KNOWLEDGE BASE ARTICLE

Why a Post Is Not Visible: Approval, Rejection and Visibility Rules

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Overview

"I posted, but nobody can see it" is the most common question on a board with moderation, and "the topic is there, but not in my **list**" the most common one without it. In Discussions a topic or reply can be invisible for several common reasons: it is waiting for approval or was rejected, the current **view** or filter excludes it, it is on a later page, or the user has no permission to read it. This article explains each rule as implemented in version 26.11.4 and shows where to find the missing item.

Start here

What you see	Go to
The author sees the badge *Awaiting approval* or the message *Thank you. Your post will be visible after a moderator approves it.*	**Pending approval**
The author sees the badge *Rejected* on a topic or a reply; colleagues do not see the item	**Rejected items**
A link to a topic (`?topic=ID`) shows *This topic is not available. It may be awaiting approval or may have been removed.*	**The visibility rule**
The topic exists but is missing from **Unanswered**, **Answered** or **Featured**	**Views and filters**
Search finds nothing although the words are in the reply	**Views and filters**
The topic is "gone" after a day or two	**Paging and sort order**
The **Discussions Activity web part** does not show a new topic	**The Activity web part**
Some users see the board, others get an error	**Permissions**

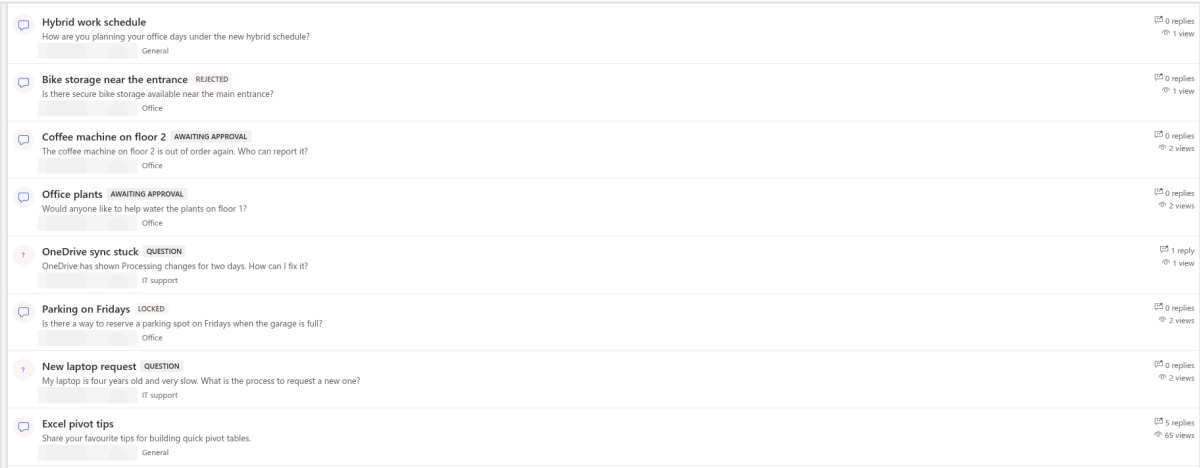
The visibility rule

Every topic and reply carries an **Approval status** column with one of three values: *Approved*, *Pending* or *Rejected*. The web part applies one rule everywhere, in the topic list, in the thread and in the moderation queue:

Who	Sees
Moderators (users with **Manage Lists** on the **site**)	Everything: approved, pending and rejected items
Everyone else	Approved items plus **their own** items, whatever their status

Whether a new post starts as *Approved* or *Pending* depends on the board: when **Require approval of new posts** is on, topics and replies written by non-moderators start as *Pending*; posts by moderators are always approved immediately. On a board without the setting, everything is approved on creation but existing pending and rejected items keep their status.

The rule also applies to direct links. When someone who is neither the author nor a moderator opens `?topic=ID` of a pending or rejected topic, the web part shows *This topic is not available. It may be awaiting approval or may have been removed.* with the **Back to topics** button instead of the topic; see KB10407. Sharing a Link to a Topic in Discussions (Deep Links).



