

Developing Key Skills in Case Studies

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Key Skills

- Lifelong Learning
- Personal Development
- Employability
- A Number of reports identify several key skills as being important to employers, but not well developed in recent graduates

Why Case Studies?

- Case studies typically project-based so were a good medium to incorporate key skills
- Some cover large topics so group working features in many
- In some cases we had to incorporate structured and formalised teaching of key skills
- Support web-site

Key skills

- Group working
- Individual study skills
- Information gathering and analysis
- Time management
- Presentation skills
- Practical skills

Student Feedback

- Aware of importance of independent study and transferable skills
 - ‘Improves key skills like giving presentations and group working’
 - ‘Gives us a chance to go away and do our own research’
- Two main areas in which students expressed concern:
 - group working
 - presentation skills (oral and poster presentations)

Group Working

- Group dynamics, uneven workload, conflicts
 - ‘It’s not fair on team members when other members do not provide any input or aid the group process’
- Formal group working session
- Discussion of group dynamics, group roles, group meetings and short group exercise
- Additional and supporting information provided on website (www.cases.bham.ac.uk)



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Address: <http://www.cases.bham.ac.uk/group/tips.htm>

METALLURGY AND MATERIALS CASE STUDIES - TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCE

General Information

- Introduction
- Case Study Teaching
- Case Study Theory
- Student Perception of Case Studies
- Learning Resources and Links
- Contacts

Case Studies

- Metallurgy and Materials Science
- Sports and Materials Science
- Biomaterials/Bioengineering
- Technology

Group Working

- Why work in groups
- Tips for effective group working
- Tips for effective meetings
- What's your role in a group?
- Group roles
- Example agenda
- Example minutes
- Resources and Acknowledgements

Assessment Information

- Guidelines for levels
- Group and peer assessment

Tips and Advice

- Tips for effective presentation
- Tips for effective poster design
- Tips for writing reports

Tips for Effective Group Working

An effective group work together to complete a task in an agreed time, with each member contributing to the team according to their skills, experience and personality.

There are various stages that you will go through in a group project to achieve a task. A clear plan is critical to effective group work and will give you direction and help you coordinate your work in order for efficient task completion. The following guidelines should help you to start with your task:

- First of all it is important to establish a set of group guidelines. Get to know the members in your group, their strengths and preferred ways of working. Try to ensure that everyone has an opinion and that individuals have different methods of working and learning.
- It is advisable to appoint a group leader and also a scribe to record the group's activities.
- Discuss the group's task or activity in order to reach a shared understanding.
- Summarise the shared understanding of the problem on a board or piece of paper.

Oral Presentations

- Most students wanted to practise but felt nervous/uncomfortable or unsure of how to communicate their work effectively
 - ‘pointers for how to give an effective presentation would be helpful’
 - ‘Practising talking in front of people is very useful and needs practice but is really scary’
- Provided tips and practical advice on the web-site
- Practise presentations in the first year of study

Poster Presentations

- Used in several case studies
- Students were not sure what was required of them:
 - ‘It would have been useful to have been told what was required when designing our poster’
- Tips and advice provided on web-site



Web-site

www.cases.bham.ac.uk

Feedback and comments welcome