

How should group work be graded?

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Learning outcomes

**By the end of the session
participants will be able to:**

- LO1 Articulate the pros and cons of group work
- LO2 Appreciate how to support students undertaking group work
- LO3 Apply a range of models for the grading of group work
- LO4 Reflect on the principles underlying the fair grading of group work



Activity 1: Who already uses group work?

Go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com)



Activity 2: Pros and cons of group work?

Go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com)

Pros and cons of group work



Pros

Interest

Independent learning

Key skills (team working, leadership, problem solving, communication)

Challenging/different work



Cons

Management of groups

'Free riders'

Student anxiety

Perceived unfairness

Supporting students to undertake group work

Image from Group work framework: Dundalk Institute of Technology

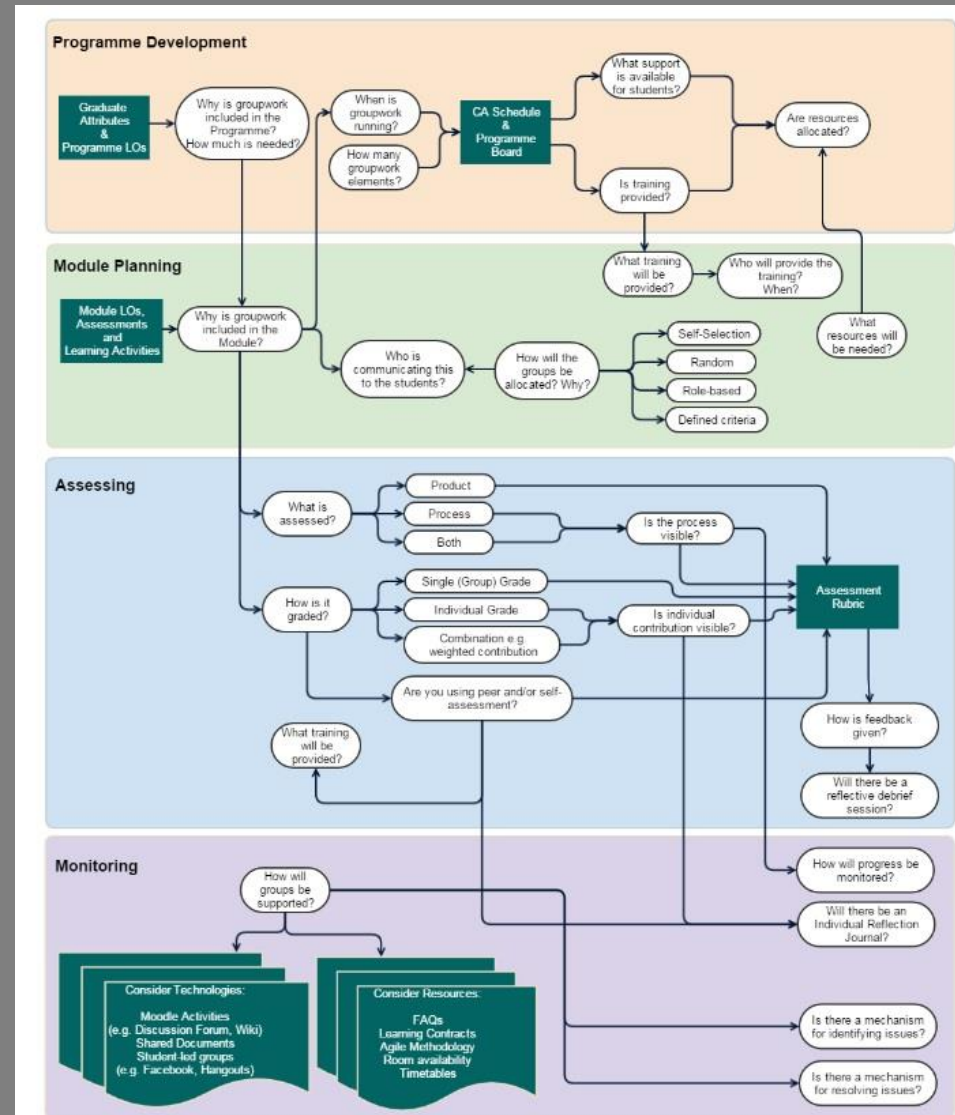
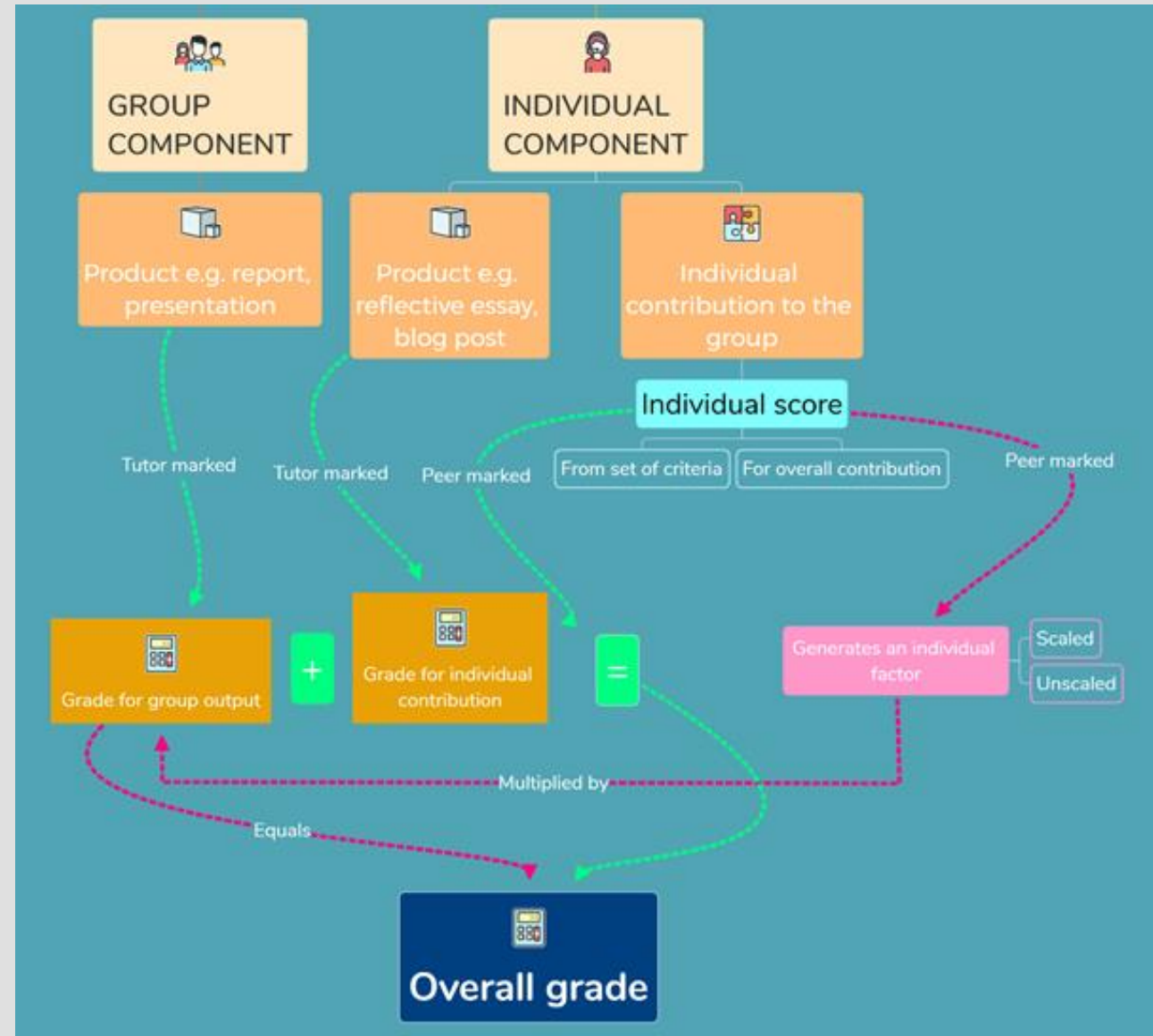


