Collaborate Virtual Classroom Setup in MyAberdeen

eLearning Team, updated: February 2015

This quick guide includes how to:

- Create a Content Area for Blackboard Collaborate meeting rooms and recordings
- Create a link to Blackboard Collaborate Rooms and Recordings
- Creating a Collaborate Scheduled Session to give Students moderator access
- Manage Blackboard Collaborate Recordings
- Add a Support Page for Blackboard Collaborate Users

Further information about Collaborate, including guides to the different features, can be found at:
http://www.abdn.ac.uk/eLearning/bbcollaborate/. Out of working hours help is available via
http://tinyurl.com/pta2xvp

Creating a Content Area for the Collaborate Meeting Room

By default your course will have a Collaborate meeting room. Creating a Content Area for the room will enable students and staff to find the room, and associated help, quickly and easily.

- Under left hand Content Menu, above the course name, click on and select add Content Area

Fig 1 Adding a Content Area via the Content Menu

- In the Name text entry box within Add Content Area window add Bb Collaborate (Virtual Classroom)
- Click in the checkbox to select Available to Users
- Click on Submit
- The link to the area appears at bottom of the Content Menu, click on the left-hand side of the of the link to drag it higher up to a more prominent position, perhaps below Assessment.

Creating a Link to Blackboard Collaborate

- Click on the Bb Collaborate (Virtual Classroom) link in the Content Menu that you have just created
- Under Tools, click on Blackboard Collaborate
- Under your Course Room, click on Add Link, see fig 2 below:

Fig 2: Click on Add Link under course Collaborate Room
In the *Add Link* page that opens

- Under **Course Link Information**
  - Leave the Course Code as the first part of the **Course Link Name** - feel free to change the name of the Room however the Course Code is needed to help locate the files at a later date
  - Under **Course Area List** click in the checkbox **Bb Collaborate (Virtual Classroom)**. It is also possible to add links within Course Materials if you so wish
- Under **Course Link Options**
  - Click on **Details** and under **Description** add details of when you would want participants to enter the room and under **Comments** any additional information or requirements such as a webcam or specific reading matter
  - Click on the greyed out **Off** adjacent to **Required** to change the wording in the link to **Required** instead of the default **Suggested**
- Unless you have good reason to change the settings, do not implement **Date Restrictions**
- Click on **Save** to create the link

**Creating a Link to Collaborate Recordings and Scheduled Sessions**

- Click on the **Bb Collaborate (Virtual Classroom)** link in the **Content Menu**
- Click on **Tools**, select **More Tools** and click on **Blackboard Collaborate Scheduling Manager**
- Change the **Link Name** to **Link to All Bb Collaborate Rooms and Recordings**
- In the **Text box** type: “Click on the above link to access recordings - click on the 'Recordings' tab to the right of the ‘Scheduled Sessions’ tab which appears below links to rooms.” If you have information you would like to share about Scheduled sessions you can also add that here
- Click **Submit**

**Creating a Collaborate Scheduled Session to give Students moderator access**

If you want to set up a Room to where all participants have moderator access in order to share content with the group, or have a room available **only** at a specific times, you can use the **Schedule a Session** link within the Blackboard Collaborate Scheduling Manager.

- Click on the **Bb Collaborate (Virtual Classroom)** link in the **Content Menu**
- Click on **Link to All Bb Collaborate Rooms and Recordings**. (You can also get to the same area by using the **Course Management menu > Course Tools > Blackboard Collaborate**)  
- Click the **Create Session** button within the **Schedule a Session** box, see fig 3 below:

![Blackboard Collaborate Interface](image)

*Fig 3: Creating a Scheduled session*

- Under Session Information
  - In **Session Name**, leave the course code as the start of the name, add a dash and an identifying name for the group e.g. - Friday discussion
Click in the Start and End Time boxes to specify the date, start and end times for the session, OR...

