



The Why: Labs benefit both the student and the instructor

Labs provide students with:

- Opportunities to observe best practice
- Opportunities for exploration
- Practical experience
- Initiation into the rules and practices of your discipline
- A safe environment

Labs enable instructors to:

- Interact with students
- Be present with individual students and groups
- Provide proactive guidance
- Answer questions
- Share advice

The How: Blackboard Collaborate enables safe and secure online labs

A safe environment

Online Lab Sessions are inherently safe. Web-based and simulated experiments allow your learners to participate in practical exercises within your discipline without any of the physical dangers.

 Blackboard Collaborate uses features built into the web browser so you don't need any extra software or plugins.

 It is a secure and role-based system giving appropriate access to only those who need to be there.

Observation of good practice

There is still great value to be had in allowing your learners to observe skilled facilitators demonstrating good practice. Supplement this with engaging interactions and discussions with your class.

 Use the facilitator's HD Video and Audio feature for live demonstrations.

 Use Learner Feedback and Polls to encourage engagement and check for understanding.

Exploration and practical experience

There are many opportunities for you to guide your learners into practical experience involving web-based and other simulated exercises. These will give your learners opportunities to experience some of the interactions and complexities found within your discipline.

 Use the Chat feature to distribute links to online tools, experiments and simulations.

 Allow learners to share their own screen and camera to enable them to share their own experimental work with the class.

Proactive interactions and advice

The need to be proactive in your interactions and communication is even more important in an online environment. Use the features of the collaborative environment to draw out feedback and engagement from your learners.

 Use the Chat feature to ask and answer questions.

 Learners to use the Raise Hand feature to request assistance.

Be present with individuals and groups

Use the power of Breakout Rooms to create private and quiet spaces to interact with individual learners or small groups. Don't be afraid of using your webcam to better connect with your learners.

 Use a Breakout Room to have a one-on-one interaction with individual learners.

 Assign learners into their own breakout groups for group-based laboratory sessions. Don't forget to give them Presenter roles so they can share their webcams, audio and screens to work together.

