Collaborate Ultra Troubleshooting

Troubleshooting Audio Problems on Windows Computers

Introduction

This document covers fixes for numerous potential audio issues on **Windows** computers, and presents them in a logical order. Work through the fixes in order until your problem is resolved. *Screenshots and methods included here are for Windows 10 machines, other versions of Windows may differ.*

If this document does not resolve your issue, visit Blackboard's own Collaborate Ultra Troubleshooting Pages. If you continue to have issues, please call the helpline (if you are a student/family member) or put in a ticket (if you are a staff member)

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SEC 1: If you can't hear *others* speaking:

First, use the session's text chat to ask others if they can hear anything. If they **can't** either, then just wait for the presenter to start. If they **can**, try opening a YouTube video to see if you can hear it playing:

- If you **can** hear the video then try steps one and two below;
- If you **can't** hear the video then try steps three and four first, *followed* by steps one and two.

01. Check you're using an appropriate browser:

You should be using Google Chrome, and should be logged in Chrome using your @pavcs.us account.

02. Check your settings within Collaborate Ultra:

Ensure your speaker volume within Collaborate Ultra is 100%: Click on the cog/gear icon in the bottom right of the Collaborate session, then click on "Audio and Video Settings".
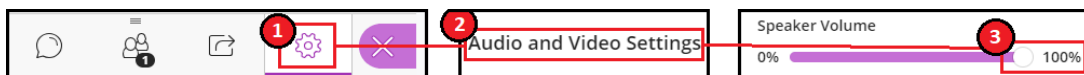
You may also wish to try leaving and re-entering the Collaborate Ultra session.

03. Physically check your headphones/headsets (only for devices that plug into/connect to your computer):

1. Check that they're connected to your device:
   a. **If connecting with a cable:**
      i. Plugged in (to the correct port on your machine, don't plug headphones into a speaker port,etc - check the icons next to each port for help), and that no wires are loose
      ii. If using a USB device, try plugging it into a USB 2.0 port (it's grey/black inside) rather than 3.0 (blue inside) if you have one available
   b. **If connecting via Bluetooth:** Check your Bluetooth settings
2. Test them on another device to ensure they're generally functional.
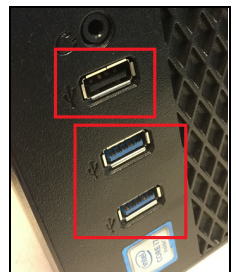
04. Ensure your web browser isn't blocking presenter audio:

In certain instances, using Collaborate Ultra on newer versions of Google Chrome web browser (71+) can not work as expected and you may not hear presenters speaking even if you can hear in-room notification "pings". If this happens:

1. Click on the lock symbol in the left-hand side of the web browser URL address box


2. Select Allow next to Sound

3. Click the Refresh button on the browser

05. Ensure that your computer's settings aren't blocking audio:

1. Check that your machine isn't muted: Click on speaker icon (🔊) in the bottom right of your screen (next to the clock) to access a slider you can click and drag to change playback volume.

2. Click on the magnifying glass (🔍) in the bottom left of your screen (or press WIN ⊞ + S on keyboard) and search for "***Sounds***"

    a. Click on the **Sound - Control Panel** option in the results. Ensure you're on the **Playback** tab.

    b. If you can't see your device listed, right click in the pane and select "**Show Disabled Devices**"

