

**IT Guidance to Staff**  
**Blended and Remote Learning – September 2020**

This is guidance written to assist academic staff during the 2020/21 academic year during teaching. All staff should note that there is a significant amount of support available through the CAI website.

The guidance covers the following:

1. Setting up student groups for synchronous teaching using Blackboard Collaborate Ultra and MS Teams
2. How to record attendance during blended and remote learning
3. What to do in the event of problems in synchronous teaching
4. Information for staff and students on blended and remote learning
5. Information for staff on the IT Access Hardship Scheme

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Please direct any questions to your IT Business Partner ([Diarmuid.cullinane@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:Diarmuid.cullinane@dmu.ac.uk) for CEM and HLS, [Daniela.Condrea@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:Daniela.Condrea@dmu.ac.uk) for BAL and ADH)

Requests for IT Services should be made via the MyDMU portal; with an email to [itmsservicedesk@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:itmsservicedesk@dmu.ac.uk); or on 0116 250 605

Please check this document if you have questions, as Frequently Asked Questions will be added.

## **Setting up student groups for synchronous teaching using Blackboard Collaborate Ultra and MS Teams**

Academic staff can use either Blackboard Collaborate or MS Teams to deliver synchronous learning and teaching activity. The capabilities are broadly similar, and the CAI site contains information on how to use each.

CELT have written specific information for academic colleagues on how to set-up synchronous sessions in either Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, or MS Teams. It is recommended that Programme and Module Leaders should review this and set-up their Blackboard Groups prior to holding any synchronous sessions, and note that the automated creation of MS Teams with students enrolled is only undertaken overnight, on a daily basis.

CELT Partners in each faculty can provide further advice and guidance where there are specific circumstances for consideration.

The CAI website to support staff for remote teaching can be found at <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/academic/centre-academic-innovation/staff-support-for-remote-teaching/index.aspx>

The CELT Hub contains specific guidance and support on a significant range of activities to support teaching and learning through Blackboard, and a range of other IT tools specifically available to support pedagogical practice

The CELT Hub on using technology to support pedagogy, teaching and learning can be found at <https://celt.our.dmu.ac.uk/>

This contains guidance on:

1. Creating student cohort groups on Blackboard [here](#),
2. Setting up synchronous sessions for BCCU or MS Teams [here](#),
3. Training on a broad range of subjects relating to the technology tools [here](#).

CELT also provide weekly drop-ins: Wednesday from 2 pm to 3 pm and every Thursday from 10 am - 11 am. [Click here to join a CELT Team meeting for drop-in support](#). To discuss specific teaching and learning scenarios [please contact your Faculty ELT Project Officer](#)

## Attendance and Student Engagement

Academic staff can measure student engagement with remote learning through a range of methods, this is linked to the formal attendance management of students, as well as for personal tutoring or other purposes.

The key scenarios for individual synchronous teaching events that are:

1. [Students taught wholly on campus](#)
2. [Students taught wholly remotely](#)
3. [Students taught with the staff member on campus but the students wholly remote](#)
4. [Students taught with the staff member on campus but the students split between in the room with the academic, and remotely](#)

In addition, students can engage with asynchronous learning through Blackboard, MS Teams and Panopto, and/or can engage through virtual labs, linked-in learning (via their DMU Resource Lists) and other electronic engagement through their student logins. There are 2 primary sources of engagement data available to academic colleagues:

5. Student engagement with Panopto
6. Student use of student logins (SET data)

Each of these is explained below.

### 1. [Students taught wholly on campus](#)

Students taught on campus, where there is a timetabled event on campus should have their attendance monitored through the use of the student card readers in the teaching spaces or through a manual register. This is no different currently than in previous academic years.

The attendance will be reported through the normal attendance management system. Don't forget that manual registers should be given to the faculty office for manual data entry.

### 2. [Students taught wholly remotely](#)

Students taught through synchronous teaching (either through MS Teams or BCCU) will not have the capability of using the student card readers, but the academic can take an attendance list in either BCCU or MS Teams as part of the process.

