

# Managing Group Work in the Context of Internationalisation and Digitalisation of Higher Education: From Netiquette to Group Charter

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# Digitalisation and Internationalisation and of Higher Education

# Digitalisation of Higher Education

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- Covid-19 pandemic accelerated students' and teachers' acceptance of digital technologies, but also presented new challenges (Breaz et al, 2022).
- Digital transformation of higher education - associated with various potentials and expectations, but also uncertainties and fears (Breaz et al, 2022).
- DBS is NOT becoming an online college, but online is going to be a feature.
- Blended learning for a number of programmes, Moodle, Zoom, Google Meet, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Teams...
- All has implications for group work

# Internationalisation of Higher Education

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- **Internationalisation** of higher education is a global phenomenon – the result of increasing globalization combined with the requirements of the knowledge economy (de Wit and Altbach, 2021).
- Focus on **mobility**, e.g. study abroad programmes and international student recruitment (de Wit and Altbach, 2021).
- Dublin Business School has over 9,000 students and offers over 100 courses, of which more than 70 are open to students from outside the EU.
- DBS students and staff represent 80+ nationalities



# Challenges, Opportunities and Good Practice for Managing Group Work

# Managing Group Work

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- No single strategy may apply to all contexts
- Different areas may require different approaches
  - Trinity College Dublin – MEd/PME programmes
  - Dublin City University – BSc Education and Training programme
  - Dublin Business School – Business programmes: MBA, MSc (level 9); Higher Diploma (level 8); Certificate programmes (level 6)

# Examples of Group Teaching and Learning Activities

Activity	Description
Group Work	Students are divided into groups to work on a particular activity (assignment, discussion of a case study, article, video, etc.)
Peer Discussion	Students engage in a discussion about a topic which the lecturer observes and can contribute to
Peer Presentations	Students present either individually or as a group to their fellow students
Controlled Debate	Students are divided into groups and argue the merits of a specific stance on a topic usually determined by the lecturer
Role Play	Students act out a scenario from the real world for the whole group

## Impacts of **digitalisation** and **internationalisation**:

- ✓ Online group collaborations
- ✓ Virtual exchange among students
- ✓ Diverse multinational student groups

# Dublin Business School

- For DBS Business programmes, this discussion begins during the **Student Inductions** before the programme starts
- Setting ground rules/expectations from the start
- Students from a wide variety of backgrounds – all have something to offer





# Academic expectations

- Students are asked to read The DBS Learner Charter which highlights 10 key areas, for example:

## Learners can expect to:

- 6. Be treated with respect, dignity and professionalism by DBS staff at all times in a safe environment where diversity is embraced.

## DBS expects learners to:

- 6. Behave in a courteous and professional manner towards other learners and staff at all times.



# Benefits of Group Work

(highlighted at Inductions and beyond):

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- ✓ Share ideas and find solutions
- ✓ Develop key skills for the workplace: team working, time management, communication skills, project management
- ✓ Problem solving and dealing with conflict
- ✓ Work with students from a range of different cultural and social backgrounds
- ✓ New friendships

# Challenges of Group Work (highlighted at Inductions and beyond):

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- Throughout the course you will work on a variety of assessment tasks that will require you to work both in a group and individually.
- You may worry that working in a group will be difficult
- Typical concerns are normal and may include members not meeting up, not turning in high-quality work and not making the deadline.
- With careful planning, consistent communications and recording of individual contributions these concerns are normally not an issue.

# Common challenges:

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## People challenges:

- No attempt to get to know each other
- Members dominating discussions
- Ideas being mocked or ridiculed
- Members being ignored
- Unreliable members

## Process challenges:

- No 'ground rules' agreed, e.g. when, where and how often to meet
- No agreed agendas
- No agreed specific roles or tasks
- No agreed due dates
- No meeting notes taken, e.g. what was agreed

# Ground Rules for a Successful Group

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- Acknowledge that managing collective projects is part of learning
- Agree an overall protocol/ group charter, referring to **DBS Learner Charter** as an example, setting the expectations for the group
- Identify clear roles within the group (e.g. rotating leader, minute taker)
- Ensure assignment tasks are clearly assigned with equal workload
- Agree a schedule of meetings
- Ensure all meetings and tasks are documented
- If the group is not functioning effectively, take early steps to address
- Staying in contact, setting expectations if delays occur

# Netiquette (online meetings etiquette)

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- If the group is meeting remotely, i.e. via online meetings, bear in mind that behaviours, feelings and issues can be exacerbated in the online environment. Be aware of this and constantly check your own behaviours.

In 2022 – it is about how you prepare, treat others and focus

- ✓ Defining Netiquette rules for your team
- ✓ Create an agenda
- ✓ Come prepared
- ✓ Signal to others you are in a meeting
- ✓ Prevent distractions
- ✓ Log in early
- ✓ Start with video on
- ✓ Muting yourself when not speaking
- ✓ Don't talk over people
- ✓ Resist the desire to do other work
- ✓ Hybrid meetings: make sure you can be seen, be inclusive, no whispers, allow the other person go first

# Managing Group Work

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- ✓ Uploading group work support slides to class moodle page (e.g. from the Induction/QAH).
- ✓ Go over tips and expectations with students and the start of group work.
- ✓ Frequent reminders about equal distribution of work, the need to provide expectations to group members, constructive feedback, mutual respect, netiquette.



# Individual contribution report

## Individual Contribution Report

Provide a short account of the overall contribution made by each individual group member. This document will be agreed by all members.

Name: Overall Percentage Contributed (out of 100%) /100  
Summary of your individual contribution to this assignment:

Name:  
Summary of your individual contribution to this assignment:

Name:  
Summary of your individual contribution to this assignment:

Name: |  
Summary of your individual contribution to this assignment:

- Each group is asked to complete Individual Contribution Sheet (one per group).
- Helps to identify free-riders
- This document will be agreed by all members.
- Aimed at equal work distribution.
- The right is reserved to vary the grade awarded to individual group members should circumstances warrant.

# References

Association for Learning Development in Higher Education (ALDin HE) [online resource]  
<https://aldinhe.ac.uk/resource-category/group-work-resources/>

Atlassian (2022). The importance of teamwork (as proven by science)  
<https://www.atlassian.com/blog/teamwork/the-importance-of-teamwork>

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DBS Quality Assurance Handbook (QAH)

de Wit, H. & Altbach, P.G. (2021). Internationalization in higher education: global trends and recommendations for its future, *Policy Reviews in Higher Education*, 5(1), 28-46, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322969.2020.1820898>

Miller, N. (2022). Online meeting etiquette for attendees – A 2022 update. <https://thedigitalworkplace.com/>

Thank you!