Student focus group 2

📅 Fri, 5/13 7:06PM 🕐 46:59

F **Ffion Neal** 00:00

Does anyone have any? Does anyone have any particularly positive or negative experiences of webcam use that they'd like to share? If you want to, like use the raise hand feature or something to answer the questions, then we can work through people.

P **Participant 1** 00:21

I just say that during, say things like workshops and stuff last year, when they put us into breakout rooms, if there was nobody else with the camera, it was just like, awful because you couldn't, I feel like when someone's at least got the camera on, you know, the looking and at least listening, if you want to say that sort of thing directly to them to try and get them involved. Whereas without it was really to just get any sort of interaction from other people sometimes.

F **Ffion Neal** 00:58

Yeah, that's great. Do you think you'd prefer having webcams on in breakout rooms? Would you prefer it if everyone else did?

P **Participant 1** 01:04

Yeah, definitely. Because you just sometimes you just ended up sat there because there was no response? And it was it felt like a waste of time. You didn't know if your own ideas were right, because nobody else were helping out?

F **Ffion Neal** 01:20

Yeah, that's great. Thank you.

P Participant 2 01:22

No, I definitely agree with that. I think, like last year, I did my masters here. And was the whole thing. Oh, yeah, it was online. And I think I was quite lucky in the sense of masters, I don't know, I feel like if people are a bit more invested, they're paying for it like that people did mostly have their cameras on mostly engage when you went into a breakout room. Or you wouldn't be the only one that did like I only had one occasion where I was put in a breakout room. And there's just four blank screens and like, I'm talking, and nobody's you know, sometimes just having no cameras on, the person would like either apologize straightaway give an excuse, you know, like, I'm out, I'm in the car, whatever. Or they will just make a point of speaking quite early on. So you know, kind of probably reassure everyone else that they were there and they were going to like, participate as well. But yeah, we only had one time where, you know, you kind of started speaking, you know, got any response, you can't see anyone. And for me in that case, it happened that the the lecturer was kind of going around from breakout rooms or breakout rooms. So she kind of joined and straightaway was like, Well, this is a bit unfair. And she just got in and then just spoke to me. Because if nobody else was kind of listening back, then I kind of thought it'd be that when you know, when she joined loads of cameras would come on. But they didn't. But no, yeah, it's definitely, it's definitely frustrating. But then also, I did notice that even though sometimes you go to breakout room, and you see a couple cameras off, and you're like, 'This is going to be awkward'. A lot of times, you could tell people were like, trying to make an effort to prove like, if my camera's not on what I'm gonna speak quietly, to kind of, then they were just more in the conversation because if you knew they were going to respond, you were just kind of speak to them by name and without being able to see them. So it's not like it wasn't a completeb barrier was definitely much more comfortable the breakout room when everyone goes

F Ffion Neal 03:27

Yeah, that's great. Thank you. Have we lost someone? I think we have.

C Craig Morley 03:40

Yeah, it looks like Participant 3 is just gone but we can carry on and if you mind to come back, and we can just incorporate her back into the discussion as well.

F Ffion Neal 03:48

Okay, brilliant. I'll move on to the next question, then. What do you think some of the benefits of webcam use are? Do you think that and why would you think lecturers may want you to use your webcams during sessions?

P Participant 2 04:07

I think just the most obvious one is they can tell you're A there and B listening like it, it must be

hard. If you know you've planned your lecture and are used to given it used to give it in person when you can see everyone you can make eye contact to looking at a screen of blank and not even know when if people are engaging with it. So yeah, I think I definitely the biggest I think just as well. It's nice to speak to people's faces. And also maybe you can, you feed off people's expressions. So if everyone has got cameras on, we kind of see people confused or people are really enthusiastic, then you kind of know where to go with it. But obviously, with a blank screen, you've just got no indication other than someone actually typing the chat or speaking off if they had a problem or they weren't getting it or whatever.

F Ffion Neal 04:57

That's brilliant. Thank you

P Participant 1 05:00

Oh, sorry, I miss the question.

F Ffion Neal 05:03

Okay, I'll say it again. Now participant 3 is back. It was what do you think the benefits of webcam use? Are? And why do you think some lectures may want you to use webcams during that class?