#### **2.1 Downloading an attendance list in MS Teams**

This can only be completed during the MS Teams session, and only takes attendance up to the point that the attendance list is taken. Attendance CANNOT be taken after you leave the MS Teams meeting.

The instructions on how to take an attendance list or register for an MS Teams synchronous teaching session can be found at <https://celt.our.dmu.ac.uk/celt/remote-teaching-2/downloading-an-attendance-list-in-teams/>

## 2.2 Downloading an attendance list in Blackboard Collaborate

The instructions on how to take an attendance list or register for a Blackboard Collaborate Ultra synchronous teaching session can be found at <https://celt.our.dmu.ac.uk/celt/remote-teaching-2/attendance-lists-for-synchronous-sessions/>

### 3. Students taught with the staff member on campus but the students wholly remote

For any situations where the academic staff member is on campus but teaching students fully remotely then follow the instructions in 2.1 (for MS Teams use) or 2.2 (for Blackboard Collaborate Ultra use).

### 4. Students taught with the staff member on campus but the students split between in the room with the academic, and remotely

If the teaching session has been timetabled as a teaching session in a classroom with students in attendance, undertake both steps a. and b.:

- a. Students in Attendance - Follow the instructions in section 1
- b. Students Attending Remotely – Follow the instructions in section 2, submit the attendance list to the faculty office for manual uploading.

If the teaching session has been timetabled as a remote teaching session, undertake both steps c. and d.:

- c. Students in Attendance – Take a manual register and submit to the faculty office for manual uploading.
- d. Students Attending Remotely – Follow the instructions in section 2, submit the attendance list to the faculty office for manual uploading.

### 5. Student engagement with Panopto

Instructions on extracting engagement activity from Panopto for academic staff can be found at <https://celt.our.dmu.ac.uk/celt/remote-teaching-2/providing-asynchronous-online-teaching-using-dmu-replay/accessing-dmu-replay-statistics/>

### 6. Student use of student logins (SET data)

The Student Engagement Tracker can be used to identify if a student is interacting with the university and its systems, through monitoring the number of logins made to email, Blackboard, DMU Single Sign on and sundry other items. It is expressed as a number per week, which if the number is 0, there has been no interactions.

If you require access, this is available through the faculty offices only.

## Problem Solving for Synchronous Sessions for Staff

### What do I do if I have a problem during synchronous teaching?

The key things to minimise any disruption to synchronous teaching are:

- a. Preparation:
  - I. Make sure you are clear on which synchronous teaching tools you are going to use,
  - II. Ensure you've checked the approach prior to the teaching session,
  - III. Ensure the students have clear instructions on what to connect to and how to connect well before the session is due to commence, including setting up the groups, including the links and times on the module shell,
  - IV. Ensure you've installed Office 365 fully on your devices, preferably with the Microsoft Teams client, in plenty of time before your first synchronous session using MS Teams. Give plenty of time to contact the IT Service Desk if you have installation issues, it is unlikely that they can resolve a problem if you request assistance shortly before a synchronous session starts and not disrupt your participation, if you have not installed and checked this.
  - V. Check the web browser you intend to use with Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, preferably install more than one browser on your PC, including Chrome and/or Firefox. Test this before you start your first teaching session.
- b. Make sure you are connected to the university through a reliable internet connection before the session. This includes ensuring the Wi-Fi access (if using Wi-Fi) is as strong as possible

Domestic broadband may have limits and performance limitations of that broadband contract. Please consider the location of any Wi-Fi routers, as both distance from the router and the thickness and density of walls and floors can substantially reduce the speed and reliability of domestic broadband services. Wherever possible, use broadband services as close to the router as possible, and where the router has a physical network socket that you can access then this is likely to provide a more reliable connection if you can connect to your device through this. You can check the speed of a broadband connection you are connected to using <https://www.speedtest.net/> or other similarly available tools.

