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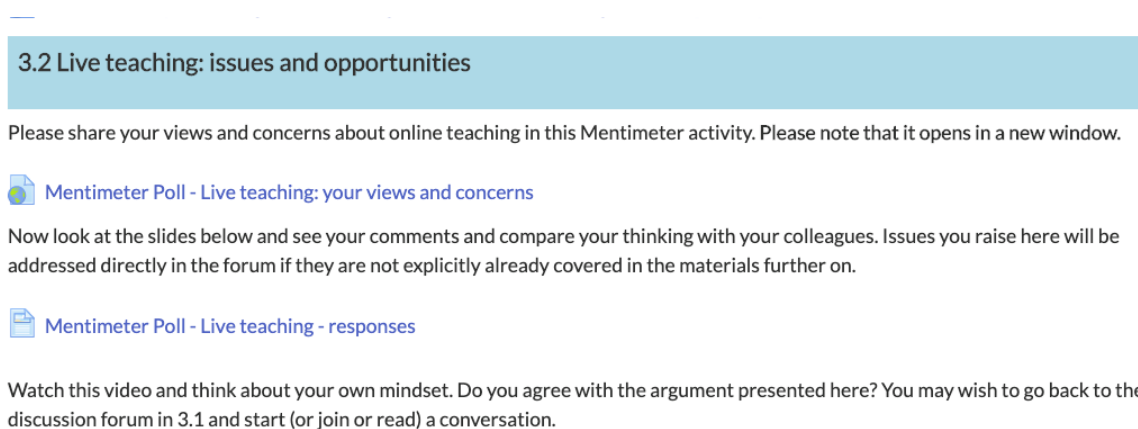
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Mentimeter: Empowering presenters and students in online teaching

We have recently seen the number of users of Mentimeter breach the 1,000 mark. That the numbers of colleagues (and students) creating presentations is still increasing is testament, we believe, to the flexibility of Mentimeter as a tool to support engagement and indeed empowerment even where teaching has been increasingly dependent on online media. There have been challenges and even abuses of the tool by a very small proportion of students so GLT and ILS always advise colleagues to familiarise themselves with the [guidance on pre-empting or responding to such subversive behaviours](#).

The general recommendation is for new users in online spaces is to start by using Mentimeter asynchronously. This contrasts profoundly with the ways in which Mentimeter is optimised in face to face contexts. In blended/ hybrid modes of teaching Mentimeter presentations are created with speculative, opinion-based or diagnostic type questions in them and then shared with the students for completion before a 'live' session or concept checking, evaluation or review questions are used and shared *after* a live session. At Greenwich, Moodle is the place where such sharing occurs for most lecturers and the images below show how the 'voting link' is shared (and contextualised) and how the results are shared below that (also with contextualisation):



The screenshot shows a Moodle presentation slide with a light blue header. The header text is '3.2 Live teaching: issues and opportunities'. Below the header, there is a paragraph of text: 'Please share your views and concerns about online teaching in this Mentimeter activity. Please note that it opens in a new window.' This is followed by a blue icon of a document with a globe and the text 'Mentimeter Poll - Live teaching: your views and concerns'. Below this is another paragraph: 'Now look at the slides below and see your comments and compare your thinking with your colleagues. Issues you raise here will be addressed directly in the forum if they are not explicitly already covered in the materials further on.' This is followed by another blue icon of a document with a globe and the text 'Mentimeter Poll - Live teaching - responses'. At the bottom, there is a final paragraph: 'Watch this video and think about your own mindset. Do you agree with the argument presented here? You may wish to go back to the discussion forum in 3.1 and start (or join or read) a conversation.'

Fig 1: Links to Mentimeter voting link and embedded version on the presentation containing all responses.

When students have responded to the 'poll' they are guided by the next link to the responses. Here could be a direct link to the presentation or, for those comfortable using embed codes, the embedded version reduces the number of clicks and windows and brings the Mentimeter context closer to the rest of the content in Moodle:

Adjusting to Blended Learning Environment (ABLE)-CPD

DASHBOARD / MY MODULES / ADJUSTING TO BLENDED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (ABLE) - CPD / 3. SEMINARS, TUTORIALS AND ONE-TO-ONES
/ MENTIMETER POLL - LIVE TEACHING - RESPONSES

Mentimeter Poll - Live teaching - responses

Use the right arrow on your keyboard to advance the slides if no arrow is visible on screen.

