

Instructions to support online teaching for PhD courses

This document encompasses a list of suggestions that may be useful for professors intending to activate, or already carrying out, teaching for PhD courses using the Microsoft Teams or Cisco Webex Meetings software.

Any proposed corrections or additions to the document should be sent to Mr Luca De Ponti luca.deponti@polimi.it, who will also provide support for online teaching activities within the PhD School.

Any technical issues regarding the Teams/Webex software should be referred to the helpdesk, whose contact details are

- for professors: by email to helpdoc.didatticadistanza@polimi.it, or by telephone on internal number 8181
- for students: by email to helpstud.didatticadistanza@polimi.it.

This document contains the following information:

1. General information on PhD courses
2. Generation of virtual classrooms for an online course, delivered through Teams or Webex software, as well as useful instructions for external professors.
3. Suggestions for preparing or conducting lectures

1. General information

The PhD courses have a specific nature that differentiates them from Bachelor or Master's degree programmes. In particular, they have the characteristics listed below.

- They do not have a set schedule. Therefore, it is not possible to create a direct link from the teaching schedule; instead, the procedure explained below should be followed.
- They do not have fixed exam sessions for students. The professor may, at any time, hold exams and record the results.
- PhD students do not have predetermined windows in which to change their study plans. Therefore, the list of PhD students enrolled on a programme must be able to be changed at any time.

2. Generating virtual classrooms for an online programme

When deciding to activate online teaching for a PhD course, the professor should send an email to those enrolled on the programme, by customising the draft email below (that message can be sent using the normal Online Services).

For lectures carried out entirely online, both Teams and Webex can be used; for lectures carried out from the Politecnico classrooms, Webex should be used, as the system is integrated with the technological equipment used in the classrooms (cameras, etc). For further details, please contact the helpdesk.

Microsoft Teams

To generate virtual classrooms for the programme, the professor responsible for the course can create the necessary virtual classrooms autonomously, using the calendar of the Microsoft Teams software. In that regard, detailed instructions are found at the bottom of this document.

Cisco Webex Meetings

Virtual classrooms do not need to be generated. Lectures are held in the professor's virtual classroom, the internet address of which is typically <https://politecnicomilano.webex.com/meet/name.surname>, where name.surname is the professor's name in the format in which it appears in the email address name.surname@polimi.it.

External professors

External professors (not “Polimi structured”) who must manage and provide online lectures autonomously (namely without the support of a Polimi professor) must check that they are recorded as “Professor - Active” in the Online Services <https://www.polimi.it/en/online-services/>

Each professor can check this personally, using the link at the top right “Change registration/career” in online services, by selecting the registration associated with the category “Professor - Active”.

If the category “Professor - Active” is not found in the list “Change registration/career”, the professor responsible for the programme should contact Mrs Lorena Caraffa (lorena.caraffa@polimi.it) to request the activation of the Professor profile for the external trainer.

3. Suggestions for preparing and holding the lecture

This section contains information on some useful features found in the Microsoft Teams software.

Before and during the lecture

We strongly advise that you carry out all the lectures in the same virtual rooms, so that the direct link to the classroom will remain active and fixed throughout the whole duration of the course and the exams.

Having entered the virtual classroom, the following observations apply.

- The “chat” option (at the top) allows students to receive and to provide, at various points of the lecture, written feedback (in particular, to ask questions and to receive responses)
- The “file” option (at the top, to the right of “chat”) allows files to be uploaded, which can be shared with all participants at the meeting
- During the meeting, it is a good idea to ask all participants (except the speaker) to turn off their cameras and microphones.
- The speaker can share their screen, using the icon next to that of the camera and the microphone. Once this option has been activated, the software asks the speaker if they want to share the screen or if, on the other hand, they want to share a presentation (PowerPoint or pdf), which is then shown in full screen version to all participants.

We advise professors to carry out a test video call with a colleague or a student before their first lecture, in order to test out the various features.

Attendance check

Several PhD programmes require mandatory attendance on the programme (typically a percentage of at least 70% of the lectures). There are several ways in which this check can be carried out for online lectures, the fastest of which is to create an online form using Microsoft Forms, as per the mini-tutorial below.

