

Improving student experience and engagement with group assessments and peer review

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Abstract

21PSC773 Strategic Management of Sport Organisations and Events is a new 20 credit module which ran for the first time in the academic year 2021-2022 for Part C students on the BSc Sport Management programme. In preparing for this new module, group assessment and peer-review practice was implemented that – as well as assessing student understanding and comprehension of the subject matter, etc. – was primarily aimed at enhancing the final-year experience of students by aiming to address areas of the National Student Survey (NSS) Results which had been highlighted as areas of improvement for the BSc Sport Management programme (compared to the other aspects of the course); these being Assessment and Feedback (2020 NSS - 84.8%), Learning Community (85.3%), and Student Voice (83.3%). The following case study outlines that practice, highlighting the issues, benefits, and challenges associated with implementing it, as well as evidencing of success of its application.

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1. Background

In July 2020, the results of the National Student Survey (NSS) were published, indicating that overall student satisfaction with the BSc Sport Management programme was high (92.0%) and above both the wider-University (88.7%) and Sector (90.0%) averages. Yet despite these successes, there were areas of the NSS Results in which students believed that improvements could be made in relation to their university experience, evidenced by the scores the programme received for Assessment and Feedback (84.8%), Learning Community (85.3%), and Student Voice (83.3%), as well as some of the qualitative feedback offered by students who completed the survey. Specifically, for students on BSc Sport Management programme, one of the recurring issues highlighted in these results (see, for example, Appendix A), and by way of module evaluations and the School's Student-Staff Liaison Committee, relates to group-based assessments and peer review. For example, a common point of student feedback relating to group-based assessments indicated concerns with the fact overall degree marks (a particular concern for final year students) might be impacted by group members whose contributions (or lack thereof) might not see them achieve the grades they might typically expect compared to working alone. Further feedback related to scheduling difficulties for group meetings, and students wanting the opportunity to contribute to and better understand how group-based assessments are conducted and marked.

Shortly after the 2020 NNS results were published, work began on preparing new Part C modules for the academic year 2021-2022¹, including the focus of this case study, *PSC773 Strategic Management of Sport Organisations and Events* of which the authors² were responsible for its development and delivery. In planning for this module, and in setting up the assessment, the authors sought to develop and implement teaching practice that was cognisant of student feedback for the programme and improve on the student experience by seeking to address the aforementioned challenges identified by students in relation to group-based assessments. The hope here was that by implementing such practice at Part C, this would go some way toward improving student satisfaction on future iterations of the NSS relating to Assessment and Feedback (2020 NSS - 84.8%), Learning Community (85.3%), and Student Voice (83.3%) for the BSc Sport Management programme.

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¹ To allow modules to be finalised and approved by the SSEHS Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) and Associate Dean for Teaching (ADT) in 2020-2021 ready for 2021-2022 (for a newly developed BSc Sport Management programme which began in Part A in 2019-2020).

² Jamie Kenyon (Module Leader for *PSC773 Strategic Management of Sport Organisations and Events* & Programme Leader for *BSc Sport Management*) & Peter Dickenson (Module Tutor for *PSC773 Strategic Management of Sport Organisations and Events*).

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2. Methodology

Week 1 (Semester 1) - Lecture 1 - Module Introduction

Students were advised of what the assessment for the 21PSC773 Strategic Management of Sport Organisations and Events module would entail (CW1 was a group PechaKucha presentation in Semester 1, and CW2 was an individual Consultancy Report in Semester 2). For the CW1 PechaKucha presentation, students were required to vote, via VEVOX, on whether they would have liked to have picked their own assessment groups, or whether this should have been completed by the module leader. Students were requested to complete this task prior to the start of Seminar 1 in Week 2.

Post-Lecture

Results of poll indicated that the cohort were in favour of the assessment groups being comprised by the module leader (68.8% Response Rate) by a margin of 54.7% (in favour of module leader comprising groups) to 45.3% (in favour students comprising their own groups) (see Appendix B).

Week 2 (Semester 1) - Seminar 1 - Managing Group Work & Assessment Preparation

The seminar began with students being made aware of their assessment groups. They were then required to get into those groups and make introductions. The seminar continued with a more in-depth look at the presentation format (PechuKucha), the specific assessment task (see Appendix C), the general marking criteria (see Appendix D), and the peer-review element of the assessment (with a specific outline of how final individual marks would be awarded, i.e., the formula used).