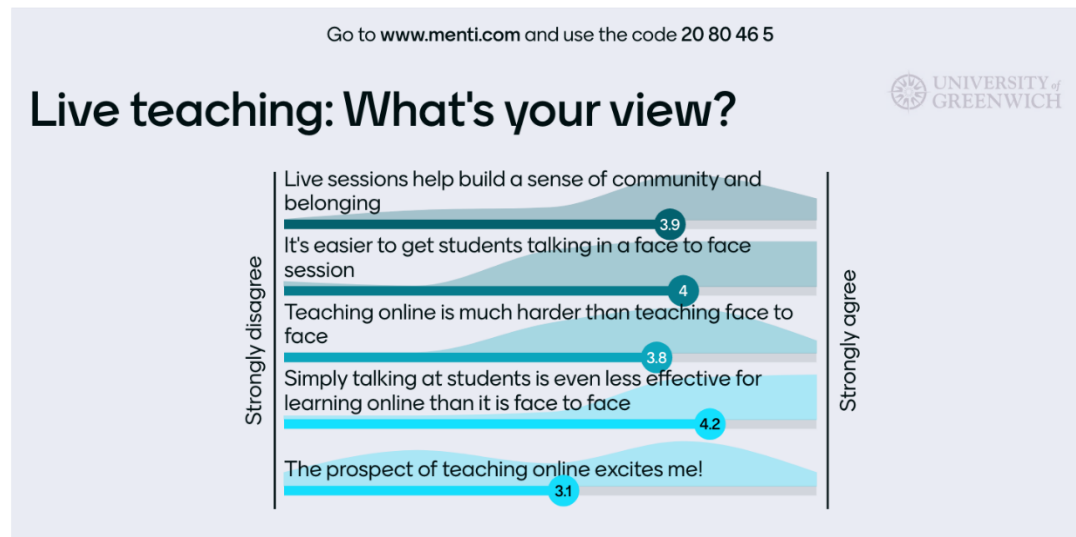


Fig 2: Embedded presentation with live, dynamic results in a Moodle 'page'.

For those who are already comfortable teaching online and switching between tools AND have confidence that their cohorts of students are adequately prepared and equipped to participate, using Mentimeter for synchronous teaching can go a long way to stimulating increased engagement. Below two colleagues, Gerhard Kristandl and Richard Ward share their reflections on using Mentimeter generally and in live online sessions which we discussed as part of their work towards achieving 'Empowered Presenter' status ([more information here](#)).

Gerhard:

I am a course leader for three modules in the Faculty of Business across years 1, 2 and 3, all undergraduate. Mentimeter is an extremely useful tool for me to achieve several outcomes. I have been using Mentimeter for about 3 years now, and it has made a major difference in my teaching approach. It has increased participation and student equity in sessions several fold. Before, I had the typical split of a class into "knows things but is too timid", "very vocal and louder than everybody else", "thinks they know everything", and/or "has no clue, knows it, but doesn't dare ask at risk of sounding stupid". All of these I could now get to participate. The timid ones gained confidence after a few sessions with Mentimeter – the vocal ones got a reality check (or confirmation) – and the ones without a clue gained said "clue". It enabled inclusivity, accessibility (to those with limitations to express themselves), diversity (in question variety), and a "fighting spirit" when it comes to competitions (especially when I pepper them with prizes).

In live online sessions I have found I am using it in two main ways. Firstly for revision of previous sessions. I do this using “Select Answer” in the Quiz Competition Types section. The timed element (I set this to 25 seconds to allow for enough thinking time and less random guessing) is very useful. The leaderboard triggers competition between students – everybody wants to win! I have framed the weekly review questions as a ‘pub quiz’ and decided to push the idea of a league. You would not believe how much this triggers the competitive nature of students! Students could participate with a pseudonym or their own name (the vast majority chose the latter). I would say this type as my favourite one, as it allows me to add a typical “Quiz Show” elements to it.

