

Timetables are the worst. Why still have them?

Is structure a help or a hinder?

Often, when in discussions with schools who are wanting to change, one of the big hold-ups is the timetable. The timetable is important when we're in one place together to ensure that space is used effectively and that information isn't missed. That leads us to think; **Now that most schools are out of their buildings, how important is the school timetable?**

On one hand, some schools are touting this approach for remote learning — “Follow your regular class schedule on normal school bell times.”

And, on the other, as the NSW Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning, Sarah Mitchell, is saying, “trying to replicate a full school day online could be counterproductive for students.” [Sydney Morning Herald, March 2020]



So, what should we do then? Should we have a timetable or not? Should our schools be synchronous or asynchronous?

This led to further consideration...Are we asking the wrong question? Perhaps the question should be more about **when** to be synchronous and when to be asynchronous.

Rather than waiting to be told what is right or wrong on this respect, why not begin a series of small experiments to measure the **impact** of learning in synchronous and asynchronous sessions? Teachers featured in the evidence below did just that in 2012; by mapping the changing energy levels through the week, students and teachers were able to rethink the timing of subjects to better take advantage of their energy ebb and flow.

Maybe now's the time to make time work **for** us rather than us being worked by time.

The Evidence

- [Free-up time by Freeing up the Timetable](#)
- The Theory of [Transactional Distance](#)
- [Face-to-Face or Face-to-Screen?](#)