How to pre-record a presentation in Blackboard Collaborate

You can use Blackboard Collaborate (the virtual classroom application) to pre-record class lectures or other course materials, such as a course overview or welcome video for online classes. Pre-recording presentations using Blackboard Collaborate is particularly useful for recording audio with presentation slides.

Commercial software such as Camtasia (on Mac or PC) or Screenflow (Mac) may be more suitable if you wish to use Picture-in-Picture (PIP)—an embedded video clip (usually a web camera recording) that plays in your main presentation.

Benefits

- Blackboard Collaborate is available to all staff through Moodle.
- Recordings can be shared through a link to the Blackboard Collaborate recording, or easily converted to audio (MP3) or video (MP4) formats for distribution.

Challenges

- Ensure that you are comfortable using Blackboard Collaborate before recording your presentation.
- Prepare your presentation content thoroughly beforehand.

Step by step instructions

1. Set yourself up for a good audio experience. Considering the following:

   Sound quality—for the best sound quality we recommend:

   - a good headset with microphone. This is vital to a good-quality pre-recorded presentation.
   - recording the presentation in a quiet area with no distractions.

   Other practical considerations:

   - **Ensure that you are comfortable using Blackboard Collaborate**, so that your interactions with the tool do not disrupt your recording. Run a preliminary recording to get used to the technology if necessary.
• Fine-tune your presentation skills by practising and playing back your recordings. Seek feedback on your presentation from a friend, colleague, producer or family member.

In terms of your presentation:

• Prepare your content thoroughly beforehand.
• Create presentation slides, and as you become more proficient include multimedia and application sharing to help reinforce content. But remember the **10MB** file upload limit.
• Create instructor notes for yourself about what you want to say and do on each screen.
• Leave yourself time to **practise delivering the content**, especially if you’re unsure how it will flow.

2. **Before the recording:**

1. Clear your browser cache and **your Java cache**. (Restarting your computer is an alternative way to clear these caches.)
2. Log in to the session using the **Join Session** link on the session page in Moodle. *Do not use* the guest link, or the speaker’s tools will not be available to you.
3. Run the Audio Setup Wizard to test your microphone (In the menu bar select **Tools > Audio > Audio Setup Wizard**).
4. Upload and test your PowerPoint presentation and/or resources by clicking **Load Content** in the Collaboration toolbar. If possible, rehearse your presentation.
5. If possible, rehearse your presentation.
6. Switch off your mobile phone, email notifications and other computer alerts or electronic devices that might sound or display during the session.
7. Mute any landline telephones in the room.
8. Be personally prepared. If necessary, visit the bathroom. Have a bottle of water to hand.
9. If you intend sharing your desktop, close down all unrelated applications, for privacy, clarity and aesthetic considerations.
10. Consider locking your door and putting up a "Do Not Disturb" sign—include the start and finish times of your session on the sign.

3. During the recording:

1. If you are manually recording the session, click **Record** in the Collaboration toolbar to commence recording.

2. Click **Talk** in the Audio and Video panel.

3. Commence your presentation.
   - Navigate from slide to slide using the right-arrow button on the **Page Explorer** pop-up window.
   - Your voice is critical in setting the tone of the session—sound positive and energetic. Some presenters
even stand up and walk around a bit during a session.

If you need to pause the recording during your presentation, click **Recording** in the Collaboration toolbar, and **OK** in the **Confirm Recorder Stop** pop-up window. To resume, click **Record** and **OK** in the **Confirm Recorder Start** pop-up.

4. Be very clear with your communication, as there are fewer visual cues for participants to go on than in a face-to-face session.

**4. At the end of the recording:**

1. Stop the recording by clicking **Recording** in the Collaboration toolbar.

2. The link for the recording will be available up to 15 minutes after the last person leaves the session—the timing depends on the size of the recording.

3. Distribute the recording to participants by either:
   - converting the recording to MP4 (video) or MP3 (audio) and circulating the link to this recording to participants. Note that:
     - both you and participants will also be able to download these recordings.
     - the MP4 content will display in the Blackboard Collaborate content area, but without the Blackboard Collaborate panels.
   - circulating the link to the recording to participants, or posting it in an appropriate venue in the Moodle course.
     - Content distributed this way will play in the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher with all panels.

4. Consider conducting a brief evaluation with other facilitators. What worked for them? What would they like to see more of? For your own development, reflect on what worked and what didn't work during the session, and why. How might you adapt your teaching practice to improve future presentations?
5. Think about creating extra recordings, either in Blackboard Collaborate or using the Voice tools in Moodle as tutorials to supplement your recordings.

Related resources

On the Teaching Gateway:

- **Pre-Recorded Lecture Guide**
- **How to conduct a Blackboard Collaborate webinar**
- **Blackboard Collaborate Classroom interface**
- **Blackboard Collaborate Classroom content area**

External resources:

- **Blackboard Collaborate On-Demand Learning Center** provides resources FOR MODERATORS under the heading DOCUMENTATION AND RECORDED TRAINING.

Further assistance

If you experience technical or other issues, consult the Where to get help page.