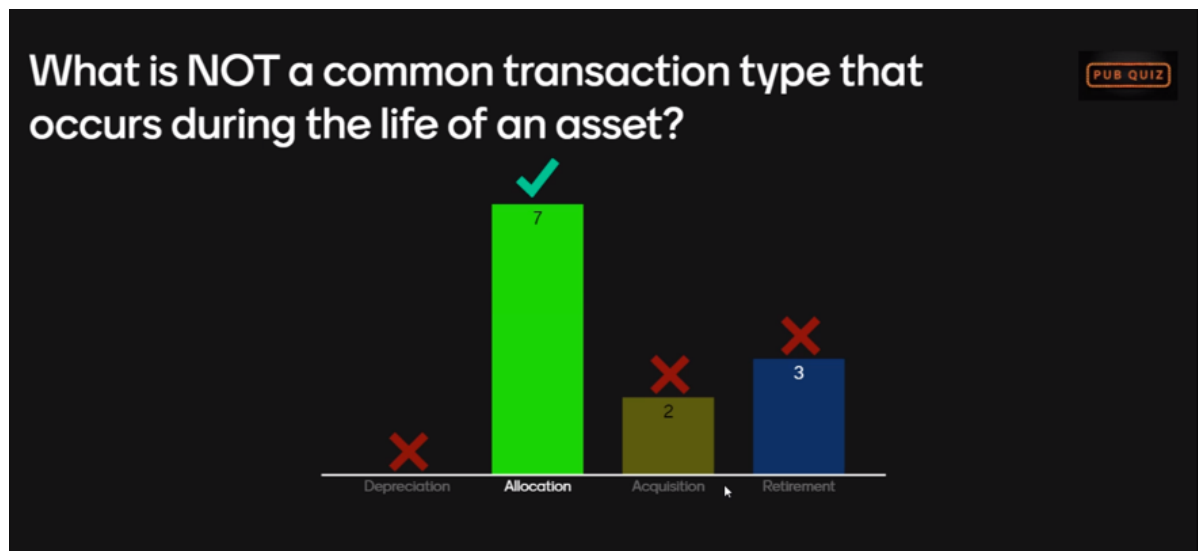


Fig 3: A quiz slide showing responses

I also use a lot of Active application of prepared material type questions. For this, I use almost all types of question that Mentimeter offers. One example is the 2x2 grid to ask students to plot e.g. managerial styles onto the Blake-Mouton grid scales to ask students to indicate which cost components make up “prime cost” or set up an investigation into fraud case vignettes where students ‘advise’ me on what should happen next in a given case study.

