Assessed groupwork:

Development and implementation of a framework and guidance at DkIT

30th November 2018

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Aims

- To discuss the issues associated with assessed group work,

- To outline the development of a framework and guidelines for assessed group work at an Irish institute of technology,

- To consider how the this can be used as a framework for planning and managing group work.

The problem

- '*There was a little girl,*
- *Who had a little curl,*
- *Right in the middle of her forehead,*
- *When she was good,*
- *She was very, very good,*
- *And when she was bad,*
- *She was horrid*!'

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882)

Group work working group

- Ronan Bree, School of Health and Science.

- Colin Cooney, School of Business and Humanities.

- Moira Maguire, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching.

- Paula Mullen, School of Business and Humanities.

- Peter Morris, School of Informatics and Creative Media.

Working group

Consultation to gather feedback, identify best practice & improvement areas

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Survey designed and sent to all staff

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3 semi-structured student sessions across the campus

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Data collated and analysed

Assessed group work: the good, the bad and the ugly

- What are the positives of group work on your programmes,
  - For students?
  - For staff?

- What about the negatives?
  - For students?
  - For staff?

Staff & Students both identify and relate to similar sets of concerns/negatives with group work

Staff see many positives with group work (however students noted very few positives)

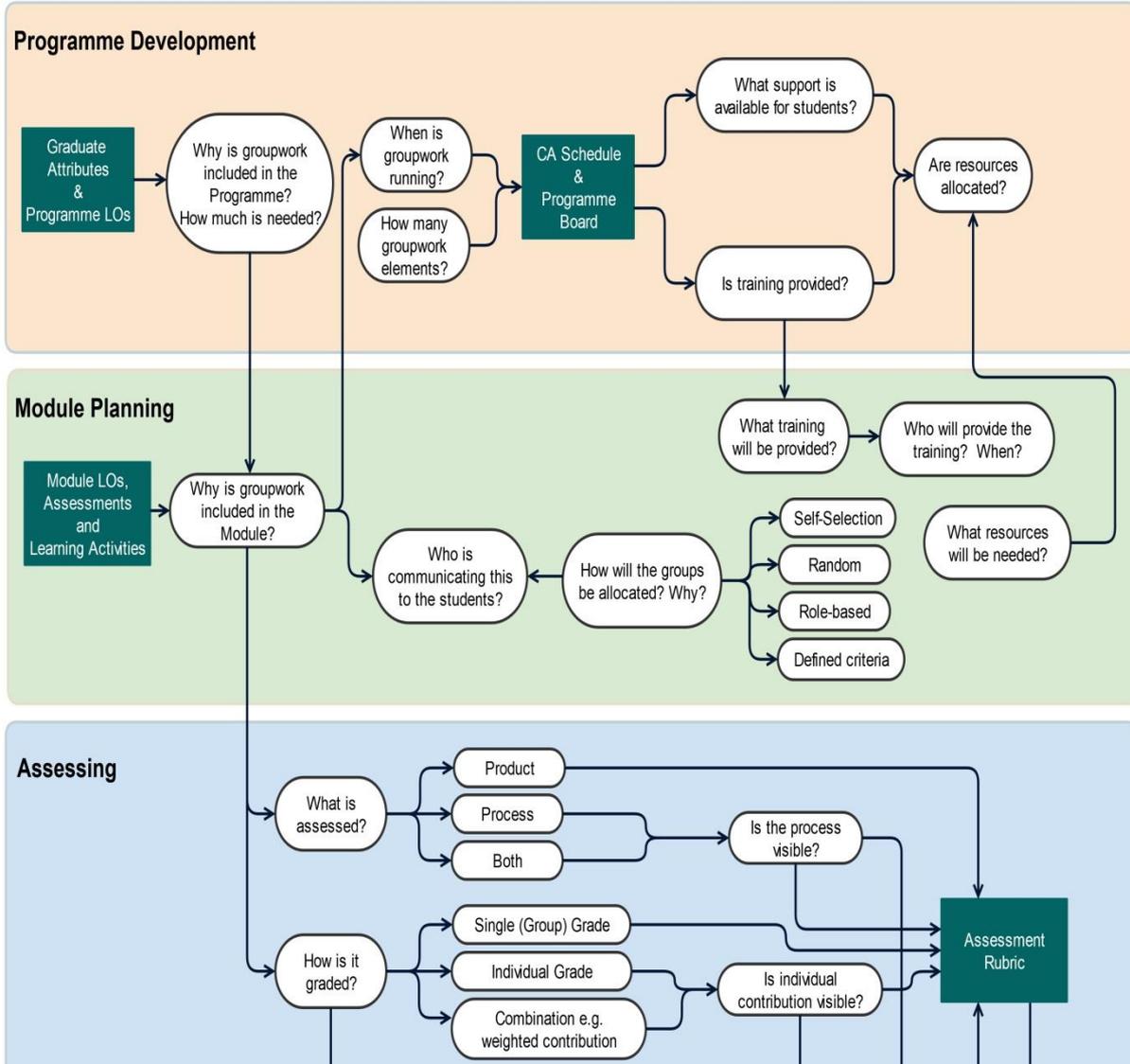Transferable skills can be acquired and developed (but not automatically)