The seminar then moved on to getting the students to reflect on their previous experiences of group work, framed around the following questions: 1.) What were the most beneficial aspects of working in a group? 2.) What were the most challenging aspects? 3.) How did you address such challenges? 4.) What are the characteristics of effective work groups? Once the discussion was complete, the groups' discussions were shared among the seminar cohort and recorded on Padlet (see Appendix E).

The Module Leader then presented some (theory-informed) knowledge and understanding from the management literature on group work/teamwork structured around the four questions that formed student discussion. As part of the "Strategies for dealing with group work challenges", the students were advised that a one-hour group-work meeting had been added to their student timetables (by the Module Leader) to mitigate issues associated with students "not having the time to meet up", scheduling conflicts, etc.

The seminar discussion then moved on to the peer review component of the group-based assessment, CW1, and the students were required to discuss, again in their assessment groups, what criteria they believed they should assess one another on from a peer-review perspective. Another group discussion was followed by another presentation by the groups to the seminar cohort, which was again recorded on Padlet (see Appendix G) – all Padlets from all of the seminars were later uploaded to the module's LEARN page for reference.

Post-Seminar

Following the seminar, the Module Leader then collated the student responses concerning peer review (recorded on Padlet) for the three seminars into another VEVOX survey for individual students to vote on what they considered to be the most important criteria, with an indication of which groups had contributed the proposed criteria (see Appendix F).

Once the vote was closed, students were advised of the criteria that they had collectively selected as part of the peer review assessment component of CW1 by way of the survey results, and marking criteria were then devised based (by the Module Leader) on the five most popular (see Appendix F). This process allowed students to contribute toward how they would be assessed (allowing them to express their Student Voice), but still allowed a

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fair amount of Module Leader control in terms of how these individual marking criteria would be devised (see Appendix G).

Post-Assessment Delivery and Marking

Following delivery of the CW1 assessment, students were required to complete the peer-review survey (over a two-week window) which asked them to assess the contributions of themselves and their group members to the assessment, based on the criteria that the cohort had collectively decided upon earlier in the semester. The peer-review was carried out using WebPA. The Peer Review Index Score produced by the WebPA and the group's overall mark for the assessment were then used to determine individual grades by way of the following formula (which students were advised of in the preparation seminar and which was also published on the module's LEARN page):

$$(Overall\ Group\ Mark\ \times\ 0.5) + ((Overall\ Group\ Mark\ \times\ 0.5) \times\ WebPA\ Peer\ Review\ Index\ Score) = Individual\ Grade$$

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3. Issues

Though such complaints were down compared to previous years (on different modules)³, there were still two groups (out of 20 Assessment Groups) that were faced with challenges in terms of non-compliance / lacking contributions from individual groups members which resulted in these groups contacting the Module Leader for assistance. These students were prompted of how to handle the situation (outlined in the preparatory seminar) and reminded that the peer-review component of the marking, if undertaken correctly by all group members, would likely account for such issues by adjusting individual marks based on individual contributions (it did in both cases). Since it was the first time running the module, there were no previous examples to draw on to demonstrate to the students how the peer-review might impact on individual grades, but now that the module is complete there are anonymised examples that can be implemented into the preparatory seminar for next year. Plans have also been put in place to further develop the preparatory seminar for next year to include some more formalised processes for handling inter-group conflict (see Appendix H).

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4. Benefits

- By having the peer review component account for 50% of the CW1 Group-Based Assessment grade, students were able to see how the grade they received was as much down to their individual endeavours as much as it was up to the group. A peer review adjustment set this high can also have significant impact on those that do not contribute toward the group work and equally benefit those that contribute above and beyond the average.
- By allowing students the opportunity to decide on how assessment groups would be comprised (student-led or Module Leader led), this gave students the opportunity to express their Student Voice (where such an opportunity did not exist previously).
- By devising a seminar that allowed the student assessment groups to collectively reflect upon and discuss the successes and challenges associated with previous experiences of group-based assessments was aimed at a.) encouraging students to take responsibility for their group success by agreeing on some shared behavioural principles, and b.) increase the interactivity among the groups prior to them beginning the assessment in earnest.
- By having students involved in the development of the own marking criteria, this also gave students the opportunity to express their student voice as well as increasing information and support relating to the assessment criteria, and ownership and accountability of the related work.
- Equally, by advising students of the formula used to work out individual grades, this also provided students with further information relating to the assessment as well as increasing transparency with respect to the marking process.

