Dual Mode Teaching @HKU

TIPS on Using Audio Effectively in Dual-mode Teaching

1. Arrive at your classroom earlier and test before you start

Whenever possible, it is recommended that you arrive at your classroom a bit earlier and test the audio, internet connections, and other facilities. In dual-mode teaching, there are two groups of students that need your attention: those sitting in the classroom and those who attend online. Allow more time to configure audio and computer settings would be encouraged. Different classrooms have different audio facilities and someone who has used the classroom before might have changed the setting, e.g. volume of the microphone. You could test your audio through these steps in ZOOM.

2. Use a clip-on or handheld microphone preferably

Your voice needs to be clear for both face-to-face and online groups. Using a clip-on or hand-held microphone is recommended. Only in small classroom and only when you can stay close to your computer all the time (within a metre), you may consider not to use an external microphone. Remember to greet both groups of students and enquire if they could hear you properly at the beginning of the class. More information on hardware choices can be found here (Points 3 & 4).

3. Mute remote students and remind in-class students to mute their devices

It is recommended that you mute all students on the teleconferencing platform upon entry to reduce noise from unknown sources and ask those who need to speak to unmute themselves. For in-class students, it is important to remind them to mute their own devices and **turn off the speaker** to avoid audio echo. If students in the classroom want to access your class using ZOOM, they would need to wear a headset. Click here to find step-by-step guidelines on how to mute and unmute participants. Remember to tick "Allow participants to unmute themselves" if you want your students to be able to speak when needed.

4. Assign someone (a student or a tutor) to convey feedback from the Chat on the spot

If there is anything wrong with the audio (or video or other materials), students in the online group tend to type in the Chat to notify you (remember that they are muted so they probably do not want to shout out that they could not hear). It is better to have someone sitting in the classroom help monitor the Chat so that you can be informed and fix the problem. Consider rotating students or assigning a pair of students as you do not want to give one individual too much responsibility. You could also assign these students as co-host in ZOOM so that they can help with more work, e.g. mute someone who accidentally unmute himself/herself.

5. Give a microphone to students in the classroom when they speak or paraphrase what they say

Without a microphone, students' voices in the classroom cannot be heard by the online group. If conditions allow, consider giving the microphone to students in the classroom when they speak. Alternatively, you could repeat or paraphrase what students say before responding so that the online group of students will also hear what is happening in class.

6. When playing video, share computer sound during screen sharing

If you have video clips (with sound) in your course content, remember to click Share computer sound when you share your screen. Otherwise, the sound of the clips cannot be conveyed to the remote students. Make sure that the volume is at an appropriate level (note: remote students often complain it is too loud). If you are sharing PowerPoint while wanting to play a video clip from YouTube (or other applications), make sure that you switch and share the correct application. See a 1-min clip on screen sharing with tips on audio.