

# Standards Unit

## IMPROVING DIFFERENTIATION IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

### TOPIC 3: USING GROUP WORK TO DEVELOP LEARNING

#### FACILITATOR GUIDANCE

#### Activity 3: Developing group activities and guidance (1 hr, 15 mins)

##### Facilitator notes

The purpose of this activity is to encourage participants to put into practice and reflect on what they've learned about planning and managing group work.

PowerPoint Slide 8 shows the objectives for the session.

##### Now read the activity.

##### Objectives

- To apply principles of good planning and management of group work.
- To devise a checklist of good practice.

##### Resources

Flipchart paper and pens

Checklist of good practice in planning and managing group work.

##### Stage 1 (in groups of three or four) (30 mins)

Devise a group activity for a set of learners. If you prefer, you can rework an activity within an existing session plan or for a session you have already planned. Prepare an outline of the activity on flipchart paper and nominate one person to present this.

##### Facilitator notes

A whole group feedback session will give

participants the opportunity to share their ideas and the reasoning behind this.

##### Stage 2 (in whole group) (15 mins)

Present your flipchart and the reasoning behind the group activity you have devised.

##### Stage 3 (in same groups of three or four) (15 mins)

Use your experience of group work and your discussions in the last stage to draw up a checklist or set of guidelines for planning and managing group work.

##### Facilitator notes

After participants have completed Stage 3 you should give out the handout 'Planning and managing group work checklist'. Ask participants to compare their ideas with the ones on the handout. Note down any extra ideas they've come up with. You may wish to draw on these in subsequent CPD sessions.

##### Stage 4 (individually) (5 mins)

After you've completed the exercise, you'll be given a handout 'Planning and managing group work'. You should compare your ideas with those in the handout.

## Stage 5 (in main group) (10 mins)

### Facilitator notes

#### *Points for a group discussion*

- What are the key issues, concerns and barriers in terms of planning and managing group work?
- How could these be addressed?

The activity will close with a group discussion about key issues, concerns and blocks in terms of planning and managing group work.

### Taking the session forward

You may want to encourage participants to commit themselves to further actions they can take to experiment with using group work. They could agree to try one or two approaches then arrange to compare experiences at a future date.

Or they may want to meet in curriculum teams to re-visit their schemes of work and consider how they might:

- better incorporate different types of group work;
- distribute these to avoid 'overkill';
- use them to reinforce each other.

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#### TOPIC 3: USING GROUP WORK TO DEVELOP LEARNING

#### PARTICIPANTS' BRIEFING SHEET

#### Activity 3: Developing group activities and guidance (1 hr, 15 mins)

##### Objectives

- To apply principles of good planning and management of group work.
- To devise a checklist of good practice.

##### Resources

Checklist of good practice in planning and managing group work.

##### Stage 1 (in groups of three or four) (30 mins)

Devise a group activity for a set of learners. If you prefer, you can rework an activity within an existing session plan or for a session you have already planned. Prepare an outline of the activity on flipchart paper and nominate one person to present this.

##### Stage 2 (in full group) (15 mins)

In the full group there'll be a discussion in which you'll get an opportunity to share the reasoning behind your decisions and to share ideas. Present your flipchart and your reasoning behind the group activity you've devised.

##### Stage 3 (in same groups of three or four) (15 mins)

Use your experience of group work and your discussions in the last stage to draw up a checklist or set of guidelines for planning and

managing group work.

##### Stage 4 (individually) (5 mins)

After you've completed the exercise, you'll be given a handout 'Planning and managing group work checklist'. You should compare your ideas with those in the handout.

##### Stage 5 (in main group) (10 mins)

The activity will close with a group discussion about key issues, concerns and blocks in terms of planning and managing group work.

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#### TOPIC 3: USING GROUP WORK TO DEVELOP LEARNING

#### PLANNING AND MANAGING GROUP WORK CHECKLIST

1. Are there explicit learning outcomes for the group activity (not 'group work for group work's sake')?

Learning outcomes may be about:

- knowledge;
- skills;
- understanding;
- acquisition;
- application;
- consolidation/revision.

And they may be:

- subject/topic-related;
- work-related;
- generic (e.g. problem-solving or communication skills);
- simple (information gathering) or higher order (critical thinking).

2. Are the learners aware of the learning outcomes for the group activity?

3. Do they see the relevance of these?

4. Do the learning outcomes:

- allow all learners to make progress and achieve?
- stretch the most able?

5. Is the type of group activity you've selected appropriate for the type of learning you want to take place (knowledge acquisition, skills development, problem-solving etc)?

6. Do you plan the composition of your groups of learners? This needs to be thought through in advance, not left to chance.

7. Are the activities tightly organised, with:

- clear roles, tasks, timings, reporting or feedback procedures;
- resources prepared in advance?

8. Do the activities keep all learners occupied?

9. Do they enable all learners to participate without feeling threatened?

10. Do the groups have access to support if they're struggling with the task?

11. Is sufficient time left for de-briefing after the group activity?

12. Do you need to establish (or get learners to establish) any ground rules for learners' behaviour when working in groups? Examples could be:

- listen to others;
- respect others' contributions;
- if you challenge a comment, be prepared to justify it.