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10-14
FEB
2025
South
Kensington
Campus

Learning Well Programme

DESIGNED FOR ALL IMPERIAL STUDENTS

- Craft your personal journey to success
- Connect study strategies with positive mental wellbeing
- Foster wellbeing through effective learning practices

Explore the Learning Well Project student resources

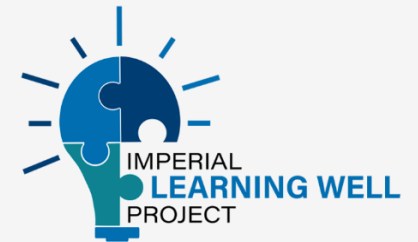
SCAN HERE

The poster features an illustration of a diverse group of students interacting. Above them are speech bubbles containing icons for music, books, a person running, and a graduation cap.

How Does Competition Shape Your Learning Experience? Navigating Competition and Building a Collaborative Mindset

Facilitators: Dr Tiffany Chiu & Dr Richard Bale
(Centre for Higher Education Research & Scholarship)

14/02/2025



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Pre-session check-in exercise

Imperial students -

To support you to get the most from the Learning Well Programme, please take a moment to complete this short exercise about your current understanding and expectations of this session:

- Your responses will be submitted anonymously.
- There are no right or wrong answers – feel free to share your thoughts.
- This activity should take no more than 2-3mins.

Learning Well Programme: Pre-session Check-in Exercise (FRIDAY)



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Session aims and learning outcomes

- Reflect on and explore the role of competition and collaboration in learning
- Develop strategies for balancing competition and collaboration
- Apply collaborative practices and mindsets in academic and professional contexts

Engage in the *Traitors* game to reflect on group dynamics



Source: <https://studiolambert.com/project/take-part-the-traitors-uk/>

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Exploring competition and collaboration in learning

▪ **Definition of competition?**

- ✓ “a situation in which someone is trying to win something or be more successful than someone else
- ✓ an activity done by a number of people or organizations, each of which is trying to do better than all of the others” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

▪ **Definition of collaboration?**

- ✓ “the situation of two or more people working together to create or achieve the same thing” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)



Group discuss:

Can you think of a situation where competition and collaboration worked together rather than against each other? How might they complement each other in achieving individual and group goals?

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Social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978): Why collaboration matters?

- **What is social constructivism?**

- ✓ Learning happens through human activity and is shaped by social interactions.
- ✓ Your environment and peers play a crucial role in helping you grow and learn.

- **How does collaboration help you learn?**

- ✓ Knowledge is built together: By working with others, you create new ideas and make meaning through interactions.
- ✓ Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD): This is the gap between what you can do on your own and what you can achieve with help from others.



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Game: The Traitors

- Work as a group on a collaborative task – answering some questions about an image to be shown shortly.
- All students start as *Faithfuls*. The role of *Faithfuls* is to **collaborate** to complete an activity successfully (**collaborative mindset**).
- Two students will be allocated as *Traitors*. Their role is to **work against** their peers and to remain undetected (**competitive mindset**).

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Game: The Traitors

1. You will see an image on the next slide, which will be shown for 30 seconds. **The idea is to memorise as many details as possible. Take 2 minutes to discuss your strategies as a team.**
2. This will be followed by 7 questions about the image. Work as a group to answer these questions.
3. *Faithfuls* should work collaboratively to arrive at the correct answers. **If Faithfuls answer at least 4 questions correctly, they win the game.**
4. *Traitors* should subtly steer the group towards incorrect answers by 'misremembering' or introducing fake details **while trying to remain undetected. If traitors manage to influence the group to answer at least 4 questions incorrectly, they win the game.**
5. Roundtable debrief: we will reveal the correct answers and you can reflect on how you worked together. You can also consider who might have been competing against the group in the role of *Traitors*.

