Collaborate for teachers

Collaborate via Moodle is an effective tool to use for presentations, seminars or lectures in courses with a large number of students. It can serve as a replacement for the u:stream service.

Collaborate is a tool for real-time video conferences with which you can share presentations, files, your desktop or interact via tools such as polls or a virtual whiteboard. Students can give feedback in a chat or via audio/video.

Collaborate is optimised for courses with a large number of attendees. Alternatively, you can use BigBlueButton for up to 100 attendees or Jitsi of the University of Vienna for up to 10 attendees. Please find a comparison of all our video conferencing tools here.

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The web browsers Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge are fully supported in the last two stable versions on Windows and MacOS. Others as Opera, Vivaldi as well as Firefox and Chrome browsers on Linux should work too, their functioning cannot be guaranteed, though. If you encounter technical problems, please try a different web browser.

Please do not use Collaborate with an active VPN connection. This may cause interruptions.

Part 1 - Preparation and implementation in Moodle

Adding a session to Moodle

To use Collaborate as part of your Moodle course, you first have to add an activity it by selecting Add an activity or resource.
Configuration

1. As with any Moodle activity, you have to define the general settings and additional options under **General**:

   - Name your session under **Session name** (this will be displayed as a link in the Moodle course).
   - If necessary, add further information under **Description**. Tick **Display description on course page** if you would like the description to be visible.
   - You also have to define the **Start** of the session. Participants can join the session 15 minutes before it starts.
   - Additionally, you have to define the planned **Duration** (between 30 minutes and 2.5 hours or the duration of the course = semester).
   - With the option **Allow Collaborate guest access** you can grant external users access to your session via a link. If this option is selected, you can choose under **Collaborate guest role** which role should be assigned participants accessing via link.

   ![General settings](image)

   - **Tipp**
     
     If during a session the planned period of time turns out to be too short, you can extend it in these settings without stopping the current session.

2. In the **Instructor settings** section, you can define, which **capabilities** regular **participants** should be granted during and after the session.
3. In the Grade section you can define whether the students’ participation should be graded (according to a scale or using points). If you specify a grading scheme here, in the Grades area of the course a corresponding column is added.

4. Further options to customise the activity can be found in the following sections: Common module settings, Restrict access and Tags. These options include the availability of the activity on the course page and the group mode, for example.

5. Save your settings and return to the course page.

**Group mode**

As any other Moodle activity, Collaborate sessions can be split according to group enrolments in the course, so that every student group gets its own Collaborate session. You can set up group mode in the activity settings in the section Common module settings. The distinction between separate group mode and visible group mode currently makes no difference in this activity and can be ignored.
When group mode is turned on, users who are members of more than one group can choose which room to enter. Moderators always have the possibility to choose between all available group sessions.

Be aware!
The Moodle group mode is independent of the breakout rooms inside a Collaborate session.

Accessing the Collaborate session

1. Click the new activity you created on the course page.

2. Within the time period you specified in the activity settings under General, the button Join session will be visible to both you and the students. Click this button to join the session.

If group mode is activated and your account is member of more than one groups, you can also select, which group to join.

This button will not be visible to you or the other participants outside of the specified time period.
Accessing a session via guest link

It is also possible to grant users without a u:account access to a Collaborate session via a guest link. To activate such a link, please open the activity settings in the section General and select the option Allow Collaborate guest access. Then you can choose, which role should be granted participants, accessing the course via guest link. Afterwards, save the changes.

When the guest link option is enabled, you will see a tab with the title Guest links, where you can copy the link to your session to your clipboard in order to forward it to prospective participants of your session.

When a user is accessing the session via a guest link she is presented with a greeting screen, where she has to fill in a screen name.
Part 2 - Using Collaborate

Language settings
By default, Collaborate is displayed in the language you selected for your web browser. You cannot change this setting manually in the web conferencing tool.

Getting started
If you click the button Join session to set up and open the Collaborate session. First, depending on your web browser settings, you will be asked to give permission to access a microphone of your choice. You have to give this permission to be able to communicate with your students during the session.

The next step is a check if the audio and video connections are correctly set up. If this is the case, please click the button Yes - it's working in the displayed audio test and video test. If you do not have an active webcam, you can skip the video test.
After setup, the software offers you to go through a tutorial for using Collaborate, what you can skip clicking Later, if you are in a hurry.

