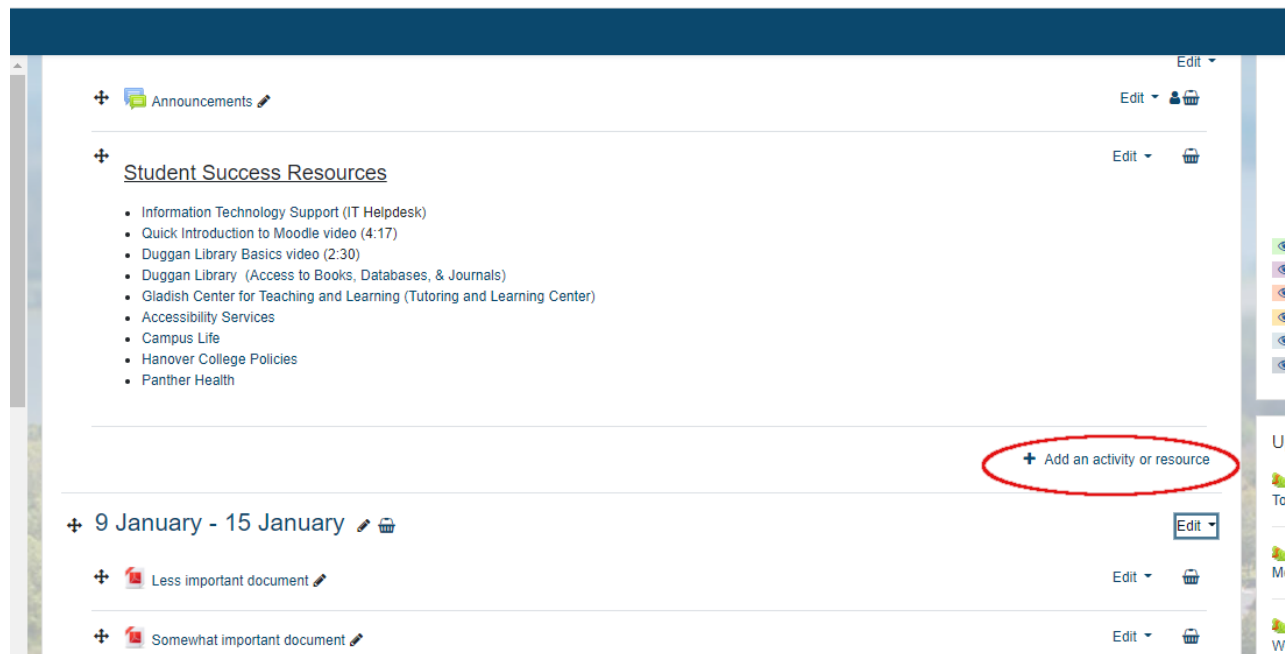


## Allowing students to (securely) take their own attendance

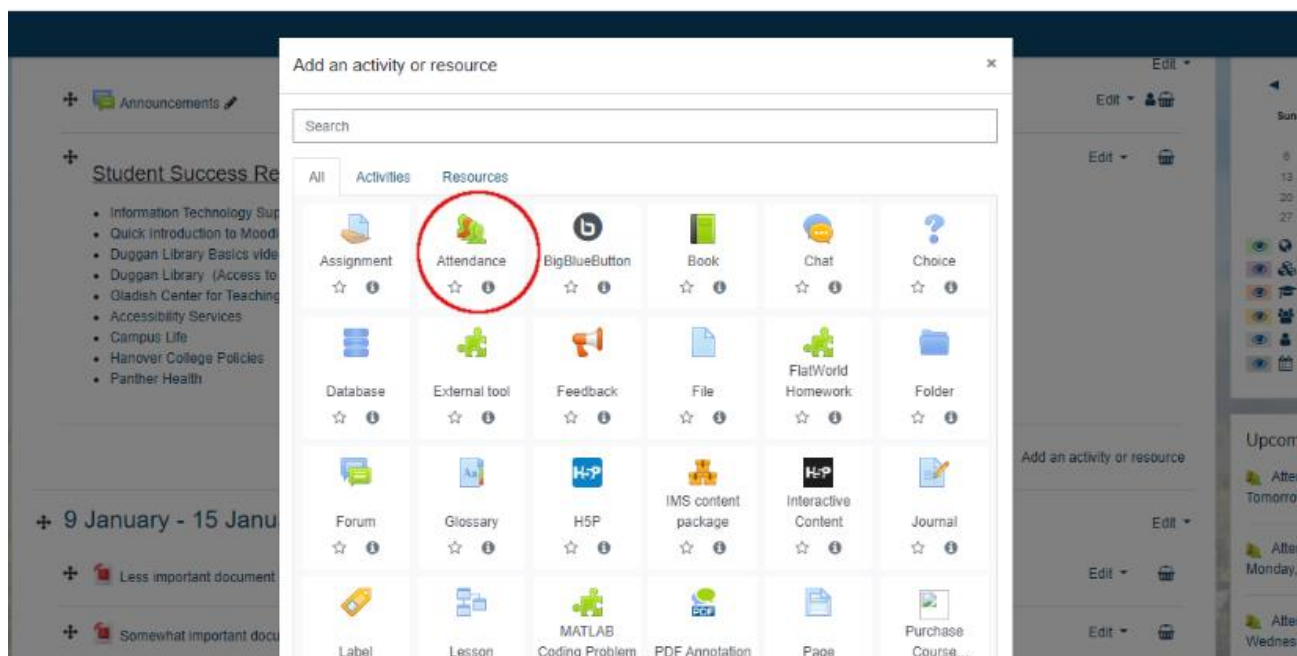
Although at first blush, the idea of students taking their own attendance for credit sounds a bit naïve, Moodle has some safeguards that prevent students from gaming the system by having students mark attendance using a password or a QR code. They can record their attendance either through Moodle using either a laptop or a smartphone.

First, we'll look at how this might work with a password.

1. Click on Add an Activity or Resource.



2. Click on Attendance in the Activity Chooser popup.



3. Change the Maximum points that you are giving for perfect attendance from 100 points, if necessary.

Adding a new Attendance

General

Name: Attendance

Description:

Display description on course page

Grade

Type: Point

Maximum grade: 100

Grade category: Uncategorised

Change the maximum number of points for perfect attendance if necessary

4. Click on the Multiple Sessions link to the left side of the page. Set up the course start date, the time of the class, click on the repeat function tick box, click on the days of the week for the class and then enter the final date of the classes.

The start time will affect when students can mark their attendance. If you want to allow them the chance to do this a few minutes before the class, select a time that begins a smidge before the class actually begins, maybe 5 minutes or so.

Typical course

Dashboard / Courses / Resources / Faculty Resources / Demo courses / M.C. / General / Attendance / Attendance

Attendance for the course :: Typical course

Sessions Add session Report Export Status set Temporary users

Add session

Type: All students

Date: 9 January 2022

Time: from 10:45 to 12:00

Description:

1. click Multiple Sessions

Multiple sessions

Repeat the session above as follows

Repeat on: Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

Repeat every: 1 week(s)

Repeat until: 15 April 2022

Set up...

Start date

Time

Repeat

Days of week

End of repeated sessions

5. Under Student Recording Click on the tick boxes for 1) Allow students to record own attendance, and 2) random password. Then click Add.

Time from 10:45 to 12:00

Description

☒ Create calendar event for session

Multiple sessions

☒ Repeat the session above as follows

Repeat on ☐ Sunday ☐ Monday ☒ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☒ Thursday ☐ Friday ☐ Saturday

Repeat every 1 week(s)

Repeat until 15 April 2022

Student recording

☒ Allow students to record own attendance 1.

