Why use a group task?

A group task can be a valuable learning experience.

- Students can learn a lot from each other.
- Group tasks can produce broader and deeper learning outcomes for individual students.
- Working in teams is an essential skill in many work contexts.

Planning the task

When planning group online tasks, consider the following:

- Does this task really lend itself to a group effort rather than an individual one?
- How many group members would be optimal?
- Should membership be random or controlled in some way?
- How can you support students to create an effective team? (see Student Guide to Working in Groups)
- Would staged submissions from the group task be helpful (rather than the complete submission at the end)?

Remember, group work can be more effective if students do not select their own group. They may prefer to work with friends, but maximising their opportunities to work with students from different backgrounds develop their team work skills more effectively.

Preparing Students for Online Group Work

Kevin Forde (Medicine) talks about how he prepared his students to conduct group work online.

Assessing group tasks

Group assessment can help make marking and provision of feedback more manageable. If you are considering an
assessable group task, also ask yourself the following questions as you plan:

- Will one grade be given to the group, or will peer assessment be used to determine individual marks?
- Will you include the team work process in the assessment criteria?

Strategies for planning and conducting effective group assessment tasks are contained in the Assessment Toolkit on this site.

Moodle tools

- Find out all about Moodle group work on the Create a group activity page
- For information on two ways to use groups, see Blogging in Moodle, Set up a forum
- For help setting up self and peer assessment, see Create a UNSW workshop activity

Resources

Learning and Teaching Unit

- Student Guide to Online Study
- Student Guide to Working in Groups

Sample facilitation guide for self-facilitated project groups

- Materials Science Project

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