Collaborative learning

When planning your teaching you may wish to structure activities to enable peer exchange and collaborative learning. As a first step, review the Learning Outcomes and consider what students need to do to demonstrate their understanding. As a second step, consider what activities are best suited to synchronous (live) or asynchronous (recorded/ curated/ self-paced) learning. If you decide to provide a mix of synchronous and asynchronous interactions consider the accessibility of the resources and platforms you are using as well as students' technological access, digital skills and broadband speeds. Build in opportunities for students to trial using the platform or to engage in a low stake activity first.

Breakout Rooms on MS Teams

There are many ways of supporting students to work collaboratively such as Canvas Groups, Canvas Collaboration, Canvas Discussion Boards, JamBoard, Google Docs etc. MS Teams enables both synchronous and asynchronous learning and the following document and related video brings you through how to establish breakout rooms on MS Teams.

Breakout groups are supported in MS Teams but require the creation of multiple channels under your main Team with the manual addition of students to each group. However, once set up, you can keep the same set up and just replace the members.

Video overview

Creating breakout rooms in MS Teams https://youtu.be/b1r5sOZHHzc

Setting your groups up

1: Create a Team and name. Click "build a team from scratch". Mark the Team as private and by invitation only. Add members manually.

2: Once created click on the 3 dots next to Team name and select "Add Channel" from the drop-down menu. Name this channel "Group A,". Change the privacy to "Private", then add your members. It is important to change the privacy setting at the start as you cannot do afterwards.

3: If you want the participants to engage in a particular exercise, you can pre-load this on the main area or in each group.

4: Once your meeting is running, simply move to each channel/group and select the camera button at the button of the screen and click to "Meet Now". Repeat this for each of the other groups. This is how your students will be able to go into their respective groups.

*If you are setting the groups up on an IPad the "Meet Now" button is absent so you will need to create the links via your Outlook Calendar on the Desktop app (not via the Browser). Open Calendar and click "New Teams Meeting" to create a new link for a unique meeting. Highlight this and copy and paste this into Group A. Redo by creating another link in your calendar and pasting to Group B.

Moving between groups

Click on the "Meet now" link in one of the groups to enter the group area. The option to return to the main group should appear on your left margin as a button.

*** Don't exit by hanging up using the red phone symbol.*

Once your session has begun, the participants will need a little bit of help to access their group. Make sure each participant knows which Group they are in, i.e. Group 1, Group 2. They then need to be guided to that channel/group. First click on Team icon on left and go to Test Team and select Group 1 channel. They can then click the "Join" button and immediately enter the group. Make sure they are clear on what task they need to complete, what time they have allocated and how to return to the main area.

Working on an exercise

Upload the document or PowerPoint into the group area. Participants will need a little guidance to access the document. Have the participants click on the Teams icon on the left margin and then click on Teams Group 1 channel. Click on Files tab to access the document and then select "Edit in teams". Each student will need to follow this step to be able to edit the document or PowerPoint slide.

Sharing work in main session

Open the PowerPoint slides or Word document in the browser and have a representative from each group share their screen.

Words of caution

- If students start typing in the conversation area, the button to re-join the class meeting button moves further down the page. Either add a new link each time or delete previous chat.
- Any student who has ever joined a meeting room / channel will still see notifications for ongoing chats if you retain the same meeting link. Its best to add a new link each time.
- Remind students not to click the red 'hang up' button. They can be re-added to group but its easier to remind them from the outset.