

“When I learnt that this module involved group work, I felt rather apprehensive”: an analysis for students’ reflections of group work.

Alfredo Gaitán  
University of Bedfordshire

Student engagement is associated with active and significant learning, as opposed to passive and irrelevant study. One way to engage students is group work. However, the students’ need to work more time than ever, commute and juggle family responsibilities pose real obstacles to effective group work. Additionally, group work requires special social skills from the students. An experience of group work in a Social Psychology module (at undergraduate degree level 2) was examined through content analysis of a sample of students’ reflective essays produced by three different cohorts. Trends regarding expectations at the start of the module (mostly negative), difficulties and gains in terms of personal development (PDP) were identified. Students’ attempts to apply concepts from the module to explain the situations experienced were also analysed qualitatively as instances of significant learning.