

CIT, for almost a decade, has been supporting a range of fully-online programmes. A big part of this model are live online classes. A similar option is being offered for remote teaching through the use of something called conferences in Canvas. This system allows you to schedule online classes and to share your video, audio, slides, chat or desktop with your students in real time and organise live discussions and other learning activities with them. Significantly, all live classes can also be recorded for later viewing and revision.

This document offers information on the following:

- Some advice before you begin using Conferences
- Checking on minimum requirements for conferences
- Scheduling a Conference
- Starting a conference and setting up of your mic
- Sharing your screen or uploading a presentation
- Making sure you can communicate with Students
- Recording the session
- Concluding the meeting and accessing the recording

Before you begin using Conferences

To participate (and present) in a conference in Canvas, you should ideally have:

- A microphone (your computer may have a microphone, but these are rarely of good quality)
- A pair of headphones (your computer may have speakers, but these can cause acoustic feedback if they are close to the microphone)

A webcam may be useful, but this is not a necessity unless you want to share a video feed with students.

Live lectures through Canvas modules are called “Conferences” and are scheduled in advance, so it is recommended that you create a conference and schedule it for a specific day and time so that students know when to attend. You can start the conference a few minutes beforehand to setup your microphone, etc.

Canvas will also keep a record of completed conferences and - depending on if you want to record your session or not - the recordings of these conferences.

To do a quick test and to check for the minimum requirements to run BigBlueButton, read “Conferences (AKA BigBlueButton) - Minimum Requirements” on the following page.



Conferences (AKA BigBlueButton) - Minimum Requirements

Minimum requirements may vary depending on the device and browser being used.

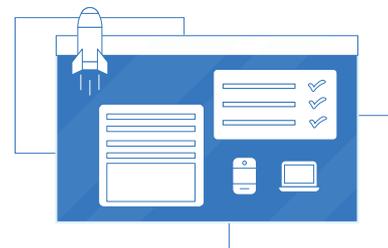
We recommend all users ensure they are meeting the minimum requirements for BigBlueButton HTML5 prior to their first live session.

Recommended Browsers

The recommended browsers are:

- **Desktop/Laptop:** Chrome, Firefox or Edge (latest versions)
- **Mobile iOS (12.2+):** Safari Mobile
- **Mobile Android (6.0+):** Chrome Mobile

At this time the IE and legacy EDGE browsers are not supported.



Mobile Device Users

The following settings are recommended for all users connecting to BigBlueButton from a mobile device:

1. For data network, we recommended **4G** for best results or **minimum 3G Network** to use audio, view presentation content, and receive screen sharing.
2. For device settings, we recommend **reducing device usage** while connecting to BigBlueButton; close applications that may run in the background and reduce browsing activities.



Additional Recommendations for Moderator/Presenters

Moderators and presenters can join BigBlueButton using a mobile device, however, use of more bandwidth intensive features such as the screen sharing may be limited.

We recommend Moderators and Presenters connect from a desktop or laptop device whenever possible to ensure all features and functions available in BigBlueButton are accessible to the user.

IMPORTANT: at this time screen sharing is not supported from mobile devices. Presenters who wish to use the screen sharing function should use a laptop, desktop, or Chromebook device.

Desktop/Laptop Users

The following settings are recommended for all users connecting to BigBlueButton via desktop or laptop device:

For computer, you need a **laptop or desktop computer** with (at least) **2G of memory and a 1Ghz processor** (any computer bought in the last five years should be fine).

1. For bandwidth, you must have at least 0.5 Mbits/second upstream and 1 Mbits/second downstream. To check bandwidth use, <https://speedtest.net/>.
2. For browsers, **we recommend Google Chrome, Mozilla FireFox or Microsoft Edge.** You can also use Safari on Mac OS X, but you will not be able to use the screen sharing feature .
3. For audio, **we strongly recommend using a headset.** A headset will ensure that others can hear your voice clearly and you don't cause echo or background noise for others. You do not need to buy an expensive one -- any basic headset with a built-in microphone will work.

A laptop with a built-in webcam and microphone will be sufficient as well if you're in a quiet area.



