

Unit Topic: Intelligent Agents

Introduction

The Intelligent Agents tool is a powerful and efficient means of communicating with students that will increase student engagement, deepen your impact as a professor, while also reducing your workload.

An Intelligent Agent is a process that runs in your DC Connect course that identifies students who have met particular criteria and subsequently sends those students pre-scripted emails to their DC Mail accounts. The criteria, message, timing, and frequency of communication is set by you, the professor. In simpler terms, you are telling DC Connect to automatically email students when they have, or have not done something in DC Connect.

Content

This document covers the following topics:

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 - Deleting an Intelligent Agent
- Intelligent Agents Settings
 - Setting a Custom From: Name and Reply-To: Email Address

How to Access the Intelligent Agents Tool

To access the Intelligent Agents tool, click on the **Course Admin** link in your course navigation...

A rectangular button with a light blue background and a thin border, containing the text "Course Admin" in a dark blue font.

... and then the **Intelligent Agents** link.

A rectangular button with a light blue background and a thin border. On the left is a gear icon, and to its right is the text "Intelligent Agents" in a dark blue font.

Creating & Managing Your Intelligent Agents

Creating an Intelligent Agent

Click on the **New** button of the Agent List page to begin creating a new Intelligent Agent.

The header of the "Agent List" page, featuring the text "Agent List" in a large, dark grey font.A blue rectangular button with rounded corners and the text "New" in white.A light grey button with rounded corners, containing the text "More Actions" and a downward-pointing chevron icon.

Enter a **Name** for the agent. It is a good idea to use a name that includes the activity it is monitoring (e.g. "Assignment 1 – Reminder")

The header of the "New Agent" form, featuring the text "New Agent" in a dark grey font.

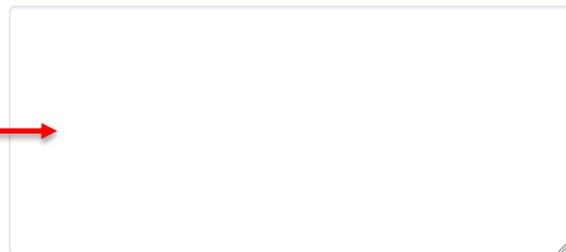
Agent Name: *

A white rectangular input field with a thin grey border, intended for entering the agent's name.

Edit Description

Description:

Having a brief description of the purpose of the agent can be very helpful when managing your agents across semesters.

A large white rectangular text area with a thin grey border and rounded corners, intended for entering a description of the agent's purpose.

Click the **Agent is enabled** Status box so that your agent is available to run.

Status:

Agent is enabled

Setting the Agent Criteria

The agent **Criteria** is the user activity that is being monitored and triggers the agent to send its messaging. Begin by selecting who you want to receive emails from the agent.

Role in Classlist

You can select **All users visible in the Classlist** (recommended).

Role in Classlist

- All users visible in the Classlist
- Users with specific roles:

Or **Users with specific roles:**

Users with specific roles:

- Instructor
- Teaching Assistant
- Instructor_NoGrade
- Student

Login Activity

If you wish the agent to take action based on how often students log into DC Connect, click the **Take action when the following login criteria are satisfied:** checkbox under the **Login Activity** title.

Login Activity

Take action when the following login criteria are satisfied:

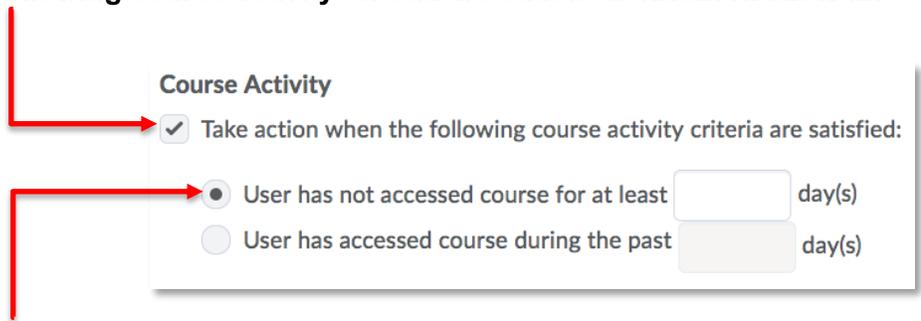
- User has not logged in for at least day(s)
- User has logged in during the past day(s)

Then click the desired **User has not / has logged in...** radio button and set the number of days that must pass before the agent acts.

