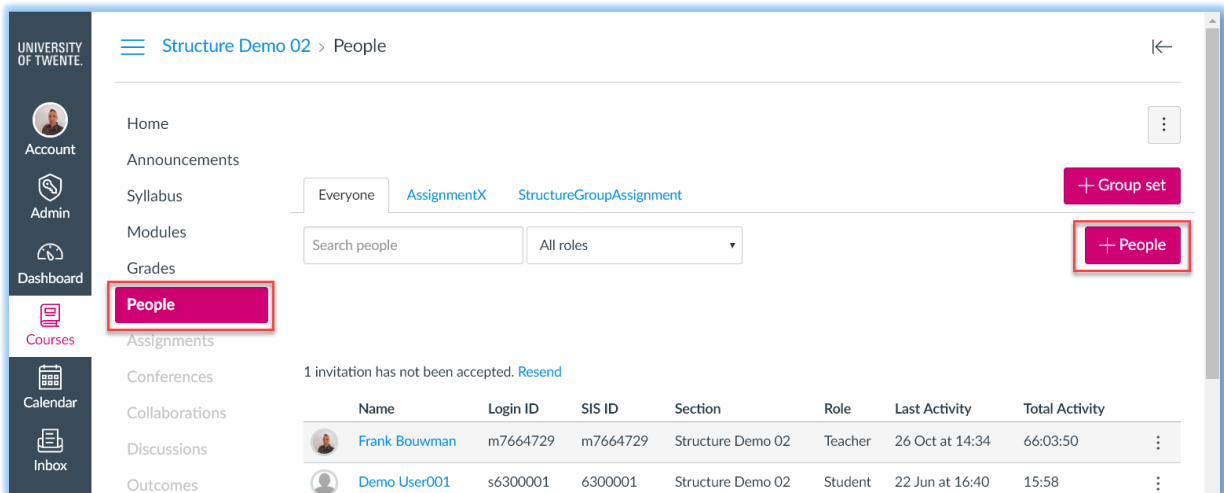
2b.1 Go to the Export Users (1) option in the Course menu and click on the "Group Membership" tab (2). Sort the list on group name by clicking on the Group Name column (3). If desired you can choose to filter to see only one group set with the pull-down menu on the right (4). Press the [DOWNLOAD GROUPS] button (5) to download a .csv file. Open the.csv file and copy a desired list of student loginid's (6). All mentioned actions are highlighted in the screenshot below.

2b.2 Go to the People menu in the Course menu and press the [+People] button.

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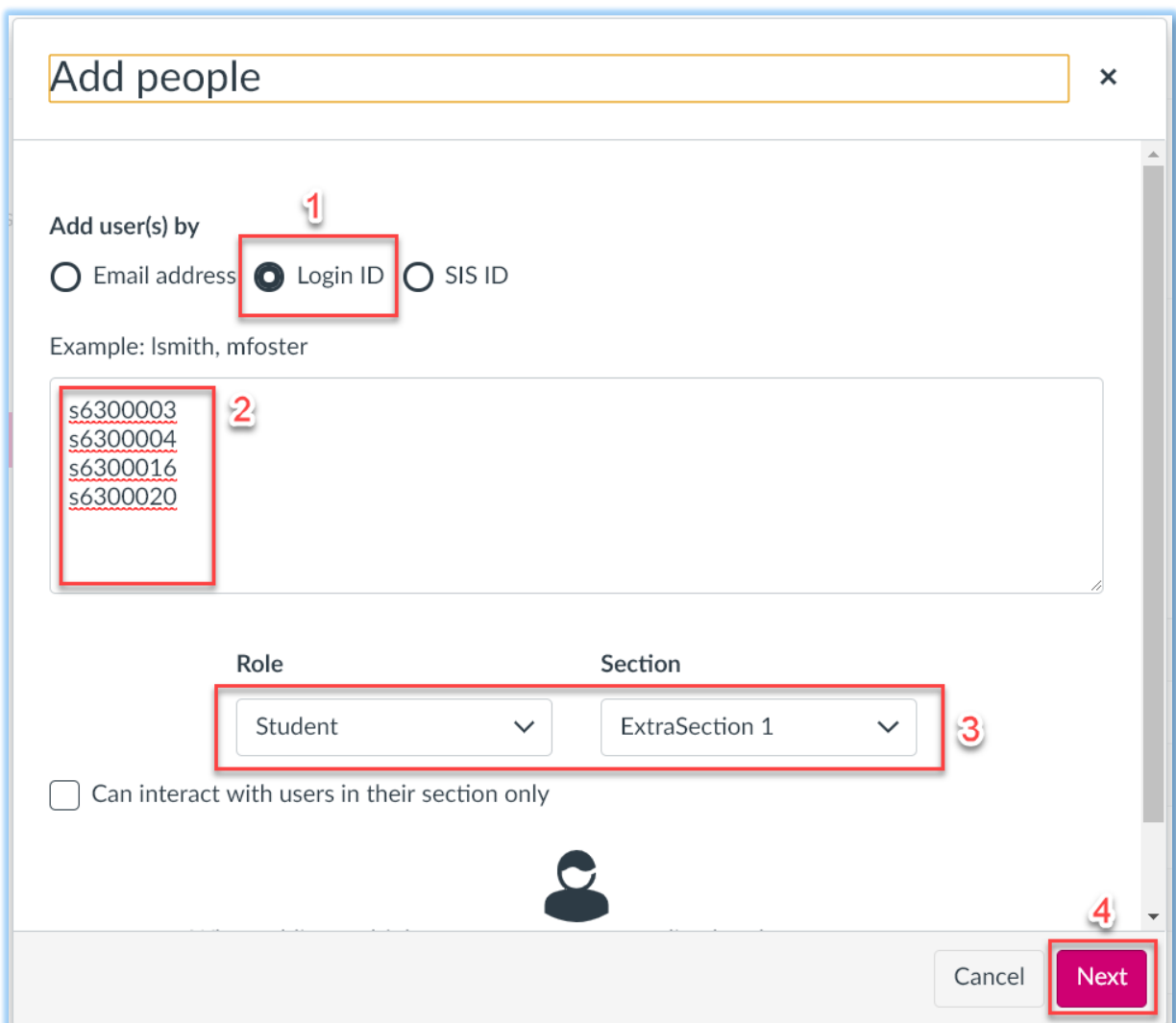
In the window that appears you can choose to add people by Login ID (1) and paste the list of login id's you copied from the .csv file into the text area (2). Choose your desired role and section from the pull down lists (3) and click on the [Next] button (4). All mentioned actions are highlighted in the screenshot below.