Automatic marking Disabled

Student password ☐ Random password ☐ Include QR code 2.

☐ Rotate QR code

☐ Automatically select highest status available

Show more...

Add Cancel

6. On the next page, teachers will see the classes aligned with the key icon next to each session. The key icon will have password information – more on that later. Click on the Status Set tab.

Typical course

Dashboard / Courses / Resources / Faculty Resources / Demo courses / Mo / General / Attendance / Attendance

Attendance for the course :: Typical course

28 sessions were successfully generated

Sessions Add session Report Export Status set Temporary users Go to Status Set

All All past Months Weeks Days

#	Date	Time	Type	Description	Actions
1	Tue 11 Jan 2022	10:45AM - 12PM	All students	Regular class session	
2	Thu 13 Jan 2022	10:45AM - 12PM	All students	Regular class session	

7. Specify the minutes available for students to record their attendance during the session. Add as much time as you like – the whole class or just the first part of it. Students cannot record attendance before the time that you set up for the session start time in the settings (see step 4).

We're going to allow students to take attendance during the first 20 minutes of class in this example, so for the first twenty minutes of class they can mark themselves as present.

You should also tick the box to 'automatically set a student as not recorded', if they have not marked their attendance.

Finally, click on the eye across from Absent to make it invisible – the icon will be grayed out and have a slash through it. If you don't do this step, 'absent' will be visible when students take their own attendance and inevitably someone will tick it by mistake and complicate things. With absent (and other statuses, like late, or excused) hidden, they only have one button to tick – 'present'. Finally, click Update.

The screenshot shows the 'Attendance for the course' settings page. The page has a breadcrumb trail: Dashboard / Courses / Resources / Faculty Resources / Demo courses / Mc / General / Attendance - self mark - only present / Settings. The main heading is 'Attendance for the course :: Typical course'. Below this are tabs: Sessions, Add session, Report, Export, Status set, and Temporary users. A note states: 'Changes to status sets will affect existing attendance sessions and may affect grading.' There is a dropdown for 'Status set 1 (P)'. The main table has columns: #, Acronym, Description, Points, Available for students (minutes), Automatically set when not marked, and Action. Row 1: #1, Acronym P, Description Present, Points 2, Available for students 20, Automatically set when not marked (unchecked), Action (eye icon). Row 2: #2, Acronym A, Description Absent, Points 0, Available for students (empty), Automatically set when not marked (checked), Action (eye icon with slash). Row 3: #\*, Acronym (empty), Description (empty), Points (empty), Available for students (empty), Automatically set when not marked (checked), Action (Add button). An 'Update' button is at the bottom of the table. Annotations with red arrows and circles point to: the '20' in the 'Available for students' column (labeled 'Time available to register attendance'); the 'Automatically set when not marked' checkbox for the 'Absent' row (labeled 'Tick automatically set when not recorded for absent'); the 'Add' button (labeled 'Click on the eye to hide \'absent\' as a choice'); and the 'Update' button.

#	Acronym	Description	Points	Available for students (minutes)	Automatically set when not marked	Action
1	P	Present	2	20	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	A	Absent	0		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
*					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Add

