

How to get your Students Collaborating in CANVAS

Collaboration helps students learn from one another, build critical skills, and feel more connected in your course. Canvas provides a range of built-in tools that make it easy to foster meaningful collaboration. Here are six effective ways to encourage students to work and learn together in your modules.

▼ Assignments Complete all items ✓ ▼	 Use group submissions when setting up an assignment to enable groups of students to work together on a project. Students can divide tasks between them and create high-quality results as a team. You can also assign grades individually or as a group.  Use Case: Students can submit draft work or formative tasks throughout a module. For example, this could be weekly tasks associated with that week’s readings or submit supporting documents to accompany a face-to-face presentation.
▼ Collaborations Complete all items ✓ ▼	 Use Collaborations to let students work together on a document at the same time. Collaborative documents are saved in real-time, meaning a change made by any of its users is immediately visible to everyone.  Use Case: Students co-create a group project plan to define project goals, allocate responsibilities, set deadlines, and track progress, ensuring all team members can communicate, and stay aligned throughout the project.
▼ Discussions Complete all items ✓ ▼	 Use Discussions to spark conversation, share ideas, and build a sense of community. Students can reply to classmates, ask questions and learn from multiple perspectives. You can guide conversations with prompts, require posts and assess participation.  Use Case: Students discuss a real-world case study and compare possible solutions. For example, they might evaluate different approaches to improving student attendance and participation in lectures.
▼ Groups Complete all items ✓ ▼	 Create group sets within your module to give students a dedicated group homepage. This is a space where a minimum of two students can organise, share resources, and collaborate all in one place.  Use Case: Academics can view each group to monitor individual student contributions to a group project. This provides greater transparency, supports fair assessment, and helps identify students who may need additional support or encouragement.
▼ Lucidchart and Lucidspark Complete all items ✓ ▼	 The Lucid suite provides you access to digital whiteboarding within Canvas. Use Lucidspark for brainstorming and ideation, and use Lucidchart for diagramming and visualising ideas. Students can collaborate in real-time on an infinite canvas.  Use Case: You can provide a 'scaffolded' Lucidchart—a diagram with some parts missing—and ask students to complete the logic. This moves them from passive consumption to active construction of knowledge.
▼ Peer Marking Complete all items ✓ ▼	 Enable peer review within an assignment so students can give and receive meaningful feedback that improves learning for everyone. Set clear criteria and use rubrics to ensure feedback is constructive, consistent, and actionable.  Use Case: Students submit a draft essay and use a rubric to provide feedback on two peers’ drafts before submitting their final version. Students may also provide marks for their peers involving group work based on their overall contribution and effort.

You can find more guidance on the above collaborations by visiting the Queen’s DigiHub or from Canvas Community Guides