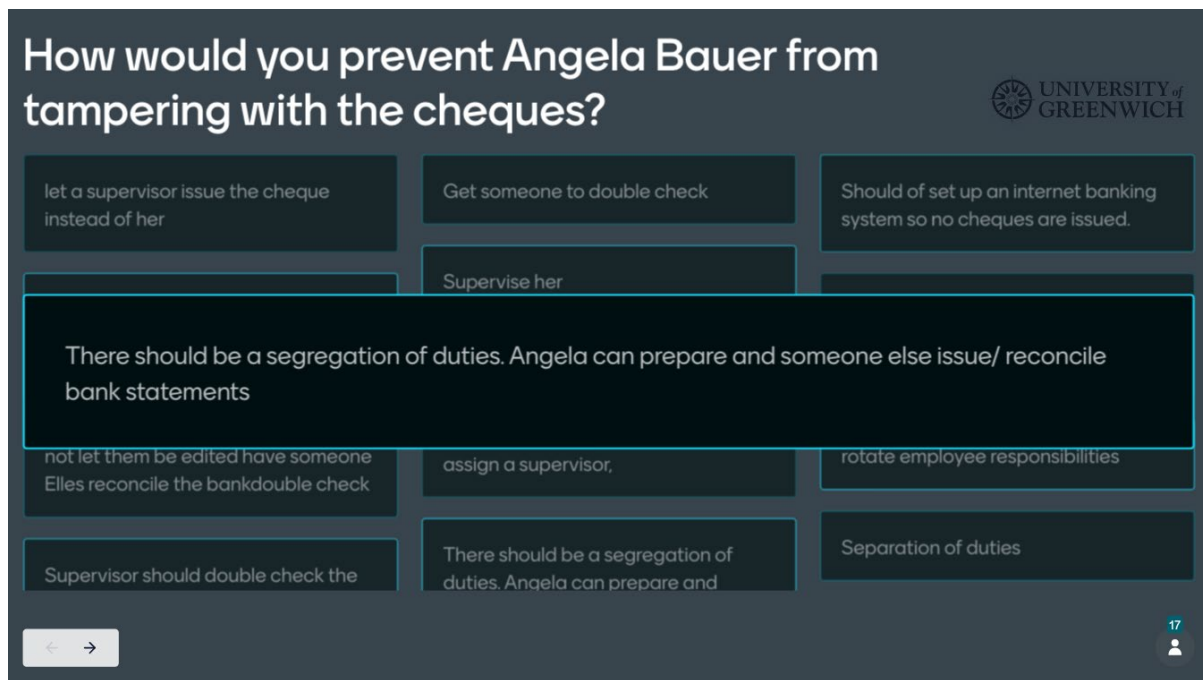


Fig 4: Mentimeter presentation slide showing open text responses to a question about a case study.

Richard:

I've used Mentimeter across all cohorts on the paramedic degree programme on a variety of different modules, as a teaching tool. I use it to ascertain knowledge levels prior to taught sessions and I've used it to collect feedback following teaching sessions that I've delivered to colleagues in my School. I predominantly use the multiple choice, word cloud and open-ended questions slides alongside using the question function on all content slides. I always block profanities, and allow students to ask questions on any slides they choose. I use images and gifs to add an element of fun to my slides and to visually stimulate my audience. I often upload pre-prepared powerpoints, if I'm short on time, into Mentimeter for ease.