P Participant 1 05:14

Okay, yeah, I think obviously, if you have everybody's cameras on, it's easier for the lecturer to see that you're listening. I think a lot of the time, you know, lecturers would even say things like, to people that didn't have the cameras on I hope you're here, because they don't even know if somebody's maybe just logged in and then left until the call ends. So it just assures them that people are listening and the work they've done isn't just a waste, and that people aren't actually there.

F Ffion Neal 05:52

That's great. Thank you. Participant 3, did you catch the question? Yeah, it was, what do you think the benefits of webcam use? Are? And why do you think some lecturers may want you to use them?

P Participant 3 06:09

Um, I think as well, just adding on from what Participant 1 said, it's a lot about like breakout rooms are used quite a lot. And I think, you know, for their benefit, if you go into a breakout room, and it's just full of people, who don't have the cameras on like you. And a lot of the time, it's like you have your camera on, and you're looking at people who don't. And I think that that

can be quite difficult. And on like the lectures part, like they're putting you into a breakout room for 15 minutes and half the time. It's just a complete waste time unless people have the cameras on and are engaging. And I think that was really difficult with the online learning.

F **Ffion Neal** 06:47

Do you prefer to be in a breakout room where everyone's on the camera as well, then?

P **Participant 3** 06:51

Yeah, definitely.

F **Ffion Neal** 06:54

Okay, brilliant. Thank you. Next question. We've got on what are the benefits of webcams explained or discuss with you at the start of term during the initial induction period of online learning? I'd say Not, not a lot, I think our program director was one of our lecturers for one module. And she would say like at the start of a lecture at start the lecture like it would really benefit me if you put your webcams on so I can see you and can see that you're listening. But other than that, I think it wasn't really mentioned in any other module, but not really in great detail when it was mentioned. Do you think you would have benefited from having someone explain the purpose of it? I think it would have encouraged a lot more people to to put it on. But me personally, I think I just sort of had it all anyway. So That's great, thank you.

P **Participant 2** 08:02

I think I'm the same as Millie where it kind of wasn't often said like when we started at the start of the year in September, there wasn't a kind of right, this is how we're gonna do things on Zoom, you should have your cameras on for this reason. But I think where there were cases where when you were in the lecture part, normally when you joined, maybe half people would have the cameras on. I don't think if it was a session where, at the start the lecture did say like, if you can put your cameras on, you would notice a lot more people would normally have them on would put them on, but it could be let's say you went in a breakout room. And then when you came back, the number started to drop again. But I do think as well that when it is mentioned, it was never kind of like 'you should have your cameras on'. You know, the kind of 'here's the benefit of it. So you can speak so I can see your face. All right. So you can see other people'. It was all I always said to me like, like cautious that like people felt like they couldn't tell you to have it on. So it was kind of like, if you're comfortable, it would really help but kind of like don't worry if not, you know, like it wasn't very, it wasn't like a strong you should have your cameras on. And it was just kind of, if you like feel you're able to then like no, there was no pressure for people who didn't want to.

F **Ffion Neal** 09:22

That's great. Thank you.

Participant 1 09:24

Yeah, and I'd also say that I think having some lectures say it and others completely like bypassed it. It was it probably gave some people the idea of well, if they don't if they're not bothered about it, it can't be that useful. So I'll just leave it be whereas the thinking they call me like a unified front of everyone was saying please have it on. It's useful. I think a lot more would have done, because yeah, as both have already said it was quite, you'd have one or two that would say you know, can you please put it on? Well, that was as far as the other one.

Ffion Neal 10:00

Yeah, brilliant. Thank you. I'm going on to the next question now. Why might you not want to use a webcam or prefer to have it turned off?

Participant 2 10:17

I think for me sometimes when I was if it was like, a longer part of a lecture or kind of, or a talk or something like that, where it's, you know, they're sharing their screen, and it's like speaker view, when you know, that, there's just a couple of people down the side, I sometimes felt I didn't feel like not guilty's the wrong word. But like, I didn't feel as bad turning my camera off, if I was just kind of sat taking notes and was concentrated, because I know they're not seeking the kind of your reaction and you're not being spoken to, I think, to the point where, you know, the screen is sharing, you know, that people can only see them or a couple of people anyway, I then thought, well, if I'm just kind of close, especially when you use the online learning, when you literally could be like, you know, sat on your bed or whatever, the kind of like, I'm just gonna get comfortable and just write these notes. But then it was always that when that screen sharing goes away, it's other people turn their cameras back on, again, for the actual kind of engagement, like q&a or something afterwards, but I think that was the only time where I've kind of over the year thought, well, I'll just switch it off now. Like in like a lecture or seminar in seminars, I'd be like, I wouldn't, I wouldn't turn it off.