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Canvas will show a window with the users that will be added. Click on the [Add Users] button if you agree with the selection.

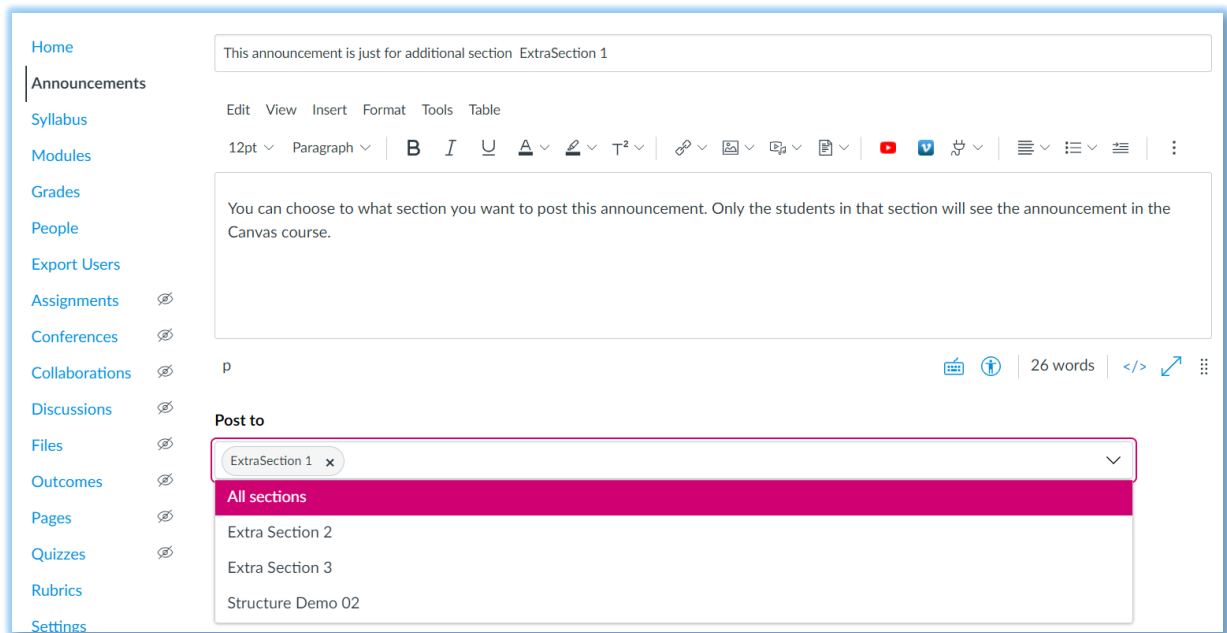You will return to the People page where you can see that the added students are pending.

All students that were added to an additional section this way, will have to click the [Accept] button they will see on their Canvas Dashboard. It is therefore wise to inform your students that you will add them to an additional section.

When they have Accepted, they are part of the additional section

3. Once you have created and populated your additional sections you can select these sections while creating Canvas items that can be differentiated by section. Below you see the example of an announcement that is being created just for the additional section 'ExtraSection 1" instead of the default "All sections". The sections are available from a pull down menu.

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WARNING: WHEN ADDING NEW USERS IN A COURSE WITH MULTIPLE SECTIONS, MAKE SURE THAT YOU (ALSO) ADD THEM TO THE DEFAULT COURSE SECTION. BY DEFAULT, USERS ARE ADDED TO THE FIRST SECTION IN THE LIST, IF YOU DON'T SELECT A SECTION YOURSELF. THIS MAY NOT BE THE DEFAULT SECTION, AS THESE ARE LISTED IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

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