

Active Learning in Synchronous environments



WARWICK
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

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Session objectives

- To consider the importance of active learning in Higher Education pedagogy.
- To explore ways in which this can be achieved effectively in synchronous learning environments, with examples from two programmes in the Academic Development Centre.
- To consider benefits and affordances versus difficulties and disadvantages.
- To share practice with others of synchronous active learning.

What is Active Learning?

Active learning is any **learning activity in which the student participates or interacts with the learning process, as opposed to passively taking in the information**

Active learning can be:

- Interactive (between student and others, or stimuli)
- Task-based and 'managed' (specific actions related to learning outcomes)
- Individual (prompted thinking, reflections)
- Collaborative (group, problem-based, peer to peer or student to teacher)
- Student-centred and constructivist in nature

Synchronous Learning Activities



Build Community +
Relationships



Lead Interactive Modeling
Sessions



Differentiate Instruction
for Small Groups



Personalize Instruction
+ Provide 1:1 Coaching



Guide Practice +
Application



Facilitate Real-time
Conversations



Foster Collaboration
Among Students



Real-time Feedback on
Work In Progress

Setting expectations

- This is a space to share ideas and thoughts around active synchronous learning.
- Turn cameras and microphones off – there will be opportunities to turn them on and we will let you know when.
- If you have a question you can share it in the chat or raise your hand.
- The session will be recorded and shared with colleagues on the LDCU Teams space.

Things we'll look at this session...

- Teams – simple strategies to encourage interaction – chat pane, raised hands, together mode.
- Breakout rooms and channels - Think Pair share, One minute papers, Smallgroup discussions, Presentations
- Live polling – Vevox
- Small group management – channels, break-out rooms, randomizer
- Some active learning activities!

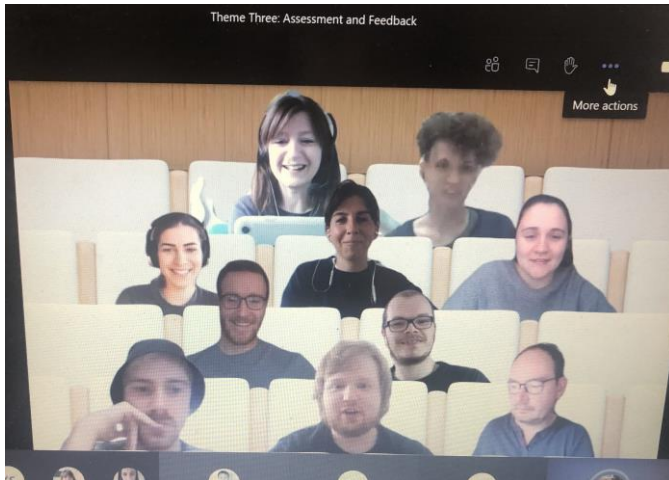
Teams

- Hands up – have you used teams in teaching before?
- Chat – share using an emoji how you are feeling right now?
- Chat – which department are you in?



Seeing and hearing...

- Gallery mode
- Large gallery mode
- Together mode



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<https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/hand-use-videoconference-app-icon-microsoft-1721026879>

Screen sharing

- A simple technique to enable active learning in synchronous spaces is to **share materials on the screen**.
- Slides can be used as a **prompt for active learning** (e.g. prompts for thinking or action made explicit).
- **Sharing other screens** (e.g. desktop, open windows, applications, the Internet) enables quick movement between resources, with low effort/difficulty for the group. Looking over work completed on the VLE, for example, can be affirming.
- **Students can also share screens and resources.**

Principles of good feedback

Good feedback practice:


1. helps clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria, expected standards)
2. facilitates the development of self-assessment (reflection) in learning
3. delivers high quality information to students about their learning
4. encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning
5. encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem
6. provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance

Adapted from: Nicol, D. & Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006). Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: A model and seven principles of good feedback practice, *Studies in Higher Education*, 34 (1), 199-218.

Activity: Use these principles to consider the quality of the feedback samples you have looked at. Go to your group channel and record your discussion.

Break-out rooms and channels

< All teams



APP PGR online - Route C ...