Update

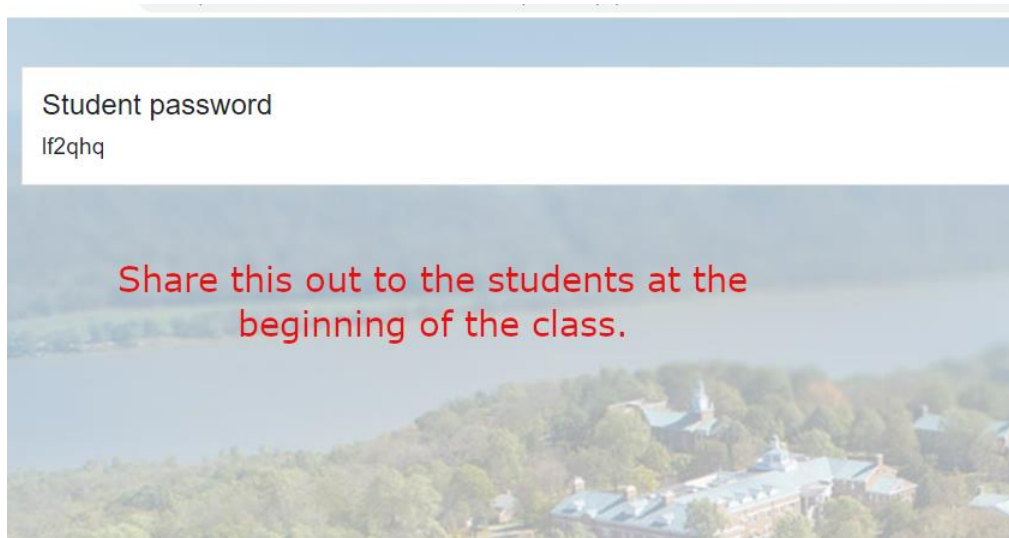
8. Click on the Key for a session to get the specific password for the session.

The screenshot shows the 'Attendance for the course' sessions page. The page has a breadcrumb trail: Dashboard / Courses / Resources / Faculty Resources / Demo courses / Mc / General / Attendance / Attendance. The main heading is 'Attendance for the course :: Typical course'. Below this are tabs: Sessions, Add session, Report, Export, Status set, and Temporary users. There are filters: All, All past, Months, Weeks, Days. The main table has columns: #, Date, Time, Type, Description, and Actions. Row 1: #1, Date Tue 11 Jan 2022, Time 10:45AM - 12PM, Type All students, Description Regular class session, Actions (key icon, gear icon, trash icon). Row 2: #2, Date Thu 13 Jan 2022, Time 10:45AM - 12PM, Type All students, Description Regular class session, Actions (key icon, gear icon, trash icon). An annotation with a red arrow points to the key icon in the Actions column of the first row, labeled 'Click on Key for session to get password that you'll share out'.

#	Date	Time	Type	Description	Actions
1	Tue 11 Jan 2022	10:45AM - 12PM	All students	Regular class session	
2	Thu 13 Jan 2022	10:45AM - 12PM	All students	Regular class session	

9. You will need to share out the password for the session to the students during the class period. Students do not have this sent to them. They have to get it from you. They will only see this if you share it with them, so that they can record their attendance.