Ffion Neal 11:32

Did you think that you were more engaged when your webcams was on? Or do you think you were still able to focus on the session when it was turned off?

Participant 2 11:41

I think I was more, I was more I was more engaged. Like if say, it was a seminar, I turn the camera off, I definitely be much less engaged than if my camera was on, because you're less likely to contribute, you're less likely, you know, it's kind of mean, even even though your webcams can make the eye contact, I do think if it was, you know, if I'm listening to like an hour and a half talk, I don't think it affected my engagement as much because I'm just gonna be sat writing notes, you know, so I'm just not going to be conscious of like, Oh, my laptop's

fallen or like, where's the webcam, you know, I mean, so I don't think it would have a big effect of engagement on that. But again, if it was a talk where say, somebody was just on Zoom, and they weren't sharing insights, and the screen wasn't like taken up by that, then I would keep my camera on, because even if you are, they can see that you're writing and might not be looking at, I think just seeing the sea of faces, rather than seeing the sea of blank screens is a lot better. So it was definitely down to whether, you know, the screen is kind of locked as the slides and not people that I would turn it off.

F **Ffion Neal** 12:37

Thank you. That's really useful.

P **Participant 1** 12:44

Ah, so I've lost my train of thought now. What was the first question? Sorry?

F **Ffion Neal** 12:50

It was why may you not want to use a webcam or prefere to have it turned off.

P **Participant 1** 12:55

Yeah, I think there was some times where you'd be in, you might be in a lecture, and we'd have over 100 people in probably less than 10 with the cameras on. And I think sometimes you might just feel like, because the so few of you have it on, it's almost like well, are people watching me? Because my you don't you don't really know. And if there's loads of people, then it's like, Well, nobody's probably going to pick you out. But it's like, if there's only a couple of us but so many in here, you're like, almost become a focal point as well as the lecturer. And sometimes that was like, well, maybe I'd rather just turn it off because he's only talking anyway. And then that way people will focus on focus on him, maybe instead of instead of what you're doing. Well, in regard to the being more engaged when it was when I had my camera on, I'd say definitely. And i think working at home, there's a lot of distractions. But if you know that the lecturer can see you you're like, aware of, I don't want to be doing anything. You know, I want to look like um, so I definitely would be more engaged. Whereas if you turn it off, there's more like, oh, well, I'll just quickly check my phone or something like that and easy to get distracted. Yeah.

P **Participant 3** 14:26

I think for me, it was sometimes I would turn my camera off if it was like them askin questions that I weren't sure about. Because if I had my camera off, then they were less likely to ask me a question they'd more they were more likely to target someone who had the camera on and so I think that was one of the major things for me and the other one was like participant 1 said, if you know sometimes people were you felt like people watching you. I mean, one of the program director In one of my lectures pointed me out for smiling, and, and then someone from

the call who I didn't know like found my whatsapp off the group chat and message me and was like, Oh, I can't believe she was pointed you out like, you have a really nice smile though. And I was like, right? Well my camera's going off now that's really weird. Why's someone watching me? So yeah, that was like the kind of reasons why I would turn my camera off. And if you're just having one of them days where you don't really feel like contributing, it was so easy to just turn it off. And because with the engagement thing as well, like, if my camera was off, like I'd just go downstairs and get like a biscuit or something. And just it was so more so much more tempting to just pick up the phone or just go like see the dog or something like that. Because you know, no one knew what you're doing, because they're just talking at a blank screen.

F **Ffion Neal** 15:57

That's great, thank you. And that came up in the staff focus group that we had a few days ago as well where lecturers said that if they saw students with their cameras on that were consciously paying attention, and there wasn't any of them, they were like way more likely to pick on them multiple times, just because they knew they'd get a response from it, and it'll save the awkwardness. So yeah, that's something we noted from that as well. Thank you. Um, next question is, what would make you feel more comfortable using a webcam? And are you comfortable with being asked to turn it on by a lecturer?