    c. Right click on the device that **should** be playing audio: If it says "Enable" (as opposed to Disable) click on this, then click on "Set as Default Device" if not already:
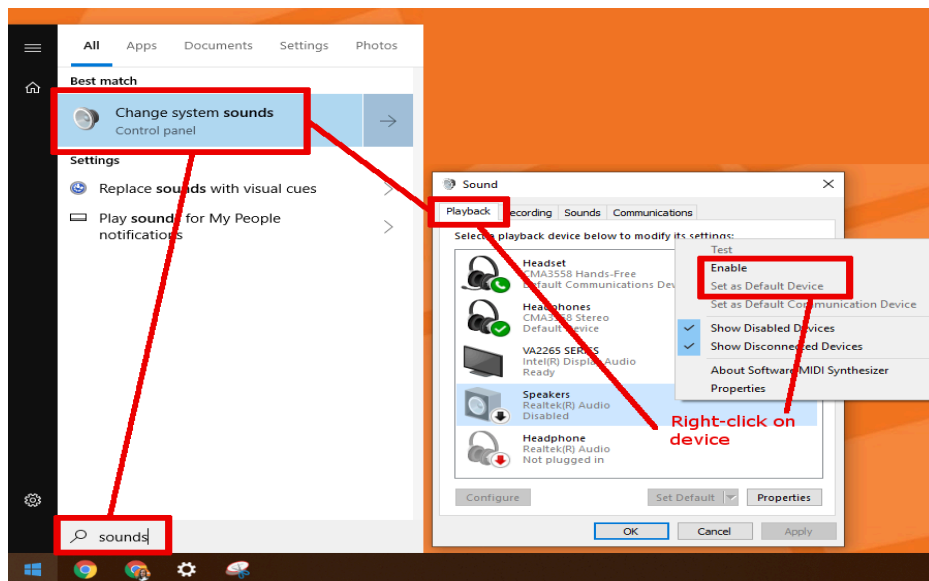
    d. Try restarting your computer and re-joining the Collaborate session.

3. While in sound settings, check that the device is not muted.

    a. Select the device, and click the **Properties** button.

    b. Make sure you are on the **Levels** tab, and look at the button on the far right of the slider.

   c. If it has the red 'no' symbol, it is currently muted (like seen below).   Click on it to un-mute.
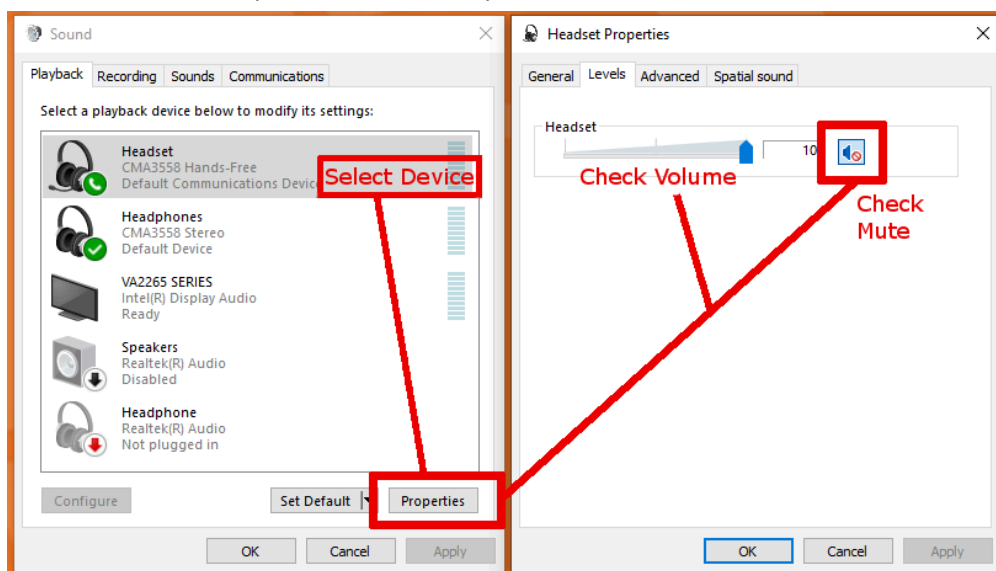
SEC 2: If others can't hear *you* speaking:

01. Check your settings within Collaborate Ultra:

1. **Ensure that you've unmuted yourself within the Collaborate session**
   The Mute/Unmute button is located in the bottom middle of the black part of the screen. Click the button to toggle your microphone on (ie. unmute) or off (ie. mute). If you can't see this button, you've not been given permission to speak. Let the meeting-organiser know.