NOTE: This agent criteria monitors student logins to DC Connect, system wide. It is not course specific. We DO NOT recommend using this criteria for your agent.

Course Activity

If you wish the agent to take action based on how often students access your course, click the **Take action when the following course activity criteria are satisfied:** checkbox under the **Course Activity** title.



Course Activity

Take action when the following course activity criteria are satisfied:

User has not accessed course for at least day(s)

User has accessed course during the past day(s)

Then click the desired **User has not / has accessed course** ... radio button and set the number of days that must pass before the agent acts.

GOOD PRACTICE: It is critically important for students enrolled in hybrid and online courses to engage with their courses on a frequent basis. If you are teaching a hybrid or online course, it is strongly recommended that you create an agent that monitors your students' course activity and prompts them when they do not access your course with the desired frequency. Input the number "7" to prompt students who are "absent" for more than a week.

Release Conditions

Release conditions are conditional requirements that restrict access or visibility to specific content, resources or areas within DC Connect. Students must satisfy the conditions before the restrictions are removed. Stated more simply, students can't see or interact with the course content or activity unless they have done (or not done) what the condition describes.

When you use **Release Conditions** as the Criteria for an Intelligent Agent, the action or inaction described by the condition controls whether or not students receive the agent email. There are many, many options for what can be used as a condition. A comprehensive description of each **Condition Type** and their subsequent **Condition Details** is beyond the scope of this document. However, some excellent examples, especially for an Intelligent Agent, are: has/has not submitted to an assignment submission folder, has/has not viewed content topics, has/has not completed a checklist, has/has not achieved a certain grade on an assessment.

Click the **Create and Attach** button to begin.



Release Conditions

There are no conditions attached to this item.

Click the **Condition Type** pulldown menu and select the interaction you wish to monitor.

Create a New Release Condition

Release this item when the following condition is met:

Condition Type

-- Select Condition Type --

In the subsequent **Condition Details** pulldown menu (it will appear, I promise), select the action or inaction that triggers the agent to execute.

Condition Details

Select Condition Type --

Click the **Create** button to affix the Release Condition as the Criteria for your agent.

Create

Cancel

Setting the Agent action

The agent **Actions** determine the frequency of the agent's action and whether or not an email is sent.

Repetition

The **Repetition** setting determines how many emails an agent might send to users who satisfy its criteria.

When you select this setting, all users that satisfy the agent's criteria receive only one email no matter how many times the agent is evaluated.

Actions

Repetition

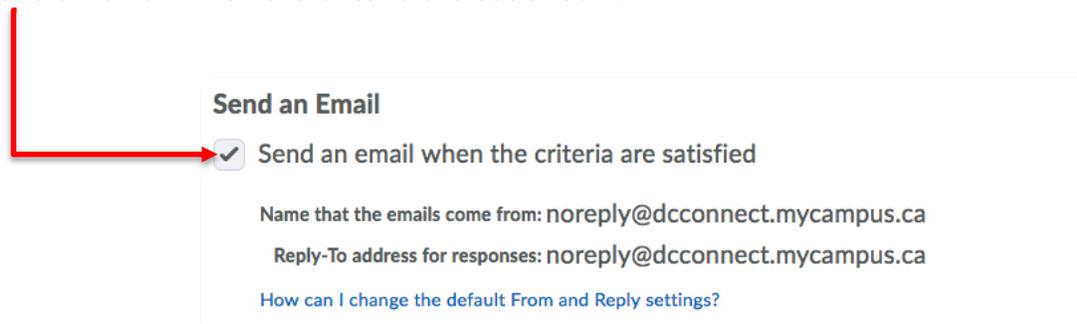
- Take action only the first time the agent's criteria are satisfied for a user
- Take action every time the agent is evaluated and the agent's criteria are satisfied for a user

When you select this setting, the agent sends an email to all users that satisfy its criteria every time the agent is evaluated.

Send an Email

NOTE: Although it is possible to use the Intelligent Agent tool to quickly identify students who meet a particular Criterion, we strongly recommend using the tool for communication.

