

Title: TBL, PBL, EBL, SCALE-UP, Buzz, Virtual or what? What are the 'best' teamwork recipes to support our students' professional development and enhance their learning experience?

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Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Identify key features of group/team-based pedagogies
- Compare different group-based pedagogies in terms of their likely impact on the student experience and students' future professional development.
- Discuss how to identify and integrate valuable team-based pedagogies at different stages of the curriculum

Session Outline

What should students know about team dynamics?

How can we improve student teamwork skills?

Which approaches to teamwork provide the best opportunities for learning gain in both subject discipline and group process?

Partly stimulated by dramatic increases in student numbers and corresponding decrease in resources/staffing, student team/groupwork is now commonplace. But what are the best ways of organising and supporting this, given that employers see teamwork as a "fundamental skill" which is often lacking, e.g.

<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/skills-and-competencies/300764-teamwork-its-high-on-the-graduate-recruiters-wishlist>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-29454002>

The importance of teamwork is also emphasised in University careers advice for both undergraduates and postgraduates, e.g.

<https://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sk/teamwork.htm>

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/careers/postgrad/phd/making-career-decisions/identifying-your-skills>

We now have various team-based pedagogies, from established techniques such as problem-based learning (PBL) to more recent American imports such as Team-Based Learning (TBL) and SCALE-UP.

These imports provide an interesting contrast. Both have been adopted by specific courses/programmes in several UK Universities which have designed/adapted teaching rooms to fit. Both can be categorised as variants of 'flipped learning' and both organise students in small teams. But their processes are rather different.

TBL uses groups of 5-7 who complete a 'readiness assurance process' involving individual and group tests, followed by tutor feedback and workshop activity (e.g. Dearnley et al 2018). SCALE-UP uses groups of 9, usually in three sub-groups of three. Nottingham Trent University is particularly active in the UK - see their student handbook: https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document_uploads/teaching/181133.pdf

There is evidence of positive impact on student performance and satisfaction. But do these techniques give students the necessary grounding in the complexities of teamwork which will affect their professional futures? How do they relate to established techniques like PBL and/or other approaches to teamwork with students such as the use of models like Belbin (Belbin, 2010;Hartley, 1997)? How can course/programme teams decide which approach to student groups/teams is the most productive?

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The outline of the workshop is as follows;

Opening presentation (15 minutes)

We will offer a suggested typology of group pedagogies based on the focus and structure of group/team pedagogies and comment on how course/programme teams are now using these pedagogies in universities across the UK.

Group activity (20 minutes)

Small groups, using different structures and sizes, will be asked to propose answers to selected questions, such as:

- How do course/programme teams in your institutions decide how to incorporate student teamwork across the course?
- Is there a 'best mix' of student teamwork/groupwork which offers students the best basis for their future professional careers?
- What do we need to know about the effectiveness of methods such as TBL?
- What do students expect from their courses in terms of teamwork, and how do those expectations influence their behaviour?
- How do we best manage student teamwork in terms of assessment and qualification?

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

Groups will feedback their conclusions and reflections and we will summarise the ideas and suggestions arising in a concept map and Google Doc for delegates to take away and further develop. Both resources will be freely available on the Web after the conference.

References

Belbin, R.M. (2010) *Management Teams*. 3rd edition. London: Routledge.

Dearnley C.A., Rhodes, C.A. Roberts P., Williams P., Prenton S. (2018) "Team based learning in nursing and midwifery higher education; a systematic review of the evidence for change". [*Nurse Education Today*](#). [Volume 60](#), January 2018, Pages 75-83

Hartley, P. (1997) *Group Communication*. London: Routledge.