

# Checklist: How to prepare for, and facilitate, a webinar/virtual class

Short for “web-based seminar”, a webinar is a lecture, presentation, workshop or seminar that takes place online using video conferencing software. Also termed virtual classes, in TU Dublin, webinars are facilitated using Bongo Virtual Classroom (accessed within your Brightspace module).



Similar to face-to-face class, a webinar is live, conducted in real time, where students must log in at the same time to attend. The value of a webinar lies in the fact that it gives an opportunity to interact with students who are at a distance in a way that would not be possible otherwise. Webinars can also be recorded for archiving purposes or for distribution to the class after the event.

This checklist contains a list of key tips and issues to consider when planning, facilitating and supporting students after, your webinar.

**\*\*IMPORTANT:** If you are considering **recording** your webinar, there are a number of issues which you should consider beforehand: see this [Checklist of considerations when recording Webinars/Virtual Classes](#) for more information.

## Before the webinar

If you are using a PowerPoint presentation:

- Avoid using animations within your presentation as these may not work within Bongo.
- Avoid using external links within your slides as these will not be able accessible within the virtual classroom.
- Make sure to adhere to copyright requirements and reference external sources correctly (including images).
- Consider including a “welcome” slide at the start of your presentation which will be displayed prior to the webinar proper as students log in. This might include: your picture (so they put a face to your name); the title and date of the webinar; a message saying that the webinar will start shortly; the webinar start time.
- For your first webinar with a class, include some [“interface tour” slides](#) to orient students within the environment.
- When you have completed your PowerPoint presentation, save it as a PDF for uploading to Bongo. (Click File > Save As and select PDF as file format.) This will ensure that your slide layouts are maintained within Bongo.
- Check that your audio and video are working.
- Email webinar participants with:
  - the webinar data, time and details of how to access the webinar
  - a reminder of technical requirements (including if they will need a webcam). Click here for [Bongo: Help Center](#).
  - notification that the webinar will be recorded (if you intend to do that).
  - a reminder that they will need a quiet space and they should alert others in the vicinity that they are participating in a webinar (to avoid distractions, interruptions, privacy breaches.)
- Prepare your “teaching space” to limit distractions such as phones, background noise, visitors etc.
- If you intend to use your webcam, make sure that the room has adequate lighting and that you are not in front of a bright window. (Ideally your window should be on the left or right hand side of your monitor.)
- If there are international students within your class cohort, operating within different time zones, pick a time that accommodates all possible time-zones.
- When scheduling your virtual classroom within Bongo, set the start time for approximately 10- 15 minutes before the class proper is due to begin. This will allow you time to get set up, upload your



slides etc. before the students begin to arrive. Also, when setting the class duration, give yourself plenty of time. (The virtual classroom will automatically close after your specified duration period. (Click here for further details on [how to set up your virtual classroom](#).)

## During the webinar

- ❑ It is a good idea to share a visual of yourself via a webcam at the outset of the webinar at least - to introduce yourself and to allow students to put a face to your name.
- ❑ Make sure that participants' microphones are working and that they can see/hear you.
- ❑ Make your classroom etiquette explicit. Basic guidelines commonly include the following:
  - ❑ Please raise your hand if you want to ask a question - or post in chat room.
  - ❑ Mute your mic if not speaking,
  - ❑ Avoid sharing your camera (unless requested in order to save on bandwidth).
- ❑ Ensure that participants can do the basics within the environment, including:
  - ❑ mute/unmute mic
  - ❑ Accessing and typing into the chat room
  - ❑ Viewing the participant list
  - ❑ Changing their status (For example raising their hand)
- ❑ In the first webinar with a class, ask participants to introduce themselves at the outset (either via the mic or the chatroom).
- ❑ Moderate the classroom chat room. Ideally you would have a second person for this who will respond to and flag any important questions. However this isn't possible for many so if you are teaching online alone, make sure to pause at intervals to allow you to go through the chat and allow for student discussion.
- ❑ Allocate at least five minutes at the end of the webinar for a summary of key points, to allow students to ask questions/discuss etc.
- ❑ Make sure to include interaction throughout the webinar. Click here to learn more about [how to make your webinars more interactive](#) (you can log into HS Talks using your TU Dublin credentials to watch this video in full. Choose 'log in via organisation').

## After the webinar

- ❑ Email participants with follow up information including how to access recordings, webinar slides and additional materials etc. Students can access recordings via 'Module Tools > Virtual Classroom'. However, it is best to provide students with a direct link to the virtual classroom, and to the recordings, from within the module content. For more information on how to do this, [watch this video](#) or see this guide on [Using Bongo Virtual Classroom](#).
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