   a. When you're muted (ie. **not** sharing audio) the button will state "share audio" when hovered over with your mouse, and will show a white microphone icon with a slash through

   b. When you're not muted (ie. **are** sharing audio) the button will state "sharing audio, select to mute" on hover and will show a green microphone icon containing a moving white level. This level indicates the noise level that you are sharing. The more white, the louder you are.
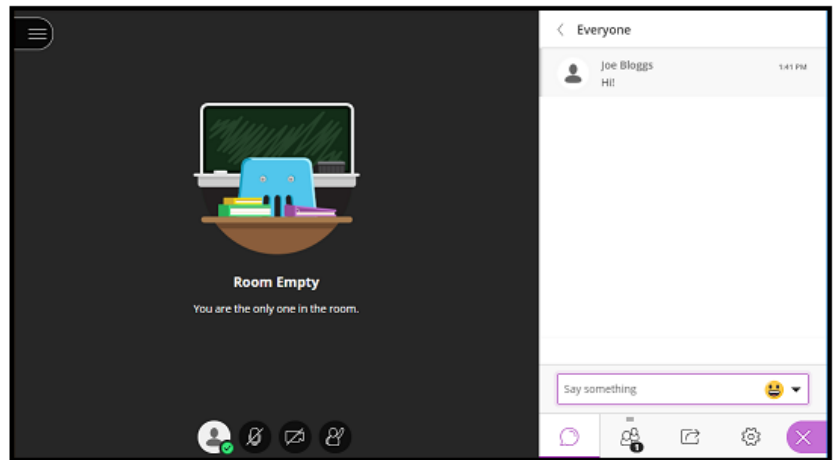

2. **Ensure your microphone volume level within Collaborate Ultra is set to 100%**
   Click on the cog/gear icon in the bottom right of the Collaborate session, then click on "Audio and Video Settings". Ensure Microphone Volume is at 100%:
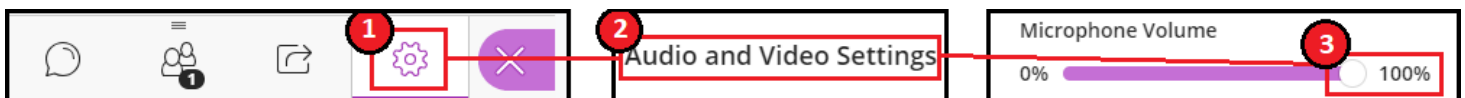

3. **Ensure that you have the right microphone selected**
   In the same Audio and Settings pane where you just checked volume levels, you'll also see an option to "Set up your camera and microphone":
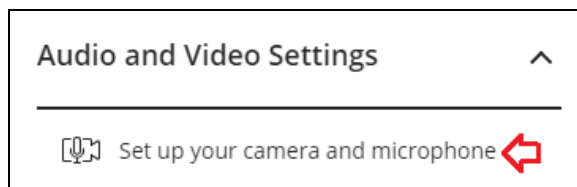

   Opening this option will allow you to pick from a drop down list *which* microphone Collaborate should be using and will also allow you to see a visual representation (a purple bar) of whether the selected microphone is picking up your audio.
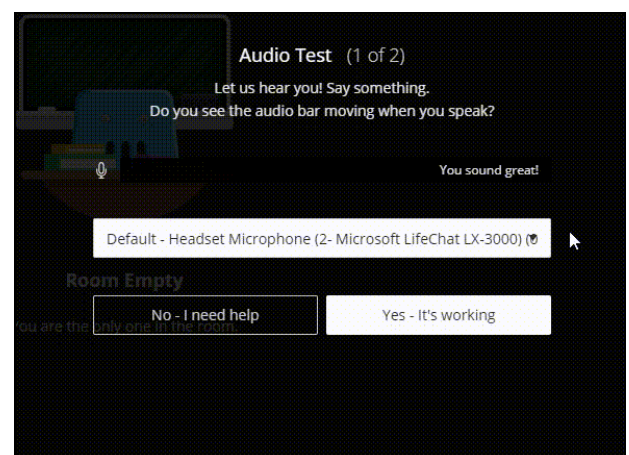
02. Physically check your microphone (this is only for mics you have to plug into the computer):

1. Check that it's connected to your device:
   a. **If connecting with a cable:** Plugged in (to the correct port on your machine, don't plug microphones into a headphone port - check the icons next to each port for help), and that no wires are loose
   b. **If connecting via Bluetooth:** Check your Bluetooth settings

2. Ensure that you plugged your microphone in **BEFORE** you entered the Collaborate session. If you didn't do this, leave and re-enter the Collaborate session with your microphone plugged in.