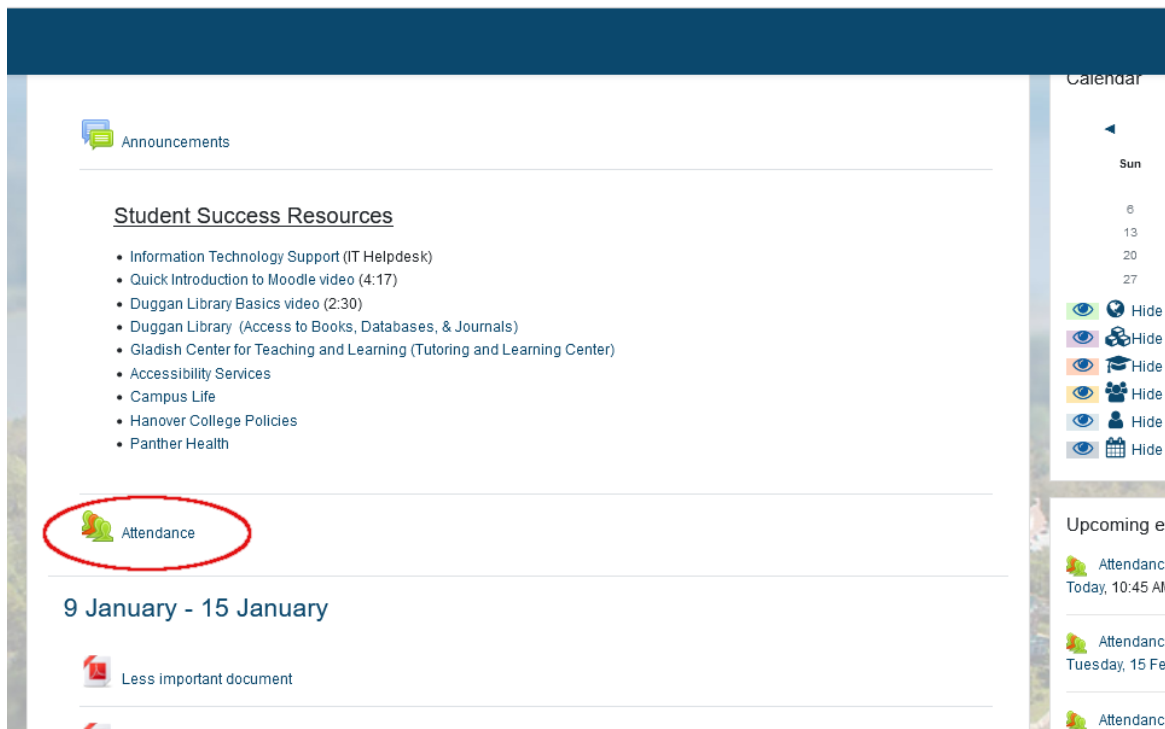
You can share a screen with the password written down or write it on a whiteboard.



### Student view of taking attendance.

Now that you've set up the attendance, this is what a student would do at the beginning of class.

Joe Student would login to the class on his laptop or smart phone. He would click the Attendance activity.



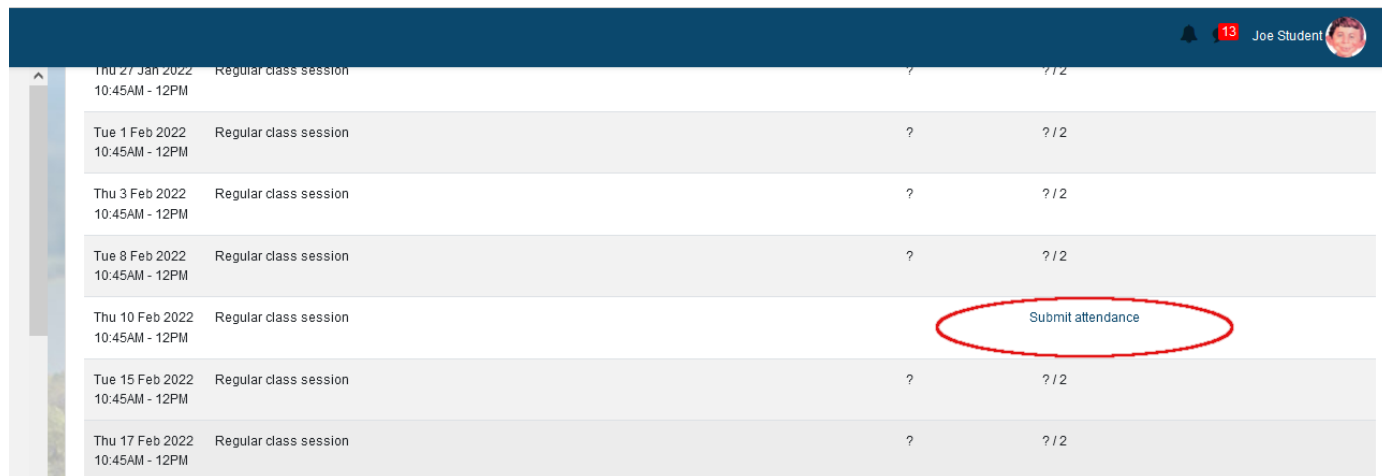


He would see a list of previous classes, but for the session that he is in, he'll see a Submit Attendance link if he logs at classtime or slightly before, if you've enabled students to take attendance slightly earlier.