³ Accepting that this year would only represent a single case-study.

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- The way in which decisions were made relating to assessment groups and peer review marking criteria (by way of a democratic process), it was hoped, would foster a greater sense of Learning Community.
 - By timetabling weekly group meetings, challenges with respect to scheduling were mitigated, and individual students were no longer able to draw on the excuse that they were struggling to find time in the week when all group members were all available to meet.
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5. Evidence of Success

Since no formal module evaluations were planned for SSEHS modules in 2021/2022, the authors conducted an informal mid-module evaluation at the end of Seminar 1, which revealed the following.

Overall, of the 55 responses (71% response rate), the following questions received 4 or above (out of 5):

- The module has helped me to develop my understanding of strategy/strategic management within sport contexts
- The assessment requirements for the module were made clear in advance
- I liked that I could contribute to the peer review criteria for Assessment 1 (PechaKucha presentation)

The theming of qualitative feedback comments also indicated that the cohort found the following aspects of module to have been particularly positive: the team/groupwork assessment set-up and format, the weekly one-hour timeslot for groupwork/ability to prepare, and clear assessment guidelines.

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6. How Can Other Academics Reproduce This?

The applicability and reproducibility of the practices outlined in this case-study to other disciplines is evident. The addition of a single preparatory seminar (should one not exist), and the implementation of the practices outlined in this case-study would be a relatively easy addition to existing modules.

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7. Reflections

Despite the “Evidence of Success” outlined above, not until the results of the NNS 2022 are released will there be any indication of whether the practices implemented for this module have contributed toward improvements relating to Assessment and Feedback (2020 NSS - 84.8%), Learning Community (85.3%), and Student Voice (83.3%) in the experiences of our BSc Sport Management students. Further, though there were many positive qualitative comments in the mid-module evaluation conducted by the authors, there were also some comments which indicated that students felt more work needed to be done in improving the module (though not as many comments as there were positive). Among these, related to the group-based assessment, included the fact that despite many student feeling the assessment guidelines were clear, there were some students who conversely believed that they could have been clearer. Student feedback also indicated that more seminars/studying time was needed in relation to the assessment task, and a greater weighting for the group-based assessment. Though it is worth reminding the reader that this is the first year in which this module has run, plans have already begun in responding to these comments for the next iteration of the module (including increasing the weighting of the Group Assessment and amending the module delivery schedule, which have already been approved for 2022/2023).

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8. Appendices

Appendix A – A Sample of Qualitative Comments from the Loughborough University NSS Results 2020 – Sport Programmes

“Assessment criteria haven't always been clear with contradictory information, or not enough information is given. Greater academic support in relation to assessment criteria...”

“Some coursework could have been explained more clearly and feedback could have been more useful but was good enough.”

“When having to do coursework in groups, not being provided the opportunity to work with people who I want to work with. Too much emphasis on group work, elements of the assessment were not in my control.”

“Not being able to choose your own groups in certain modules and too much group work at times. More personal interaction with students.”