General

Brilliant Meerkats 🔒

Courageous Lions 🔒

Genius Tigers 🔒

Group 1

Group 2

Group 3

Group 4

Group 5

Introduction to APP PGR

Remarkable Frogs 🔒

Theme Four- Teaching Philosophy, re...

Theme One - Inclusive Teaching and L...






Theme Three - Assessment and Feed...

Theme Two - Small and Large Group t...

Activity 1: Constructive alignment	Group 1: Life Sciences Katy Matt Chitra Beth Helen	Group 2: Social Sciences Max Arianna Lucia Pooja Sany William	Group 3: Science Adam Alun Shayan Kirstie	Group 4: Arts Paul Sky Emma Madeleine Somak
Activity 2: Feedback	Brilliant Meerkats Arianna Autieri Paul Grigsby Beth Richmond Max Warrack	Courageous Lions Sany Angkasa William Chan Matt Harwood Emma Morton Pooja Vishwanathan	Wise Owls Katy Faulkner Sky Herington Alun Rees Madeleine Scherer Kirstie Shearman	Genius Tigers Somak Biswas Adam Cowden Chitra Joshi
			Remarkable Frogs Lucia Collischonn Shaya Shakti Helen Wilkinson	

Hattersley, Sara 30/07 00:08 Edited

Group Task: The Learning Environment

Formal/lecture style 	Horse-shoe/seminar 	Empty space/Informal seating 
Boardroom 	Cabaret-style seating 	In these example teaching space lay-outs L= learner T= teacher


As a group, discuss the issues and benefits of the FORMAL LECTURE STYLE. You may wish to discuss this in relation to other examples here, but by the end of the group task you should have some notes about it which can be shared with the whole group, later.

[See less](#)



- Larger groups can be divided into smaller 'break-out' groups to replicate **small group classroom activities**, particularly **discussions**.
- **Teams channels** can be built, with pre-organised membership OR left open for individuals to join.
- Channels can **contain resources and instructions** for groups, as well as keep a **record of interactions** taking place.

Break-out group activity




Learning Design Consul... ...

General

- 1. Discussion and exchange**
- 3. Workshops
- 4. ABC Mini Sprint
- 5. ABC Learning Design exchange
- Breakout room 1 Arts and Humanities
- Breakout room 2 Science Medicine an...
- Breakout room 3 Social Sciences
- Discussion hub 1
- Discussion hub 2
- Discussion hub 3
- Discussion hub 4
- Discussion hub 5
- Events and Announcements

- Discussion hub 1 – second names A - C
- Discussion hub 2 – second names D - H
- Discussion hub 3 – second names I - M
- Discussion hub 4 – second names N - S
- Discussion hub 5 – second names T - Z



Universities must embed digital for the long term

Support for mental health is vital

Has Covid-19 infected university league tables?

Reflection will help students navigate a post-Covid future

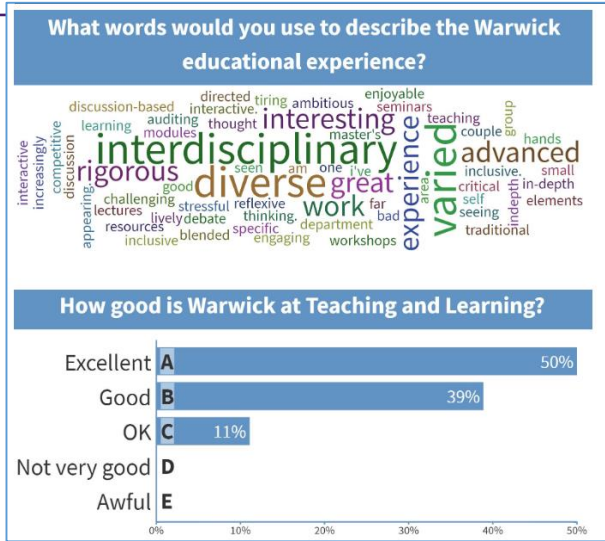
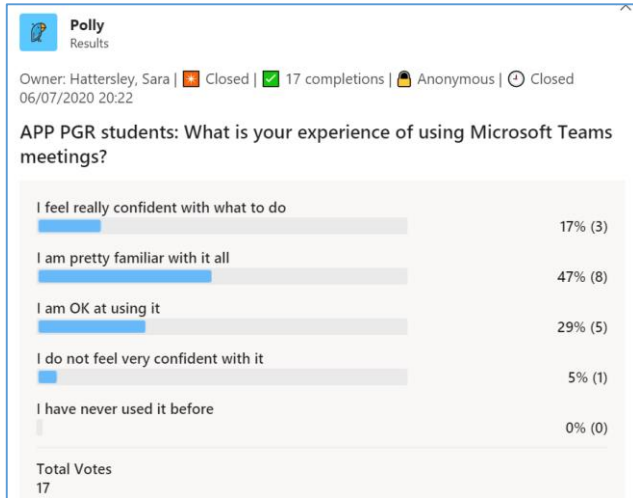
Covid-19 is a chance to create a new model of knowledge transfer