No one single 'best approach'

14/50 staff responses referred to conflicts or rows (that they were made aware of)

Programme approach needed; address the (in)visibility of group work, simultaneous projects and scaffolding of skills

Student Services raised concerns about the volume of group work and negative impact on some students.
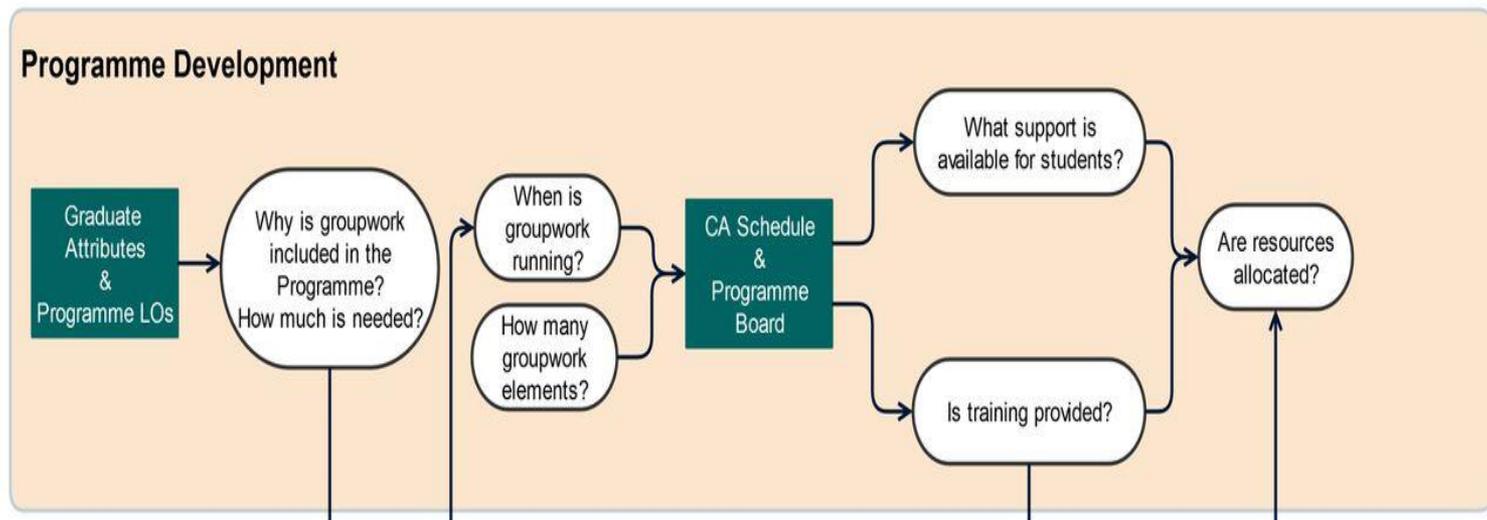
Framework developed

Programme Development

- Graduate Attributes & Programme LOs
- Why is groupwork included in the Programme? How much is needed?
- When is groupwork running?
- How many groupwork elements?
- CA Schedule & Programme Board
- What support is available for students?
- Are resources allocated?
- Is training provided?

