

Running Online Classes with BigBlueButton

IN THIS GUIDE

- ? The words used here
- ? Part 1 · Creating a room for your unit
- ?? Part 2 · The settings that matter
- ? Part 3 · Scheduling the class in Google Calendar
- ?? Part 4 · Running the session
- ? Part 5 · Recordings
- ? Part 6 · Running the class from inside the LMS
- ? Start-of-semester checklist
- ? If something goes wrong
- ? Support

? The words used here

Room	A permanent online classroom with its own link. One unit, one room.
Session	One live class held in that room. The room is reused; each session is separate.
Moderator	Can start the session, mute others, share the screen and record. You.
Viewer	Can watch, speak when unmuted, and use chat. Your students.
Access code	A short code typed once when joining. Optional, and separate from signing in.
Recording	A saved copy of a session. Recordings belong to the room, not the session.

? Part 1 · Creating a room for your unit

1.1 Sign in

Go to bbb.tangaza.ac.ke and click **Sign in**. You will be sent to the University sign-in page and then to Google. Use your **tangaza.ac.ke** account. Personal Gmail accounts are refused.

Your account is created the first time you sign in. A colleague who has never signed in does not exist on the system yet and cannot be added to anything.

1.2 Create one room per unit

You start with a single room named after you. Do not use it for everything a lecturer teaching two units at the same hour will collide with themselves, and students will see the wrong class.

1. Click **+ New Room**.
2. Name it after the unit, using the unit code first: *ISTP 701 Foundations of Peacebuilding*.
3. Click **Create Room**.
4. Repeat for each unit you teach.

If **+ New Room** does nothing, you have reached your room limit. Ask ICT to raise it rather than deleting a room you still need.

1.3 Naming

Same discipline as the LMS, for the same reason. Lead with the unit code, then the unit name: **ISTP 701 - Foundations of Peacebuilding**. Add the intake where a code repeats across semesters.

?? Part 2 · The settings that matter

Open the room and go to the **Settings** tab. Set these once, when you create the room.

Setting	Set to	What it does
Require users to be signed in before joining	On	Only people with a Tangaza account can enter your class. Standard for all teaching rooms.
Allow any user to start this meeting	Off	Students cannot open the room. They wait until you start the class. Leave this off.
Mute users when they join	On	Stops forty microphones opening at once.
Require moderator approval before joining	On for exams, vivas and interviews	A waiting room - you admit each person yourself. Too slow for a normal class.
All users join as moderators	Off	On would let any student mute you or end the class.
Allow room to be recorded	Your choice	Enables the record button during the session. It does not record automatically.

?? **Require users to be signed in before joining** is the setting that keeps your classroom to Tangaza people. Without it, anyone holding the link can walk into your class without identifying themselves. Turn it on.

2.1 Access codes

On the same tab you can generate an **access code for viewers**. Use one for anything sensitive - an exam, a viva, a staff meeting. Put the code in the Calendar invitation, never in a public timetable. Change it each intake, exactly as you change an LMS enrolment key.

? Part 3 · Scheduling the class in Google Calendar

BigBlueButton has no calendar of its own. Google Calendar supplies the schedule, the invitation and the reminder; the room supplies the address.

1. Open the room and click **Copy Join Link**.
2. In **Google Calendar**, create an event for the class.
3. Set the day and time, and set it to repeat weekly for the semester.
4. Paste the link into **Location**.
5. Paste it into **Description** too, with the access code if you set one.
6. Add your class under **Guests**, or invite the class Google Group.
7. Save and send the invitations.

Wording that prevents most first-week questions:

“ Join the class here: [link]
Access code: [code, if any]

Sign in with your Tangaza email - personal Gmail will not work. The room opens when the lecturer starts the class. If you arrive early you will see a waiting screen; keep the tab open.

Do **not** use Google Calendar's *Add Google Meet video conferencing* button. It creates a second, different meeting and half your class will end up in the wrong one.

?? Part 4 · Running the session

1. Open bbb.tangaza.ac.ke a few minutes before the class.
2. Open the unit's room and click **Start Meeting**. Students waiting on the link enter automatically once you do.
3. Choose **Microphone** when asked, and run the echo test.
4. To record, click **Start recording** at the top of the meeting. Tell the class you are recording.
5. Share slides with the **+** button, or upload them beforehand on the room's **Presentation** tab.
6. End the class from the ? menu ? **End meeting**. Closing the browser tab leaves the session running without you.

4.1 Sharing a room with a colleague

The **Access** tab lets you share the room with a co-lecturer, so either of you can start the class. Do this wherever one person being stuck in traffic would cancel a session.

? Part 5 · Recordings

Recordings appear on the room's **Recordings** tab a few minutes after the session ends - a long class can take longer to process.

Because recordings belong to the room, every week of the semester lands in the same list. **Rename each one as soon as it appears:** *ISTP 701 - Week 3 - 8 Sep 2026*. Leave it a month and nobody will know which is which.

Each recording can be set **Public** or **Unlisted**. Unlisted means only people with the link can watch. Share the link through the LMS unit, not on a public page.

FOR LECTURERS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS · bbb.tangaza.ac.ke

Creating a room, scheduling the class in Google Calendar, and running the session.