UK academics 'at breaking point' over shift to online teaching

Cancel the face to face teaching

Covid-19 increasing risk of burnout amongst academics

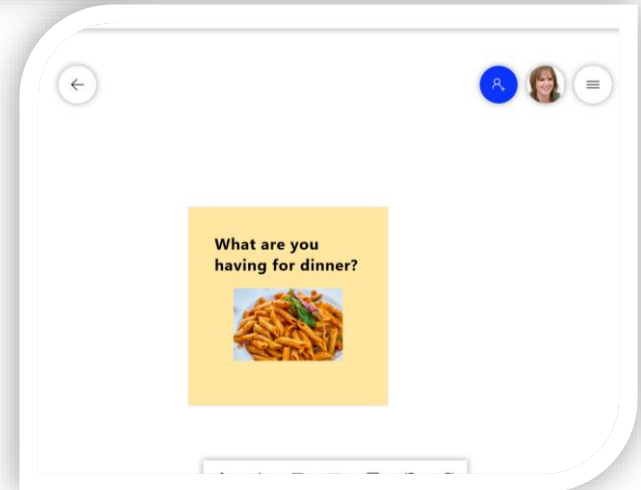
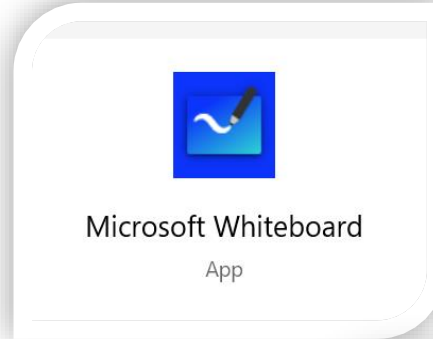
Polling



- Live polling is a great way to **enable group participation** and can be deployed for a range of purposes (assessment of group knowledge, crowdsourcing, choice of activities etc).
- Polling apps can be **embedded in live chat streams** (e.g. Polly) or **enabled 'outside' but in parallel** to a synchronous teaching session.
- **Multiple devices** are sometimes helpful (e.g. using a phone).
- Polling can take **multiple forms** - closed questions, open questions, images, word clouds, drawings etc).
- **Results from polling can be kept, saved and shared** if desired.

Microsoft Whiteboard

- Microsoft Whiteboard is a **digital interactive whiteboard** – you can access it via the app or browser (although the app has more functionality). Whiteboard can enable brainstorming and collaboration in Microsoft Teams.
- The whiteboard can be used for brainstorming, visualising concepts, collaborating, discussions in seminars etc.



Collaborating together

- Microsoft Office **Online** allows you to edit and **collaborate PowerPoint** presentations right inside of a **web** browser
- You may want to use this to edit documents, drag and drop, make posters, team discussions etc.
- [Link to activity \(demo\)](#)



Pitfalls/things to look out for...

- Cameras and mics – affective responses.
- Connection problems and contingency
- Consider students access to technology – reliable internet connection and physical devices and software.
- Real time interaction but it may not be possible for all students connecting from different time zones, attending to care responsibilities etc.
- Number of students - logistics

Accessibility and inclusivity

- Live captions in Teams
- Live interactive sessions provides an opportunity for student voice
- Record sessions for access later
- Consider offering flexibility and alternatives to students who may have access issues

Future workshops

- LDCU Workshops - <https://warwick.ac.uk/ldcuevents>
- Teach for Learning Online - <https://moodle.warwick.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=38299>
- ABC Learning Design - <https://moodle.warwick.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=38475>