

Tools for Communicating with Students Online

Tool	Examples	When to use the tool
Announcement	Welcome message to the class at the beginning of the semester.	One-way communication of important notices to the whole class.
Discussion forum (class or group)	Class Q&A forum. Facilitation on collaborative work in small group tasks.	Use a discussion forum for general or assessment specific Q&A to make information available to all students. Students can subscribe to forums and receive email updates. Use group discussion forums for online activities to help students share ideas and reflect on course content.
Microsoft Teams	Class webinar. Group presentations with live Q&A. Virtual office hour for one-on-one consultation.	When interactivity and real time participation is necessary for the learning to be effective, you can use Microsoft Teams for the learning activity.
Email	Group mailing lists. Individual participation reminders/follow-up.	Email is good for providing 'closed channel' feedback to select groups. Private conversations involving an individual student or smaller groups of students can also be done via email.
ePortfolio	Group portfolio work. Individual portfolio work.	Use the portfolios when students are required to collect and showcase their learning through various artefacts and medium. This can be a group portfolio work or individual, allowing feedback (communication) from the lecturer.
Blog	Lecturer's blog for the paper. Student group blog on special topics. Individual blog as a reflective writing task.	A lecturer's blog can be used to deliver updates, if this is appropriate for your paper. Student groups can post to a group blog as a way of collaborating on content co-creation, or information sharing. For smaller classes, individual students could keep their own blog as part of their assessment, allowing peers and lecturers to provide feedback or interact with their posts.

Journal	Weekly reflective writing task, as a group or individual.	<p>A journal is a good way for one-to-one or one-to-few communication.</p> <p>It is often used for reflective writing or a way for students to note their own learning progress.</p> <p>Note: You don't have to mark all the journal entries. You can get them to submit selected pieces for marking.</p>
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