# Practical Strategies for… engaging students in digital learning environments (cameras on or off?)

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# Session outline

This session will offer you the opportunity to explore and develop your digital teaching practices and consider ways to engage students with digital learning.

- Introductions.

- Think about why we and our students use (or don't use) cameras.

- Consider ways we can engage students during live and asynchronous digital teaching and learning activities.

- Group activity: online engagement framework.

- Engagement and collaboration resource.

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# VIRTUAL CLASSROOMS

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## Etiquette

During discussions, please use the **raise your hand** function and wait for the lecturer or facilitator to ask you to speak.
**Mute your microphone** unless it's your turn to speak.
**You can type a question or comment at any time** in the text chat.

## Identity

**Why is my name displayed?**
Your name is displayed to the lecturer or facilitator and the other students and you are able to see their names. This is to help keep the learning space secure, support academic community and student engagement, and run the session effectively.
**Do I have to turn my video on?**
No, you don't have to.  However turning your video on when you speak can make it easier for us to get to know each other and work together.

## This class may be recorded

**Your lecturer will tell you whenever recording starts and stops.**
**Who can view the recording?**  Only the students and staff on this Course. You must not share it further. To do so would breach University regulations, copyright law and, perhaps most importantly, the trust that's required between us all to keep your learning environment safe.
**What if I don't want to be recorded?**  You can ask the lecturer in advance of the lecture, or during it, to stop recording while you contribute.
**Is the text chat recorded?**  Normally, yes. The lecturer or facilitator will tell you whether the chat is anonymous or identifiable.
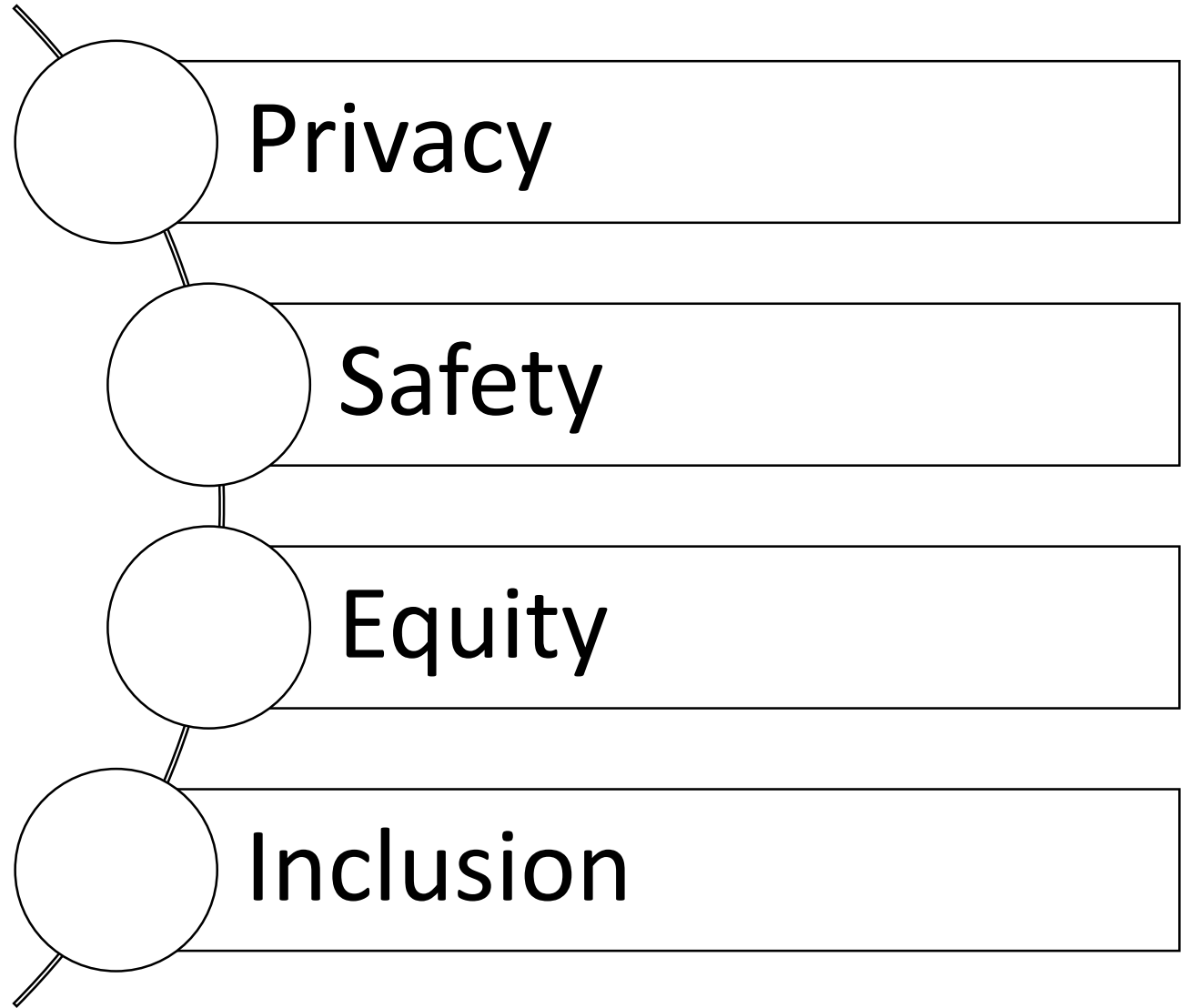
# Introductions