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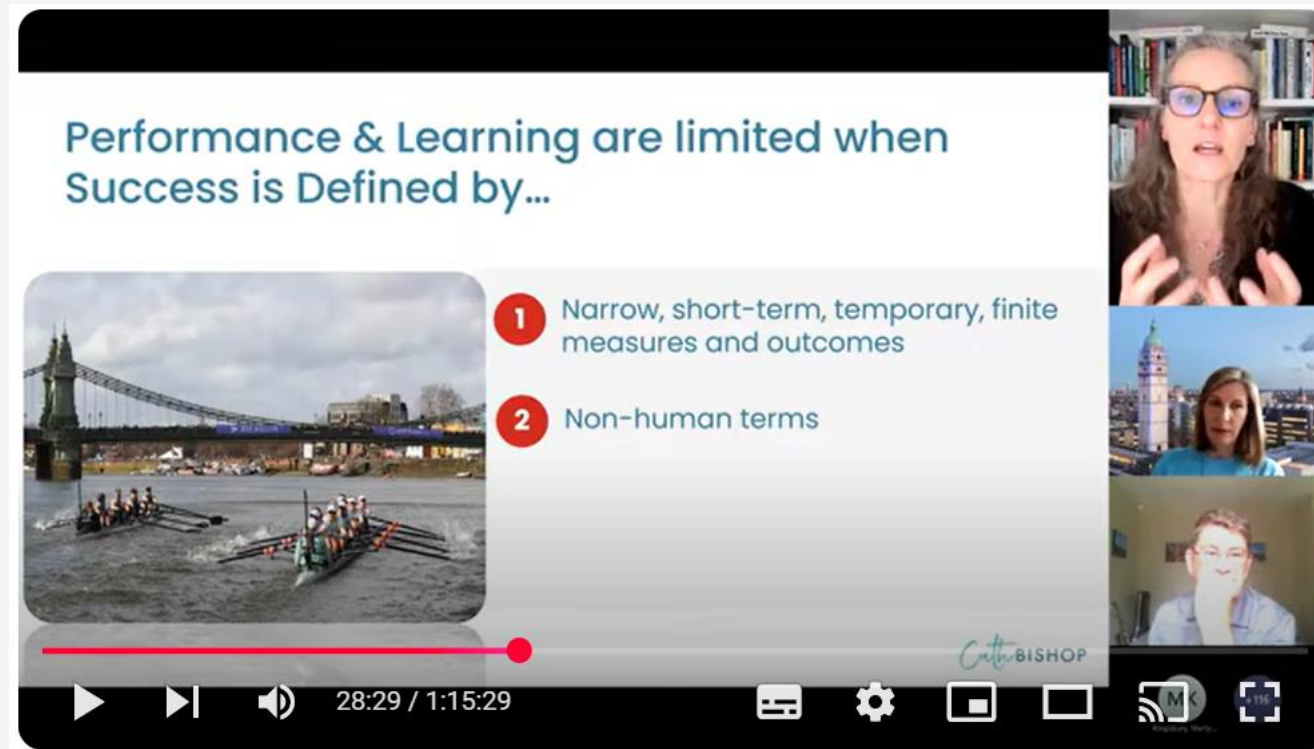
Debrief

- How did it feel working on this activity together?
- Can you identify instances of collaboration? To what extent did it feel like there was any lack of collaboration and competitive behaviour?
- Just for fun: do you think you can identify who was allocated the role of *Traitor*? What makes you think this?

Key message: The *end product* of university (graduating with a degree) is an *individual* endeavour. However, the *process* of learning and living through university is *collaborative*. To have an enjoyable experience at university, it's likely to be more productive (and fun) to work together.

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You might want to listen to this recording!

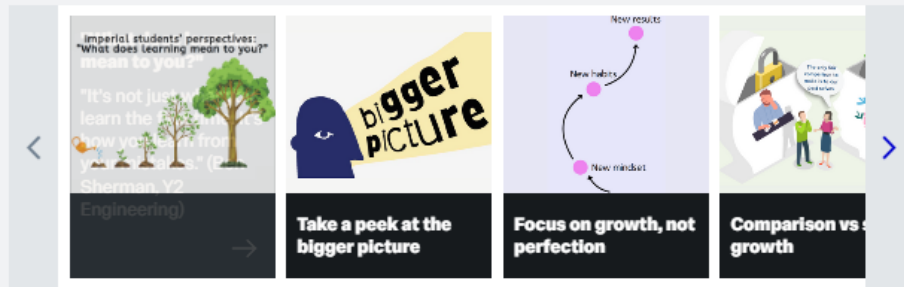


The Long Win: Redefining Success and Competition in Education by Dr Cath Bishop, Olympic rowing medallist, former diplomat, author of 'The Long Win' and leadership coach (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93zINbnVuOo>)

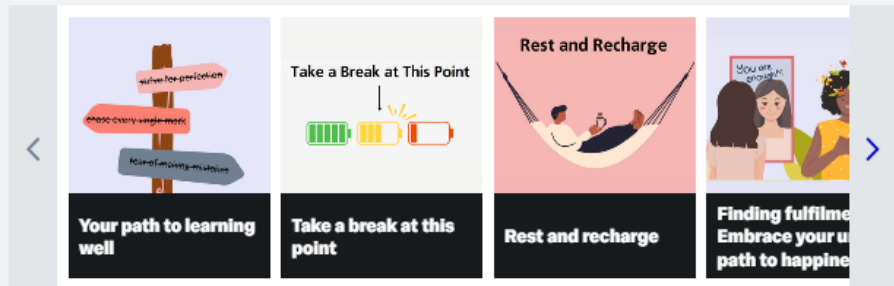
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Learning Well Resources

Understanding 'Learning Well' and strategies to achieve it



Maintaining mental wellbeing is essential for effective learning



Website: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/education-research/our-work/efficacy-agency-and-wellbeing/imperial-learning-well-project/pedagogical-materials-development--innovation/>

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Post-session Reflection

Imperial students -

To help you maximise this learning opportunity, this activity is designed to support you to reflect on what you've learnt and to consider what you can personally take away from this session.

- Your responses will be submitted anonymously.
- There are no right or wrong answers.
- This exercise should take no more than 3mins.
- We hope you find this activity helpful.

Learning Well Programme: Post-session Reflection Activity
(FRIDAY)

