

STARScience International/UK Forum

Introduction

One of the main ways that you can share thoughts, experiences and problems with other teachers is to use on-line conferences. The STARScience International/UK Forum will allow you to participate in text-based discussions, sharing ideas and experiences related to a particular topic with other people who share this interest.

This guide is provided to assist you in maximising your experiences when using either the International or the UK Forum (referred to as Forum from now on). It will cover the following topics:

- Opening conferences
- Reading messages
- Viewing topics
- Replying to a message
- Marking messages as read
- Finishing a conferencing session

Login to the Forum

When you first login to the Forum you will be presented with a welcome screen that informs you how many new messages have been posted to the Forum since your last visit. If this is your first visit to the Forum it indicates how many messages have been posted since your user account was created.

Inside the Forum your screen will be divided into three frames:

- A menu bar at the top
- A navigation frame on the left
- A main information window on the right



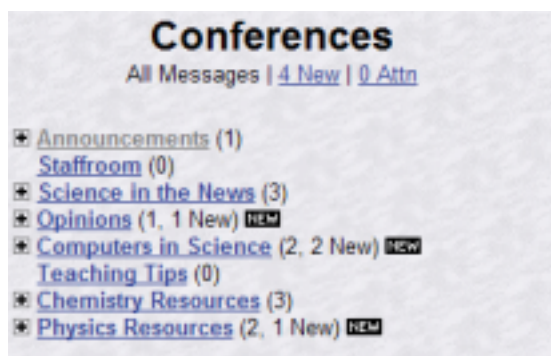
Opening Conferences

In the navigation frame you can view a list of the current available conferences.

In this example there are eight conferences. The first conference, 'Announcements' currently contains one message.

The second conference, 'Staffroom', currently contains no messages

The last conference, Physics Resources currently contains two messages, one of which has been newly posted.




To view a messages within a conference, click on the 'conference title'

For example,

- Click on: **Announcements**, to view the messages posted to this conference

Selecting a conference will expand it allowing you to view different messages posted to it.

Any conference that has a  to its left contains posted messages and can be expanded.

Having selected the 'Announcements' conference, you can see that there is one message, called 'Using Conferences, that has been posted by the Forum Moderator, the message was posted on the 11 February 2004.

- Click on the message title to view the message

The posted message will be displayed in the main information window on the right.

If people reply to posted messages then it will appear underneath the original message. You may need to scroll down to read long messages or replies.

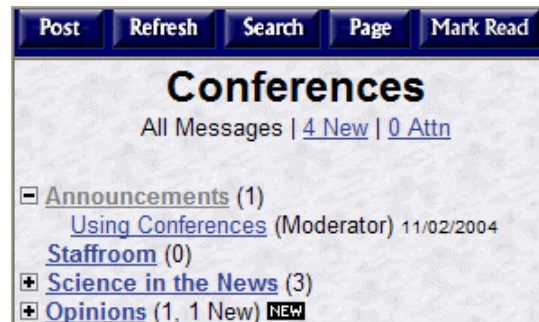
Viewing topics

A collection of related messages is referred to as a **topic**. A topic is sometimes referred to as a **thread**.

- Click on: **Computers in Science**
- Click on: **Using ICT for Teaching and Learning**

In the main information window you will be able to view the original message posted on the 12 February 2004. Immediately underneath this message you can see a posted reply.

Each posted new message starts with a blue banner.



Replying to a message

Open a conference and navigate to the message that you wish to reply to.

When you view a message a number of options appear in the blue banner directly above the message.

To reply to, or comment on, a message:

- Click on: **Reply**

Alternatively

- Click on: the **'Reply to'** option, at the foot of the message

Note: *Certain Conferences, such as 'Announcements' are information areas and as such are read only*

The screen displays a window where you can enter your own message.

- Click in: *the Topic box*
- Change the topic to indicate what your message is about
- Click in: *the large message box*
- Type: *your message*
- Click on: **Post** (either at the top or the bottom of the message window)

You can preview and check the spelling of your message. If you want to rewrite anything:

- Click on: **Back** in your browser's tool bar to return to the previous screen otherwise
- Click on: **Post** and your message is added to the conference

[Post](#) | [Reply](#) | [Reply/Quote](#) | [Email Reply](#) | [Delete](#) | [Edit](#)
[Previous Text](#) | [Previous Topic](#) | [Next Topic](#) | [Entire Topic](#)

Topic: Using ICT for Teaching and Learning (2 of 3), Read
Conf: [Computers in Science](#)

From: [baure](#)

Date: 12 February 2004 04:15 PM

These studies (by Department for Education and S demonstrates evidence of the positive effects of I



Marking messages as read

Having reviewed the conferences within Forum, replying to messages that are of interest to you, it is advisable to mark 'old' messages as read before you end your session. This will improve your conferencing experience in so much as, the next time you log on to the forum you will be able to go directly to newly posted messages and avoid reading content that you have already reviewed.

To mark messages read,

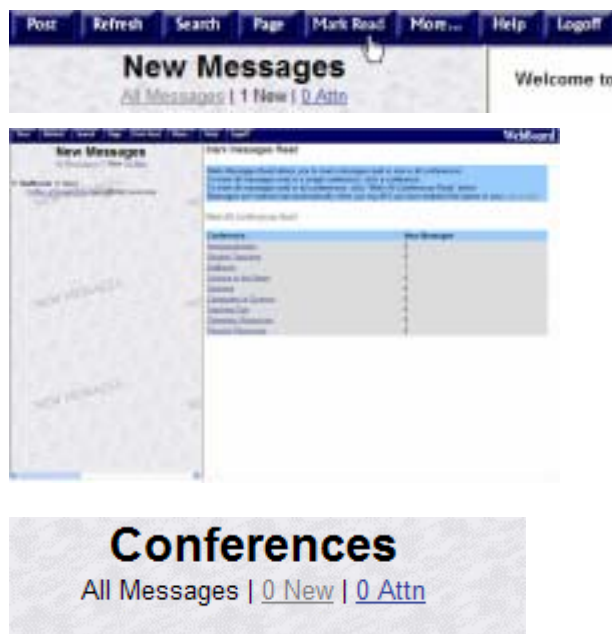
- Click on: **Mark Read**

You can then choose to mark individual conferences as read by clicking on the appropriate conference title.

Alternatively, you can choose to mark all the conferences as read,

[Mark All Conferences Read](#)

Where you 'Mark All Conferences Read' the new messages counter will be returned to zero:



The next time that you log onto the Forum you will only be notified about new messages that have been posted after you selected 'Mark All Read' you can now end your conferencing session.

Finishing a conferencing session

When you have finished your session the simplest way to stop is to exit from, or quit, your web browser:

- Click on: **File menu**
- Click on: **Exit** (or Close or Quit)