P **Participant 1** 16:33

I'd definitely say, as I mentioned before, the more people that are using it, the more happy you are to have it on. And I think sometimes it not being recorded is more of a way I'm like, well, I'll definitely put that on, because I'm not going to be on video later on Blackboard for everybody to see or anything like that. But yeah, I was definitely happy for lecturers to ask. Because as we said earlier, I can see how much of a benefit is for them if people are visible. And so I've just been willing to help them as well.

F **Ffion Neal** 17:14

Did you notice that if lecturers did ask more people would then turn it on?

P **Participant 1** 17:17

And sometimes Yeah, some we had some that sometimes go through a few names and sometimes the only people that they knew sometimes had on? But if they did, they did say that and like Can you put it on today? And they would so

P **Participant 2** 17:40

I think I definitely agree with Participant 1 about the kind of the recording, but that was a big one, you'd think, you know, you'd say, well, we're actually going to record this session. So if you don't want to come on, like everyone's hammer would go off, like most people's kind of would go off, which I think is natural, because it's not like, you know, you look to the sky, you

speak and whatever, like you could have been doing all that and give him everything against them as what Participant 1 said, it's the size of the group. Like if, you know, there's literally hundreds of people on that call, you definitely less inclined to put your camera on a scene like that many people. But again, like again, if you know, you know, you've got this simple maths of having gallery view on and you know, on your first screen. It's not just people with their cameras on, you know that you're gonna be on that front screen for everybody. No matter you know, I mean, because there's not that many people with it on. But I think for me like I wouldn't I never minded even though it didn't happen loads were you know, they've said, Can you come around because I normally had mine on anyway. But I think, and this isn't completely linked to the webcam front. For me, it wasn't the having the webcam on didn't bother me that much. I sometimes if I was speaking, I could see myself and I'm like, you know, you know, everyone else is looking at you. Sometimes I can feel myself going red. But that is not just because everyone's looking at you. It's more because it's the equivalent of speaking in front of a room of people. And I think while it's fine to say, you know, kind of everyone put their webcams on I think if you're a single somebody out, it's just the same as for me. I was quite an extra person seminars, especially undergrad, I didn't speak at all in person seminars, probably 'till 3rd year. And the thought of the same thing of being like singled out like without you having to put your hand up. I think that's a similar thing with asking someone to put my webcam on space individually. It's just the same as kind of calling on someone who hasn't volunteered to speak and I think you kind of have to think with some people that would like, even though they might do it, it might be quite stressful for them.

F Ffion Neal 17:40

That's great, thank you. Do you think it's easier to answer questions and get engaged with the chat during a webcam session or do you think it's easier in person?

P Participant 2 19:54

And I think I know when I first start when I started my master's last year I had timeout from uni. And I was really nervous about it because I thought I was just going to kind of freeze. But I actually think, especially with the addition of breakout rooms, which again, I thought were gonna be awful. I think with everyone having the cameras on that was quite a ways to ease yourself into it. Because you are just, you know, everyone's there, you think you're not everyone's probably even paying that much tension. Like, I think it actually was quite similar to the sometimes it's, it feels like maybe less pressure on Zoom than if you were in a big room. And everyone's like, you know, when a big circle and everyone's looking at Yeah, I think in a way, it was actually less pressure once I was doing it than I kind of anticipated it would be sometimes it was still nerve racking, or you'd feel like, I don't really have anything to say. And there was maybe more expectation to contribute on Zoom, because when you went to like an in person seminar, there was less of the kind of right, we're gonna go round everyone, or like, we're gonna go round every single group. And that seems to happen more on Zoom where, you know, especially if your camera was on, it was kind of viral, we're gonna go around the room and see what everyone has to say. So there was maybe that happened a bit more on Zoom. And maybe that was because you had the webcam on, like you're saying before, if someone seems to be engaged, it could be that cus youve got the webcam on, they feel a bit pressured, because they want to be polite. But that doesn't mean you're inviting for themselves to like,

contribute loads, because they might just be unsure about they just might be a bit uncomfortable. So maybe that could be misconstrued of being like, keen to like, speak loads, when maybe.

F Ffion Neal 21:33

That's really interesting . I think I just agree with what the both said, like the more people that would have it on the easier be to, to keep it on. And yeah, I was fine with being asked to put mine on. That was great. Thank you. Um, got one more question. And then we'll open up more of like a general discussion, we can make points on your opinion, stuff like that.

P Participant 2 22:16

Sorry, please. Can you review the question? I broke off of it that Okay.

