# Presenting in Groups

Group presentations offer you the opportunity to develop a range of interpersonal skills needed for effective teamwork, in addition to those required for developing a presentation. These 'soft skills' are highly valuable in the workplace and beyond. One of the challenges of designing and delivering group presentations is the need for coordination among and cooperation with your group members. This guide outlines a 4-step process to help you meet that challenge effectively.

## Step 1. Make Contact Early!

As soon as possible, establish contact with the members of your group and arrange a first meeting (in-person or online). Members will need to prepare individually for the first meeting by:

- Reading the Assessment Brief and Rubric and beginning preliminary research on the assessment topic so that they can contribute to the planning of the presentation (Refer to the Quick Guides on Analysing and preparing for assessments and Researching and organising information).
- Thinking about their strengths, weaknesses and preferences regarding their potential role in the group and the presentation topic.
- Consider directing other members to this guide to ensure everyone has similar expectations and goals.

## Step 2. First Meeting – Planning, Scheduling and Assigning Roles

During the first meeting, the group establishes its ground rules or rules of engagement and allocates roles to each group member. During this meeting, the group should:

1. **Establish the ground rules** for the group, including:

- Frequency and mode of group contact between meetings, e.g., exchange of auxiliary contact details, establishing a group chat.
- Means of decision-making and conflict resolution, e.g., decision by consensus, decision by group vote? Will you elect one person to act as the group coordinator? What are the contingencies if a member is uncontactable and workload needs to be redistributed?

2. **Assign roles** to group members, considering the following:

- As each group member will be assessed, this usually means dividing the presentation among the group. Discuss how to divide the topic among the speakers, taking preferences into account.
- Consider the strengths of each member. It can be particularly effective to begin and end your presentation with your most confident speakers. Do any of the group have strengths in designing posters or slideshows?
- Decide how you will coordinate and finalise the joint slideshow. Will you agree on the themes and fonts to be used and apply them to separate presentations? Will you elect one person to take charge of the final draft of the slideshow to ensure consistent formatting? If pre-recorded, who will be responsible for uploading the presentation to the submission portal?

3. **Draw up a schedule/plan** for the assessment by:
- Agreeing on the dates for at least two additional meetings.
- Setting the major goals or agenda for each meeting. Make clear what individuals must have completed by the time of each meeting, e.g., first draft of slides, first script.

- Your final meeting may take up more time for polishing your presentation. Ensure that you schedule this meeting at least a few days before the final submission date to allow for last-minute changes.

## Step 3. In-Progress Meeting(s) – Preparing and Assessing Draft Presentation

The purpose of the next meeting(s) is for the group to assess group progress, see the first draft of slides and hear each member deliver their first scripts. In these meetings, the group should assess the individual contributions, give and receive feedback, and problem-solve any problems that may arise. Consideration should be given to assessing and addressing:

- **Gaps:** Is information omitted that should be included?
- **Overlap:** Does each presentation advance the narrative, or is there unnecessary repetition of ideas?
- **Coherence:** Does the order of presentations and the order of ideas within them cohere into a strong narrative or message? **Does the presentation meet the criteria in the Assessment Brief and Rubric?**
- **Integrity:** Are the sources used of high quality? Are they scholarly? Is information paraphrased, cited and referenced in accordance with the Assessment Brief?
- **Transitions:** Are the transitions between speakers smooth? Tip: Speakers can briefly introduce the next speaker and their topic.
- **Stylistic Consistency:** Are the themes, fonts and formatting consistent? These should be agreed upon in the second meeting and applied by all thereafter unless one person has been elected to design, format and polish the slideshow.

## Step 4. Final Meeting – Final Rehearsal and Polishing of Presentation

Before the final meeting, the group members should continue refining their draft slides and scripts. The final meeting is an opportunity to practice the final draft of the presentation and finalise the slideshow. If submitting a pre-recorded presentation, aim to have chosen the best 'take' by the end of this meeting.

- Practice authentically, as if being assessed and time the whole presentation to ensure it adheres to time limits.
- Give constructive feedback and make any last-minute changes to the slides or scripts.
- By the end of the meeting, aim to have one group slideshow and script that can be distributed to all members – this means that if you are being assessed 'live' and a group member is absent, another will be able to stand in.
- If you are pre-recording your presentation, ensure everyone has a copy of the recording.

## Post Assessment Reflection

After your presentation is submitted and assessed, reflect upon the feedback from your assessors. What went well, and what could be improved? What would you do differently in future? If you have specific aims or outcomes you want to pursue in future group work, what resources/additional learning would help you meet these goals?

This guide should be read in conjunction with the Quick Guides on Oral Presentations (in the category 'Types of Assessment'), Working in Teams and Groups (in 'Study Strategies'), and, if relevant, VoiceThread (in 'Preparing to Submit').