How to Conduct a Viva Online

This page contains guidance on how to use supported IT services to conduct vivas with remote participants, whilst ensuring compliance with University rules, procedures and relevant legislation. For general guidance on how to conduct a viva please refer to Appendix 5 of the Postgraduate Research Regulations held in the Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures (MARP).

Microsoft Teams is the University's supported, licensed and approved online meetings application, and as such, it should be used for conducting vivas with remote participants. MS Teams is a cloud-based application that is resilient and will work on most devices. MS Teams and Office 365 has been approved by the University for the storage of viva voce data. Training on how to use MS Teams is recommended for all participants and can be found at: Microsoft Teams help and training.

Contingency plans are essential in the event of technology failure. Contact details should be agreed prior to the examination commencing in order that, in the event of a connection failure, all parties can discuss alternative plans such as using other video conferencing software if available to all parties or rescheduling the viva voce. Examinations must not be conducted solely by audio.

Preparing for the viva voce

The chair shall ensure that suitable arrangements are put in place for the viva examination. The chair has the power to suspend or cease the viva in the event of technical difficulties.

1. The chair will host the meeting and ensure **connection tests are undertaken at least one week prior to the viva**.
2. The details of the viva must be communicated to all parties prior to any party being allowed to participate in an online viva. The following text must be included in the meeting invitation:

   > *"The viva voce will be recorded for evidential and quality assurance purposes. The recording will be stored securely with the University Registry and retained for twelve months from the date of the viva voce. For further information on how the University uses and secures your personal data, please see our suite of Privacy Notices."*

It is important that the procedure for the day is circulated prior to the viva and that all parties confirm that the procedure is clear and well understood.

Conducting the online viva voce

1. During the examination the examiners should normally be able to view the candidate, although it is accepted that for certain disciplines the candidate may need to demonstrate material on screen to the panel. Maintaining continuity of contact, however, is important and expected throughout the viva (excluding agreed breaks).
2. A member of Lancaster University staff who can confirm the candidate's identity must be present at the beginning of the examination.
3. The University will not normally permit any person to be present with the candidate other than technical staff involved in the use of online communication technology or where appropriate support arrangements have been previously agreed with disabled students.

Recording the viva voce

1. The chair must ensure that all parties consent to the viva being recorded.
2. The chair will start the recording using the functionality in MS Teams.
3. On completion of the recording, the recording will be automatically stored in the chair's account on Microsoft Stream.
4. Access to the recording on MS Stream is restricted to all participants in the meeting. To ensure that the candidate **CANNOT** access the recording, the chairmust perform the following steps **immediately** after stopping the recording.

   a. To access Microsoft Stream, go to lancaster.ac.uk/office365 and log in using WebLogin

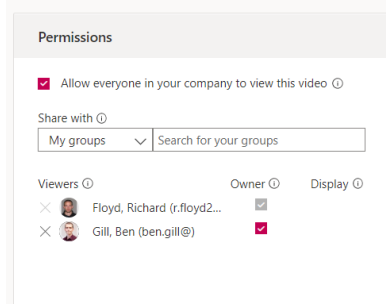b. Browse to the video in Microsoft Stream.
c. Under the video title, click **...** (more actions).
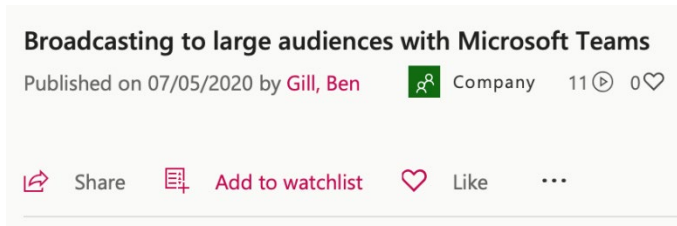
d. Click '**Update video details'.**
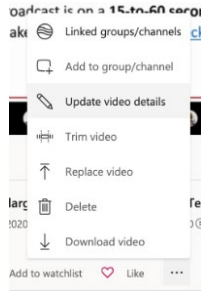
e. Under '**Permissions'**, click the **'X'** next to the candidate's name to remove the candidate from the list of participants who can access the recording.

f. At this stage the chair must share the recording with their department's Postgraduate Co-ordinator/Director of Postgraduate Research by doing the following:

    i. Select people from the **'share with'** options.

