

## **Internet Videoconferencing: The Next Panacea in Blended Learning?**

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### **Abstract:**

Internet videoconferencing allows participants working from a computer, to send videos and audio to other participants (students and/or teaching staff). The software currently being used by the author in the Bachelor of Emergency Health at Monash University is Marratech™. Marratech™ is an international web conference provider that offers teaching institutions such as Universities in its desktop videoconferencing facility. Internet videoconferencing has been recently introduced in medical education with the literature suggesting this innovative teaching approach is not only cost-effective but also a suitable method of teaching health care students. Internet videoconferencing allows a collaborative teaching and learning approach between teachers and students in 'real-time' without frustrating delays. Two sessions a week are offered to students to assist in their weekly clinical case series; however it is possible for student-to-student or student-teacher to organise meetings not just in scheduled online tutorial sessions. A key feature allows the integration of PowerPoint slides with whiteboard capabilities that allows the author to draw, highlight and emphasise particular slides with students. Descriptive evaluation thus far has highlighted positive student feedback:

"Marratech provides a forum for to ask questions and receive feedback in 'real time'. I also use this forum to reinforce information being taught in lectures."

"Marratech is a great help for me as it provides me with a live, direct conference with the Lecturer, allowing for immediate answers to questions or explanations of information and procedures that may be unclear. As helpful as emails are, Marratech provides spontaneous feedback and help which is greatly preferred."