Collaborate offers the following functions to enrich your session:

- **Uploading presentations** in different file formats
- **Recording sessions**
- **Sharing audio, webcam and/or screen**
- **Chat feature**, both private and public
- **Whiteboard function**, i.e. writing or drawing on a virtual whiteboard or directly on the uploaded slides
Collaborate user interface

Collaborate offers various features grouped in four areas (see details in the following section):

A - Content presentation area for displaying presentations, the digital whiteboard and videos
B - Collaborate Session menu
C - Functions to participate actively in the session
D - Collaborate panel

Collaborate Session menu

To open the session menu, click the icon (hamburger icon) on the top left of the window.

This menu includes the Start Recording function, various help topics as well as the logout button to leave the session.

Warning
During recording, all interactions as well as the chat are recorded. These recording can be downloaded by the students afterwards.
Participating actively in the session

In this area you can find several functions that enable interactive communication (from left to right):

- Switch Status and Settings
- Share audio
- Share video (giving permission to access your webcam)
- Raise hand (to signal consent or to attract the attention of moderators or other speakers)

If you share content, additional functions may be displayed in this area.

Collaborate panel

To open the Collaborate panel, click the pink « button at the bottom right of the window.

In this panel, additional functions for holding a session are displayed (from left to right):

- Chat feature, both for chats with moderators and all participants
- Overview of session attendees
- Functions to Share Content (whiteboard, screen, presentation files, polls, breakout rooms, etc.)
- Settings for the session like notification settings, audio settings and session settings

By clicking the X icon you can close the collaborate panel at any time.

Uploading and sharing presentations

You can upload files directly in Collaborate to share them with other participants of the session.

Allowed formats are images (*.jpg, *.png), PowerPoint files (*.pptx, *.ppt) or PDF files. You can also upload several files all at once and select them one by one to display them for your students.
Warning
You cannot upload OpenOffice files (*.odp). Please, export them to PDF files before uploading.

To publish or share your uploaded file, select your file in the overview and then click the **Share Now** button.

To **rename or remove your file**, click the ... icon on the right-hand side of the file name.

If you share a **file that contains several slides or pages**, you have to click **Share Now** first before being able to **Select a slide to begin sharing** with your students.

On the **top left of the content presentation area**, various tools are displayed with which you can **point something out or write on slides or pages**.
You can stop sharing the file at any time by clicking the relevant button on the top right of the content presentation area.

Recording sessions

You can find the recording function in the Collaborate Session menu.

Click the button Start Recording to start recording the session. If you click the button (now labelled Stop Recording) once again, the recording of the session is stopped. Several minutes after the recording has been stopped (if applicable, already during the session if the recording was stopped beforehand), the recordings are available in Moodle to you and your students.

The following contents will be recorded:

- Audio and video (microphone and webcam)
- Whiteboard notes
- Shared presentations
- Chat messages

Please find information on viewing and downloading recordings in the section Follow-up in Moodle / Publishing recordings below.

Sharing audio, webcam and/or screen

You can share audio and video from your computer by clicking the respective icon in the middle of the bottom of the window:

If you would like to share an application on your desktop or your whole screen, this function is available on the Collaborate panel under Share Content.
Chat feature

You can communicate with all attendees in a public chat, with moderators in a group chat or with individual participants in a one-to-one chat.

To do so, open the Collaborate panel and then click the Chat icon.

If you make a recording, the chat history is also saved and it is available afterwards. Please bear this in mind and also notify your students, that their actions are being recorded.

Writing and drawing on slides (whiteboard)

In the Collaborate panel you can find an area for sharing content. This also includes the whiteboard, which you can use together with your students if needed.

This function is disabled for participants by default. You can activate it for individual or all participants at any time.

As with the options for shared presentation files, several tools as well as a button for stopping the whiteboard are displayed.

The resulting whiteboard can be saved as an image at any time before stopping the whiteboard function, by right-clicking the whiteboard itself.

Conducting polls

You can ask your students one question at a time by using a poll.
To do so, open the **Collaborate panel** and select **Share Content**. You can find the **Polling** option here:

![Polling](image)

There are **two types of polling** you can choose from:

- Multiple Choice (no more than 5 answers)
- Yes/No Choices

![Info icon] We recommend that you create a dedicated slide on which the poll question as well as all answer choices with their respective letters (max. A-E) are displayed.