Once connected to the Politecnico online services, you can access Microsoft Forms from the icon on the top left on webmail, or directly from the website forms.office.com. Then

1. You can create a “New form” entitled, for example “Course COURSENAME / attendance check”
2. “Add new” and then “Questions”. Normally, only three questions are needed: name (text field) – surname (text field) – attendance option (“I am attending the COURSENAME class”, with mandatory response).
3. There are lots of other options but it is important to note that by selecting Settings from the menu on the top right, you can decide on various things, for example, whether or not the students can request email confirmation (which is used as a “receipt”) [but if you activate this option, the form is restricted only to internal use]

4. If you then click on the “Responses” tab, you will see everyone who has responded, including the day and time. If, then, at a random time during the lecture, someone asks to complete the form in the next 5 or 10 minutes, there is a way of checking later who responded in time.
5. By clicking on “Share” you will access two important links. The first should be shared with the students: by clicking on it, students can respond (this link can also be obtained in the form of a QR code). The second link “Get a link to view and edit” SHOULD NOT be shared with the students but can be shared with your collaborators, who will be able both to edit the form and to check the responses.

If in doubt, consult Mr De Ponti.

Creation of parallel classrooms for group work

When creating the classrooms, you can also create (for some or all of the lecture days) parallel classrooms. Students can then work in a group in their virtual classroom and the professor can connect to one or other of the classrooms to provide support.

Draft email for PhD students enrolled on a programme [to be customised by the professor responsible]

Dear Candidates

This email is to inform you that the PhD course COURSENAME is to be held online, using Microsoft Teams/Cisco Webex Meetings software, starting from STARTDATE.

The link to attend the online classes is: LINKTEAMS / LINKWEBEX.

We suggest that you install (if not already present) the Microsoft Teams/Cisco Webex Meetings software/app on your tablet/laptop/desktop so that you will be able to attend the virtual classes.

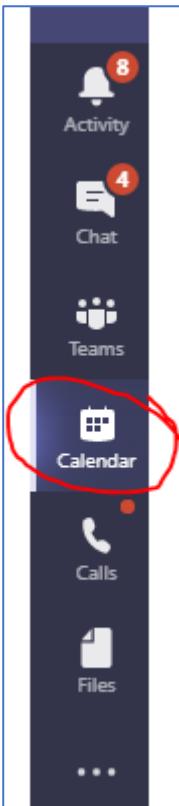
[More specific information, if necessary, including prerequisites, pre-reading, information about the necessary documentation for the course, information on exam dates, ...]

Best wishes

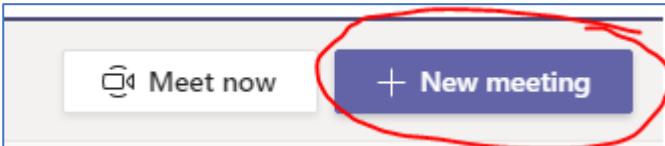
PROFESSORNAME

Instructions for creating online lessons with Microsoft Teams

- 1) Open Teams <https://teams.microsoft.com/>
- 2) Click on “Calendar” in the left column



- 3) Click on the “New meeting” icon (top right)



- 4) Set the following fields:

A screenshot of the Microsoft Teams "New meeting" setup form. It includes fields for "Add title", "Add required attendees" (with an optional link), date and time (set to 11 Jan 2021 from 10:00 to 10:30, 30m duration, All day off), and recurrence (Does not repeat).

- **Meeting title**, for example: “098573 - SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, SOCIETY AND WIKIPEDIA” (obviously you can decide the title)

- **Mandatory participants**: enter the other Politecnico professors who will participate at the lecture (the person creating the meeting in Teams is obviously automatically “invited”). In order to allow Teams to generate the LINK to the meeting, **at least one “participant” must be added**

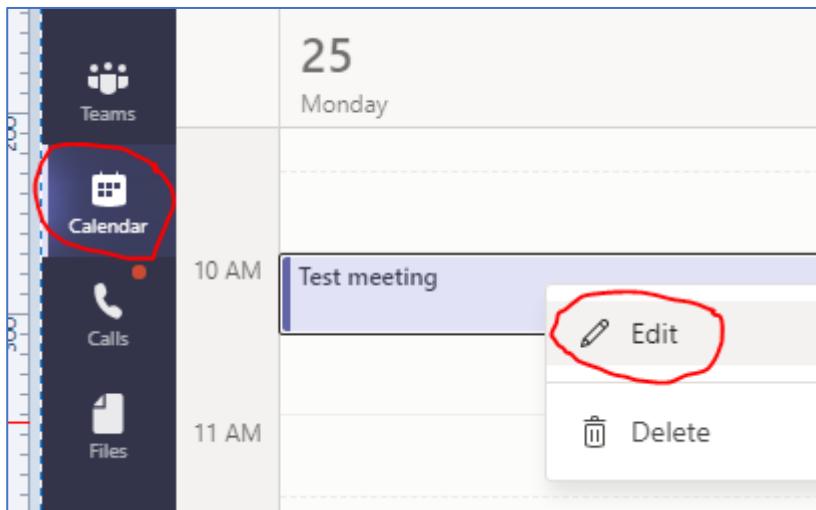
- **Date**: we suggest generating the classroom in correspondence with the start and end date of the programme, so that you can easily find the link in your calendar for the entire duration of the programme. However, note that the classroom remains active even if shorter periods of time are entered.