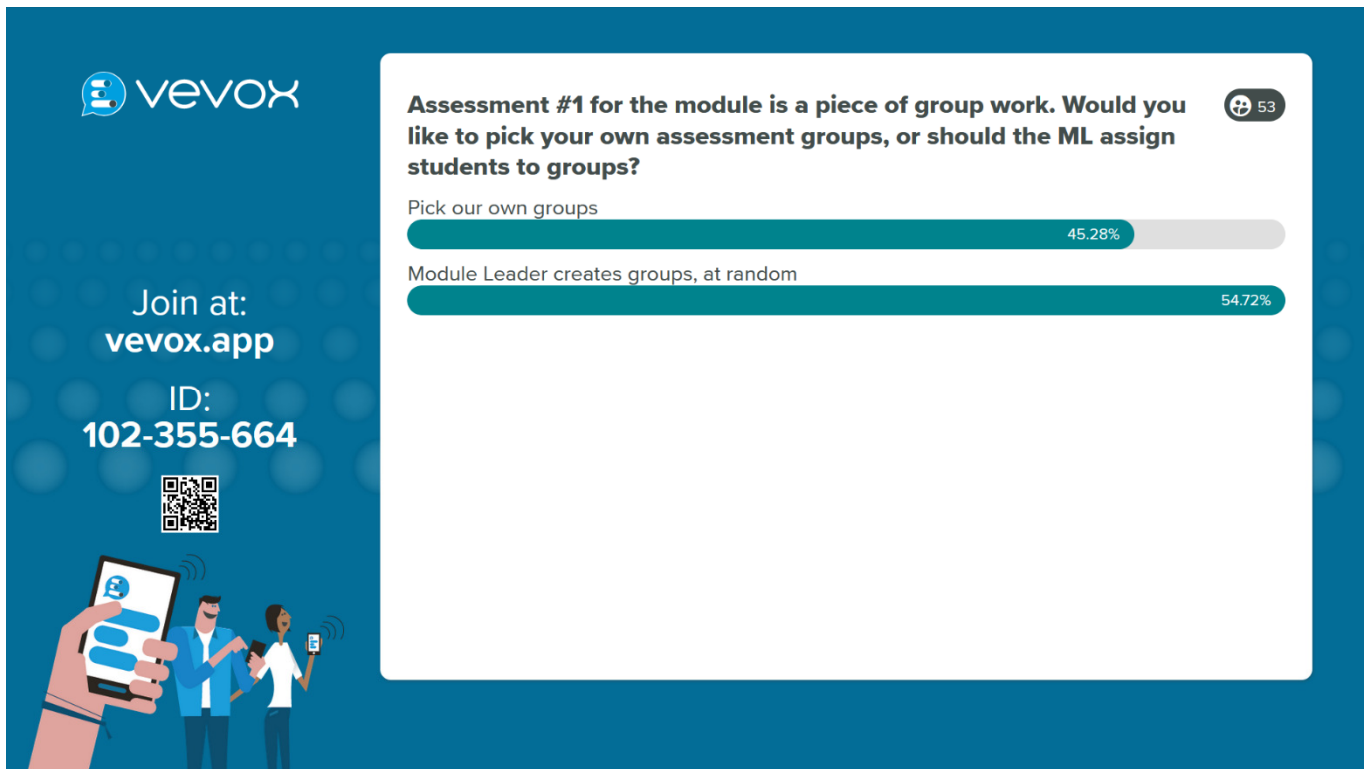
“I enjoyed working in group projects and recognised the value in it, however, I have found it unfair that marks are awarded to individuals based on the entire group's performance.”

“I don't feel I have always been made aware how assessments are marked, and there were a few occasions where I did not receive feedback.”

(Office for Students / Ipsos MORI, 2020)

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Appendix B – Results of Student Vote on How Assessment Groups Would Be Comprised



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Appendix C – 21PSC773 CW1 PechaKucha Presentation Assessment Brief

CW1 - Group Assessment is a group PechaKucha presentation which will be delivered during the seminar session of Week 9.

PechaKucha is a format of presentation in which 20 slides are delivered with 20 seconds of commentary each (total length of presentation should be 6 mins, 40 seconds).

Allowing for some very small margin of error, no presentation should exceed 7 mins.

Delivery will be followed by approximately five minutes of Q&A.

The grade that your group receives will be subject to peer-review adjustment resulting in individual grades; that is, 50% of the indicative group grade will be subject to peer-review-based adjustment to determine individual grades.

In your groups, you will be required to:

- Select a sport organisation that has a strategic plan on its website
- Utilise strategic management tools to conduct a strategic analysis of that plan
- Propose and defend recommendations for the selected organisation based on your group's analysis of that strategy

