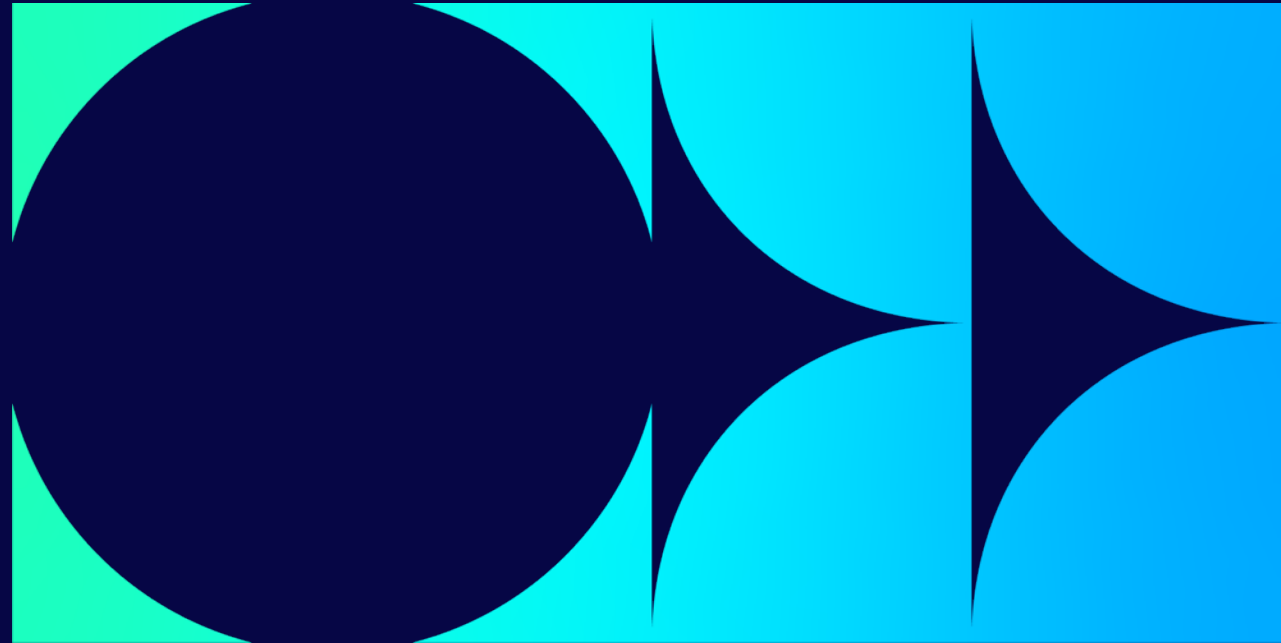


# Wellbeing of distance education students: the importance of their work and family

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Event: Connecting and belonging



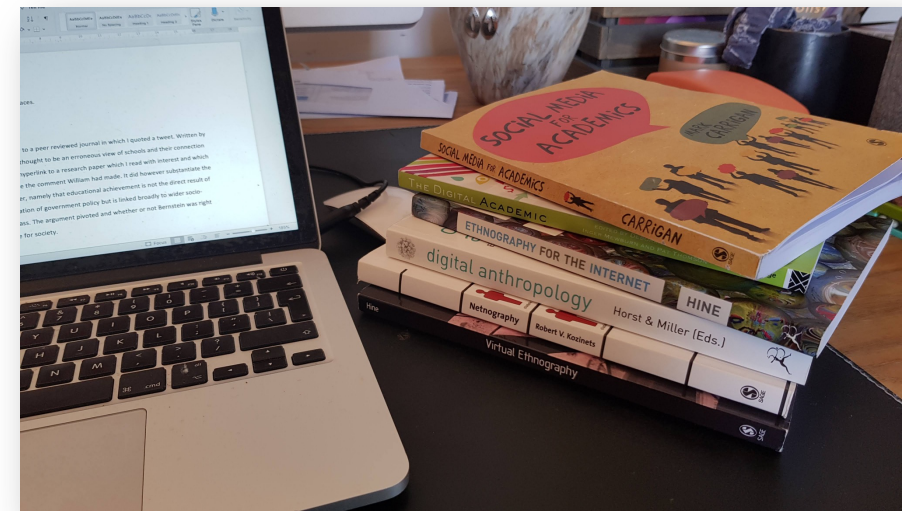
# Work, family, study and connection

## Work and family commitments may influence students' interaction with different dimensions of DE experience

- Bozkurt et al. (2020) – adopting more peripheral learning roles
- Meijs et al. (2019) – less reliance on contact with other learners

## Transactional distance (Moore and Kearsley 1996)

- Woznaik and McEldowney (2015) time needed to adjust to transactional distance/management of transition for students to become self-regulated learners.



# Aims of the project

1. To quantitatively examine students' mental distress using an established and tested measure (i.e. Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scales/DASS-21).
2. To consider the associations between wellbeing, and students' work and family commitments, and perceptions of work/family-study conflict and facilitation.
3. To explore students' perceptions of institutional support, and to elucidate the strategies used for coping.

# Method

- Survey sample to a random sample of level 3 HWSC & ECYS students (24% response rate – n=348).
- Closed questions including:
  - DASS-21 – standardised mental distress scale (Lovibond & Lovibond 1995)
  - Conflict & facilitation scaled adapted from validated scales in work-family literature (Netemeyer et al. 1996; Grzywacz & Marks 2000)
- Open questions on institutional support and strategies to manage studies



# Connection to tutors

**“Your tutor makes a massive impact on learning. Some tutors are excellent but I have had a few which have not been as good due to lack of communications. Some do not use forums and you can feel very isolated.”**

# Connection to peers

**“it [F2F tutorials] takes you out of the situation (home life etc) and it's a space to fully focus on university studies. There is no background noise from your family doing what they normally do, or housework niggling at you as you know it needs to get done. There is no home phone ringing or a doorbell that needs to be answered.”**

# Connection with their motivation

**“My eldest son is in University away from home and it has helped us both as he can see that University study is stressful for us both and although our courses and totally different we proof read each others work via email. The anxiety that he has felt has been [alleviated] as he can see that we are both in similar situations although [our] circumstances and commitments are very different”**

# At a crossroads – an OER



- An Open Education Resource that aims to support students with work, family and study
- Evidenced informed strategies and tips
- Available on OpenLearn

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/crossroads>



**Any questions?**