If you had set the time in the attendance settings (step 4) to allow them to mark themselves 5 minutes before class, they will see this link pop up 5 minutes before class.

If he logs in too early, the Submit Attendance link will not be seen.

Once the clock strikes the minute to begin class (or the time that you've specified), ask Joe to refresh his screen or log back in and he'll see the link for Submit Attendance appear.

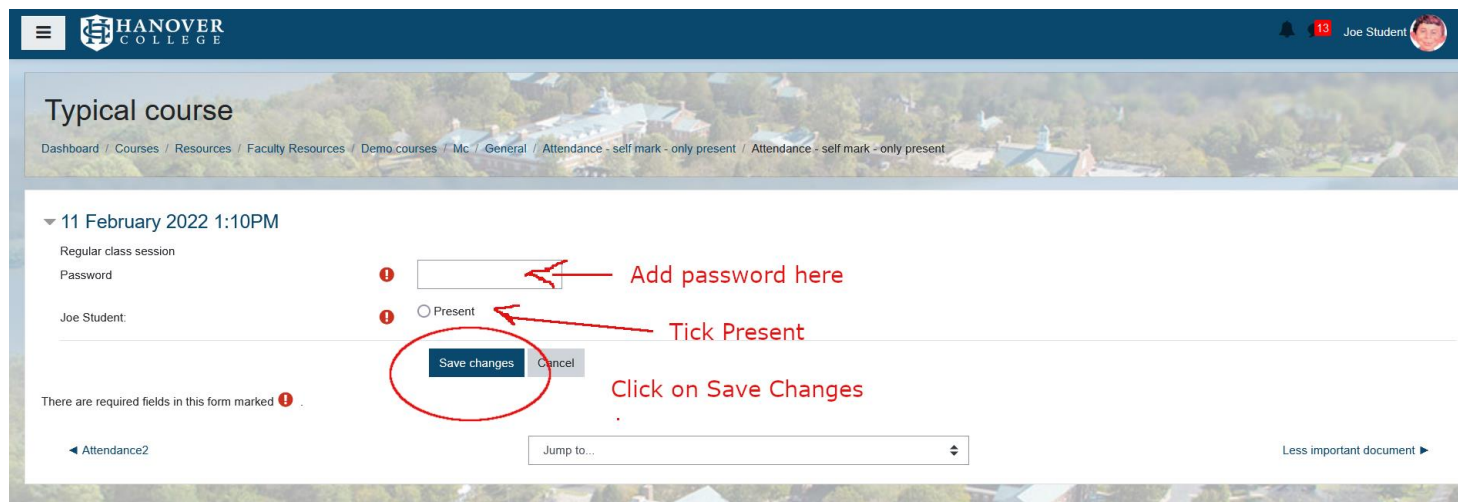


Thu 27 Jan 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	?	? / 2
Tue 1 Feb 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	?	? / 2
Thu 3 Feb 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	?	? / 2
Tue 8 Feb 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	?	? / 2
Thu 10 Feb 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session		<a href="#">Submit attendance</a>
Tue 15 Feb 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	?	? / 2
Thu 17 Feb 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	?	? / 2

Joe Student will see the screen below. He can add the password and fill in the radio button for present and then click Save Changes.

Note that by hiding absent in the settings, we gave Joe only one option - present.

Even so, it is important to stress to the students to tick 'present' and save the attendance. If they do not, they along - with everyone who doesn't show up – will be marked as absent.



**Typical course**

Dashboard / Courses / Resources / Faculty Resources / Demo courses / Mc / General / Attendance - self mark - only present / Attendance - self mark - only present

▼ 11 February 2022 1:10PM

Regular class session

Password


Joe Student: ☐ Present

There are required fields in this form marked **i**.