If you want to repeat the session, click on the default ‘off’ position adjacent to Repeat and select whether you want Repeats to occur: Daily, Weekly (default setting) or Monthly. Under Every, select how often repeat sessions takes place, by default this is after 10 occurrences. By default Early session entry is set to 15 minutes, leave this at the default setting to allow participants to set up their system prior to the session beginning, unless you have good reason to change it. See Fig 4 below:

**Fig 4, Creating Repeat Sessions**

- Under Room Options
  - Under Session Type, unless you want to include participants from all courses that you have Course Coordinator status for, leave this as the default Course setting.
  - Leave Teleconference Options at their default setting of Use Built-in – if in doubt contact elearning@abdn.ac.uk.
  - Leave settings within Room Attribute at their default settings unless you have good reason to change them. You can Preload content within this area from either your computer or the Content Collection.
  - If you want to add a Grade Centre column for attendance in the session click on the Grade Centre Integration and on the default off adjacent to Add a grade column for it to become On and select the points awarded for attendance
  - Under Roles and Access do NOT click on the Restrict access to this session. To restrict access use adaptive release rules – contact elearning@abdn.ac.uk for more details if required

**Fig 5, Allowing all participants moderator privileges**

- To give all participants moderator privileges, click on All Users join as Moderators check-box
- When you have added Participants and any additional moderators click on Save.

**Managing Collaborate Recordings**
- Click on the Bb Collaborate (Virtual Classroom) link in the Content Menu
• Click on **Link to All Bb Collaborate Rooms and Recordings**. (You can also get to the same area by using the **Course Management menu > Course Tools > Blackboard Collaborate**)

• Click on the **Recordings tab** adjacent to **Scheduled Sessions**

• By default recordings are displayed by **Title** and then **Oldest first**

• You can use the **Search** facility if required. Recordings are only finalised by the system once every user has left the session and are not immediately pulled through to this list, so you may not see recent recordings for several hours.

• Hover you mouse over the title of the recording and click the arrow that appears next to the name of the recording, a choice of functions then appears:
  - **Play** - allows you to play the recording
  - **Edit** - allows you to edit the name of the recording. As with session names, please include the course code in the name. An alternative name can be specified for the **link** to the recording that students see. A **Description** can also be added at this stage.
  - **Delete** - permanently deletes the Collaborate recording
  - **Guest Link** gives you a URL that you can send to guests to enable them to watch the recording
  - **Add Link** - allows you to link directly to a specific recording in a **Content Area**
  - **Convert to MP3** - creates an .mp3 audio file of the session
  - **Convert to MP4** - creates an .mp4 video recording of the session. Creating an Mp4 allows those without access to Collaborate to view the session. **NOTE:** The mp4 does not include the chat or Webcam images, only the Whiteboard and audio get included.

### Adding a Support Page for Collaborate Users

It is recommended that you put a support page alongside your **Collaborate Room** links.

• Within your Blackboard Collaborate (Virtual Classroom) area, go to **Build Content > Add an Item**

• Within **1 Content Information**, type ‘Support for accessing your virtual room’ into the text area box

• Within the accompanying text box, type the following text, and make all the hyperlinks open in a New Window:

  **To access your virtual room (link below) you will need a computer that is connected to the internet and a headset / mobile phone earphones with a microphone (using a headset / earphones will reduce echo and eliminate feedback).**

**Before accessing your virtual room please**

• **Check your System requirements** ([link this text to http://tinyurl.com/3gotox5](http://tinyurl.com/3gotox5))

• **Install the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher** ([Links for downloading the software are in your virtual meeting room launch](http://tinyurl.com/p9hz5yn))

• **Go to the Configuration Room** ([link this text to: http://tinyurl.com/p9hz5yn](http://tinyurl.com/p9hz5yn)), and:
  - configure your audio by going to Tools > Audio > Audio Setup Wizard
  - set your Connection speed by going to Tools > Preferences > Session > Connection (on Mac: Blackboard Collaborate > Preferences > Session Connection)

**Help and Support**

Help is available via the Support Portal where you can contact Blackboard Support on a 24/7 basis by:

• **Calling their UK helpline on 0800 051 7248 (or from Ireland call 1 800 64 4528)** Using **Web chat** ([link this text to: http://tinyurl.com/pta2xvp](http://tinyurl.com/pta2xvp)) to communicate with a support representative

• **logging a call** ([link this text to: http://tinyurl.com/khg3mco](http://tinyurl.com/khg3mco))

• **Accessing their Knowledgebase** ([link this text to: http://tinyurl.com/pewglth](http://tinyurl.com/pewglth)) for solutions to common problems

**If you continue to encounter problems accessing your virtual meeting room after following up on the above please contact the eLearning Team at:** [elearning@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:elearning@abdn.ac.uk)