



### 3.6. CPD ACTIVITY FOR MANAGING STUDENT TEAMWORK CHALLENGES

An adaptable, collaborative CPD activity for teachers designed to support thinking through the dimensions, possibilities and challenges of collaboration for students. The activity involves having teachers come together to respond to a scenario and experience a collaborative structure as a way into reflecting on and preparing for potential pitfalls.

**Total activity time: approx 1 hour** (depending on number of participants)

#### NOTES ON USE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS:

- This could be offered as a stand-alone session in a school-based or discipline-specific CPD workshop series.
- The scenario can be adapted to suit a specific school setting or subject area.
- The questions can be reduced in number or rewritten to address specific challenges facing the teaching faculty.
- The reflection activity could be developed to encourage peers to share and discuss insights.
- The discussions can help school leaders determine which areas deserve more attention when planning future CPD activities.
- Organise a facilitator.
- Design it to count towards teachers' CPD hours and issue certificate.

#### ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

To develop strategies for responding to student group work challenges through a structured collaborative exercise

Note: the idea is to run the activity in a way that

- echoes the structure and role allocation useful for student group work
- includes a mixture of constraints and opportunities for negotiation and agency
- invites reflection on process

#### ROLE OF FACILITATOR:

- Invite each table spokesperson to offer their group's key points in turn 2 mins per group
- Take notes on key points on board / shared doc.

*Note on timing: it will depend on number of table groups - aim for max 20 mins total reporting back*

- Once all groups have reported, summarise key points made and note any areas of disagreement that may require further examination in another session
- Explain final short reflection task.

#### SET UP:

Teachers sit in table groups or circles of 4 - 5

Facilitator writes up 5 (numbered) group roles on the board / in a shared doc

1. scribe to keep notes (by hand or in shared doc)
2. timekeeper
3. conversation monitor (ensures that everyone gets a chance to contribute to the discussion)
4. spokesperson who will report back to the larger group
5. accuracy checker (ensure the spokesperson correctly represents the discussion, with the right to add a comment during reporting back)

Explain the Activity process A-E (see below), or share written instructions so each group can manage themselves accordingly

**MATERIALS ON EACH TABLE:**

- 1 printout of scenario + 8 questions (A3 paper or larger)
- blank paper and pens or (if online / using devices) a shared doc
- 5 role cards face down (could be slips of paper each with a number - corresponding with group roles as listed above)

**ACTIVITY:**

- Each person picks up a numbered card to find out their role in the group.
- Timer: allow 2 mins for negotiated role swaps based on strengths and preferences. If not finalised in 2 mins, then random re-allocation by the timekeeper (or youngest at the table!). 3 mins
- Conversation monitor (role 3) reads the scenario out to the group. 1 min
- Group members work through the 8 questions together. Either discuss all 8 questions briefly or spend more time on selected questions that seem most important to the group. Scribe records key points made. Conversation monitor ensures everyone gets a chance to contribute. 20 mins
- Decide as a group on three key points you want to make based on your discussion overall that you agree would help Mrs Kikon deal with the situation. 6 mins

TOTAL TIME: 30 MINS

**SCENARIO FOR CPD ACTIVITY**

*Mrs Kikon sets up a three-week project for her Class XI subject students, based on a real-life problem, with roles allocated based on students' interests and strengths.*

*A week in, there are difficulties with some of the group members.*

*One high-achieving student Z complains that she is doing all the writing work. Another student P who has dyslexia but is a confident speaker complains that Z doesn't allow him to contribute. A third student has been absent for most of the first week and has missed crucial information.*

**QUESTIONS FOR TEACHER GROUPS:**

How can Mrs Kikon support students to work through these various challenges and ensure they get the group project back on track?

**Consider:**

- What protocols could Mrs Kikon establish before the project begins that would help students anticipate and/or deal with a situation like this?
- What could she encourage the students to do, to deal with the problem themselves?
- How willing should Mrs Kikon be to let her students experience some frustration and discomfort in the process?
- When do you think she should step in (if at all)?
- Should Mrs Kikon work with the group or with individual students (or both) to help them come up with a workable solution?
- What should Mrs Kikon do if several groups are experiencing similar problems at the same time?
- How should Mrs Kikon respond if a parent complains about group work on behalf of their child?
- What kind of support would be helpful to Mrs Kikon - or to you - from colleagues and/or school leadership
  - » When setting up project-based / collaborative learning
  - » When responding to difficulties that arise

**INDIVIDUAL TEACHER REFLECTION (POST-ACTIVITY):**

- Take 3 - 5 minutes to reflect on how you found the process of this group work activity.
- If you were to identify one main emotion you experienced during the activity what would it be?
- Was there enough time for a meaningful group discussion to take place?
- What, if anything, would you change to improve the design of the activity if you were to do something similar for your own students?