- c. Check your connection and access before the session is due to start. Preferably, test this, and connect a few minutes early to allow time to re-start your device or connection.
- d. Make sure you are connected and ready before the time that the session is due to commence
  - i. If you have a problem with your username and password, try again, and if it's still a problem, check with another device (e.g. your mobile phone). Common issues may be:
  - ii. Your connection to the internet is not established
  - iii. Your login has a problem
  - iv. Your connection to the university through the internet is erratic, has a performance issue etc. This is possible if you are using a mobile phone or a poor Wi-Fi signal.
  - v. If you identify all of these are fine, then you may need to call the IT Service Desk

The university operates a 24-hour IT support line for staff and students, available through the myDMU portal or through a 24-hour telephone support line (0116 250 6050, or internal extension 6050).

The IT support line has a dedicated line for staff who are having IT and AV issues during teaching, please select the appropriate option and you will be contacted as quickly as possible to resolve the

issue. If the issue is not an urgent live teaching issue, you will be transferred to the appropriate support service.

Further information on the Service desk can be found at <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/about-dmu/professional-services/information-technology-and-media-services/service-desk.aspx>.

There may be occasions that the IT Service Desk asks to take control of the desktop on your device in order to resolve an issue. They will explain what they are doing and how, and you will be asked to grant them access if this is necessary. Please ensure that you close any sensitive or personal information before granting them access.

- e. To reduce the likelihood of problems, close down other programs/apps on your device, and make sure you're not loading videos or other high data use processes in the background. Check with others in your household that may be using high bandwidth services
- f. If you have a problem with performance in synchronous teaching sessions, then try closing the Teams/Collaborate session and re-starting this. You may need to switch off your video if the problem persists, and check the items above. If you can move location easily, try locating yourself closer to the Wi-Fi router.
- g. If you are having issues with Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, or MS Teams if running through a web browser, switch to another web browser and try again.
- h. If students report problems with connecting, ask them to check the guidance on resolving problems from the student IT Handbook, found at <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/documents/ydmuf/itms-handbook.pdf>
- i. If problems persist, and you've checked the actions above, you may need to re-start your device and re-connect. This may take a few minutes, hence checking before the session starts wherever possible. If you have access to another device such as a Smart Phone, you could use this in the intervening time. There are MS Teams clients for many phones and tablets, as well as for PC and Mac computers.
- j. Use another device where possible to inform participants if you are going to be delayed, through the module shell or Teams Chat.
- k. In the event that you have a problem that creates significant issues in participating in a synchronous teaching session, you could move that session to the other platform (MS Teams or Blackboard Collaborate Ultra). You should ensure you are familiar with both platforms to enable you to transfer as appropriate.

## Information for Staff and Students on Blended Learning

### Information for Staff

There is a plethora of information available to support academic staff with remote and blended learning, please check the following:

- a. The CAI site is the central portal for information, guidance and support of academic staff for remote learning. This is found at <https://library.dmu.ac.uk/teachingandlearning/home> and it is recommended that staff review the contents of this website prior to delivery of remote and blended learning.
- b. The CELT hub contains specific guidance and instructions on a range of activities and systems that will be required for remote learning. This is found at <https://celt.our.dmu.ac.uk/celt/remote-teaching-2/> and should be consulted to help with preparation and delivery of remote teaching, including on the tools and how to do commonly required activities.
- c. The POD toolkit contains detailed instructions on how to undertake many activities in Officer 365, in easy to use instructions. This is found at [https://demontfortuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/DMUHome/org/POD/OD/Pages/DMUOnline\\_Learning\\_Teaching.aspx](https://demontfortuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/DMUHome/org/POD/OD/Pages/DMUOnline_Learning_Teaching.aspx)
- d. In the event of technical issues with the use of or access to the remote learning tools, the IT Service Desk can provide technical assistance. Further information on the Service desk can be found at <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/about-dmu/professional-services/information-technology-and-media-services/service-desk.aspx>.