Click the **Send an email when the criteria are satisfied** checkbox.



Send an Email

Send an email when the criteria are satisfied

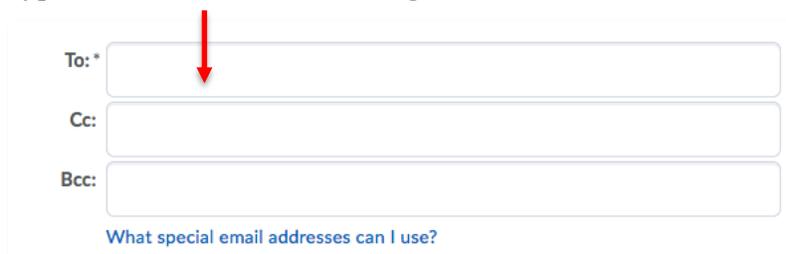
Name that the emails come from: noreply@dcconnect.mycampus.ca

Reply-To address for responses: noreply@dcconnect.mycampus.ca

[How can I change the default From and Reply settings?](#)

You will need to use a special code (called a replace string) in the **To:** field so that each student who satisfies the agent's criteria receive an individual email.

Type **{InitiatingUser}**, including the brackets, into the To: field.



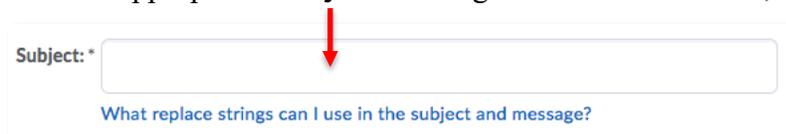
To: *

Cc:

Bcc:

[What special email addresses can I use?](#)

Enter an appropriate **Subject:**. "Assignment 1 – Reminder", for example.



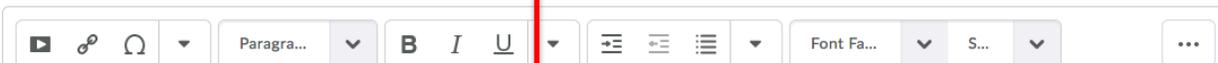
Subject: *

[What replace strings can I use in the subject and message?](#)

Enter the content of your email in the **Message:** field.



Message:



{InitiatingUserFirstName},
This is a reminder that...

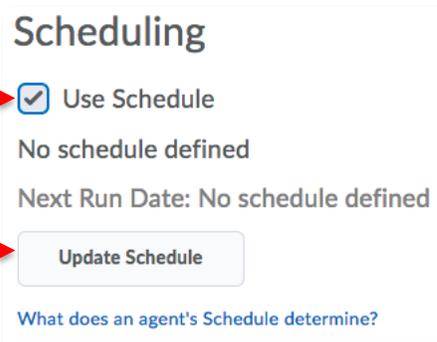
[What replace strings can I use in the subject and message?](#)

Here is an opportunity to personalize your communication. We recommend using the **{InitiatingUserFirstName}** replace string. Each student receiving the email from the agent will see their own first name as the salutation of the message.

Running Your Intelligent Agent

There are two ways to run your agent, using a schedule to predetermine when your agent will run and with what frequency, and manually.

If you would like to set your agent to run automatically at a future point in time, click on the **Use Schedule** checkbox.



Scheduling

Use Schedule

No schedule defined

Next Run Date: No schedule defined

Update Schedule

[What does an agent's Schedule determine?](#)

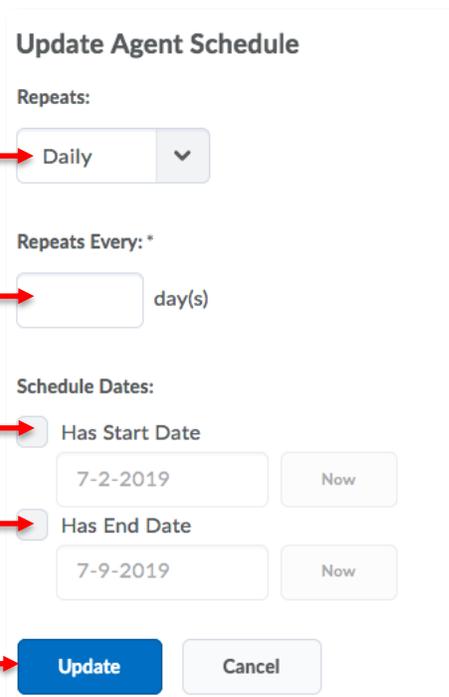
Next, click on the **Update Schedule** button.