- 5) Click on “Save” (icon at the top right)

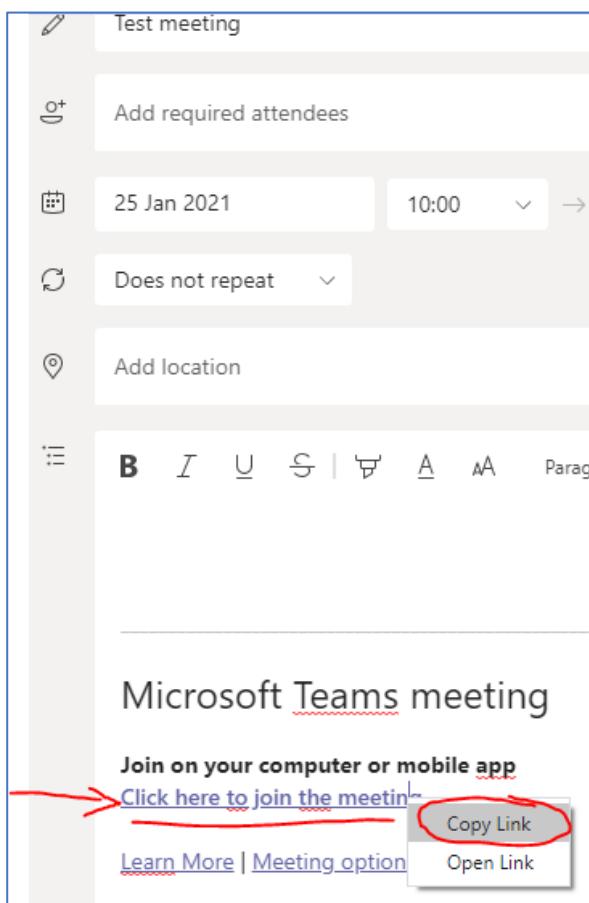
Notes:

Once you have generated the event, you will be able to find it again in your Teams Calendar.

We suggest going to the event and selecting “Edit” as below:

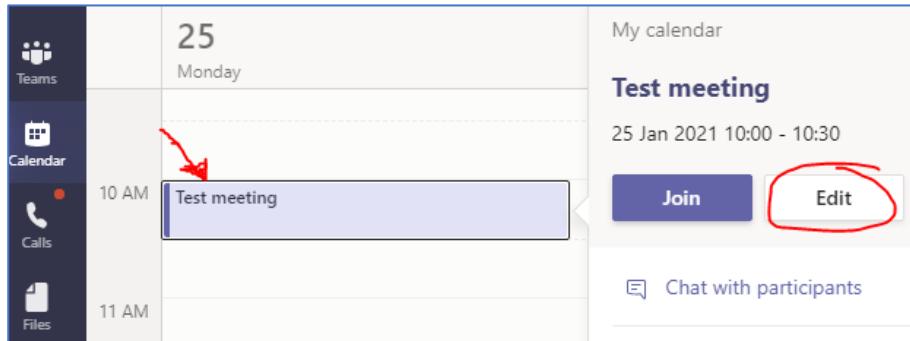


In that way, you can find the link to the virtual classroom in the field indicated below. You can then copy the link (right click on “Click here to join the meeting”, “copy link”) and paste it into the message to be sent by email to the participants, internal or external.