Additional recommendations for Moderator/Presenters:

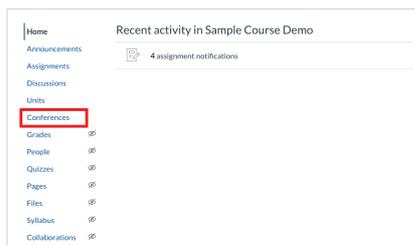
Moderators and Presenters have the same requirements as students. For screen sharing, we recommend using FireFox, Chrome or Edge for the best results.

Screen sharing uses more bandwidth than sharing a webcam, so a good upstream bandwidth is required (at least 1 Mbits/sec).

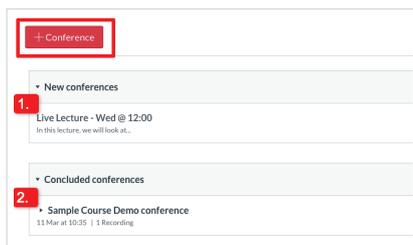
We recommend moderators or presenters connect through a wired network (not wireless) if possible.

If connecting from a wireless network that is not reliable, you may experience periodic disconnects or gaps in your audio.

1 Scheduling a conference



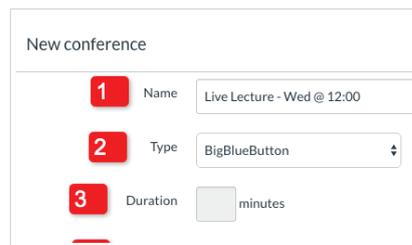
Live lectures through Canvas modules are called "Conferences". To setup a live lecture, click "conferences" in your canvas module's left-hand menu



The section on the right will show:

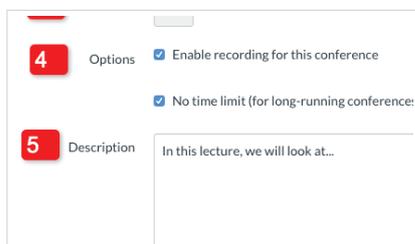
1. "New conferences" - these are conferences which have not yet happened
2. "Concluded conferences" - these are conferences which have taken place. If you have recorded a conference, students can access the recording here

To schedule a new conference, press the Red "+Conference" button in the top-left area of the screen



This will provide you with a number of options about the conference:

1. **Name:** The name of the conference. Try to include the date and time in the name
2. **Type:** This will be set to "Big Blue Button" and cannot be changed
3. **Duration:** If you want to, you can set a duration for the conference (e.g. 60 minutes) (continue below for 4 and 5)



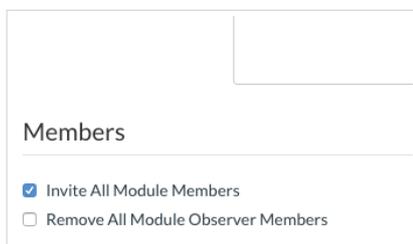
4. Options:

a) *Enable recording for this conference* -

This will allow you to record your conference so students who cannot attend live can view it later (You cannot record your conference unless this box is ticked).

b) *No time-limit* - If this is ticked, there will be no set duration for the conference and it can be as long or as short as you would like

5. **Description:** A description of the conference. It is recommended you include an outline of what you intend to cover in the conference

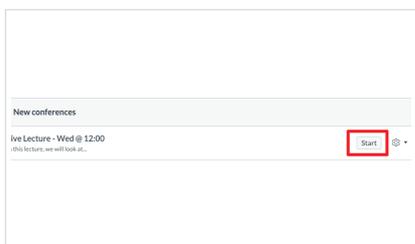


In the lower section of this screen, under "Members", you can decide who you want to have access to the conference

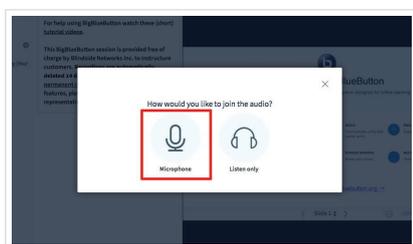
Invite All Module Members: when you create a module, students who can access it are sent an update via canvas that it has been created. Please note:

1. If this is ticked, then all students will have access to the conference (this is the recommended option)
2. If this is unticked, then you can select specific students who will have access to the conference

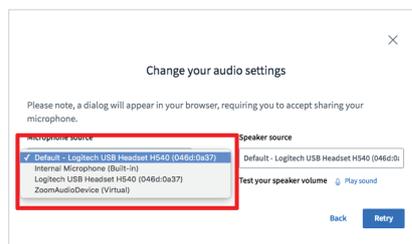
2 Start conference & setup mic



When you have setup your conference, it will appear under "New Conferences". To begin the conferences, press the "Start" button



When you start a live conference, you will be asked "How would you like to join the audio?". Select Microphone.



