# Video Communication Essentials

The following guidance is offered to help maximise online video interaction for both participants and presenters.

## 1. Manage your physical environment

Try to find and use locations that maximise your connectivity. Room decoration, layout and furniture can often impact upon Wi-Fi signal strength.



Be aware of room lighting. Are there steps you can take to bring clarity and definition to the image you portray onscreen?

How do you model the difference between formal and informal interactions? (e.g. Lectures, Tutorials) For example, are you able to adjust your camera height so you can stand to present formal content? (e.g. TED talks). Can you change location to reflect this shift in style?



Be aware of background noises. Using headphones, where possible can eliminate sounds picked up by the microphone from your computer speakers.



Be aware of how you frame what is in view. Check your background and surroundings to ensure that you are comfortable with what is being shared.

## 2. Hold pre-session conversations and run check-ins

If you are planning to record elements of a session make sure you have agreed consent from all attendees before they enter the digital space. Never ask this question from inside the meeting room as it places undue pressure on an individual to identify themselves. Also, consider the impact this may have on a groups willingness to engage with a task or activity.

If sessions are to be recorded, always save to the cloud. This ensures safe storage, creates shareable links, and allows for the auto creation of audio transcripts.

Create opportunities for individuals to test out the equipment being used to engage with taught content and online communication. Plan how this will be managed (staff facilitation or peer support via confident IT users?)

## 3. Consider the Feelings of Others

Online video communication often fosters very linear conversations and can miss many of the non-verbal cues and cross room conversations that take place in the physical environment.

Individuals encounter a wall of faces when they enter a virtual room and being aware of how this may make people feel is important. It is essential to consider the practices you can employ to enable safe engagement and support interaction. How might you utilise breakout spaces to facilitate small group conversations and foster a sense of community?

## 4. Develop Standard Protocols and Practices

Consider how you will manage the use of webcams and participant audio. Will they remain off for large lectures and only turned on for small informal activities, tutorials and breakout tasks?

How will you make use of chat during live sessions? How will it be monitored and managed? Will this role be undertaken by a colleague or given to a member of the group? How will chat messages inform session delivery? Will you interject, pause for review, or pick these up at the end of the session?

Discuss how you will use room reactions (Raise hand, thumbs up, go slower, etc..) during sessions. Adopt standard practices and share this with everyone involved so that they know what to expect and how to interact when working in this environment.