- Introduce yourself In the chat area
- You might want to include some information about your role and where you're based.

Celeste McLaughlin

Head of Academic Development for Digital Education

Institute for Academic Development

Concerns about camera use

Privacy

Safety

Equity

Inclusion

https://edin.ac/36E9Hun

" I really felt it was hard to get to know them, because all you would see is either, at worst just a name, and you would have nothing to hang, you know whether they're male, female, short, tall, you know, anything about them, other than the username, and they're typing in a chat. So from my perspective that was quite unnerving, sometimes I would get an avatar, so I'd see a cat, you know, and occasionally you would get a photograph of the person, on their picture, but they almost never put their cameras on, or occasionally they put the camera on, once in a blue moon, and then all of a sudden, you have this more of a connection.

" For the synchronous sessions what I found really disheartening was the fact that I was sitting here my little attic bed, looking at my screen, and I had these …. I had these bubbles with the initials, but I had no faces, you have no way of reading the room, you have no way of actually understanding of, you know getting in an idea of whether students have actually understood what you were just on about, or whether you need to you know, what kind of questions you need to ask and so on, because it's just a kind of blank screen of you know, these bubbles, and occasionally someone ask something but they don't necessarily, and you can see that, when you do face to face teaching you can actually see who has a couple of questions, who might want to ask something, with whether they got it or they didn't, and you know it's a completely different form of interaction really, and I find that really disheartening

