

Tips for running virtual meetings

If you've decided to have a go at running a virtual meeting we've put together a few pointers that may help. If you've never run a virtual meeting before it may be a good idea to have a practice run with another course leader or a friend. If you would like to test it out on me, I'm happy to do so. We can have a virtual coffee at the same time! - Sarah

KEEP IT SIMPLE:

- Designate one person as a facilitator (presenter) and another person to manage the technology (chat, breakout rooms).
- Set clear joining times and keep to the finish time as well.
- Make the purpose of session clear at the beginning - what we're going to cover and how.
- Ensure all instructions are clear and as straightforward as possible. Check understanding to make sure people know what is being asked.



RULES:

- Agree 'rules' at the beginning. These could be 'don't look at your phone' and 'don't eat during the call'.
- Make a list with the order for people to speak and show this at the beginning, so that everyone knows when it's their turn. This will avoid people talking over each other and will ensure everyone gets a chance.
- Always introduce everyone at the beginning of each session.





LOGISTICS:

- It can be helpful to have what you are asking them to do on the screen – basic instructions, questions etc.
- Making up a simple set of PowerPoint slides to share is perfect; use words and images to bring your instructions to life (a picture paints a thousand words).
- If you do need to share your screen during a video call, take a few seconds to prepare before you hit that share button. Clear your desktop of any extra tabs or programs you may have open and make sure any private or sensitive information is hidden.
- Most platforms have a 'whiteboard' but you can also use PowerPoint to collect any answers to questions.

GOOD PRACTICE:

- Make sure you're in a well-lit room, free from any distractions.
- Try to look into the camera when you talk. If you look at yourself or others on your screen, it may look like you're looking at something else.
- When you're not talking, make sure you're paying attention to whoever's speaking or sharing their screen and that you're looking at any materials you may need to reference. (Again, others can see where you're looking).



LOOKING AFTER PEOPLE:

- Make small talk – this can help people feel connected.
- Chat is good for answering questions as everyone responds at the same time. The facilitator can then comment, offer feedback or invite individuals to expand on their response.
- We recommend NOT recording sessions as this may have a negative influence participant engagement (unless this has been agreed by all participants in advance).
- Put in breaks. These can be 10/15 minutes so people can make a drink then come back refocused.
- Always start with an ice breaker. This could be as simple as 'where are you today?' Or a simple questions or trivia.