◀ Attendance2

Less important document ▶

He'll see present set up for the current date and he'll see that he's been awarded the points that you give for students who attend a class session.

13 Joe Student

## Typical course

[Dashboard](#) / [Courses](#) / [Resources](#) / [Faculty Resources](#) / [Demo courses](#) / [Mc](#) / [General](#) / [Attendance](#) / [Attendance report](#)

Your attendance in this session has been recorded. ✕


This courseAll courses

AllAll pastMonthsWeeksDays

Date	Description	Status	Points	Remarks
Thu 10 Feb 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	Present	2 / 2	Self-recorded
Tue 11 Jan 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	?	? / 2	
Thu 13 Jan 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	?	? / 2	
Tue 18 Jan 2022	Regular class session	?	? / 2	

This screen shows  
the status  
for the class...

At the bottom of the screen is a running total for attendance points for the term.

13 Joe Student

Thu 31 Mar 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	?	? / 2
Tue 5 Apr 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	?	? / 2
Thu 7 Apr 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	?	? / 2
Tue 12 Apr 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	?	? / 2
Thu 14 Apr 2022 10:45AM - 12PM	Regular class session	?	? / 2

Taken sessions: 1  
Points over taken sessions: 2 / 2  
Percentage over taken sessions: 100.0%  
Total number of sessions: 28  
Points over all sessions: 2 / 56  
Percentage over all sessions: 3.6%  
Maximum possible points: 56 / 56  
Maximum possible percentage: 100.0%

... and if the student  
scrolls down,  
they get their totals  
for the class



## QR Codes

You can set up attendance so that QR codes authenticate a student in the same way that a password does. Because QR codes may be difficult for some smartphones to read, you may want to consider using both the password and QR codes simultaneously as options.

At any rate, in the settings for attendance (step 5), you'll see the place where you can specify that you want QR codes.

Then click Add.

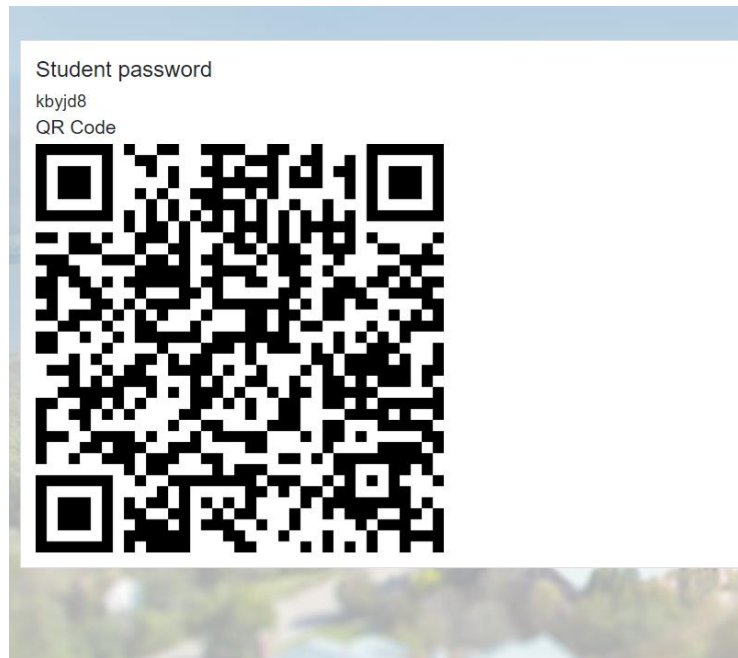
The screenshot shows the 'Student recording' section of an attendance settings form. A red circle labeled '1.' highlights the 'Random password' and 'Include QR code' checkboxes, both of which are checked. Another red circle labeled '2.' highlights the 'Add' button at the bottom of the form. The form also includes fields for 'Date', 'Time', 'Description', and 'Automatic marking'.

When the day of class comes, you'll have to share your QR code, just like you did with the password. The icon that shows that you have a QR code setup for attendance is a 4-block icon. Click on it.

