Introduction
The following guide is designed to help students working in groups or teams make effective use of the MyAberdeen collaborative group tools, available on the group homepage. Students can access various tools for self-reflection, collaboration, and communication which allow them to collaborate on assignments or share and create knowledge with others in their course. In the following sections you will find short descriptions and suggested uses for these tools to help you decide how they could play a role in your course and help you collaborate with other students.

Group Discussion Board
A discussion board is an asynchronous communication tool, which can be used to track public debate and peer-to-peer interactions. It is also an ideal option for file sharing, as threaded posts within the discussion board enable discussions of documents to be tracked easily. Group members can communicate as a group, as well as create and manage their own forums. The group discussion board is available only to the group members and it enables students to express their ideas, gather feedback from their peers and revise and refine their plans and objectives throughout the project.

Suggested Uses for the Group Discussion Board:
- Brainstorm and post ideas during the ideation, design and development stages of projects.
- Share initial thoughts about a topic before exploring it further in a blog post or wiki entry.
- Express your opinions on a certain subject and use the posts to debate with other students in the group.

Group Journals
Through the use of a journal, members of a group can share their thoughts, questions and concerns with each other and communicate with the course coordinators privately. Journal entries made in the group journal are visible to the group members and course coordinators only.

Suggested Uses for the Group Journals:
- Collect minutes from meetings and record your observations and notes throughout the course.
- Develop a team plan for your projects and create strategies for improvement together.
- Set team goals and track your progress during the course by adding daily or weekly entries.
- Evaluate and reflect on your group’s approach to the project, assignment or task.

Group Wikis
Group wikis enable students to access a collaborative space to view, write, and edit content. Group wikis are an ideal collaborative space to share and exchange files or to create a shared document within the content editor. Because each group member is a trusted source of information, everyone in the group may edit and organize the content.

Suggested Uses for the Group Wikis:
- Create a project summary and group work progress outline for everyone to see.
- Build a project glossary and use the wiki as a repository for resources (e.g. links to images, articles and other media files, including details about why they were selected).
- Collectively produce written reports and documents and upload project presentations and posters explaining your group work to others.

Group Blogs
Users within a group can add entries and comments to the group blog to share ideas. Group blogs can be very useful to work collaboratively by demonstrating what group members have learned from an experience and presenting the information to their colleagues.
Suggested Uses for the Group Blogs:

- Present information and deliver arguments and supporting evidence for various projects.
- Write commentaries on a given subject and interpret case studies for your projects and prototypes.
- Analyse a certain topic in depth, adding information at regular intervals.

Group File Exchange

Group members can use this tool to upload documents to the group area, and delete files, regardless of who added them. Files appear in the order they were uploaded and images appear in a new browser window. This is an effective solution that enables for cooperative editing as well as simple file exchange. Students can also use this tool as a resource repository for their projects.

Group Tasks

Users within a group can define and separate the workload into tasks, while distributing the list to the entire group. Each task has a status and a due date to help keep members on track. Group members can view the group assigned tasks in the group tasks tool or in the course tasks tool. A student will not see tasks for groups they are not enrolled in when viewing the course tasks tool.

Group Email

The group email tool allows for communication between different team members. The recipient list is automatically populated with group members, so you can quickly select all or some of them. Emails are sent to members’ external email addresses.

Need Further Advice?

For further information on the groups feature visit https://en-us.help.blackboard.com/Learn/9.1_2014_04/Student/090_Tools/Groups.

If you have any queries or need help using MyAberdeen, please contact the eLearning team in the Centre for Academic Development.

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