    ii. Search for the coordinator by entering their last name in the **'Search for people'** field and clicking the magnifying glass to search.
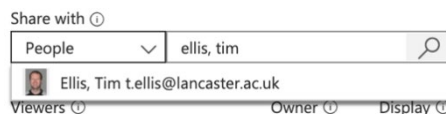
    iii. If the name does not appear in the search results, then try searching by the person's email address.

    iv. Select the person by clicking on the appropriate name in the search results.

    v. Make sure that the co-ordinator is an owner of the recording by ticking the **'owner box.'**

    vi. Repeat the above steps to add the Director of Postgraduate Research.

g. On completion of the above steps, the chair must apply the changes by clicking on the '**Apply'** button
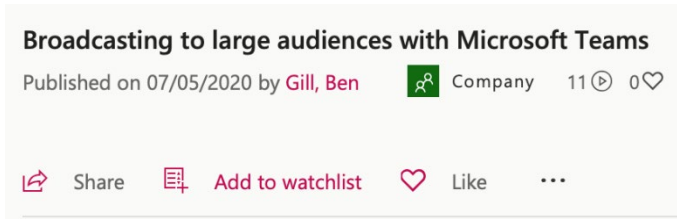

h. Finally share a link to the recording with the Postgraduate Co-ordinator/Director of Postgraduate Research via email by

     i. clicking the **'share'** button
     ii. selecting **'email'** and searching for their name using the search box
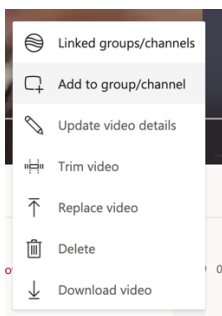   iii. Add the selected name, then press **'send'** and close.

Actions for the Postgraduate Co-ordinator/Director of Postgraduate Research

On receipt of the recording, the Postgraduate Co-ordinator/Director of Postgraduate Research must share the recording with the Registry by doing the following:
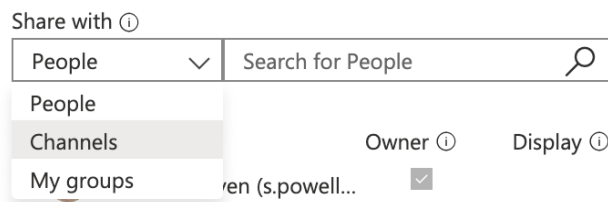
1. Open the video in MS Stream by clicking on the link provided in the email.
2. You may need to login by going to lancaster.ac.uk/office365 and log in using WebLogin
3. Under the video title, click **...** (more actions).

Broadcasting to large audiences with Microsoft Teams
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 Share   Add to watchlist   Like   ...

4. Click **'Add to group/channel.'**

- Linked groups/channels
- Add to group/channel
- Update video details
- Trim video
- Replace video
- Delete
- Download video

5. Under **'Permissions'**, select channels from the drop-down list.

Share with ⓘ

| People | ∨ | Search for People | 🔍 |

People
Channels   Owner ⓘ   Display ⓘ
My groups   en (s.powell...   ☑

6. Type **'Viva recordings'** in the text box and search by clicking the magnifying glass.

7. Select **'Viva recordings'** (Grp-PGR Viva examination recordings) from the search results.

Share with ⓘ

| Channels | ∨ | viva recordings | 🔍 |

🔒 Viva Recordings   Grp-PGR Viva Ex...
Viewers ⓘ   Owner ⓘ   Display ⓘ
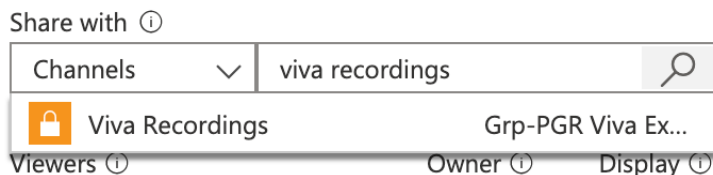
The search will only find groups or channels in MS Stream or MS Teams that the user has access to. If the search does not return any results, the co-ordinator should contact the Registry and ask to be added to the PGR Viva Examination group.

8. Ensure that the owner box is ticked.

× 🔒 Grp-PGR Viva Examinat… ✓ ✓

× Viva Recordings

9. On completion of the above steps, the user must apply the changes by clicking the **'Save'** button.