3. Check to see if it has its own physical mute button. For example, Microsoft Lifechat Headsets have a mute button halfway down their cable (see image right). If your headset is muted using its inbuilt mute button, then only *unmuting* yourself in Collaborate won't work. Unmute your headset using the inbuilt button (and leave it unmuted for the session), and *then* use Collaborate's Mute/Unmute to control when others can't/can hear you.


Unmuted: Muted:
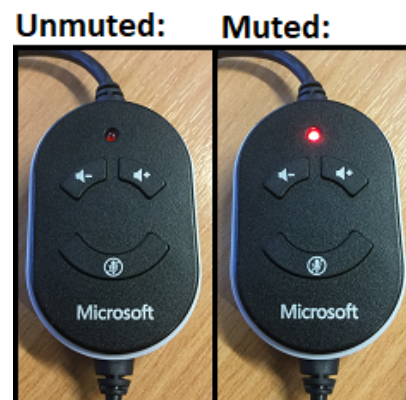
03. Ensure your web browser isn't blocking access to your microphone:

When you entered the Collaborate session your browser should have asked for your permission to use the microphone. If you **didn't** grant this permission, the microphone will likely be blocked. To allow access:

**On Google Chrome browser:**

1. Locate and click on the **video camera icon** at the right hand end of your browser's address bar

2. Select the **radio button** for **option "Always allow *<site name>* to access your microphone"**

3. Click **Done**

4. Click **Try Again.**
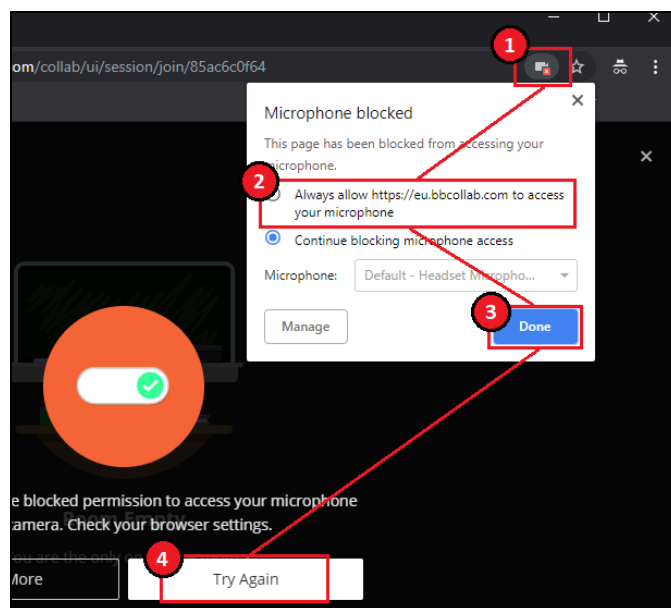
04. Ensure that your computer's settings aren't blocking the microphone:

1. **Check that your microphone is not disabled**

    a. Click on the magnifying glass ( ) in the bottom left of your screen (or press WIN + S on keyboard) and search for "*Sounds*"

    b. Click on the **Sound - Control Panel** option in the results. Ensure you're on the **Recording** tab

    c. If you can't see your microphone listed, right click in the pane and select "**Show Disabled Devices**"