?? New here? Work top to bottom the first time create a room for your unit, set it up once, then schedule it in Calendar. After that you only ever do Part 3 and Part 4.

Tangaza University runs its own online-class system at bbb.tangaza.ac.ke. It is not Zoom and it is not part of the LMS, but it is where live classes happen. You sign in with the same Tangaza Google account you use for the LMS and for email there is no separate password.

One thing to understand before you start. A room is a permanent address, not a single meeting. The same link works all semester, every week, for that unit. Nothing happens inside it until you press Start Meeting. That is why the schedule lives in Google Calendar and the room lives here.

? Part 6 · Running the class from inside the LMS

Instead of pasting a link into Google Calendar, you can add the class as an activity inside your Moodle unit at **lms.tangaza.ac.ke**. Students click it from the course page like any other activity, and the session appears in the course calendar automatically.

?? This is the better option for a taught unit. You get open and close times, the session in the Moodle calendar, and recordings listed in the course. Use Google Calendar (Part 3) for meetings that are not tied to a unit — staff meetings, interviews, supervision.

6.1 Add the activity

1. Open your unit on **lms.tangaza.ac.ke** and switch on **Edit mode**.
2. In the week or topic where the class belongs, click **Add an activity or resource**.

3. Choose **BigBlueButton**.
4. Give it a name students will recognise: *Week 3 Live Class — Conflict Analysis*.
5. Use the description for anything they should prepare beforehand.

The integration is switched on and pointed at the University's own server, so the activity is there for every unit. If you cannot see **BigBlueButton** in the list, check that **Edit mode** is on before contacting ICT.

6.2 Set the schedule

This is the part Google Calendar cannot do. In the activity settings, open **Schedule for session**:

Setting	What it does
Join open	The earliest students may enter. Set it 5 or 10 minutes before the class.
Join closed	After this time the link stops working. Useful for a class nobody should wander into three days later.

Both dates appear in the Moodle calendar and in students' upcoming-events block, so you are not relying on anyone reading an email.

6.3 Room settings, the LMS equivalents

The same protections from Part 2, under different names:

In the LMS activity	Set to	Same as
Wait for moderator	Yes	<i>Allow any user to start this meeting being off</i>
Session can be recorded	Your choice	<i>Allow room to be recorded</i>
Mute all participants on join	Yes	<i>Mute users when they join</i>
Role assigned during live session	Lecturer ? Moderator, Student ? Viewer	Moderator and viewer roles

You do not need an access code here. Only people enrolled in the unit can see the activity, so enrolment is the access control — which is why this route is safer than a link that can be forwarded.

6.4 Recordings

Recordings from an LMS session are listed on the activity itself, inside the unit, visible only to that class. No copying links, and no risk of sending Week 3 to the wrong cohort.

6.5 Which route to use

Use the LMS activity when	Use Google Calendar when
It is a taught unit with enrolled students	The meeting is not tied to a unit
You want open and close times	You are inviting people from outside the unit

Use the LMS activity when	Use Google Calendar when
You want recordings kept with the course	Attendees are staff, or external guests
You would rather students never handle a link	A one-off: interview, viva, supervision, staff meeting

? Start-of-semester checklist

#	Check
1	A room exists for each unit you teach, named with the unit code
2	<i>Require users to be signed in before joining</i> is On
3	<i>Allow any user to start this meeting</i> is Off
4	<i>Mute users when they join</i> is On
5	An access code is set, if the unit needs one, and it is new this intake
6	A co-lecturer has been given access to the room
7	The Calendar event repeats for the whole semester
8	The join link is in both Location and Description
9	The link is also posted in the LMS unit
10	You have run one test session with audio before week one

? If something goes wrong

Students report	Cause	Fix
"It says the meeting has not started"	Normal. You have not pressed Start Meeting yet.	Nothing. They enter automatically when you start.
They are refused at sign-in	They used a personal Gmail	Sign out of Google completely, sign in again with the tangaza.ac.ke account.
An empty class started without you	<i>Allow any user to start this meeting</i> is On	Turn it off on the room's Settings tab.
Strangers joined the class	Sign-in not required, and the link has been shared	Turn on <i>Require users to be signed in before joining</i> and set an access code.
Nobody can hear the lecturer	Joined as Listen only, or the wrong microphone	Leave the audio, rejoin with the headphone icon and choose Microphone.
The recording has not appeared	Still processing	Wait - a two-hour class can take a while. If it is missing the next day, contact ICT.
The recording does not exist at all	Recording was never started, or the room does not allow it	Recording is a button you press each session. It is never automatic.
The class ran on after the lesson	The tab was closed instead of ending the meeting	Always use ? ? End meeting.

? Support

Online-class support is provided by ICT. Contact them for:

- Raising your room limit if you teach many units
- Rooms for graduations, guest lectures and other large events
- Recordings that have not appeared, or need removing
- Google sign-in problems for staff or students

Accounts are created by signing in. A colleague or student who has never signed in cannot yet be given access to a room — ask them to sign in once, then add them.

Access codes are yours to set and issue. ICT does not hold them and cannot give them to students.

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