Module Planning

- Module LOs, Assessments and Learning Activities
- Why is groupwork included in the Module?
- Who is communicating this to the students?
- How will the groups be allocated? Why?
  - Self-Selection
  - Random
  - Role-based
  - Defined criteria
- What training will be provided?
- Who will provide the training? When?
- What resources will be needed?

Assessing

- What is assessed?
  - Product
  - Process
  - Both
- Is the process visible?
- How is it graded?
  - Single (Group) Grade
  - Individual Grade
  - Combination e.g. weighted contribution
- Is individual contribution visible?
- Assessment Rubric

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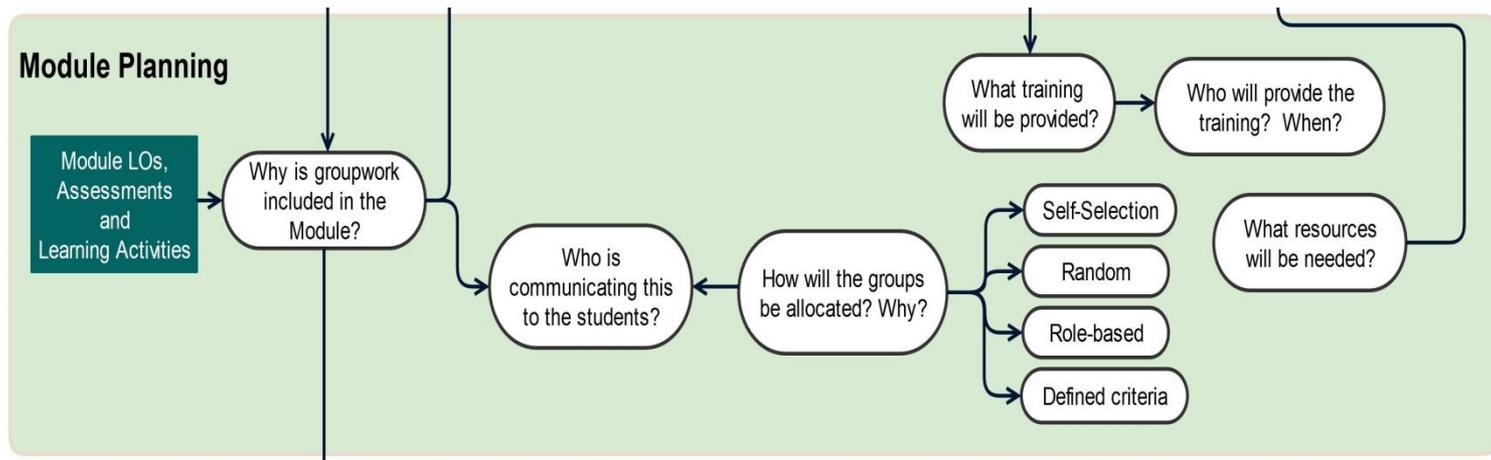DHÚN DEALGAN

Using the framework

Group work considered at programme level

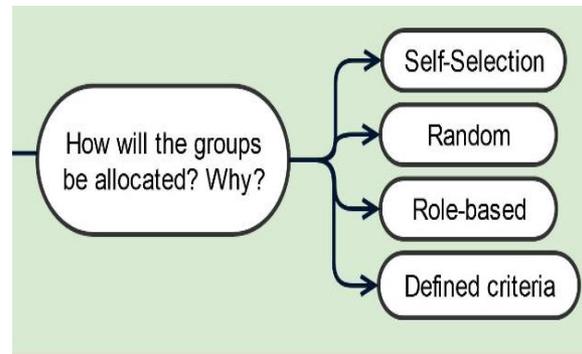# What role does group work place in your programme/s?