In the window that pops up, set the periodicity, ...

...repetition, ...

...start date, ...

...and end date of the agent schedule.



Update Agent Schedule

Repeats:

Daily

Repeats Every: *

day(s)

Schedule Dates:

Has Start Date

7-2-2019 Now

Has End Date

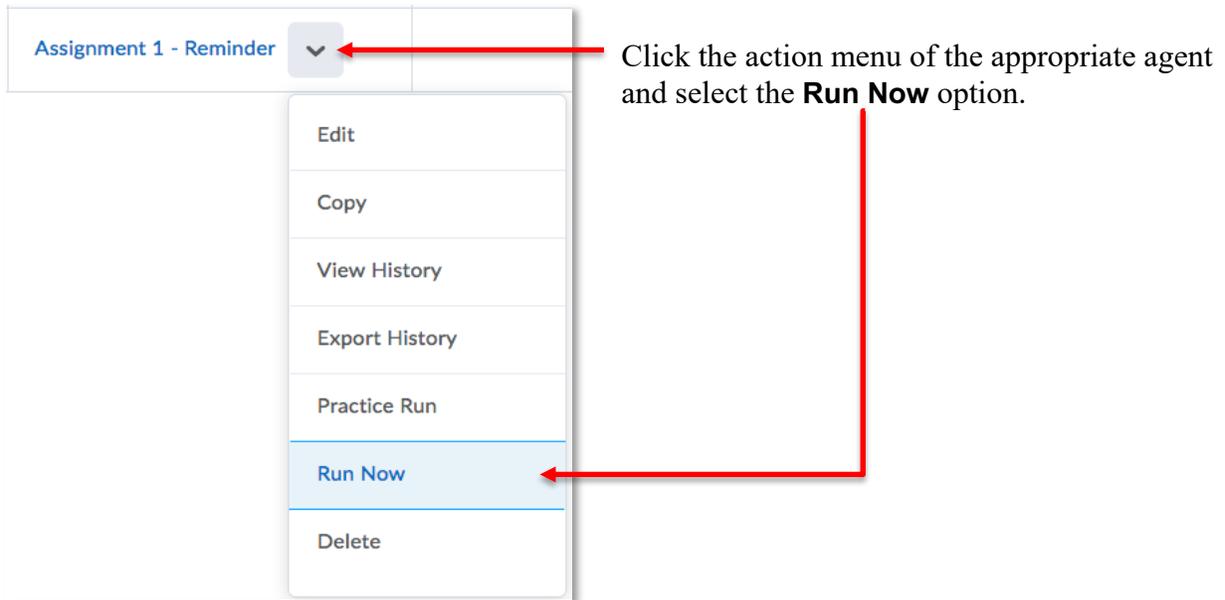
7-9-2019 Now

Update Cancel

Click the **Update** button to affix your agent schedule.

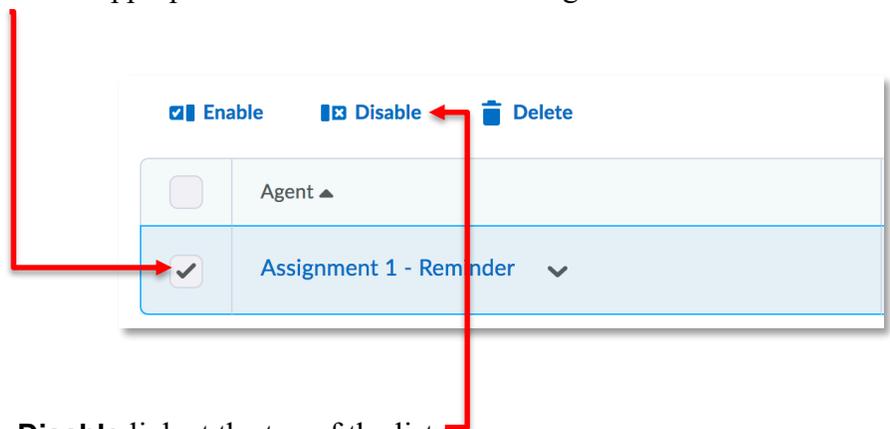
After setting your schedule, be sure to click the **Save** or **Save and Close** button to preserve all your agent parameters.