### Information and services available to Students

Information has been specifically provided to students to assist them with their transition to remote and blended learning, these can be found at:

- a. The Student IT Handbook contains information about the IT available to students, how to access this and guidance and support for students. This can be found at <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/documents/ydmuf/itms-handbook.pdf>.
- b. The Student Mini Module to prepare students for blended learning will be available and students are expected to complete the module in the early part of the term. This will be available to all students through Blackboard, the PDF is available at [https://demontfortuniversity.sharepoint.com/%3ab%3a/r/sites/DMUHome/support/future/Documents/Mass%20Module%20Blended%20Learning\\_v5.pdf](https://demontfortuniversity.sharepoint.com/%3ab%3a/r/sites/DMUHome/support/future/Documents/Mass%20Module%20Blended%20Learning_v5.pdf).
- c. The student IT Induction is delivered through the library, and is available to all students and provides guidance on how to use the remote and blended learning tools and technologies. This can be found at <https://library.dmu.ac.uk/learningtech>.
- d. A significant proportion of software used in teaching is available for students to download and use on their own PCs and laptops, the software list can be found at <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/documents/ydmuf/link-1-student-software-master-prep-for-publishing.xlsx>, and this includes information on how students can download the software.
- e. All students will be able to access IT Labs through the new virtual labs system available at <https://YourDMULabs.dmu.ac.uk> from Week 1, most student teaching software will be available through this. Minimum spec recommended for a student to run YourDMULabs from a Windows laptop would be i5 Intel Processor (or equivalent) with 4GB RAM,

although 256GB SSD & 8GB RAM is recommended to install and use DMU software on this laptop, the list of software downloadable by students onto their own device is located at <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/documents/ydmuf/link-1-student-software-master-prep-for-publishing.xlsx>, and where a higher level specification is required for a software title, this is included.

- f. There will be students for whom they have difficulty accessing IT. The student IT handbook contains information on the access to IT that DMU has made available to students, and in recognition that a small number of students will have IT access difficulty, typically if they are unable to attend the campus **and** they are unable to obtain their own IT equipment, an IT Access Hardship Scheme will be available. Further information will be provided before the start of Week 1.
- g. The IT Service Desk provides support, advice and assistance to students as well as staff. All students have links to this through the MyDMU app (student portal), or through the same channels as staff. Staff can direct students to raise their enquiries through the Service Desk. Full information on this is in the Student IT Handbook found at <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/documents/ydmuf/itms-handbook.pdf>.

### **Information for Staff on the IT Access Hardship Scheme**

The IT Access Hardship Scheme is setup as a last recourse for students who would not be able to access remote element of blended learning through any other means.

All students should initially be referred to the Student IT Handbook, published on Your DMU Future at <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/documents/ydmuf/items-handbook.pdf> which explains what IT resources are available.

The IT Access Hardship Scheme is intended to provide assistance only in the most significant cases of need, where a student is unable to attend the campus due to COVID 19 related health guidance, and where the student would not be able to obtain their own equipment without causing significant financial hardship. Students who have not received all the funding for whom they are eligible, or sponsored through and employer will not normally qualify.

See either the Student IT Handbook, or the IT Access Hardship Scheme guidance for more detailed information on the IT resources available to students through DMU and/or Personal IT.

The IT Access Hardship Scheme relies on equipment provided by the University to help students who are facing genuine and unavoidable hardship in accessing IT equipment on campus. There is restricted equipment available for loan.

The default position is that students have access to the IT they require on campus, and considerable effort has been made to enable students to fully engage with blended learning through their own IT equipment. Since Virtual Labs, Blackboard, Teams, Office 365 are accessible through a browser, this does not need to be a high performance or expensive device, access is possible through a connected Chrome Book or similar device, or low cost PC.

Students that do not have access to any IT facilities, who are unable to purchase their own, and are unable to attend the campus may qualify for the IT Access Hardship Scheme and can contact the IT Service Desk for further information. This can be via the MyDMU portal; with an email to [itmsservicedesk@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:itmsservicedesk@dmu.ac.uk); or on 0116 250 605.