MS Teams: For teaching and learning

> ⚠️ MS Teams is **not** a substitute for the University VLEs – MyAberdeen (including the web conferencing tool Blackboard Collaborate Ultra), MyMBChB, and MyBDS. These VLEs remain the University platforms for resources, materials, assignments, and communication within programmes and courses for teaching and learning. In addition, Teams does not offer a robust system for marking or originality checking so must not be used for written summative assessment.

Blackboard Collaborate Ultra is the University's recommended virtual classroom tool as its tools have been designed specifically to meet the needs of education, and it is available in any course and organisation area of MyAberdeen for online seminars, tutorials, meetings, presentations or group working.

See the Centre for Academic Development's guide highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of Collaborate Ultra and MS Teams. To find out more about using Teams to complement the VLEs, read on.

Using Teams to complement teaching and learning

Microsoft Teams is the University's recommended tool to support collaboration as it enables teams to collaborate on documents in real-time, meet and chat, and seamlessly integrates with Office 365 apps. You can use it to complement activities in the VLEs in a number of ways:

- For **one-to-one meetings** with students, eg personal tutoring.
    - See our Quick guide to Meetings
- For **collaborative working** and **small group activity**, including collaborating in real-time on documents, file sharing and chat, eg to support Student Group Projects.
    - See our guides on Collaboration options, Using channels as break out rooms, and Using Breakout rooms in a meeting
    - See also our guidance on Class Teams, below.
- As a **webinar solution** for delivering presentations that *don't* require the participant and session management controls or simple polling and breakout group functionality available within Blackboard Collaborate Ultra.
- In situations **where Blackboard Collaborate Ultra is** *not* **easily available and MS Teams** *is*, eg NHS Grampian devices, which must be unblocked for Blackboard Collaborate Ultra on a case by case basis.
- If you need **to request desktop control, or to be able see more than 5 video streams at once** – MS Teams enables you to request desktop control from someone who is sharing their desktop, and you can have up to 49 participants sharing their video at the same time.

    Note: Teams should **not** be used for preparing pre-recorded lectures or demonstrations of software. Please use the University's video platform Panopto and embed Panopto videos in MyAberdeen, MyMBChB, or MyBDS.

Creating a Team for teaching and learning

> 💡 **Do you need to create a Team at all?**
>
> If you only intend using MS Teams for meeting with groups of students, you do not need to create a Team and add students to it. You can simply create a recurring Teams Meeting.

Creating your Team

If you decide you *do* need a Team, you can create a Team of the type **Other**, or – if you would like to make use of the Class Notebook feature – you can create a **Class** Team.

- See our Create a Team 'quick start' for guidance on setting up an 'Other' Team.
- See below for more about 'Class' Teams

Membership of Class Teams

- Anyone added as an **Owner** is regarded by Class Teams as a 'teacher'.
  - o You can have more than one Owner, but all should be 'teachers'.
- Anyone added as a **Member** is regarded by Class Teams as a 'student'.

Standard features of Teams

Both Team types comprise the following standard features:

- **Built-in Office apps** including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Forms, and Whiteboard
- **Ad hoc chat** with individuals or groups, audio and/or video
- **Team conversations** within channels (threaded), audio and/or video
- **Teams meetings** for up to 300 guests (up to 1000 if you are not using breakout rooms), scheduled or meet now, within or outwith Team channels, audio and/or video
- **File sharing and collaboration** with automatic version control
- Ability to **add channels** – dedicated sections within a Team to organise conversations and files by topic, project, etc.
- Ability to **add other apps** such as Planner, and **tabs** (eg links to web pages or SharePoint sites)
- **Ease of access** via Teams desktop app, web app, or mobile app

Adding students to your Team

If you are adding students to a Team created for Teaching, you do not have to add them one by one.

You can ask students to join using a code. They can then join directly – you won't get a join request.

Generate the code first, then circulate to your students however you choose – for example, via a class mailing list in Outlook.

- Guidance on generating a code
- Guidance on using the code (for students)

It is also possible to create a link for a Team and share that link for students to use to join. However, as Team Owner, you would then have to respond to all requests and accept or deny!

Class Teams

We usually recommend that staff create Teams of the type **Other**. So why might you want to create a **Class** Team instead?

Class Teams offer the same features as Other Teams. In addition, every Class Team comes with an its own linked OneNote[1] **Class Notebook**. You may find this useful for group project work.

---

[1] OneNote (part of Microsoft 365) is digital notebook that allows you to capture, collate and share information – including text, attachments, video, audio, and images.

About Class Notebook

The Class Notebook appears on the **General** channel toolbar of every Class Team. Clicking on it allows you to create a new OneNote Class Notebook incorporating these components:

- **Student Notebooks** – a private space shared between you and each individual student. Each student has their own notebook. You can access every student notebook, while students can only see their own.
- **Content Library** – a read-only space where you can share materials with students. Students can see this area, but only you can add to the content or edit it.
- **Collaboration Space** – a space where everyone in your class can share, organize, and collaborate.
- **Teacher Only** – you can enable this section group to store materials private to you.

You can use the Class Notebook either within Teams, or independently in the OneNote desktop or web app.

Can I add an *existing* Class Notebook to a Class Team?

Class Notebook is one of the apps available to you as part of the University's Microsoft 365 agreement so you may have already created Class Notebooks for groups of students *outside of* a Class Team.

It might seem logical to assume you can set up a new Class Notebook in a Class Team using content from an *existing* Class Notebook – indeed Microsoft have published guidance on doing so.

However, while the 'Content Library' and 'Teacher Only' (if used) sections are copied across from the existing Class Notebook, the content in 'Student Notebooks', 'Welcome' and 'Collaboration Space' sections are **not**. In addition, the new Class Notebook is located on your Team SharePoint site, along with your other Team files, so it does not sync with the *existing* Class Notebook.

What about Assignments?

You may have heard about the Assignments feature in Class Teams. This feature has been disabled for University of Aberdeen Class Teams as *all* assignments and assessments should take place in the VLEs.

Microsoft guidance

Please note: Because the University of Aberdeen VLEs are not synced or integrated in any way with MS Teams, and the Teams Assignments feature has been disabled, you may find that some parts of the guidance linked to below do not apply to UoA staff and students.

Class Teams

- Microsoft Quick Start to Class Teams
- Microsoft Support for Teams for Education
- Microsoft Teams for Education Video Playlist

Class Notebooks

- Video Tutorial on Class Notebook in Microsoft Teams
- Getting Started with OneNote Class Notebook
- Microsoft Support for Class Notebook

Further help and support

See Guides and Links in our MS Teams resource on Toolkit or contact the IT Service Desk: myit.abdn.ac.uk.