Figure 1: Planning, Implementing and Assessing Group-Work

Models for grading group work





Activity 3: Applying models for grading group work

Image by [Karolina Grabowska](#) from [Pixabay](#)

Pool of marks

	Mark for group product	Mark from pool of 100 for group contribution	No of students in group	Individual factor (unscaled)	Overall mark (unscaled)	Individual factor (scaled 50%)	Overall mark (scaled 50%)
Angela	66	38.3	3	1.149	76	1.0745	71
Julie	66	36.3	3	1.089	72	1.0445	69
Tom	66	25.3	3	0.759	50	0.8795	58

Mark against criteria

Marks to:	Angela			Julie			Tom		
By:	Angela	Julie	Tom	Angela	Julie	Tom	Angela	Julie	Tom
Enthusiasm	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	1
Ideas	2	3	1	2	2	2	1	1	2
Understanding	2	2	2	2	2	3	0	2	1
Helping group function	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	2
Organising	2	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	1
Efficiency	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	1
Individual score	39			36			21		
Average score	32			32			32		
Individual factor	1.21875			1.125			0.65625		
Scaled individual factor (50%)	1.109375			1.0625			0.828125		
Overall mark (unscaled)	80			74			43		
Overall mark (scaled)	73			70			55		

Division of total marks

	Mark for group product	Individual mark
Angela	66	74
Julie	66	66
Tom	66	58
Total	198	198

Comparison of models

Grading model	Pool of marks, unscaled	Pool of marks, scaled, 50%	Score against criteria, unscaled	Score against criteria, scaled 50%	Division of total marks
Angela	76 (+10)	71 (+5)	80 (+14)	73 (+7)	74 (+8)
Julie	72 (+6)	69 (+3)	74 (+8)	70 (+4)	66 (0)
Tom	50 (-16)	58 (-8)	43 (-23)	55 (-11)	58 (-8)



Principles

Grading of group work should

1. Be **fair**:

- a. Reflect quality of final product
- b. Value individual contributions
- c. Achieve a balance between a and b

2. Be **easy for students to understand**

Achieving balance

“If effort marks are high compared to base marks, students who make a greater contribution than their fellows to a project which is skimpy or fatally flawed are likely to end up with a better mark than a lesser contributor to an outstanding project. If contribution marks are weighted highly, a subtraction procedure is likely to fail students unless they produce very good projects. On the other hand, low weighting to the effort mark could reduce its significance to the extent that students still complain that they were not rewarded for their effort” (Conway et al. 1993:47)

Considerations when grading group work



INDIVIDUAL
OR GROUP?



PRODUCT OR
PROCESS?



WEIGHTING?



MARKER?



CRITERIA?



ASSESSMENT
METHOD?

Activity 4: Discuss considerations



Discussion and questions



References and further reading

Conway, R., Kember, D., Sivan, A. & Wu, M. (1993) 'Peer assessment of an individual's contribution to a group project'. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 34(2), 141-148.

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Lejk, M. and Wyvill, M. (1996) 'A survey of methods of deriving individual grades from group assessments', *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 21(3): 267-281

Orr, S. (2010) 'Collaborating or fighting for the marks? Students' experiences of group work assessment in the creative arts'. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 35(3): 301–313. <https://doi-org.eor.uhi.ac.uk/10.1080/02602931003632357>

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