    d. Right click on your microphone: If it says "Enable" (as opposed to Disable") click on this to enable your microphone, then click on "Set as Default Device" if not already selected:
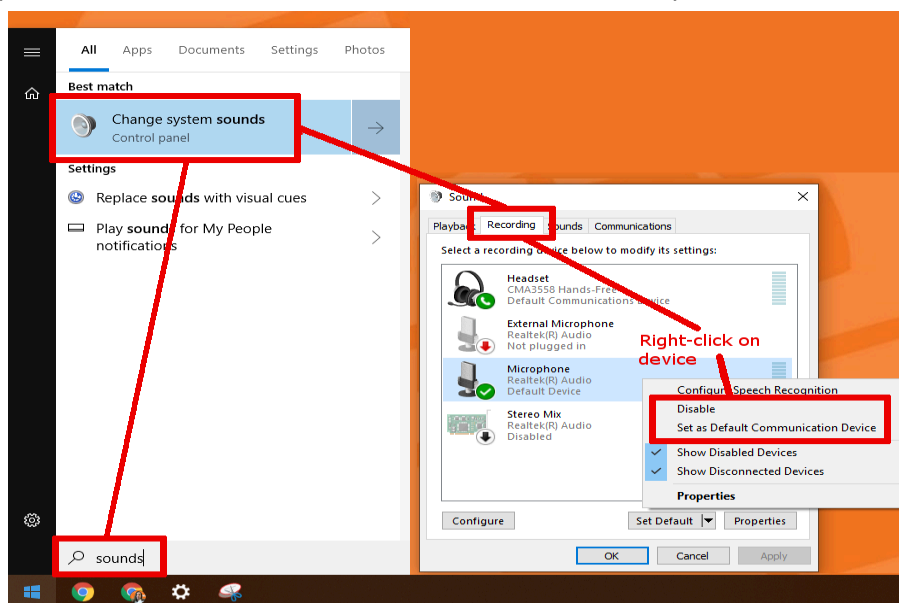

2. **Check that your microphone's levels are high**

    a. In this same window, select the device, and click on the **Properties** button.

    b. Make sure you are on the **Levels** tab, then use the **slider** to increase volume, if it's not already maxed

    c. Click **Apply** and then **OK**

3. **Check that your microphone is not muted**

    a. Use steps A and B above, and while on the **"Levels"** tab, check the button to the right of the slider. If red "no" symbol, it is currently muted (like seen below). Click on it to un-mute.
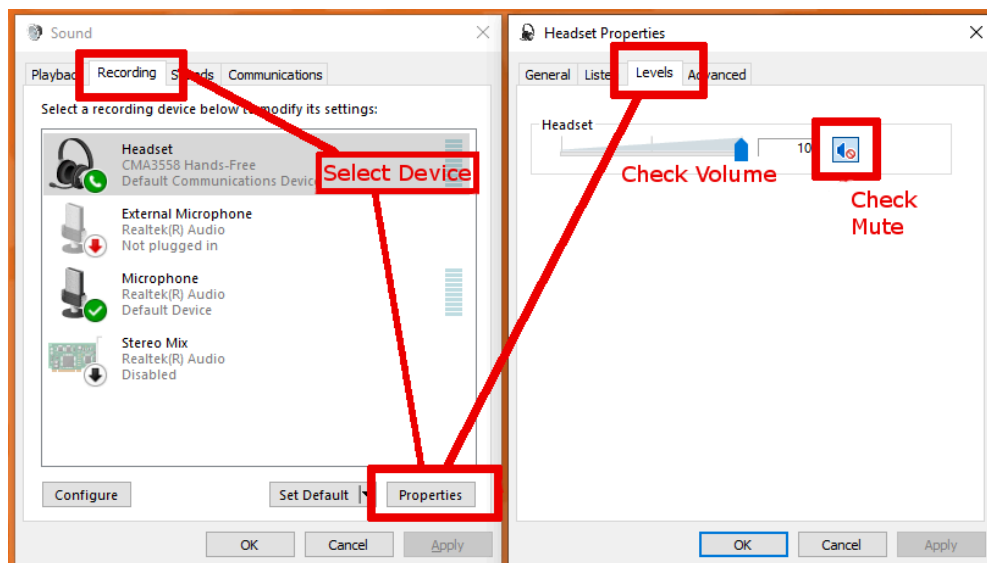
4. **Check that your computer's privacy settings aren't blocking the microphone**
   a. Click on the **magnifying glass** (🔍) in the bottom left of your screen (or press WIN ⊞ + S on keyboard) and search for **"Microphone"**
   b. Click on the **"Microphone privacy settings"** option that shows in the results
   c. In the **"Allow apps to access your microphone"** section, ensure the toggle is set to **"On"**.
      i. If it states "Off", click it to switch to "On":