C Craig Morley 22:23

I think it makes of cutout. Again, so the start of the question that Fi was asking anyone else? Because I thought it was was aim 'Does using webcams or people using webcams? Does it make you sort of enjoy that online learning environment more or less? Or does it have no sort of effect on your enjoyment of learning online?'

F Ffion Neal 23:02

I've put it in the chat, it's a bit of a wordy one. I think, for me, like it definitely changed the environment. When I think more in like breakout rooms and seminars and anything I think, you know, like lectures, most people either had them on or off, but didn't really matter. Because, you know, you weren't really having to engage with the lecture, but I think in in seminars, I mean, the thing that I didn't like, was the been picked out because you're on on camera. And I think that was something that, you know, I definitely struggle with. And, you know, the fact that that, I mean, I get it from the lecturers point of view, because, you know, they're just trying to get someone to engage with them. But it definitely meant that different people were targeted more often than others, which mean it made me like it less when, you know, people didn't have it on it made it more enjoyable when, you know, everyone was engaging in a in a seminar and in a breakout room because I've I've been in breakout rooms where you go in and everyone's got their mark off and got the camera off and you sat there and you say hello and no reply. So the only thing you could do then to feel less awkward is just put your camera of and put your mic off and then you spend the time just sat for five minutes in, in silence. And I think you know, that was obviously made it a lot less enjoyable because you couldn't engage at all. That's great. Thank you

P Participant 1 24:55

Yeah, I'd say I'd say it was definitely with the seminars more than it may, it definitely made it more enjoyable. I think, obviously with the nature of the seminars as well being questioned

based and just being able to share your answers, and if you didn't know, you could, somebody else could explain the process to you rather than having to go to the lecturer for everything. Because there's never a time to do that for everybody. So when people had it off, and it was like, Well, I've got answers, but nobody will answer me and contribute. Because I feel like it often in I found it that often, people that didn't have the cameras on wouldn't on the either they just completely wouldn't interact, there was a few that would interact with a mic. But I feel like mostly it was only the people with the cameras on that would speak back. So if, if you went into a room, and you might get put in a group of six, and at best two would have the cameras on and interact with you. And sometimes it would just be non, I think that probably happened at least once a week. And in that seminar, you just really struggle because it'd be random, but then, you know, people that you know, on the course might have ended up with a group full of people the cameras on and then they seem to really know what's going on. And you feel like, well, I've just fell behind on that session, because I've not been put with the people that are going to interact. So I think when you did get it, it was massively more enjoyable, because you knew he was getting somewhere and benefited from the session. That's great, thank you.

P **Participant 2** 26:57

I think for me, like, I would say definitely more enjoyable when everyone had their cameras on and like everyone was involved in this discussion, like, especially in the breakout rooms, like even if, you know, there was just one person that didn't have their camera mic on, it would be a bit awkward, because you'd be like, do we kind of translate the name and like, include them? Or do we just kind of talk amongst ourselves and like, that definitely made it easier in the sense of what you were getting out of the lecture. But I think for me, it was actually more than that, because we've done, it was a whole year online from start to finish. So we didn't have any existing kind of, especially for me, because I had not come straight from undergraduate straight masters. So few people, you know, just gone from one to the other. So they already knew each other. Like, like, for me, there was 50 odd people, I didn't know anyone. And if I'd done that whole year without even seeing someone's face, like it was tough anyway to do a whole course without any in person teaching or in person interaction. So it was hard enough just kind of going from the social side of it to just being sat in front of laptop and then just shutting it instead of you know, having that as you're walking out having a chat with someone or you know, like getting to know people. So if nobody had had their cameras on have spoke that would have been like, even more tough than it was. And I think it did make a difference. Even obviously, in a breakout room say there was, there was a few of you. And you'd kind of finished what you were supposed to be doing, you would just naturally have a chat like you would in person. And that was the only way that we got to know each other like at all. So there's some people that you know, we did a whole year, and you don't know what they're like, You know what sound like because if they never had their camera or mic on, they've literally just, you know, gone through the whole year without you even knowing who they are. So yeah, it definitely it made a huge difference in the term in for me because you didn't have anything to compare it to, and you didn't have any kind of existing relationships. So it was more than just what you were getting out of the course it was more just the kind of the social side of it. And also just having some interaction and it'd be in less lonely. Like it was definitely nice to speak to people face to face, even though it's free zoom for a couple of hours, and then go back to you know, just write write your essays kind of on your own, that that did make a massive difference.