A member's own topic waiting for approval

Pending approval

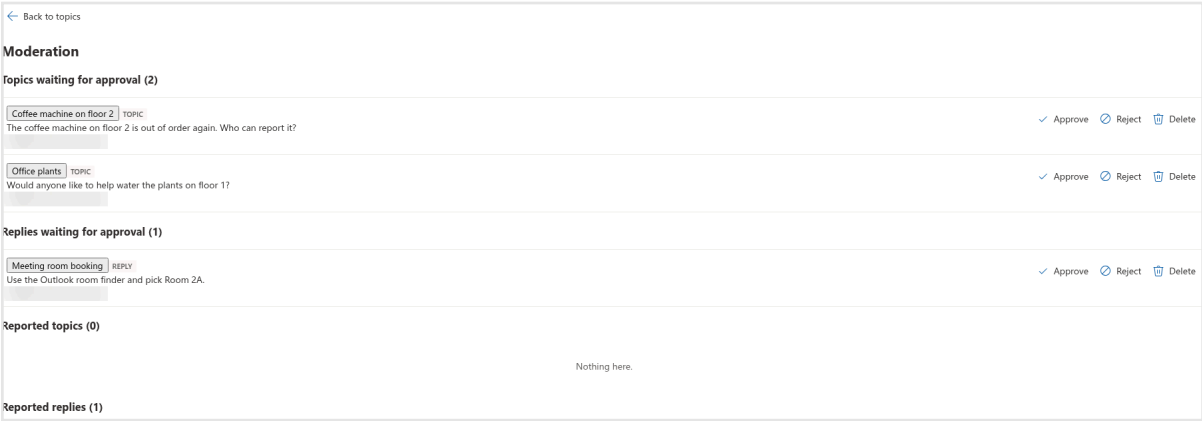
Symptom. The author sees the topic in the list with the badge *Awaiting approval*, or the blue message *Thank you. Your post will be visible after a moderator approves it.* after posting a reply. Colleagues do not see the item at all.

Cause. The board requires approval and the author is not a moderator. Until a moderator acts, the item is visible to its author and to moderators only. A pending topic cannot be replied to by its author or other members (the reply box is hidden); moderators can reply to it. A pending reply cannot be replied to or marked as the best answer, and pending replies are not counted in the *Replies* counter of the topic.

Fix. A moderator opens the board and clicks **Moderation** on the command bar. The queue has six sections: **Topics waiting for approval**, **Replies waiting for approval**, **Reported topics**, **Reported replies**, **Rejected topics** and **Rejected replies**. For each pending item there are **Approve**, **Reject** and **Delete**; **Delete** asks for confirmation and, for a topic, removes its replies as well. A moderator who opens the pending topic or reply itself also sees an **Approve** button under it.

Note

Approve from the web part rather than by editing the **Approval status** column in the list. The web part also updates the topic's *Replies* counter, *Last activity* and *Last reply by* (the author of the reply) when it approves a reply; a value changed directly in the list leaves the counters as they were.



The moderation queue with items waiting for approval

Rejected items

Symptom. The author sees the badge *Rejected* on a topic in the list or on a reply in the thread; colleagues do not see the item.

Cause. A moderator clicked **Reject** - in the moderation queue for a pending item, or in the **Reported topics** / **Reported replies** sections for a reported item that had been approved. A rejected item is not deleted: it stays in the list with the status *Rejected*. The rule shows people their own items, so the author still sees a rejected **topic** in the

topic list and a rejected **reply** in the thread, both with the *Rejected* badge; moderators see them too; other members do not. When an approved reply is rejected, the *Replies* counter of the topic is decremented.

Fix. Rejection is reversible. The moderation queue lists rejected items in its **Rejected topics** and **Rejected replies** sections, each with **Approve** and **Delete**. **Approve** restores the item; for a reply, the *Replies* counter, *Last activity* and *Last reply by* of the topic are updated as for a newly approved reply. **Delete** removes the item for good after a confirmation. Changing the **Approval status** column in the `Discussions Topics` or `Discussions Posts` list still works, but leaves the counters as they were; see KB10432. Counters, Last Activity or Best Answer Look Wrong.

Views and filters

A topic that exists and is approved can still be absent from what a user is looking at:

- **Unanswered** shows only topics of type *Question* without an accepted answer. A *Discussion* topic never appears here. Locking a question does not move it: a locked question without an accepted answer stays in this view.
- **Answered** shows topics with an accepted answer (the **Accepted post** column), whether open or locked; a locked question keeps its place here. A question with many replies but no accepted answer is not "answered", and a question whose accepted reply was deleted returns to **Unanswered**.
- **Featured** shows only topics a moderator marked with **Featured**.
- **My topics** shows topics created by the current user; replies written by the user in other people's topics do not make those topics "mine".
- On a board in **Discussions only** mode the **Unanswered** and **Answered** tabs are not shown at all.
- The **category** drop-down and the **search box** stay active when switching views. A topic without a category is hidden while a category is selected; choose **All categories**. The search looks at topic **titles** only: a word that occurs in the body or in a reply is not found, and the result is *Nothing found*.

