Connecting with large cohorts during remote learning: Scaling personalised feedback and encouragement

A primer on OnTask

Students need to feel a sense of connection and belonging in order to engage optimally with study.

However, with most instruction continuing entirely online in these COVID-normal times...

- How can you build connection and belonging even out-of-class?

- How can you know your students when they are geographically dispersed?

- How can you show your care, and foster the engagement of students who seem invisible?

- How can you know your students' progress with their study, and communicate personalised feedback to them based on this?

- How can you do all that, when you are teaching in a high-enrolment subject to students from diverse backgrounds?

As part of an OLT-funded national consortium, <u>UTS co-developed an educational platform called OnTask</u> to help educators connect more personally with students out-of-class, monitor their progress, and communicate personalised feedback to high-enrolment cohorts.

Example of OnTask feedback personalised to class participation

(a) Feedback message as it appears to a student who attended at least 1 class
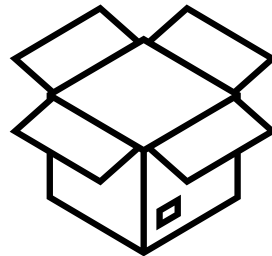
(b) Feedback message as it appears to a student who has not attended any class
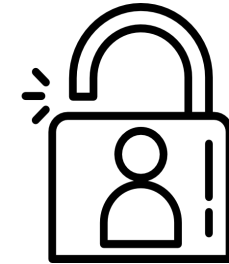
More about OnTask
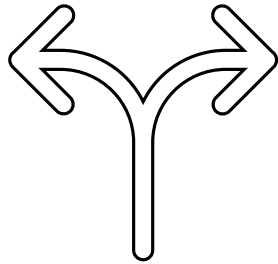
The personalised messaging system is based on "if-this-then-that" rules. And because academics are the ones writing the message, students get a sense of that personal connection and belonging which might be hard to achieve when they feel that they are just a number.

OnTask is an open system, meaning that academics can differentiate feedback based on what students are (or are not) doing in multiple platforms — Canvas, Teams, or "micro-surveys" to get to know your students to find out how they are coping with their learning over the semester.

OnTask is available to all academics at UTS. If you would like to explore how OnTask can be used in your subject, please contact cic@uts.edu.au with "OnTask" as the subject line, and we'll get in touch with you. In the meantime, you can learn more about how OnTask is being used at UTS.