F Ffion Neal 29:19

Yeah, I think I'll ask everyone a follow up question from what you've just said. But do you think there were other ways that students could have had to engage with one another and with this session that didn't involve webcams that you'd like noted, like ways that people were communicating with one another and building these relationships online that weren't through the webcam?

P Participant 2 29:38

I know it was that week had had a WhatsApp group made like at the start of the year, but I think sometimes that was actually a detriment because people weren't probably like during lectures if people just like it, wasn't it sometimes it wasn't like there was the WhatsApp chat was never used in relation to the kind of the lecture itself. So if it was used during the lecture, it was probably more of a distraction. But then afterwards, it was nice to have that kind of thing, like, if you had a question you could put it on or you could lie was everyone, you know, is everyone else struggling with this? So that was that was that was a massive help in terms of having some sense of kind of a group, even though you didn't see people in person?

P Participant 3 30:17

Yeah, I think we found that as well. Like, we had a WhatsApp group, which was set up but the people who spoke in that, were the people who had their cameras on during their lectures as well, but again, it wasn't really used as a help, it was more of a distraction. It was like, you know, look at that person's artwork on the wall, or, you know, there's someone with because a lot of people came up with filters on there, like, there was like people as potatoes and things like that. So it was just like, basically laughing at laughing at that. But yeah, I think there were the ways that we communicated. And I think, you know, naturally, we sort of our friendship group, because that was our first share, our first year was just entire online. And I think for us, we form that friendship, and it was just the people who had the cameras on and we're communicating. So it was like the seven of us on our course, actually would have our cameras on and talk to everyone, we sort of then formed a group. So when we've come into second year, like they're the people who we sort of hang around with, but it's the same way, you know, we have modules this year, that's just our course. And we don't know, half the people are in there, like we've never seen them, never spoken to them. And I think that it comes through as well with projects, because the same thing happens in projects that we've done this year, we've really struggled with setting up zoom calls, they'll be like six months in a project. And I've, I set up a zoom call for one last semester. And I was sat there with my camera on and trying to speak and no one was speaking back at me. And I was like, you know, we're not even in a situation where there's a lecturer there or, you know, I'm not here to ask you a question, you know, something that you're not going to know, I'm just trying to get something started on this group projects. And it's like, no one's communicating with me. And they were like three people who didn't have their cameras on or didn't have the mics on, who also didn't communicate in the WhatsApp group who ended up getting marked down, because they just couldn't communicate through, you know, a webcam and, and things like that. So it has had a massive effect on people. But yeah, I think, you know, it's given us a way to socialize and create sort of our friendship group.

Ffion Neal 32:31

Yeah, that's great. Did you notice that if any of the people who didn't necessarily have their webcams on did they like use the chat feature or something like that on Zoom to participate? Or were they just completely? Not involved?

Participant 3 32:42

Yeah, really, completely non involved? I think the chat, mainly wish you use for, if you wanted to ask a question, it was mainly the people at the cameras on who didn't want to just stop the Zoom call and like, try and interrupt it was easier to just pop it on the chat box, and then lecturer can come to it, when, as and when but a lot of the time, that feature was shut down on on our calls, because there were, there was one lecture where we ended up someone had given out the Zoom card. And we ended up with some racist person on there who was making racist comments and shouting things through the microphone. So a lot of the time our chat box would just get completely shut down, because there were people who were using it in the wrong way. And so yeah, that feature was so the only way you could communicate was you know, through through a Microphone and for a lot of people like that's a that's a really hard thing to do.

Ffion Neal 33:39

Yeah, that's a shame. Thank you for answering.

Participant 1 33:46

Yeah, I think I think we've covered a lot of anyway, obviously, I pretty much the same experiences as Perticipant 3 being on the same course. And we came through together so it's just that yeah, we Yeah, like shares we created agree with people that were interacting and communicating. We'd had an initial like, welcome session. And that's where we'd set up this Whatsapp group and the only people that came to that were the ones that were putting the cameras on, because everybody that came to that would put into this group initially. But then, obviously, a few people you know, fall off that they're gone create their own groups as well. Then there was a lot of people that just never came to that never really interacted and said, the majority of the course we we don't we don't know who they are when we see them. I wouldn't know if passed by him in a corridor that they were on my course because I didn't see them at all last year and It's only those that did have the cameras on that. We do know. And generally they're the ones that we speak to.

