

PROVIDING ACCESSIBLE AND EQUITABLE EDUCATION THROUGH *MS TEAMS* IN COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has changed higher education in different ways, including the shift from face-to-face to online teaching, requiring a change from physical academic activities to technological replacements. Education needed to be accessible, equitable and sustainable. In light of these requirements, a digital resource on *MS Teams* was designed for team interaction in the subject 'Internet of Things' being offered through the Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering at The University of Western Australia.

The platform provided insight into the students' collaborations and discussions, which was not earlier available to the 'Internet of Things' unit coordinator. The unit coordinator, with access to the private group channels, saw increased interaction, collaboration and communication among group members. The data show that students began with low levels of interaction, indicating that they took some time to familiarise themselves with the technology, but later demonstrated high levels of interaction. The gathered data depict high levels of engagement and collaboration among the students. Some interesting observations were made, including the positive impact that responding to student comments using emojis had on student interactions. Furthermore, compared to using email communication, it was quicker and easier for the unit coordinator to reply to student concerns.

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