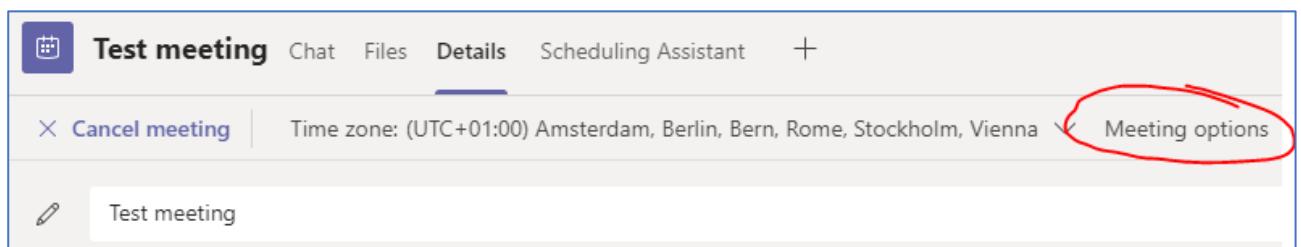


In addition, to allow users to attend, the OPTIONS of the meeting just created should be edited as follows:

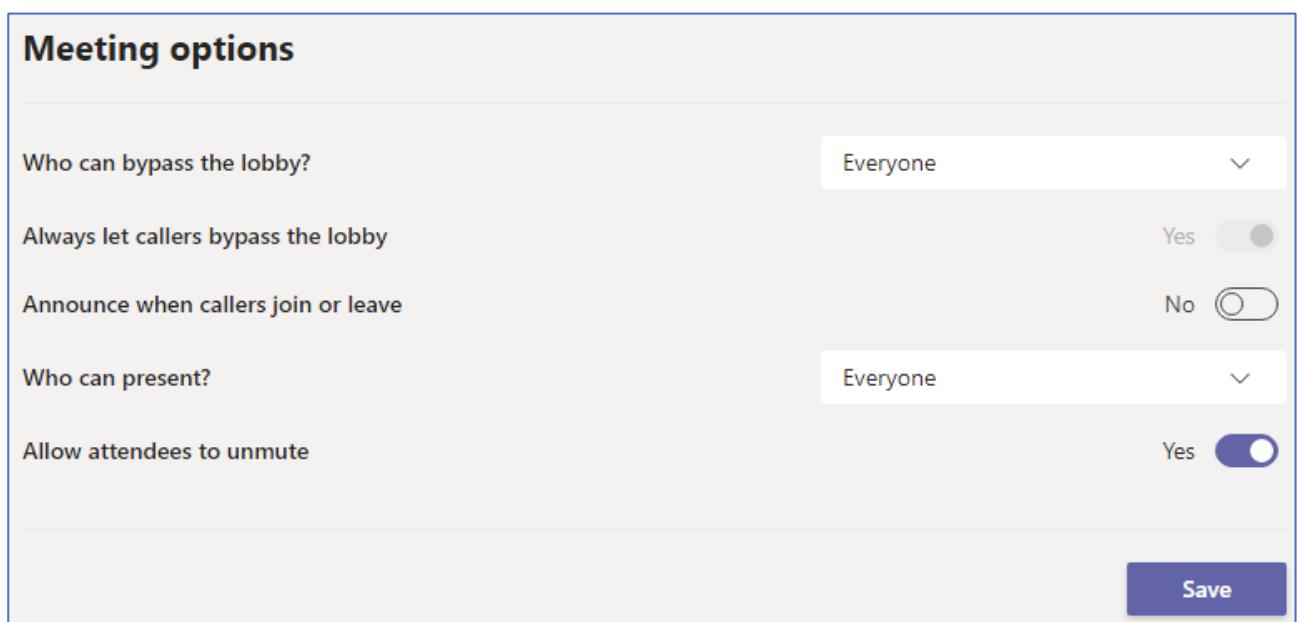
In the “calendar” click on the name of the meeting just created
(e.g.:



A page similar to the one previously viewed will open but with an extra “Meeting options” icon



When you click on this, a page will open with some options which we suggest you set as follows:



After changing the options as indicated above, click on the “Save” icon and close the window.

If you need further assistance, contact Luca De-Ponti (luca.deponti@polimi.it) and/or the dedicated helpdesk (helpdoc.didatticadistanza@polimi.it, or call internal number 8110) specifying that you are a PhD professor.

Instructions for creating online lectures with Cisco Webex Meetings

Each professor is automatically provided with a virtual “Personal Room” at the address

<https://politecnicomilano.webex.com/meet/name.surname>

This is the address that you should communicate to your students.

To login on Webex you should use the email address “@polimi.it”: you will be redirected to the Online Services authentication page.

Once you have entered your Personal Room, click on the “Start a meeting” icon to start the lecture.