

Five Edu Technologies for collaborative modules (during and post Covid)

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1. Introduction

This paper looks at five educational technologies that facilitate active learning which has many benefits ([Zhuang et al., 2018](#)) in collaborative modules during Covid times (when face-to-face learning is not possible) and that will also be beneficial post-Covid.

2. Educational technology

2.1. Collaborative module

In the Collaboration module, the students participate actively in each session of the course. In normal times, this would include many group sessions in a flat room. However, due to Covid-19, the module had to pivot to an online collaboration model. Several education technologies were used throughout the module including a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE-[Moodle](#)), a virtual meeting tool ([Zoom](#)), collaborative documents ([Google Docs](#)), a peer review tool ([peer review workshop](#)), an activity scheduling tool ([scheduler](#)). There has always been an online element to the module and it has been strengthened the year out of necessity.

Virtual Learning Environment

A VLE is essential for a hybrid mode of teaching and learning. At the most basic level, it is a repository of resources for students. The VLE hosts files, videos and quizzes for students that are essential to their learning when face-to-face teaching is not possible.

Virtual Meeting Tool

The virtual meeting tool was essential for hosting synchronous sessions with students. These sessions were not traditional lectures, but rather interactive sessions where the lecturer could check students' understanding of material, students could ask questions and seek clarification on different topics. These sessions were recorded and made available on the VLE to all students, and they were particularly useful for students who were unable to attend or had internet connectivity problems.

Collaborative Documents

Students are expected to work collaboratively on electronic documents ([Kleppner, 2013](#)) throughout the semester. In the past, this might have been done in consultation with a face-to-face session, but students had to learn how to use, comment and contribute to shared documents as a key component of the course.

Peer Review

Research shows that students learn a lot by reviewing and providing peer feedback ([Dochy, et al., 1999](#)). Students are often wary of peer review and it helps if it can be done anonymously. In the peer review workshop on Moodle, one participant reviews the other's submission anonymously and provides some feedback. In large classes, it can be difficult to provide timely feedback for formative or low-stakes assessment and to set up a peer review activity manually. The use of this tool addressed both of these issues.

Scheduling Tool

Interactive oral examination is a process of assessment for promoting academic integrity and authenticity ([Logan et al., 2017](#)). When dealing with a large number of groups, scheduling time slots for each group is another time consuming job. Moodle scheduler makes the scheduling job easy and convenient. Teachers can assign time slots for meetings, or alternatively, students can pick their preferred time slots from the list.

3. Conclusion

The five educational technologies outlined here have proven to be very useful in teaching collaborative modules during Covid pandemic and will continue to be used afterwards.