Ffion Neal 35:07

How did it make you feel when you didn't know anyone else, but they may have known you and Participant 3 if you had your cameras on more often?

Participant 1 35:15

Yeah, it's strange, because that's it as we add them on. And we'd have been answering questions and being like, one of like I say, between like 8 and 10 people with the cameras on

questions and being like, one or like I say, between like 8 and 10 people with the cameras on, it's, they probably do know, or at least recognize our faces, they might not know a name to it. But it is strange to be like, well, they might know who we are, but wouldn't have a clue passing by. It, it'd be nice to just have that. Even if it's just, you know, you might not have conversations with them. But just as you pass them by, you know, are you doing and that might be all you ever say to and but if you know more people, it's just I think it can just bring a bit. You know, if you're having a down day, you see someone who just smiles at you and says how you doing it, it can't help. And instead of being the eight to 10 people that that is could be 30 or 40. That? Yeah, just a missed opportunity, I think.

F Ffion Neal 36:25

Yeah. No, thank you for that. Um, as anyone else got anything they'd like to add about their opinions on webcams or anything, just just because we finished the questions now.

P Participant 2 36:48

Sorry, I think the only thing I can think of is maybe kind of just the name for maybe a bit of encouragement, or kind of ground rules about the use of webcams, because I just thinking about to my course, you know, and I'm saying, Oh, it was great. No people at the, you know, had the cameras on, you can have a chat in the breakout room, but then you think you kind of think, well, for some of the people that didn't, it could have just been that they you know, they were really uncomfortable. And they didn't feel like they could and maybe just that kind of recognition that if there was maybe a bit more support for people who maybe seem like they weren't contributing on that specific format. You know, if it was noticed, like, or they never had their camera on, instead of it just being dismissed and being like, well, they're just not contributing, it could be that, you know, if they were spoken to, to make sure they were okay, like, no, especially when it's over such a long period of time where it was online, maybe that was a missed opportunity to kind of reassure someone or include them a bit more. And that maybe they would have maybe decided putting the camera on, or they would have felt a bit more comfortable. So in the breakout room speaking to people, and because even though it's kind of annoying is maybe the wrong word, but you know, it was a bit it was stressful when people weren't contributing, I imagine feeling like you're too stressed to contribute. And, you know, felt ended up being a bit out of the loop. So you're like, Well, I've not spoke before. So I thought, you know, I mean, they all kind of know each other now, maybe that kind of impeded people from maybe a few months in still not contributing.

F Ffion Neal 38:26

Do you think if if if we all happen to have to go online, again, people would be more likely to get involved with webcams now that now that you know each other was a cohort?

P Participant 2 38:35

And yeah, that would have that would have made sense. I think I think it was kind of by the end of it. When you've been on Zoom calls with people for a few months, you did feel more like you knew them, and you felt a bit more relaxed about them. But then that's also I think it may be

it's not just our contribution, because I think attendance is something we've maybe not mentioned is that saying the people that engage more, and people that spoke more that people have the cameras on, I mean, the people that have the cameras on are also the people that attended most of the lectures. So that is another thing that that just happened because it was the same people were which is another factor, maybe and why that group does kind of fun, because it was the same reverse where last year were the people that did speak, you know, we ended up you know, they spoke we spoke more, and then we maybe in the summer when things opened up again. We were the ones that kind of like well, if we go for a few drinks and you kind of know who we're going to turn up even when people that said in the WhatsApp group I Oh yeah, I'm free that day. You kind of knew who was actually going to be there. So I definitely think it did help with making yourself feel like you were more comfortable in the group. Definitely. And even like for me, I was I remember being so anxious for my first one. But once you got out of the way, like it isn't actually that bad. And it's probably you feel more awkward if you weren't getting involved at all. But until you actually push yourself and do it. You don't know that

F Ffion Neal 39:56

That's great. Thank you. Has anyone else got anything they'd like to add? Participant 3?