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Appendix D – 21PSC773 CW1 PechaKucha Presentation Assessment Marking Criteria

| CW 1 | First Class: 85% (Excellent) | First Class: 70% (Very Good) | Upper Second: 60% + (Good) | Mid Second Class: 55% (Upper Satisfactory) | Lower Second Class: 50% (Satisfactory) | Third Class: >40% + (Pass) | Fail: 39% (Needs Attention) |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| Knowledge / Understanding (25%) | An advanced and insightful knowledge and understanding of the topic and/or field of study is demonstrated. The ability is shown to select, organise, use, and apply this accurately, perceptively, and creatively to the assignment question. | A very good and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the topic and/or field of study is demonstrated. The ability is shown to select, organise, use, and apply this accurately and perceptively to the assignment question. | A good and systematic knowledge and understanding of the topic and/or field of study is demonstrated. The ability is shown to select, organise, use, and apply this accurately to the assignment question. | A sound knowledge and understanding of the topic and/or field of study is demonstrated. The ability is shown to select, organise, use, and apply this appropriately to the assignment question. | An adequate knowledge and understanding of the topic and/or field of study is demonstrated. The ability is generally shown to select, organise, use, and apply this appropriately to the assignment question. | Some knowledge and understanding of the topic and/or field of study is demonstrated. A limited ability is shown to select, organise, use, and apply this to the assignment question. | Some though inadequate knowledge and understanding of the topic and/or field of study is demonstrated. Little ability is shown to select, organize, use and apply knowledge and understanding to the assignment question |
| Critical Thinking / Analysis (25%) | The ability is shown to think critically, rigorously, and creatively about issues and set these in a wider framework, analyse / evaluate / interpret (concepts, arguments, perspectives, assumptions, problems, methods, data) in depth, and make well informed and balanced judgments, as applicable. The ability to propose new or alternative arguments, perspectives, hypotheses etc. may be shown. | The ability is shown to think critically and rigorously about issues and set these in a wider framework, analyse / evaluate / interpret (concepts, arguments, perspectives, assumptions, problems, methods, data) in depth, and make well informed and balanced judgments, as applicable. | The ability is shown to think critically about issues, analyse / evaluate / interpret (concepts, arguments, perspectives, assumptions, problems, methods, data), and make well informed judgments, as applicable. | The ability is shown to think critically about issues, analyse / evaluate / interpret (concepts, arguments, perspectives, assumptions, problems, methods, data), and make appropriately informed judgments, as applicable. | The ability is shown to think critically about a few issues, analyse / evaluate / interpret (concepts, arguments, perspectives, assumptions, problems, methods, data), and generally make appropriately informed judgments, as applicable. | Some ability is shown to think critically about a few issues, analyse / evaluate / interpret (concepts, arguments, perspectives, assumptions, problems, methods, data), and make judgments, as applicable. This, however, is at a basic level. | Limited ability is shown to think critically, analyse / evaluate / interpret (concepts, arguments, perspectives, assumptions, problems, methods, data), and make judgments, as applicable |
| Reading/Research (20%) | There is strong evidence of independent reading / research from a wide range of sources. An excellent range of appropriate reading/research is used critically and selectively to support the PechaKucha. The ability to draw on evidence from other disciplines may be evident. | There is strong evidence of independent reading / research from a wide range of sources. A very good range of appropriate reading / research is used critically to support the PechaKucha. | There is evidence of independent reading / research from several sources. A good range of appropriate reading / research is used to support the PechaKucha. | There is evidence of independent reading / research from different sources. Appropriate reading/research is used to support the PechaKucha. | There is evidence of some independent reading/research from different sources. Some appropriate reading/research is used to support the PechaKucha. | There is evidence of some reading/research but from a limited range of sources. Limited reading/research is used to support the PechaKucha. | There is little evidence of reading/research. No or very limited reading/research is used to support the PechaKucha. |

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| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Presentation / Communication (20%)</p> | <p>Presentation and communication are excellent, engaging and shows originality, as applicable. The PechaKucha is very well written, presented, structured, and organised.</p> | <p>Presentation and communication are very good. The PechaKucha is well written, presented, structured, and organised. There are very few, if any, errors in presentation</p> | <p>Presentation and communication are good. The PechaKucha is clearly well written, presented, structured, and organised. There are few errors in presentation.</p> | <p>Presentation and communication are adequate. The PechaKucha is clear and appropriately structured and organised. There are some minor errors in presentation.</p> | <p>Presentation and communication are generally adequate. The PechaKucha is generally clear and appropriately structured and organised. There are some errors in presentation.</p> | <p>Presentation and communication are limited. There are some issues with style, structure and organisation and several errors in presentation</p> | <p>Presentation and communication are poor. The answer is poorly written, structured and organised and there are numerous errors in presentation</p> |
| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Time Management (10%)</p> | <p>PechaKucha is exactly 6 mins and 40 seconds long</p> | <p>PechaKucha is between 6 mins and 30 seconds and 6 mins and 50 seconds long</p> | <p>PechaKucha is between 6 mins and 20 seconds long and 7 minutes long</p> | <p>PechaKucha is between 6 mins and 10 seconds long and 7 minutes and 10 seconds long</p> | <p>PechaKucha is between 6 mins long and 7 minutes and 20 seconds long</p> | <p>PechaKucha is between 5 minutes and 50 seconds long and 7 minutes and 30 seconds long</p> | <p>PechaKucha is outside of any of the previous stated windows.</p> |

