

This document describes a set of best practices we've come up with for using RocketChat as the main means of communication in a course.

Unfortunately, RocketChat is not the most organized place when it comes to categorizing and tagging questions and posts. However, we have found it to work much better than Moodle for interacting with students. We, therefore, use RocketChat as the main communications hub for the courses. Students are responsible for receiving all messages broadcast on any of the RocketChat channels.

We propose the following strategy to keep the channels organized, the content searchable, and the interaction as fast as possible.

1. Use the appropriate *username*

Your username should be in the form *firstname.lastname*. This is required as we will only allow enrolled students to participate in the chat and we will remove users which we cannot validate.

2. Tag questions

To ensure your question can be found by other students who might be wondering about the same things, please tag your questions at the beginning of your message with the following scheme:

- For questions about the content of the lectures:

[Lecture #<lecture number>, <Topic of the question>]

For example, if your question is about the content of Lecture 2 and specifically about the definition of a language model, please start your message with [Lecture #1, Definition of a Language model].

- For questions about a specific homework question

[Homework #<homework number>, Q<question number><subquestion id>]

For example, if your question is about the subquestion a) of the third question in the second course homework, please start your message with [Homework #2, Q3a].

- For questions about a specific assignment question

[Assignment #<assignment number>, Q<question number><subquestion id>]

- For questions about a specific exercise sheet question

[Exercise Sheet #<sheet number>, Q<question number><subquestion id>]

Especially for the latter two options, please also *include a screenshot* of the question you're referring to since that makes it easier to figure out what exactly the context of your question is.

3. Answer in *threads*

To make the channels less cluttered and easier to scroll through, please answer to messages in threads.

4. Search for answers before posting a new question

If you have any questions, please search through the appropriate channels before posting a new message about it. The list of all channels is available on the course website.

5. Ask questions on *public* channels as much as possible

Private messages should only be used in two cases:

1. If your question could spoil the solution to a graded exercise (in that case, PM the author/assigned TA of that question) or
2. If your question is about some situation particular to you.

In particular, any questions about the weekly exercises and the course material should be discussed on the public channels so that everyone can participate. Remember, if in doubt, ask on a public channel. Many classmates will be glad you asked instead of them! :)

6. We highly recommend you download the desktop *app*