Good Practice with Group Work

📅 25th April / Welcome! **We'll be starting at 9:30am**

👤 Lucy Newton & Angela Buckingham

⏱ Today's session is 90 minutes long

🎥 This webinar will be recorded and available to watch again.

🔇 Please mute your mic when you are not speaking.

💬 Use chat to comment or ask a question at any time.

Picture from Uni of Reading Asset Bank 2022

Good Practice with Group Work

Angela Buckingham CQSD

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- The Working Group on Groupwork 2022

CQSD
CENTRE | QUALITY SUPPORT
FOR | & DEVELOPMENT

University of Reading

MAKING THE MOST OF GROUP WORK

A guide for staff

New resource designed by students in the Real Jobs scheme

In this session we will…

Share practical tips around preparing group tasks

Highlight some of the challenges of group work and explore ways these can be avoided or managed through effective planning and design

Share practical tips around setting up, facilitating and managing the group work process, including monitoring and support

Group work brings students together who have different skills, knowledge and experiences and can be an effective and powerful way to learn

What is the purpose of group work?

- When do you use group work with your students? At several points over the year? Throughout the programme? At all levels?

- Why do you use it? Does the purpose change over time?

Go to: menti.com
Enter the code: 1426 4529

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What do your students say about group work?

- https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/news-and-views/i-love-group-worksaid-no-student-ever

Sally Brown (in June 2016 visit to UoR) said

"Students frequently quite like being involved in group tasks but often don't like being assessed as a member of a group as they often see it as unfair"

Benefits of group work

Seven benefits of group work   1-4

1 Two heads are better than one. You can pool ideas, share the workload and examine problems from a **range of different perspectives**, tackling more complex problems than you could working alone

2 Group projects develop valuable **workplace skills** such as organisation, leadership, cooperation, delegation - and effective communication

3 You'll meet people. Working in groups provides opportunities for you to get to know other learners on your course and to develop and **strengthen your social network**

4 You'll learn to **work in different ways**, finding different approaches to solving problems and overcoming challenges. Interactions with others help you to construct new knowledge and to refine and assess what you know, through feedback, discussion and knowledge acquisition

Seven benefits of group work   5-7

5 Group work is a powerful learning experience which develops your higher-order problem-solving and reasoning and **critical thinking skills**

6 Working in diverse teams develops your **intercultural competence and communication** skills - meaning that you can work effectively across cultures - an essential skill for living and working in the globalised world

7 It's **fun**! Long gone are the days when learning at university meant sitting in a lecture theatre listening passively to a teacher-centred lecture. Group work allows you to work with others, using hands-on, practical, collaborative approaches

Don't forget the basics – classroom and group dynamics

Getting ready for group work

Use icebreakers and warmers, so they get to know each other before any group work starts

Talk with your class about how groups function

Bring in students from the previous year to share their team-working top tips

Invite guest speakers, employers and alumni to talk about the skills they value

Provide opportunities for students to discuss, negotiate, improve their listening skills and practise giving feedback to each other

Provide support by having timetabled sessions /seminars in which they are allocated specific time or tasks to work as a group

Share (and explain) the assessment criteria!

Task Design (getting the most out of group work)

The best group work tasks are those where:

- everyone in the group is able to contribute meaningfully
- these contributions can be easily identified (and possibly logged or recorded)
- (If assessed) the assessment process is clear and transparent
- the task is well-designed to encourage collaboration
- multiple perspectives / a diverse knowledge base is needed to complete the task

Break out room Task (15 minutes)

- In your room - come on camera and mic, introduce yourself
- **Share an example of a group task** which works well in your T&L context
- Explore the reasons why together in your group

Break out room Task (15 minutes)

- In your room - come on camera and mic, introduce yourself
- **Share an example of a group task** which works well in your T&L context
- **Identify three common reasons why the tasks work well**

- https://padlet.com/a_s_buckingham/nc31oxdcd95z2bpf

Welcome back!

Creating the groups

- What do you need to take into account?

Image from Pixabay https://pixabay.com/photos/startup-meeting-brainstorming-594090/

Running good group work

- Share the rationale
- Think about roles
- Support the process, use technology effectively
- Vary how you set up the groups
- Include low stakes/ risk free opportunities for practice and rehearsal
- Provide formative feedback
- Build in opportunities for reflection

Image, Angela's own

Monitoring and supporting groups

- In fact - you may find that groups will need help in a number of areas, including:

  - Group bonding

  - Setting ground rules

  - Clarifying the task

  - Managing and recording meetings

  - Encouraging effective intra-group communication

  - Dividing up tasks

  - Managing non-contribution

  - Monitoring their progress

  - Giving feedback to peers

What can go wrong with groupwork?

Technology can help

TAKE TIME

Final messages & wrap up

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Useful resources

- The **NEW!** UoR Guide to group work is located in CQSD's T&L framework page

Direct link to the guide:

- https://sites.reading.ac.uk/curriculum-framework/group-work-2022/

For your interest:

- https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/news-and-views/i-love-group-worksaid-no-student-ever

- Using group work for assessment – an academic's perspective by Dr Nigel Francis, Cardiff University with Professor Jane Thomas and Matthew Allen, both from Swansea Academy of Learning and Teaching, Swansea University.

- Learn Higher Group work resources: https://aldinhe.ac.uk/resource-category/group-work-resources/