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Appendix E – A Sample of Student Reflections on Past Experiences of Group Work

PSC773 Seminar 1 - Group Work

JAMIE KENYON OCT 14, 2021 08:09PM

Beneficial aspects of working in a group

Group 3

- Collab with each other and share ideas
- Helps to split up the work making it less stressful
- Time saving
- Motiving each other as everyone is accountable
- Disagreements spark discussion

Group 1

- Wider range of ideas/opinions
- Can challenge each other on ideas
- Develop communication skills
- Share workload
- Ability to specialise in different areas

Group 4

Cohesion skills that will become beneficial for future tasks in employment.
Collate skills and ideas together

Group 5

- Hear other people's ideas
- Make more persuasive arguments
- Work with others
- Practice workplace skills
- Organisation

Group 2

Distribution of workload
Alternative perspectives

Group 20

Example benefit here

Challenging aspects of group work

Group 3

- Having a slacker in the group
- Finding time to meet
- Dividing the work fairly
- Place to meet
- Disagreements between each other

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Group 1

- Effort may not be equal throughout the group
- issues with reliability
- clash of personalities
- agreement issues on decisions

Group 2

Organising group meet ups
Uneven workloads
Agreement on decisions

Group 4

Time management
Communications
Equal share of work

Group 5

- Some members may not be as interested – less contribution
- Disagreements
- Time management
- Not in individual control
- Spreading workload

Group 20

Example challenge here

Addressing group work challenges

Group 3

- Honest discussions to address disagreements
- Be open minded
- Be honest with each other
- Communicate well
- Planning in advance where to meet

Group 4

Communicating on a group chat / network
Setting a time for group meetings that can be accessible to all

Group 2

Communication
Setting meetings in advance

group 1

- communication with everyone in the group.
- set out standards of the group
- make time to discuss aspects of the group
- breaking down the challenges/tasks

Group 5

- Group chats for organisation etc.
- Communication
- Set time for groupwork
- Set individual responsibilities

Group 20

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Appendix F – A Sample of Peer Review Discussions

padlet

padlet.com/jaylyid/6jrd8h7opgzdeo0b

PSC773 - Seminar 1 - Peer Review Criteria

Made with a quick smile

JAMIE KENYON OCT 14, 2021 09:43PM

Group 3

- Have they turned up to the group meeting?
- Have they arrived to group meetings with the work that was expected of them?
- Have they communicated well?

Group 1

- Attendance to group meetings
- Conflict resolution ability
- Organisation
- Standard of work/research
- Engagement levels

Group 5

- Attendance
- Effort of contribution

- Quality of work
- Willingness to engage in teamwork

Group 2

- Effort levels- contribution to group talks
- Punctuality
- Organisation
- Standard of work

Group 4

- Communication skills
- Leadership skills
- Ownership of role
- Self Assessment

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Appendix G – Results of VEVOX Survey on Peer Review

Peer Review Marking Criteria - Group PechaKucha (CW1)

45 responses

Which of the following criteria should the peer-review aspect of the group PechaKucha (CW1) assess?

45

(please pick five max.)

