

**THE ENGINEERING & DESIGN INSTITUTE LONDON**

**Group Work**

**Guidance for Assessed Student Group Work**

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### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 TEDI-London acknowledges the importance of group work activities as an important part of a student's learning experience. Some of the benefits gained from group working are reflected in the attributes of graduates as set out in the Engineering Council's document, Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes Fourth Edition (AHEP 4): *Function effectively as an individual, and as a member or leader of a team. Evaluate effectiveness of own and team performance.*
- 1.2 This guidance document aims to provide advice regarding group work activities, whilst allowing the flexibility for module leads to set standards consistent with best practice within their own projects and disciplines. The main consideration should be to ensure that students are treated equitably in group working activities and that these activities do not overburden students at the expense of other learning activities. The assessment process should not be biased according to sex, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender reassignment, religion or belief, age, pregnancy and maternity, or disability.
- 1.3 Students and staff members should also take note of TEDI-London's Dignity at Work and Study policy, which promotes all members of the community treating each other in a respectful manner.

### **2. Purposes of group working**

- 2.1 Teaching and learning in small groups serves a number of educational purposes including:
  - a. Studying collaboratively has been shown to directly enhance learning as it enables a variety of ideas and resources to be discussed/used, and encourages deep learning and consequently better retention of knowledge;
  - b. Developing the growth of students' inter-personal skills, and skills of reasoning, problem solving and leadership;
  - c. Employers value the particular skills which group work may help develop, such as teamwork, negotiation and communication skills.
  - d. It is a requirement of the accreditation process with the professional engineering bodies.

### **3. General guidance**

- 3.1 The following points of general guidance are provided, along with more specific details in the appendices which follow.
- 3.2 TEDI-London should ensure that students have the opportunity to take part in group work within their programmes of study where appropriate, to satisfy the requirements of the relevant Programme Specifications and Subject Benchmarks, the Assessment Handbook and any other conditions stated by relevant Professional/Statutory bodies.
- 3.3 Students should be made aware of the educational reasons for assessed group work and how such activities contribute to the intended learning outcomes of a particular unit or programme.
- 3.4 Each student should be aware of their particular task or role within the group, whether assigned by the module tutors or by the group. It should be made clear to students the extent of their responsibilities regarding group working, including what they are expected to do and how they are expected to work with other members of the group.
- 3.5 Preparation is important. It is recommended that time is allocated within classes for group members to get to know each other prior to group work commencing. This could be through, for example, an icebreaker that explores the background and expertise of group members. Enough time should be given to ensure everyone understands the purpose of the group activity.
- 3.6 Students should be made aware of how their work should be submitted or presented; for example, whether a single submission should be made by the group as a whole or whether each student should submit their work individually.
- 3.7 Students less familiar with group work may appreciate more support about the possible roles and expected contributions of group members to help guide their participation.
- 3.8 Basic ground rules for the conduct of an assessed group work activity should be established at the start of the activity, including the means of any conflict resolution (what students should do if there are disagreements within the group) and what is expected of the group members in terms of treating others with dignity and respect. Minimum levels of collaboration should be identified as part of the group work assessment guidelines.

3.9 If a piece of assessed group work is new to a module or programme, it would be good practice to consult with the External Examiner about the nature and content of the group work activity prior to it going ahead.

#### **4. Assessment and Marking of Group Work**

4.0 The TEDI-London's Anonymity in Assessment principle states that where possible, your assessments will be submitted and marked anonymously; your name will not be stated on submissions at the point of marking and will only be revealed when your marks are released. However, in cases of group working, it is acknowledged that anonymous marking is not always practical or possible. A group work presentation is one part of a range of assessment types and methods by which students' work is assessed and anonymous marking would normally take place in the individual types of assessments.

4.1 If one or more of the learning outcomes of a module is to be assessed by group work activities, it should be identified how the group work component will be assessed if a student has a re-sit opportunity/referral. Reassessment must enable a student to demonstrate the same intended learning outcomes as the first assessment, but may not necessarily be in the same format as the original assessment. Students who repeatedly fail to complete and submit when working within groups may be asked to interrupt and return when they are in a position to complete group work.

4.2 Feedback for summative and formative group work should be made available to all group members, rather than a single group representative. However, specific private feedback should be given to each individual, particularly where there have been variations in the mark assigned to individuals.

4.3 For interim group assessments worth 30% or less, in the majority of cases, only the group work learning outcome should be used to reward or penalise individual students. The marks for an individual student for this learning outcome should be influenced by attendance monitoring, peer evaluation and staff observation scores, usually in equal measure. However, there will be exceptions where a student has clearly failed to attend or engage in the activities and the mark for the individual should be adjusted accordingly. The interim assessment should give most students an opportunity for feedback on their group work and interactions without penalising so harshly that there is no opportunity for retrieval within the module, although there may be exceptions where no or little work has been completed.

4.4 For assessments that form the majority of the marks for a module and/or are submitted at the end of a module, the marks for an individual student across each and every one of the learning outcomes should be influenced by attendance monitoring, peer evaluation and staff observation scores.