# Table 2: Impact on students' contribution to synchronous learning activities
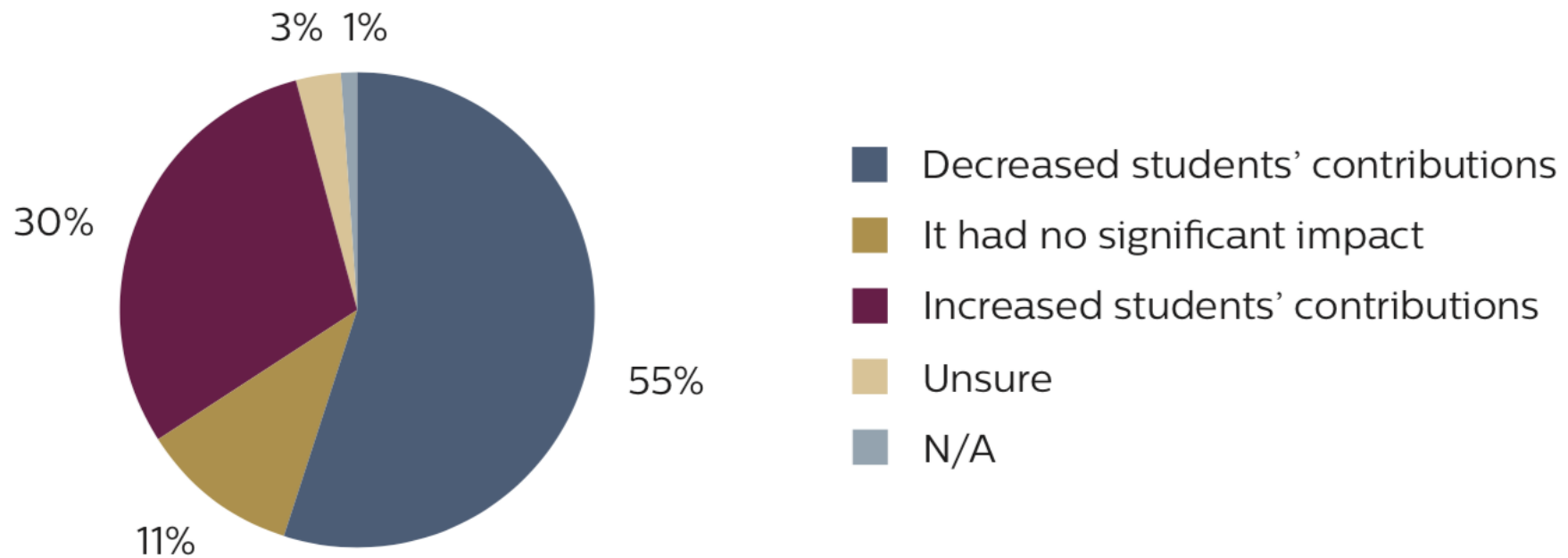


Legend:
- Decreased students' contributions — 55%
- It had no significant impact — 11%
- Increased students' contributions — 30%
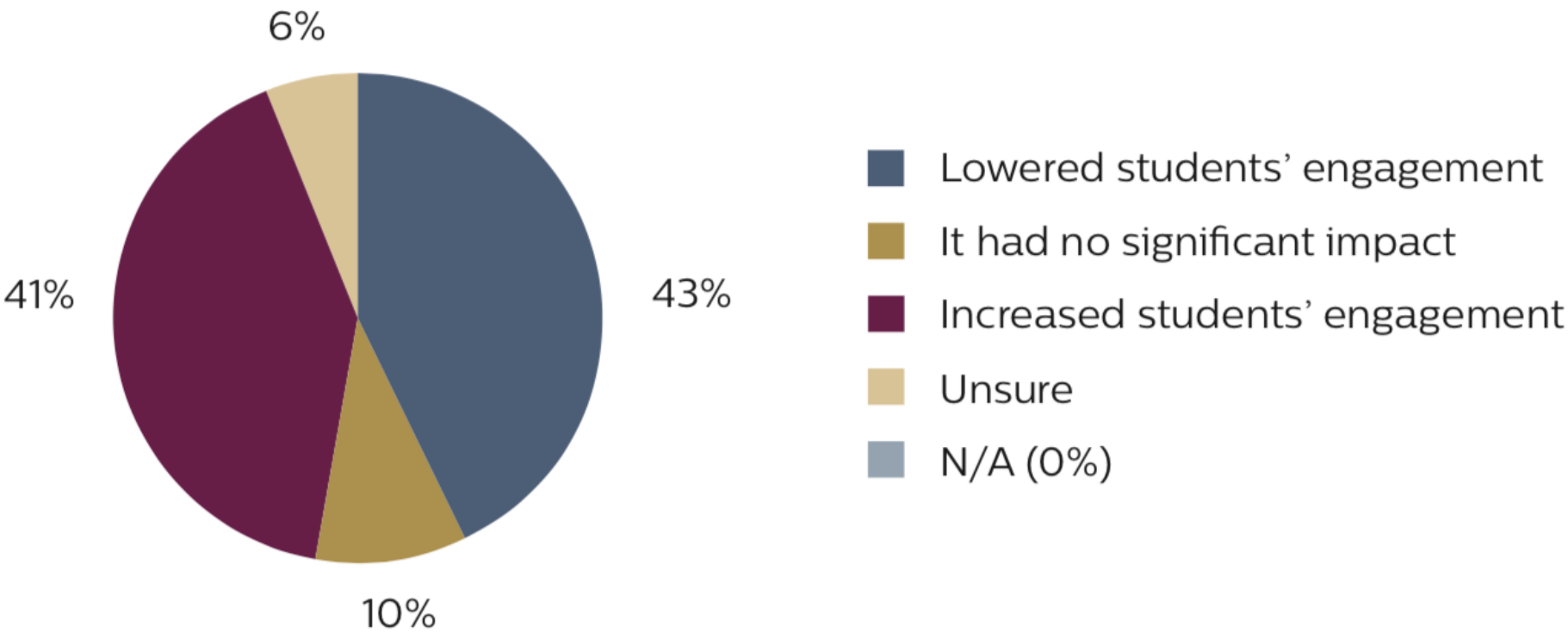- Unsure — 3%
- N/A — 1%

QAA. (2022). From Pivot to Permanent: Examining Lessons Learned from the Shift to Online and Hybrid Teaching and Learning.