P Participant 3 40:04

I think just, you know, in a sense animal added on from what Lily were saying it's the people who had their webcams on from the start were then for the whole year were the people that were picked on. And they were asked, and, you know, you you always knew if there were a question like, who was going to be asked to answer it? If, if no one did answer it. And I think I really struggled with Zoom at the start. And, you know, it took a lot for I'd speak to my college tutor about, you know, how I could try and engage more in seminars and things because I was too scared to speak with a mic on, and I was so scared to be targeted. And I think you know it, but then once you've, once you sort of overcome that hurdle, you're then the ones who are always being picked. And it was like, even things like for, you know, when guest lecturers came and spoke, like one of us would have to say, like, thank you to them, and it would always be the same people. It's like, Oh, will you will you say thank you to these guest lecturers and are like, they were through a question and answer session. In that we attended, and out, I got picked it, it was like, 'oh, will you ask? Will you ask this question?', it's always like, well, you know, it was always the same three, four or five people who were just constantly being picked on to talk. And it's like, well, the other people are just sort of like, getting away with it in a way, because, you know, I struggled with it. But you know, it was something that I had to overcome, whereas other people were just able to just sort of sit back and not have to speak in front of, you know, loads of people. And that was something that I found sort of like unfair, in a way it was like I had to be pushed to, to do it. When I, I mean, you know, it's benefited me. But, you know, at the start, I really didn't want to have to overcome that. But there's people who are just, you know, getting away with sitting there with the cameras off and the masks off, and nothing was really ever done about it.

F Ffion Neal 42:07

Thank you for sharing that.

P Participant 1 42:10

I'd also just say like, one of the benefits that I think we need to highlight is, so this year, we've had to record reading some of our essays, instead of submitting the document, do a video recording. And I think I found that tough anyway, but at least I was used to seeing myself on camera talking. And I think if that was explained to people, as you know, you're going to have to do this later in the course. And your grades going to depend on it. Because obviously, with the number of presentations as well, through group projects and things, it's like, your grade will depend on you being able to put the camera on and record yourself speaking. And I think if those were the things that were highlighted, as well as just not just the things that like the benefits to the lectures, and the benefits to learning the fact that it will actually eventually come down to your grade, I think that I'd probably help a lot of people, not just in terms of motivating them to put it on. But it would help because I know that having seen myself on camera for a year, talking and being used to it being recorded from time to time. That massively helped when it came to recording, recording the essay, because I feel like before University, like hearing your own voice on video when things i think thats awful. Whereas because you get more used to it, it's like, well, I have to do it. It's just a case of making sure I do array and how can I best present myself? So yeah, I think highlighting that because I mean, a recent one, it was like over 10 minutes long. And I think that I've been told that. And the other thing is as well, the so we've just applied for placements. Some of those have video interviews, not not necessarily on Zoom or like you have to record yourself. And I think just getting those basic skills, which I don't think was ever really highlighted to us until probably the start of this year, which was a week or two before we were starting the applications. So if that had been highlighted last year, I think it would have helped more people. As I say, I think I've benefited anyway, but just because I had mine on but more people could definitely benefit from it.

F Ffion Neal 44:49

Yeah, no, that's really interesting. You bring that point up actually we had quite a few of the staff saying in the survey and in our focus groups that one of the main reasons they encourage webcam use for students is because the business world now is so online orientated. There's so many interviews that go on via zoom. And there's so many people who work from home and have to be in conference calls all the time from home. Still. So they said that they felt it was really important that students were getting this experience now to help them with their careers in the future. So yeah, that's really interesting. You, you felt that too. Um, is there anything else anyone like to add or? No, I think we've covered most of it. Have you got anything you'd like to add Craig?

C Craig Morley 45:30

No, no, not for me, just to thank everyone for contributing to the the question is, and I think I think some of the answers that you gave really sort of, sort of shows the multiple sides of using webcams, isn't it both the way in and benefit, but then also those, those sorts of social issues

and things like that, which, which all affects experience of learning at university anyway. So it's been really useful to hear, hear your opinions and experiences. So yeah, just thanks again for, for coming along and being so open with us.

F   **Ffion Neal**   46:01

Yeah, thanks a lot, guys. I'll just run through what's gonna happen afterwards, we've now finished all of our focus groups. So we will be starting to analyze the data from these focus groups and the surveys that we've done now, and pick out some of the common themes and approaches and best practices for webcams. And we'll be producing some kind of information to go out to staff and students at universities to help improve this experience in the future. And because you've all been involved in the process, you'll probably be the first people to hear about it. So when we do have those resources put together, we'll make sure we send them out to you guys before the general population. But yeah, I think that's everything. Thank you again, for coming along. It's been really interesting listening to your talk. So thank you!