Attendance at group meetings (suggested by groups: 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 15, & 16)

13.95%

Communicating with group members (suggested by groups: 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, & 16)

16.74%

Conflict resolution ability (suggested by groups: 1)

1.39%

Demonstrates leadership (suggested by group: 4)

1.86%

Organisation (suggested by groups: 1, 2, 13, 14, & 15)

6.97%

Overall contribution / effort (suggested by groups: 1, 2, 5, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15)

17.2%

Preparedness for group meetings / completing agreed work on-time (suggested by groups: 3, 6, 10, & 11)

13.95%

Professionalism (suggested by groups: 12)

1.39%

Punctuality at group meetings (suggested by groups: 2 & 11)

3.25%

Standard / quality of work produced (suggested by groups: 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, & 9)

12.55%

Teamwork or being a "team-player" (suggested by groups: 5, 7, 8, 11, 14, & 16)

10.69%

Allowed selections: 5

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Appendix H – Peer Review Marking Criteria

| Attendance at group meetings | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|------------------------------|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Attended no (0%) of group meetings | Attended roughly 10% of group meetings | Attended roughly 20% of group meetings | Attended roughly 30% of group meetings | Attended roughly 40% of group meetings | Attended roughly 50% of group meetings | Attended roughly 60% of group meetings | Attended roughly 70% of group meetings | Attended roughly 80% of group meetings | Attended roughly 90% of group meetings | Attended every group meeting |

| Communicating with group members | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Communication (responding to and contacting group members) was significantly lacking / non-existent | | Communication (responding to and contacting group members) was about average | | Communication (responding to and contacting group members) was excellent - this group member was always pro-active in contacting group members (and provided rapid responses to the queries of others) |

| Preparedness for group meetings / completing agreed work on-time | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Group member was never prepared for group meetings and never on-time in completing work to agreed deadlines | | Made an average contribution in this respect | | Group member was always prepared for group meetings and always on-time in completing work to agreed deadlines |

| Standard / quality of work produced | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Contributed no useful original ideas and work was produced to a low standard | | Made an average contribution in this respect | | Generated a wealth of realistic ideas and design concepts throughout - work was always produced to the highest standard |

| Overall contribution / effort to the assessment | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Made no or only a small contribution overall, with little in the way of overall effort | | Made an average contribution overall with average effort throughout | | Made a significant contribution overall, and maintained significant effort throughout the duration of the project |

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Appendix K – Strategies for Dealing with Intra-Group Conflict (2022/2023)

The following is adapted from page 9 of:

Finkel, R. (2010). *Resource Guide: Principles and Practices of Events Management – Planning and Operations*. Oxford: Higher Education Academy - Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Network.

Information for Students:

It is expected that all groups will manage and handle group relations internally as if in an employment environment. It is expected that all group members will remain in contact with one another, attend meetings, fully participate, successfully complete action points, and engage in good team work practices.

You should formalise this by using a behaviour contract.

Managing your own group is a very important part of the module and has an impact on your final marks (peer review accounts for 50% of your group mark). This does not, however, mean that you should pretend everything is rosy within the group at all times. This is unrealistic in many ways. What is expected is the management of group situations in a professional, mature and productive manner.

If there is a situation (e.g., someone is not contributing / attending meetings) within the group (and they have not advised of their absences before meetings take place), then the following procedures should be taken to remedy the situation:

1. An early as possible face-to-face meeting among group members should take place to sort out any situation. This should be a fair and balanced conversation, giving all members a chance to present their thoughts and views. This should be documented in signed minutes document to show how the situation was handled by the group.
2. If the situation remains, a written warning should be sent to the person(s) by the group delineating the situation and how it can be remedied.
3. If the situation does not improve, a second written warning should be sent to the person(s) by the group delineating the situation as it now stands and how it can be remedied. The Module Leader should be copied into this email to be alerted that there is a situation within the group.
4. Face-to-face meetings of all group members should be on-going to see if the situation can be resolved. Signed records of meetings should be kept to document the handling of the situation among group members.
5. If the situation still is not resolved at this point, a face-to-face meeting with all group members and the Module Leader will be held. Documentation and evidence of the situation should be presented to help resolve the situation once and for all.
6. If the situation is not resolved, the Module Leader will then draw on school policy relating to Group-Based Assessments, which states the following (with respect to student non-cooperation):

All students are expected to make a fair and equal contribution to the assessment and the module leader should put simple monitoring (e.g. checks and reminders during lecture sessions) and reporting mechanisms (e.g. contact via e-mail) in place to deal with student non-cooperation. Where there is strong evidence and a clear pattern of non-cooperation (i.e. where this is endorsed by most other group members; where the non-cooperating student cannot defend the situation and/or provide evidence of their contribution), a deduction may be made to the non-cooperating student's mark (based on the approximate % contribution the student has been deemed to have made to the assessment, relative to the other members of the group)