

Collaboration and working with others online: the essentials.

Working successfully with others in a group or a team, particularly one with a shared goal, involves a high level of self-awareness, excellent people skills and effective academic skills. Doing this solely online requires an enhanced level of communication, preparation and understanding.

There are challenges to not meeting in person at all when you have a groupwork assignment, so it is important to agree on an online platform and be clear as early as possible what everyone's roles are. Clarify each part of the process with your team and agree a schedule. Try to anticipate issues which may arise and identify strategies to resolve them before they happen.

Top tips for doing this well:

Team ethos:

Learn about group dynamics and establish good practice:

- establish ground rules for the team: guidelines or codes of conduct for all to agree to and abide by,
- be honest with each other,
- be aware of own behaviours and the impact of these behaviours on others,
- practice empathy and support each other.

Practicalities:

Plan and organise effectively by agreeing on:

- roles and responsibilities,
- deadlines,
- agendas,
- scheduling,
- planners,
- meetings,
- back-up plans.

Set up effective communication strategies through:

- active listening,
- concise speaking,
- turn-taking,
- tools: email, social media, apps, shared calendars, video chat.

Discuss or implement effective delegation strategies i.e. who should do what.

Discuss leadership strategies.

Own role:

Have integrity by being authentic and not 'faking' your personality.

Be self-aware:

- make an honest assessment of your own strengths and weaknesses.
- be prepared to talk about your own behaviours within the group without getting defensive.
- take personal responsibility for your own behaviour, approach, motivation etc.

Learning Development

- develop your reflective and introspective skills.
- understand that emotions are not always fair nor are they necessarily based in a true reflection of events.

Lay aside your own ego in preference to the team's success.

Stand up for yourself and others respectfully, when necessary.

Be committed.

Work hard.

Issues:

If any issues arise that you really cannot solve as a team, please don't let them cause a rift in your group. Take responsibility and ask for help, your tutors and Learning Development may be able to offer a solution or alternative perspective.