Fix. Switch to **Recent**, clear the category and the search box. If the board should open on a different view by default, the page editor can set **Default view** in the property pane; **Unanswered** and **Answered** are offered there only when the board's mode is not **Discussions only**, and a saved default view that the board no longer offers falls back to **Recent**. See KB10422. Views, Paging, Search and Counters: Display Settings of the Discussions Web Part.

Paging and sort order

Symptom. A topic that was on the first page yesterday cannot be found today.

Cause. The list is sorted by **Pinned** first and then by **Last activity**, newest first, and shows one page of **Topics per page** rows (20 by default). A topic without new replies moves down as other topics receive replies and eventually leaves the first page. Editing a topic or liking it does not change its last activity.

Fix. Click **Load more** at the bottom of the list, or search for a word from the title. Moderators can use **Pinned** to keep a matching topic at the top. Everyone can share a direct link to a topic (`?topic=ID`), which opens it regardless of the page it is on; see KB10407. Sharing a Link to a Topic in Discussions (Deep Links).

The Activity web part

Symptom. A new topic is on the board but the **Discussions Activity** web part on the home page does not show it.

Cause. The Activity web part lists **approved** topics only, for everybody including moderators and the author; a pending topic appears there after approval. It also shows a fixed number of topics (**Maximum items**, 5 by default) sorted by last activity, and it can be limited to one board in its property pane. On a published page the web part hides itself completely when it has no topics to show and no loading error. When the license of the solution has expired, it shows the license message instead of the feed, like the Discussions web part.

Fix. Approve the topic; check the **Board** and **Maximum items** settings of the Activity web part; see KB10415. Showing Recent Discussions on Any Page with the Discussions Activity Web Part.

Permissions

Symptom. One group of users sees the board and another gets *Access denied*. or an empty list.

Cause. The lists inherit the site's permissions, so everybody who can read the site can read every board on it. If a site owner broke the inheritance on `Discussions Topics` or `Discussions Posts` (for example to make a private board), users outside the list's permissions get an error instead of the topics. A topic deleted from the list is likewise invisible to everyone; check separately whether SharePoint offers recovery.

Fix. Restore the inherited permissions on the lists, or grant the audience **Read** on each of the lists. Note that unique permissions on the lists apply to all boards of the site at

once; the web part does not offer access settings for individual boards. See KB10408. Permissions in Discussions: Who Can Read, Post and Moderate.

Warning

The moderator role is tied to the **Manage Lists** permission on the site. Members of the site Owners group are moderators automatically, and so is anyone with the Edit **permission level**; there is no separate "moderator" setting in the web part. Keep this in mind when deciding who gets Edit rather than Contribute.

Tip

Members can flag content with **Report**; approved reported items appear in the **Reported topics** and **Reported replies** sections of the moderation queue but remain visible to everyone until a moderator rejects or deletes them. See KB10406. Reporting Inappropriate Posts in Discussions.

Pinned topics still have to match the selected view, category and search. Activity hides an empty feed only when there is no loading error; errors are displayed. The moderation queue loads at most 200 items per section; reply batches are retrieved across the site before filtering by board, so the queue may omit an item. A reply is accessible only when its parent topic is accessible. Reporting an approved item does not hide it or change its approval status. The web part has no per-board audience setting; use separate sites for separate audiences.

Terms

List
A list is a storage unit in SharePoint. A list can contain columns of different types, content types, and views. A document library is a special type of list and therefore inherits the functionality of a list.

Permission Level
A permission level is a named set of permissions, such as Read, Edit, or Full Control, that can be assigned to users and groups on a SharePoint site, list, library, or item.

Site
A SharePoint site is a container for information within the SharePoint platform. Sites typically offer features such as document libraries, lists, calendars, discussion boards, and workflows, facilitating collaboration, communication, and document management within teams or across departments. Sites can be customized and configured to suit the specific needs and workflows of an organization.

View
A view is a saved configuration that determines which items of a list or library are displayed and how, including the columns, sorting, filtering, grouping, and layout. Views can be personal or public.

Web Part
A web part is a primary building block of functionality or content placed on a SharePoint page. Some web parts support customization, such as configuring the web part or changing its appearance.