Module planning for group work

Group Selection

- Group selection should be carefully **planned** to enable students

'**...to focus on the task to be completed rather than spending time on conflict management**'

(Noonan 2013, p. 1423)

How will the groups be allocated? Why?
→ Self-Selection
→ Random
→ Role-based
→ Defined criteria

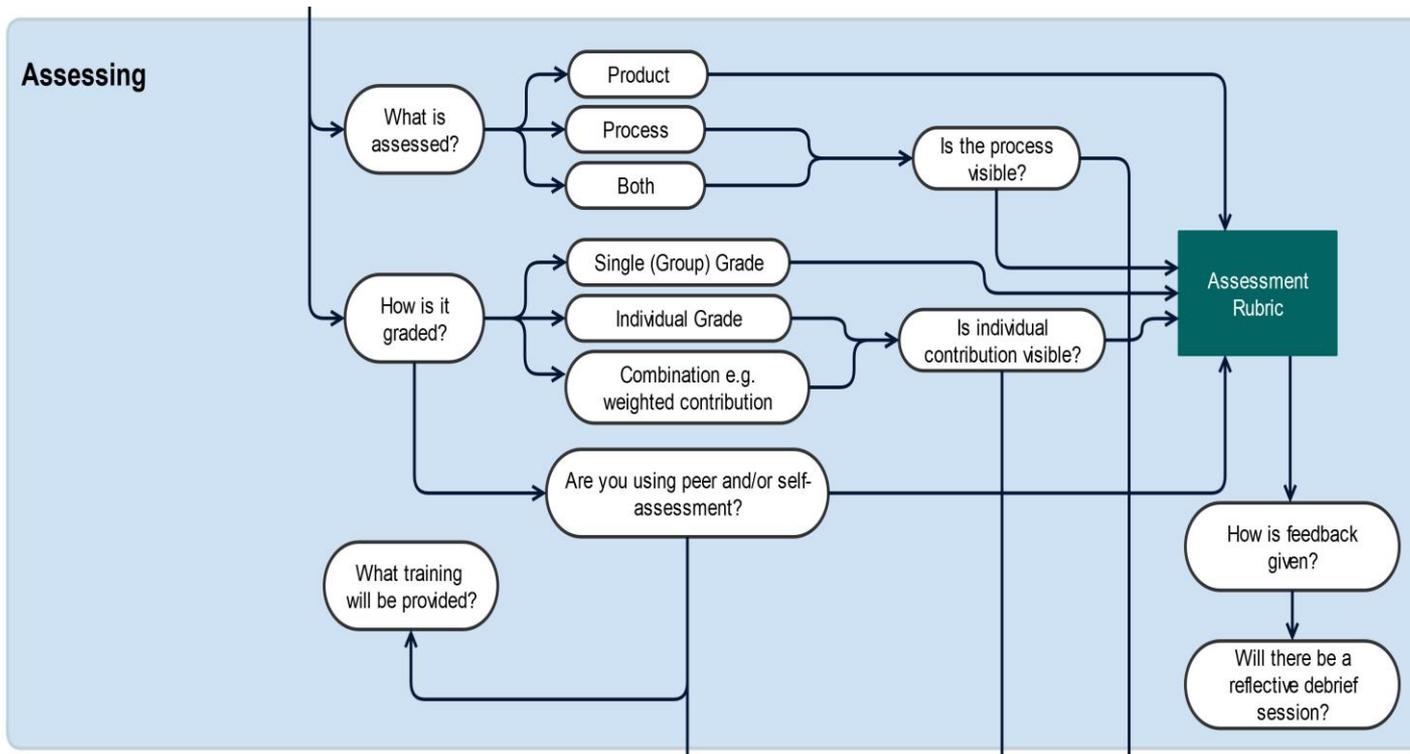| Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
Self –selection by students	● May increase motivation and engagement, ● Increased sense of control, ● Friendship groups often cohesive, ● May reduce anxiety and conflict, ● May facilitate meeting and organisation of the work.	● May exclude some students ● Roles and power structures within friendship groups may be limiting, ● Reduces opportunities to hear other views
Selection by lecturer	● May represent a more authentic work situation, ● Maybe more inclusive ● Exposure to a wider range of perspectives, ● May facilitate students adopting new roles and approaches.	● Reduces the student's perceived control, ● May increase anxiety, ● Some students may be marginalised within a group, ● May be more difficult to meet and organise the work.

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Assessing Groupwork

Poll: How do/should you assess group work?

- Poll 1 : How do you typically determine grades for group work?

  – Option 1: Everyone gets the same grade

  – Option 2: Everyone gets an individual grade.

- Poll 2: For individual grades should the

  – Option 1: Grade be determined solely by lecturer?