# Building student engagement during live teaching

- Chat boxes
- Emojis
- Polls
- Whiteboards (allows anonymous contributions)
- Breakout groups

# Table 1: Impact on students' engagement in asynchronous learning activities



Legend:
- Lowered students' engagement — 43%
- It had no significant impact — 10%
- Increased students' engagement — 41%
- Unsure — 6%
- N/A (0%)

QAA. (2022). From Pivot to Permanent: Examining Lessons Learned from the Shift to Online and Hybrid Teaching and Learning.
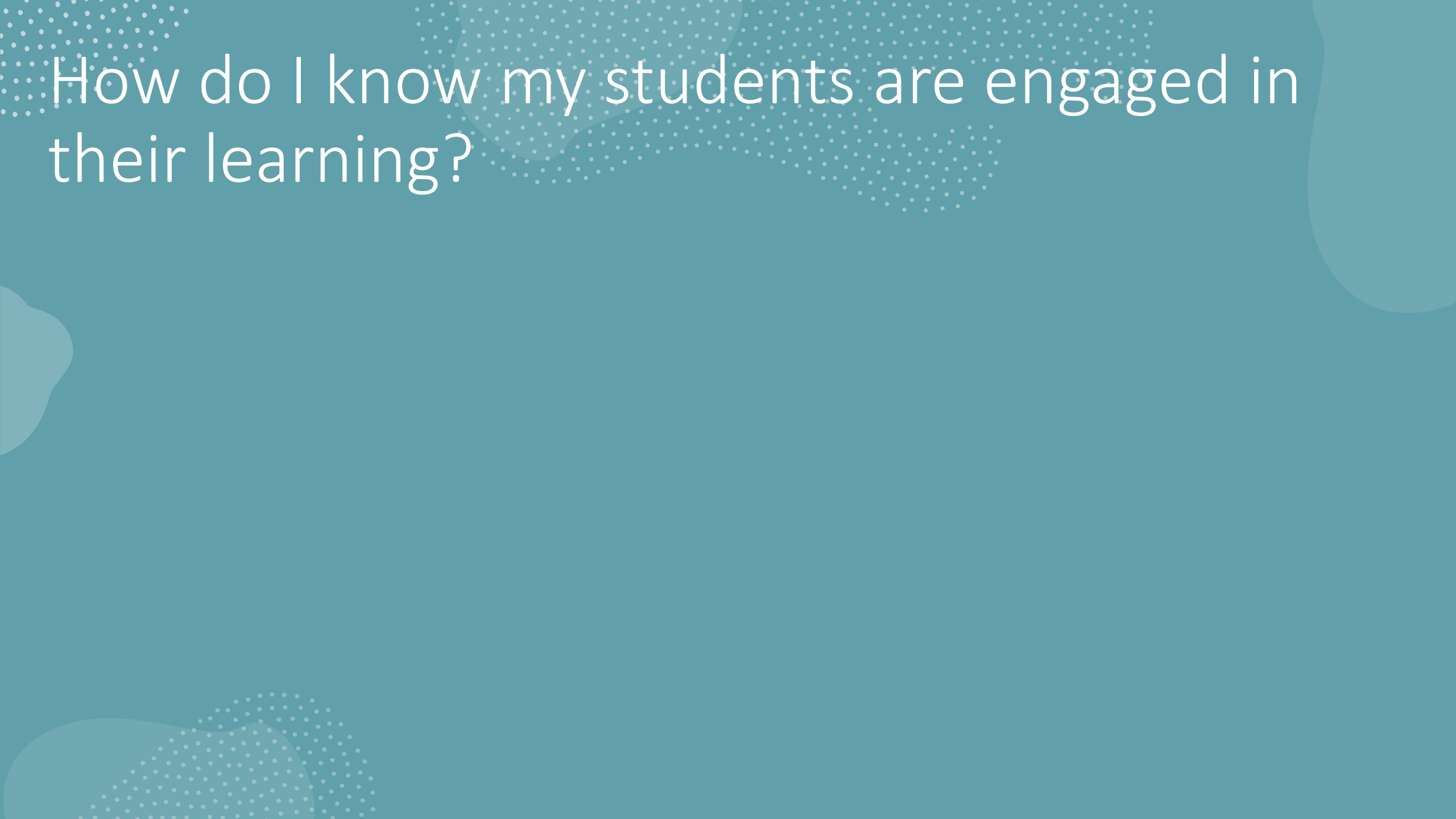
# How do I know my students are engaged in their learning?