This may bring up a pop up asking for permission to let the browser use your mic. You can select your desired microphone and speakers from the drop down menus

Note: When you are satisfied with this, you will be given a private echo test. Talk into your microphone and wait to see if you can hear your recording.

- If you can hear the recording, click the green thumbs up.
- If you cannot hear the recording, click the red thumbs down and you will be asked to repeat the process

Important: To avoid any excessive echo we recommend using, a headphones and mic combination, a chat headset combo or a talking headset or a headphones to reduce or fully eliminate this risk.

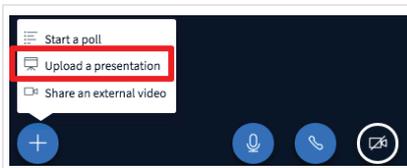
The Main content display area in Big Blue Button is on the right-hand side.

Content for students will be displayed here. You can use the icons at the bottom to to:

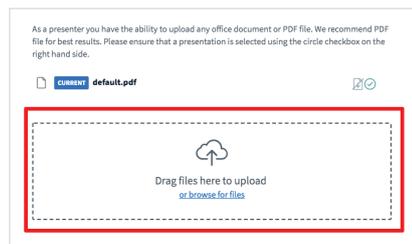
1. Mute or unmute your microphone
2. Leave audio - this will disconnect your audio and allow you to change the microphone you are using
3. Share webcam - this will turn on or off your webcam
4. Share screen - this will students to see your screen or see applications you have open



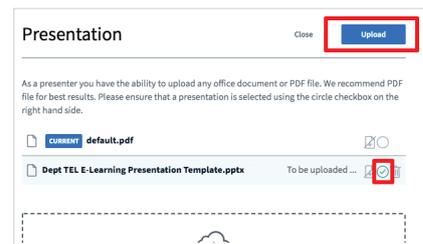
3 Upload a presentation



This will upload a presentation to Big Blue Button so that all students can see it. Click on the blue "+" button in the lower left area of the screen and select "Upload a Presentation"



From the popup which appears, select a file by clicking in the upload files area



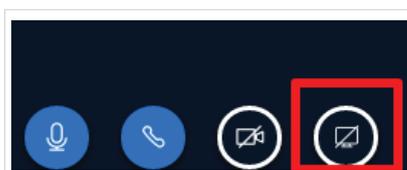
When you have selected a file, make sure that it has a green tick on the right side of the file title. Press the blue "Upload" button in the top-right corner and it will add the powerpoint to Big Blue Button



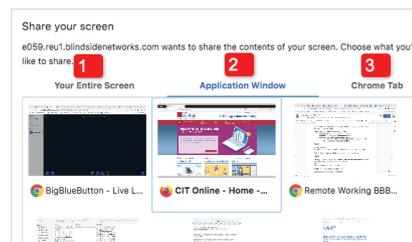
The powerpoint will be shown in the main area. You can:

1. Use the arrows at the bottom to move through the slides
2. Use the tools on the right-hand side to annotate the slides
3. Hide the powerpoint by clicking on the "Minus" button in the top-right corner
 - a) If the powerpoint is hidden, a button will appear in the lower-right of the screen which you can use to bring the powerpoint back up

4 Share your screen



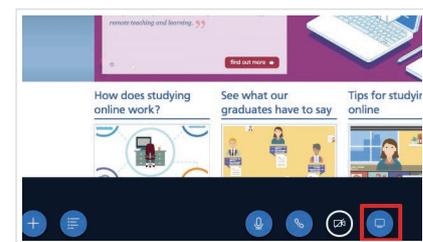
This will share your desktop, or an application you have open so that all students can see what you are doing live. Click on "Share screen" button at the bottom of the right-hand area.