  – Option 2: Grade be determined by peers to at least some extent?

Assessing Groupwork

Assessing contribution/effort

Assessed by Lecturer	Assessed by peers	Self-assessed
• Likely to be perceived as fair, • Requires a system for monitoring the process and/or contribution.	• May promote ownership and engagement, • Enhances understanding, • May reduce free-riding, • Group-members often best placed to evaluate contribution.	• May promote ownership and engagement, • Enhances understanding , • May develop understanding of own learning.
• Little active engagement by students • Need a system to monitor	• May be perceived as unfair, • Potential to create a 'hostile' environment , • Preparation and training demands • May produce inconsistencies and/or grade inflation	• May be perceived as unfair or unreliable, • Preparation and training demands, • May produce inconsistencies and/or grade inflation.

Monitoring Groupwork
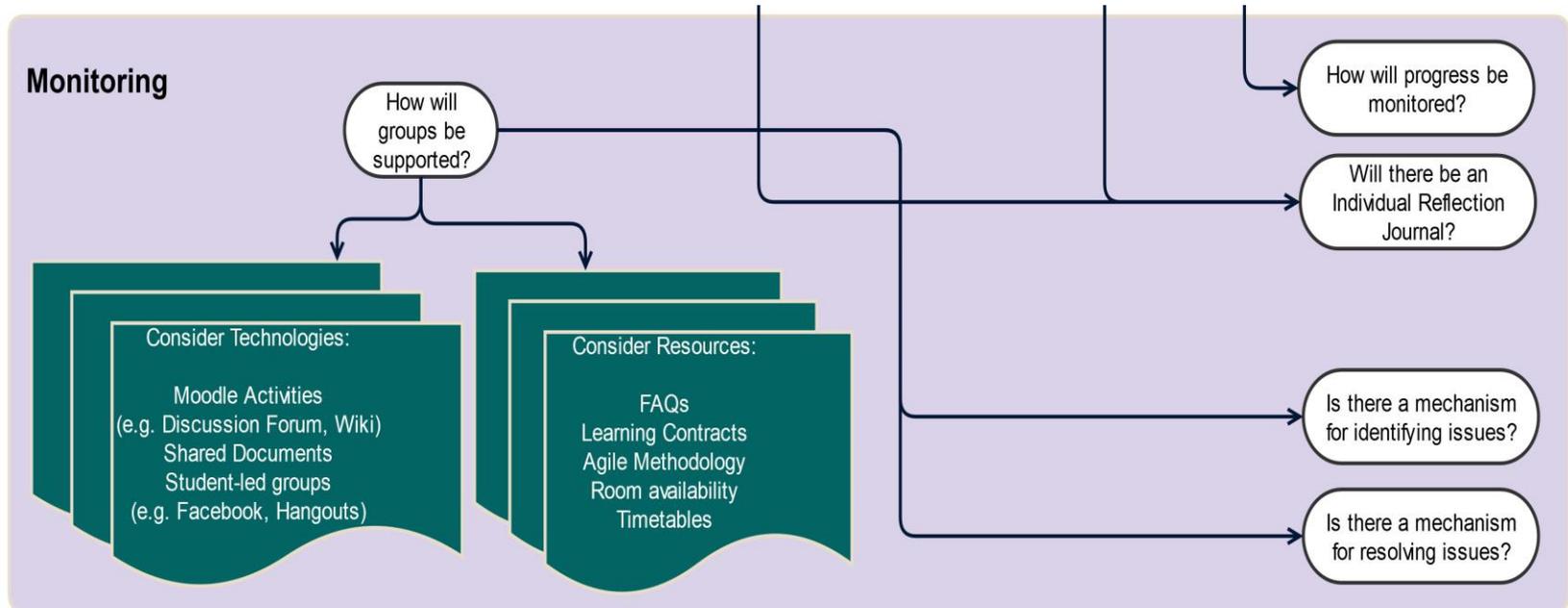
No 'magic' answer

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Over to you!

- With the person beside you, or via the discussion board, share an experience or approach to group work that has worked well. Why was it effective?

- Them identify one aspect of assessed group work that you would like to improve? How might you do this?

Thank You