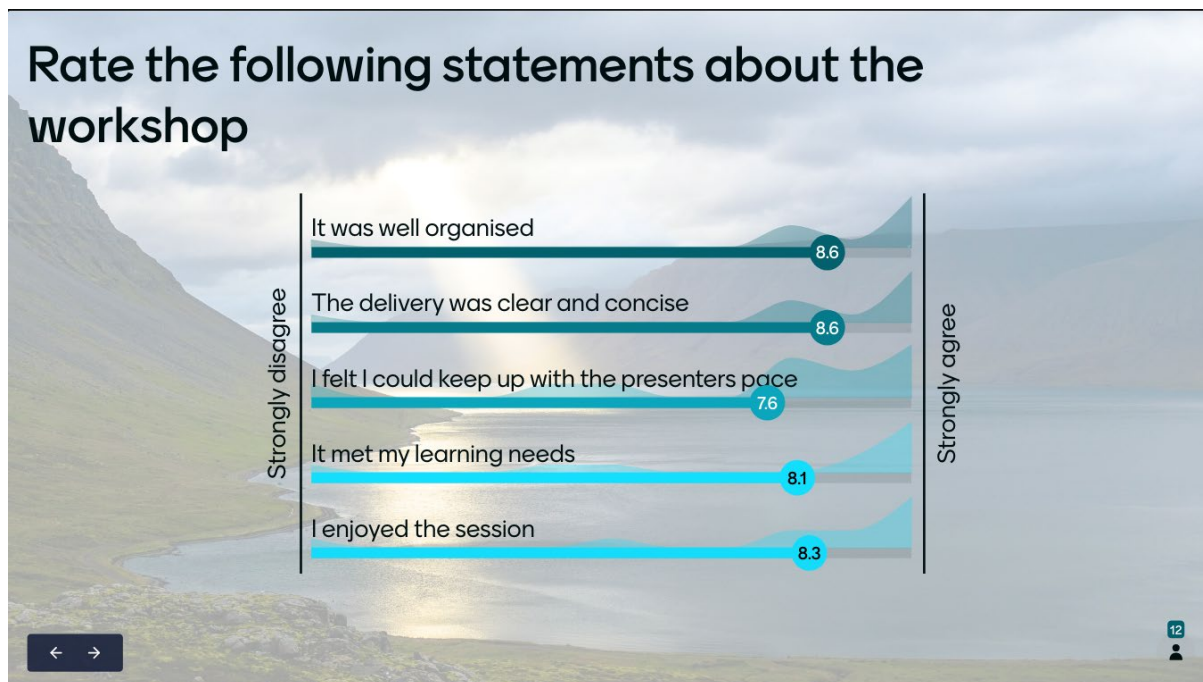


Fig 5: Mentimeter rating scales used as evaluation tool in an online workshop

Mentimeter I feel has genuinely allowed my teaching to really engage those students who would normally sit in a classroom (or online space) very quietly, not willing to ask or answer a question. With the use of the anonymous question and answer function, these students suddenly come to life and get to ask questions they would have previously been too shy to, or contribute answers, thoughts and opinions confidently. It also adds a different experience to the students, rather than academic staff using 'another powerpoint'. I feel it is intuitive to use and can easily be logged into by students in the classroom, but also by any student who is unable to attend the lecture in person. I feel the principle benefits are that it is very flexible and inclusive, engaging students on a new level. You can create interactive content very quickly, even under a real time pressure. I also really like the ability to share presentations with others at my organisation and look for inspiration from colleagues myself.

I have found that existing students have been able to easily adapt to using Mentimeter in online sessions that are live as most of us in Paramedic Science tend to use it anyway. First years need more guidance and easing in. I have found it an invaluable tool for getting the student voice into these live sessions as otherwise it can be just one or two students contributing or, worse, none of them! Using Mentimeter gives them a chance to see where they are at in terms of their understanding and it can act as a channel for me to ask follow up questions with more likelihood that some of them will be willing to move to the next level of participation and turn on their microphones.

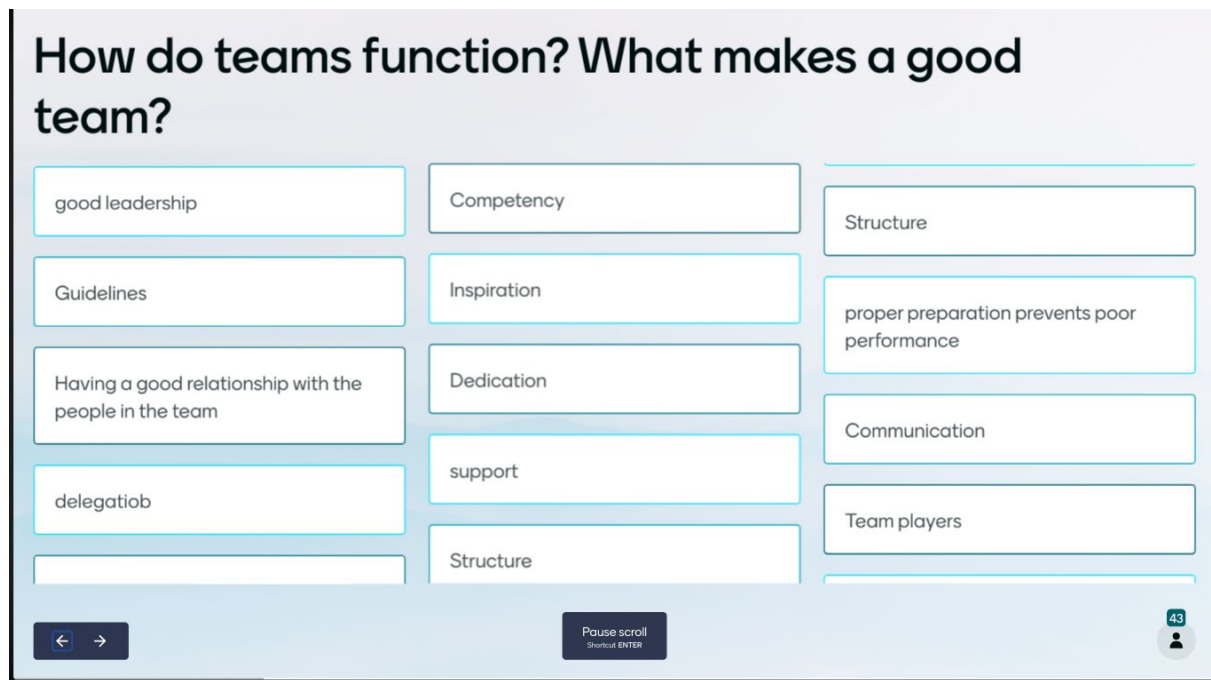


Fig 6: Paramedic Science student responses to questions about the function of teams.

Mentimeter is one of the most flexible and easy to learn tools for both constructing presentations slides and for integrating staged opportunities for interaction. In online spaces it actually reveals new dimensions as a tool for stimulating engagement pre, in and post live sessions.

Martin Compton

Gerhard Kristandl

Richard Ward