

Study Groups

What can you do in a study group?

Study groups can be used for just about anything.

Here are some examples:

- Going over lectures/readings/tutorials
- Preparing for tests and exams
- Repeating, recalling key points in subject material
- Sharing the reading load
- Checking if you are on the right track when understanding material
- Learning group facilitation and problem solving skills
- Learning different ways to study
- Questioning



Why set up a study group?

- to encourage and support each other
- for social interaction
- to bounce ideas off other people
- to learn from each other's successes and mistakes
- to share useful resources
- to help to make new friends

Communication within a study group?

- Work out a simple effective means of communicating within the group.
- If all members have access to technology, set up a closed social media page for the group to communicate on.
- Set up a safe space, so everyone feels comfortable sharing their ideas.
- Expect to disagree at times. Work out how you will deal with disagreements or conflict within the group.

GETTING STARTED

The following is one way of running study groups:

Step One: Getting the people

About four people is ideal to start a group.

When a group grows bigger, more problems may arise.

Step Two: Establishing ground rules and goals

Setting ground rules early helps the group to:

- work well together
- start from the same point
- have similar goals and expectations

You could use the list below as a starter for your initial group discussion:

- ❖ Honesty and respect
- ❖ It is OK to be wrong
- ❖ Trust
- ❖ Have a purpose/use
- ❖ Be encouraging
- ❖ Offer only constructive criticism
- ❖ Do not take over
- ❖ Listen to others
- ❖ Confidentiality
- ❖ Try not to be judgemental

Step Three: Group building time

- Set a time and place to meet regularly (at least once a week).
- Ask in your department for possible spaces, find a table in the Student Success area, or other quiet spots in corners around campus.
- Have a plan B in case you are unable to meet face to face.

Step Four: Make a plan on how to spend your time

- Use your course outline, reading assignments and assessment criteria to plan your study sessions.

A suggested plan:

- ❖ 1st 15 minutes: go over key points from lectures/tutorials (mind map and summarize).
- ❖ 2nd 15 minutes: share readings and summarize key points.
- ❖ 3rd 15 minutes: assignment progress and input.
- ❖ 4th 15 minutes: general queries, problems or issues.