Click the **Start** button to start a **poll** among all students.

![Poll](image)

If you would like to **end** the polling, click the **End polling icon** (the square in a circle on the top right of the polling panel). If you would like to lock the poll temporarily, click **Lock Poll** at the bottom of the polling panel.

Click **Show Responses** to publish the results.
Breakout rooms

During a session you can set up breakout-rooms in which participants can discuss and work on tasks in small groups. In those, the same tools as in the

> Proceedings in breakout rooms are not part of a session recording!

> Breakout rooms function independently of the Moodle group mode, which is also available for collaborate sessions.

To activate breakout rooms, click on Breakout groups in the Share content menu in the lower right corner of the screen.

A window opens, where you can create and delete groups and match participants to groups.
To add a participant to a group, you just have to click a name, hold the mouse button and drag the name to the desired group. If you checked **Allow attendees to switch groups**, users can choose their groups and move between groups by themselves.

When you finished to distribute attendees to groups, click **Start** to apply those changes. Attendees that were moved to different groups are logged out from the Main Room and logged in to their respective group room.

Moderators are able to **switch between groups** by clicking the green arrow symbol right to the respective group name. If attendees are allowed to switch groups, they also have the possibility to switch groups in this way.

To end the breakout room setting, as a moderator, click the stop button in the upper right corner. All participants are moved automatically to the Main Room again.

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**Further information**

For information on further features of the breakout mode, please consult the respective help documentation of Collaborate.
Help

In Collaborate itself you can start a tutorial or view help topics later via the navigation menu if needed. You find it in the menu on the left.

Ending/leaving the session

There are several ways to end a session, so participants can no longer attend the session in Collaborate.

- After the scheduled duration has passed
- When all moderators leave the virtual classroom
- To end a session actively, as a moderator click the icon (Collaborate session menu) on the top left of your screen and then select the option Leave session.

Editing participant permissions

You can edit the participant permissions in the Collaborate panel by clicking the gear icon (My settings).
My Settings

Audio and Video Settings

Notification Settings

Session Settings

- Only show profile pictures for Moderators

Participants can:
- Share audio
- Share video
- Post chat messages
- Draw on whiteboard and files
By default, participants can only post chat messages and cannot share their audio or webcam or draw on the whiteboard. You can change these settings at any time.

If you need additional functions, you can activate them manually for individual participants by making them presenters. You can assign them the participant role again later.

These settings can also be made directly in the settings of the Moodle activity. Open the activity settings by clicking on the gear icon in the upper right corner and choosing Edit settings.

Now you can make the desired settings in the section Instructor Settings.
Do not forget to save your changes afterwards.

Save and display

Part 3 - Follow-up in Moodle / Publishing recordings

If you made a recording in Collaborate, this recording is made available to you after ending the recording right on the activity page in Moodle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recordings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>Thursday, 26 March 2020, 8:56 PM</td>
</tr>
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<td>0 view(s) · 0 download(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⚠️ It takes several minutes for the audio and video recordings to be fully rendered. If it is a very long recording, the process can take up to several hours.

If you have started and stopped the recording several times during the session, separate recordings are created.

You can play back already existing recordings by clicking the link of the recording.

The recordings can also be deleted (by clicking the X icon).

Recordings can also be downloaded (on the right-hand side, by clicking the download icon) by moderators. Other participants can download them too, if they were given the right to do so in section Instructor Settings of the activity settings.
FAQs

- **What information do I have to give to students for using Collaborate?**
  You can find instructions for students under Collaborate for students.

- **Can I record my session?**
  Yes, further details are available under Recording sessions.

- **Who has the moderator permissions in Collaborate?**
  All roles in the Moodle course with editing permissions (i.e. teachers, tutors, assistants).

- **Why can some of my students not hear me?**
  Please consult the troubleshooting tips on the information page for students.

- **Can students download annotations on the slides or whiteboard directly?**
  You can publish notes either as part of a recording or save them as an image. Detailed information is available under Writing/drawing on slides (whiteboard). Students cannot download files used for presentation. Upload them directly to Moodle.

Please bear in mind, that students can always play back and (if set in the activity settings) download the recordings (please be aware that all content is recorded, including e.g. the chat history).