If you prefer to run your agent manually, you can do so from the **Agent List** page.



Enabling or Disabling an Intelligent Agent

On the **Agent List** page, click the appropriate checkbox to select the Agent...

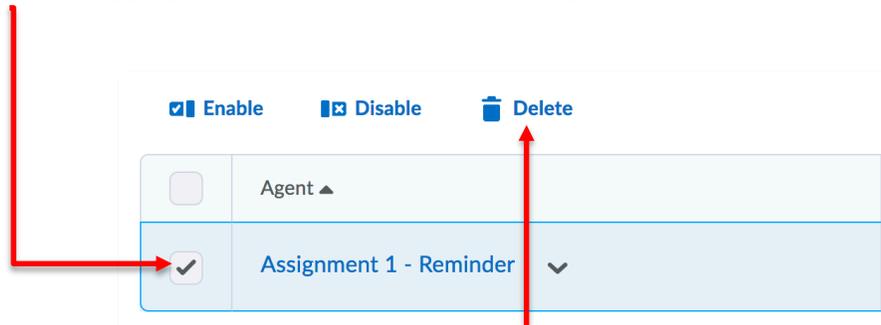


... then click the **Enable** or **Disable** link at the top of the list.

NOTE: Agents copied forward from one semester to the next will automatically disable. It is recommended practice to review the content and schedule of each copied agent before enabling it.

Deleting an Intelligent Agent

On the **Agent List** page, click the appropriate checkbox to select the Agent...



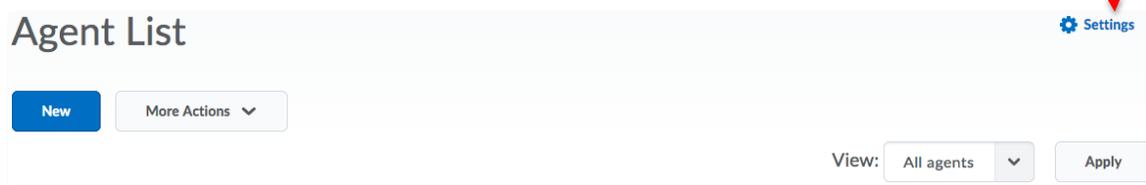
... then click the **Delete** link at the top of the list.

Intelligent Agents Settings

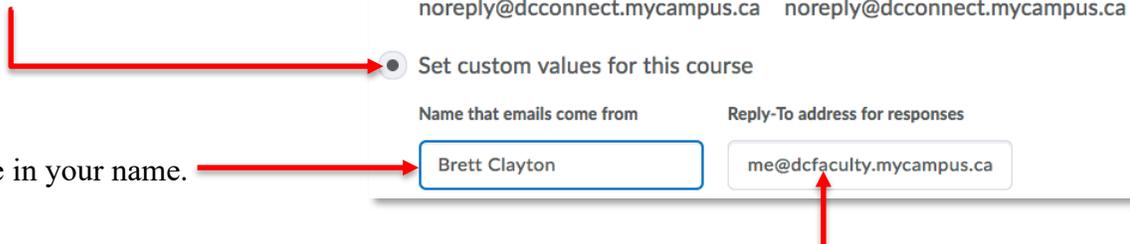
Setting a Custom From: Name and Reply-To: Email Address

By default, the name from and reply-to address of emails sent by Intelligent Agents is noreply@dcconnect.mycampus.ca. However, you may wish to facilitate communication with your students by providing a functional address that they can use to correspond with you.

On the **Agent List** page, click the **Settings** link.



Click the **Set custom values for this course** radio button.



Type in your name.

NOTE: Do not use your @durhamcollege.ca email address in the **Reply-To** field. The reply from your student will be blocked without any notification to you. Be sure to use this format: **first.last@dcfaculty.mycampus.ca**

Click the **Save** button to affix your Intelligent Agents Settings.