You can use the tabs available to share:

1. Your entire screen
2. A specific application (e.g. Powerpoint)
3. A browser tab.

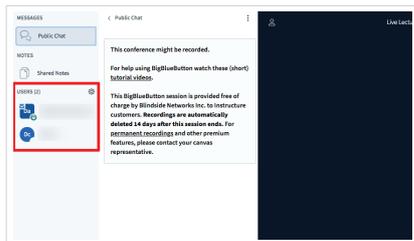
Select an option and press the blue "Share" button in the right corner



The area being shared is displayed in the main area on the right. To stop sharing your screen, simply click the screen sharing button at the base of this area again.

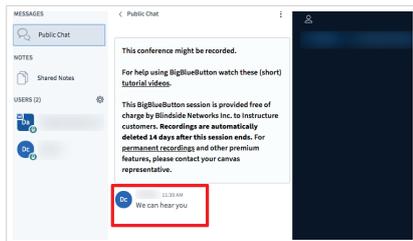
Alternatively, there may be a popup at the base of your screen which allows you to do this

5 Make sure you can communicate with students

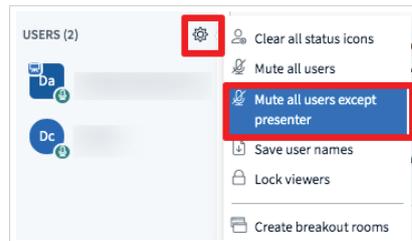


A key step before you begin lecturing is to make sure that students can hear you and that you can get feedback from them.

When students have joined the live lecture, their names will appear in the participant list on the left-hand side of the screen



A useful first step after you have setup your microphone is to speak & ask students to let you know that they can hear you. They can do this by typing in the box at the bottom of the "Public Chat" area. Their comments will appear higher up in the chat area. If you are speaking and they can't hear you, you can talk to students through the chat box.



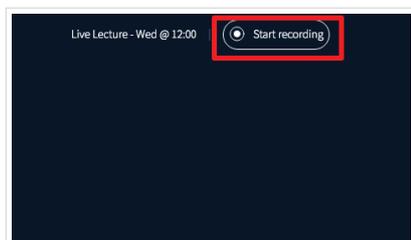
Students can also use their own microphones to speak to you or ask questions. If you want to mute students, however, you can:

1. Click on the user and select "Mute User"
2. Click on the "cog" icon to the top-right of the "Users" area and select "mute all users except presenter"

6 Record the session

Note: You can record live lecture sessions if you want. **However, this is not a requirement, and you can decide yourself if you want to record lectures or not.**

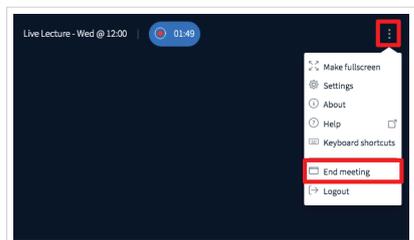
To record a lecture, you must have selected "Enable recording for this conference" (Step 1. Scheduling a conference). If you have not done so, simply end the session, edit the settings for the conference to enable this and launch it again.



To start recording, simply press the "Start Recording" button at top.

This will bring up a popup which reminds you that you can press the record button again to pause recording. While a session is recording, you can press the button again to pause and resume recordings (this is useful if you are having technical difficulties - but be sure to remember to resume recording!). Recording will stop when the conference ends.

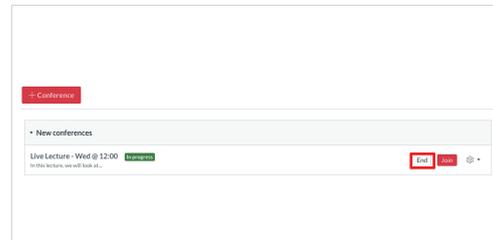
7 Conclude the meeting and access recording



To finish a live lecture, click on the menu in the top-right corner and select "end meeting". This will end the session for all users.



The conference will be available in the "Conferences" area in your canvas module. If you set the conference to not have a set duration, it may remain available to join still. You can conclude it fully (which will make the recording available) by pressing the "End" button to the right-hand side of the conference name.



When a conference has been fully concluded, it will appear under "Concluded conferences." If has been recorded, it will display "1 recording" underneath the conference title. If you want to delete a recording at any later date, you can click on the cog to the left of the conference name and select "Delete"