The screenshot shows the 'Attendance for the course :: Typical course' page. A red circle highlights a 4-block icon in the 'Actions' column of the attendance table. A red arrow points to this icon with the text 'Click on 4 box icon'. The table lists two sessions: 'Regular class session' on 'Thu 10 Feb 2022' from '11:50AM - 1PM' and 'Regular class session' on 'Thu 10 Feb 2022' from '1:45PM - 2:45PM'. The page also includes a 'Typical course' header and a 'Sessions' tab.

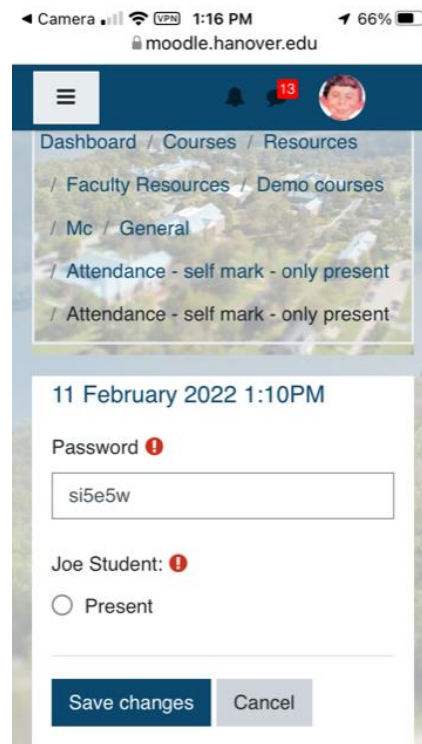


You'll see this screen. Note – I've enabled the password along with the QR codes. You can display this with a screenshare or print it out on a piece of paper. If you haven't used QR codes previously, you'll open up the camera in your smartphone and hover over the QR code....

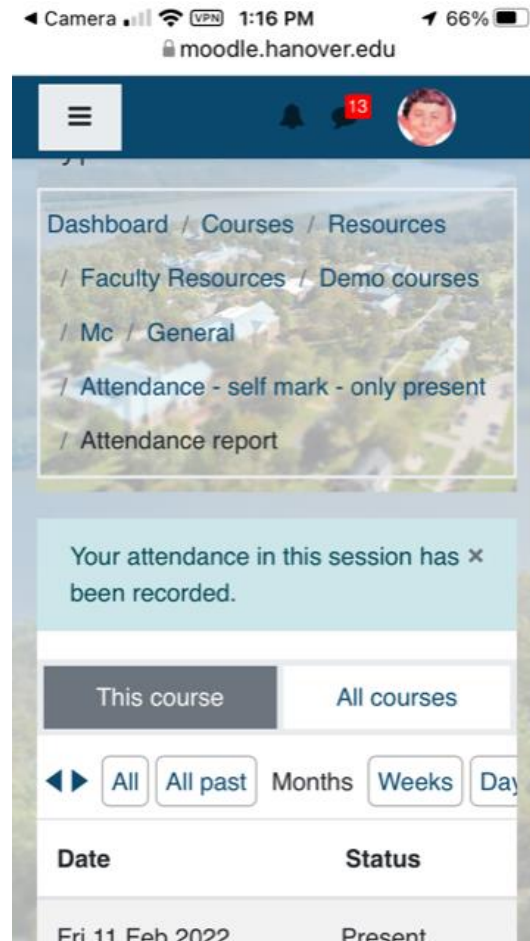


This is what the student sees on their phone after they hover over the QR code with the camera, and they open up a window that is generated by the QR code on their phone. The QR code will populate the proper password for the session.

Joe will click on the radio button for 'present' and then the Save Changes button.



This is what he sees to note that the attendance has been recorded.



Further reading:

[How do I allow my students to record their own attendance of teaching sessions in Moodle?](#) - Oxford Brookes University.