Teaching and Learning Continuity: Tips for Teaching with MS Teams

Learning and Teaching Enhancement Unit, March 2020

Teams is a great communication tool for keeping in contact with colleagues and students. Full guidance on using Microsoft Teams can be found on [Information Services’ webpages.](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/is/it-services/web/teams/)

You can download [Microsoft Teams onto your desktop, tablet, or phone.](https://teams.microsoft.com/downloads)

In addition to maintaining contact with colleagues, Teams can also be used for learning and teaching activities. Please note that Blackboard, Panopto, and Turnitin should remain the technologies that are used for course material and activities, assessment, lecture capture, and E-submission.

This guide intends to pull together several resources and tips on how Teams can support Learning and Teaching Activities.

Teams’ functions can broadly be characterised into three types of activity:

* Live online teaching
* Communicating with teaching groups
* Creating shared documents

For general information on Microsoft Teams for Education, including how to set up and manage a virtual meeting, see [Microsoft’s guidance on using Teams.](https://edudownloads.azureedge.net/msdownloads/MicrosoftTeamsforEducation_QuickGuide_EN-US.pdf)

Note: at the moment we can’t automatically set up Teams using the module enrolments from AStRA. This means:

* If you create a meeting, you will need to circulate the link to a module group via module mailing lists or the Blackboard course
* Students are able to share links with others, which means that you may get other AU students joining your meeting

If you set up a Teams site for your module you are responsible for adding all the students to it. You can get a list of all the students in module from AstRA or Blackboard. You should include a link to the Teams site in your Blackboard module so that all students can access it. Teams should not be used for summative assessment. All assessment should be managed through Blackboard. If you feel that Teams is the only option for assessment, please contact [elearning@aber.ac.uk](mailto:elearning@aber.ac.uk) / 01970 622472 for advice before beginning the activity.

# Live online teaching

Some great tips on creating Online Lessons using Microsoft Teams for Remote Learning can be found in this video, [Online Lessons using Microsoft Teams for Remote Learning](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cN5ypuZF1bI).

In the first session, we advise you not to do anything too high stakes or advanced. Use it as an opportunity to touch base with students and allow all participants to get used to the interface. This will also enable you and your students to check they can access the Teams session.

If you are just communicating information and not interacting with your students, we advise using Panopto and creating a recording.

If you are teaching a live session online, follow our tips below:

## Design and preparation:

* + What are you going to do in the live session:
    1. Identify the intended learning outcomes
    2. Identify what kinds of tasks do you hope students will be able to do after participating in the session
    3. Consider recording the session so that students who can’t participate can view the recording
  + How should your students prepare for the learning activity:
    1. Communicate any preparatory activities before the session
    2. Let the students know the learning outcomes of the session
  + Double-check that your students know how to access the session:
    1. Give them guidance on how to use Teams
    2. Let students know how to communicate with you if they are experiencing any issues
  + Have a run through of the session without anyone there:
    1. Make sure you are comfortable using the interface before your live session is due to start
    2. If you are using screen share functions, make sure you can navigate between the two

## During the session:

* + Have all the materials that you need to run the class on your desktop:
    1. Close anything that you don’t want your students to see beforehand (such as emails and other browser windows)
  + Welcome students at the start of the session:
    1. Factor in time for students arriving late to the session
    2. Let your students know if you are recording the session
    3. Spend a little bit of time explaining the Teams view to your students
  + Encourage everyone to contribute:
    1. You should be able to see who is in the Teams session so do ask for students to contribute to discussions

## After the teaching session:

* + Provide a summary for students of the discussion and the outcomes of the session:
    1. Post the summary document in Blackboard so all students can access it#
    2. Provide activities for students to do in their own time if they were unable to participate
  + Link to a recording:
    1. You can upload the recording to Panopto as a .mp4 file
    2. Provide a link to the Panopto recording in Blackboard
  + Refer to the session in subsequent sessions so that students can see the value of participating online in the Teams meeting

# Communicating with teaching groups

You can create an activity stream and use chat functions in teams. If you are using Teams as a communication tool (rather than a live teaching tool), follow our tips below:

* What are you hoping to achieve by using Teams in this way:
  + Communicate its purpose to your students
  + Be clear on what you want your students to get out of the chat / activity
  + Consider using [Blackboard Discussion Boards](https://faqs.aber.ac.uk/index.php?id=577)
* Communicate your expectations:
  + Give examples of the types of activities that students should be using discussion boards for
  + Give an indication as to how frequently students should be posting in the Activity Stream
  + Let your students know how often you’ll be communicating with them

# Creating shared documents

You can use Teams to collaboratively write documents with students. If you are thinking of using this for assessment, we recommend using the [Blackboard Wiki tool](https://faqs.aber.ac.uk/index.php?search=wikis) instead.

You might use the shared documents function to create a collaborative bank of knowledge amongst peers and students.

See Microsoft’s instructions, [Collaborate on Files in Microsoft Teams.](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/collaborate-on-files-in-microsoft-teams-9b200289-dbac-4823-85bd-628a5c7bb0ae)

If you are thinking of building shared documents:

* Be clear about what you are expecting your students to produce
* Think about how you encourage students to engage in the activities
* Let them know how often they should be updating the document and what is expected of them
* Upload the completed document to Blackboard, and let students know where to find it