# Frameworks

- Community of Inquiry

- An online engagement framework for higher education

## Cognitive presence
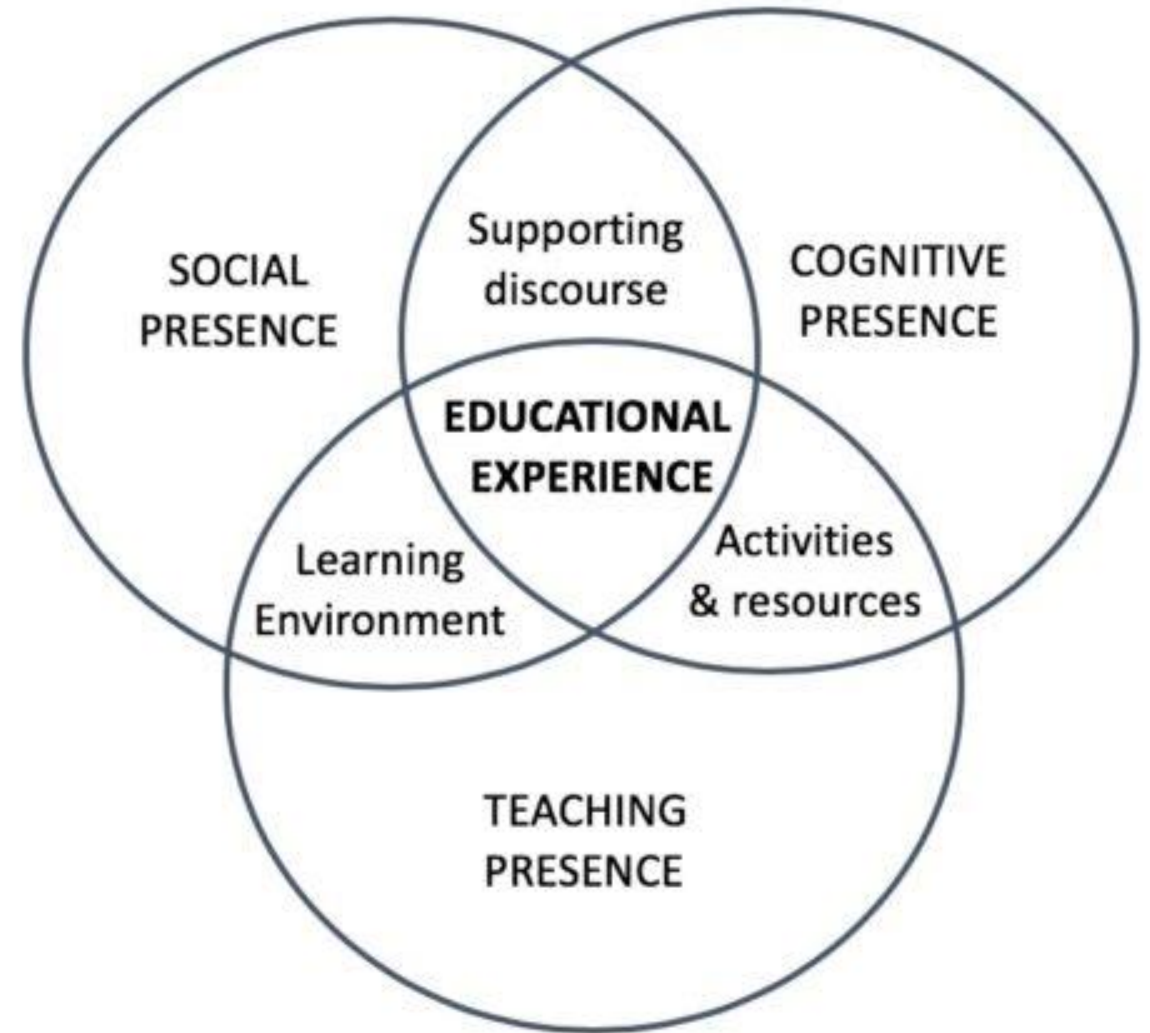Extent to which participants can construct meaning.

## Social presence
Being able to contribute as 'real people'. Social and emotional aspects.

## Teaching presence
Designing and directing to realising meaningful and educational learning outcomes.

# Community of Inquiry



SOCIAL PRESENCE

Supporting discourse

COGNITIVE PRESENCE

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Learning Environment

Activities & resources

TEACHING PRESENCE

Adapted from Garrison, Anderson & Archer (1999)

# Online Engagement Framework
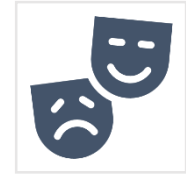
**Social engagement**

**Cognitive engagement**

**Behavioural engagement**

**Collaborative engagement**

**Emotional engagement**

Redmond et al, 2018

# Engagement & collaboration

- Collaborative group activities
- Co-creation
- Open education
- Wikipedia

Video exploring some ideas about activities designed to help engage students : https://edin.ac/3pPe4z4

Photo by Tim Marshall on Unsplash

# References & Resources

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