



MANAGING GROUP PROJECTS

Relevant Literature

Previous research has suggested that most undergraduate and honours dissertation students positively view their group supervision experiences, appreciating peer support, collective problem-solving and the opportunity to compare progress (Akister, Williams & Maynard, 2009; Baker, Cluett, Ireland, Reading, & Rourke, 2013). Further, greater student engagement and higher on-time completion rates have been reported for group-supervised dissertation students (Akister, et al., 2009) and no differences have been reported in outcomes (grades) compared to individually supervised students (Baker et al., 2013).

However, difficulties in group projects have also been noted in previous research. These include group members who do not prepare or actively participate in meetings, concern that supervision provides insufficient focus on individual dissertations, and issues between group members (Kanagasniemi, Ahonen, Liikanen & Utriainen, 2011; Utriainen, Ahonen, Kanagasniemi, & Liikanen, 2011).

Limited information is provided on how to address supervisory issues associated with managing groups. However, the importance of setting clear expectations (a 'contract') at the beginning of the relationship has been emphasised (Kanagasniemi et al., 2011).

References:

- Akister, J., Williams, I., & Maynard, A. (2009). Using group supervision for undergraduate dissertations: A preliminary enquiry into the student experience. *Practice and Evidence of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 4(2), 77-94. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10540/115667>
- Baker, M.-J., Cluett, E., Ireland, L., Reading, S., & Rourke, S. (2013). Supervising undergraduate research: A collective approach utilising group work and peer support. *Nurse Education Today*, 34, 637-642. doi:10.1016/j.nedt.2013.05.006





Kanagasniemi, M., Ahonen, S-M., Liikanen, E., & Utriainen, K. (2011). Health science students' conceptions of group supervision. *Nurse Education Today*, 31, 179-183.

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