

# WORKING THROUGH TEAM CHALLENGES – STEP 1

The purpose of this document is to outline a **clear process** to support student teams to resolve challenges. Challenges or conflict within teams requires teams to apply their learning, and make every reasonable effort to resolve team issues within the team.

However; at all stages as an individual or as a team, if there are factors leading to inefficiency in teamwork you may seek support from the Team Coach, your Instructor(s) and the Program Office.

Examples of performance challenges may include:

- *Writing challenges that the team is not able to support on an ongoing basis*
- *Repeated mistakes or lapses in understanding course outlines and Instructor guidelines/expectations*
- *Unclear guidelines for team roles and responsibilities*
- *Attendance/participation in class or out*
- *Missed external deadlines*
- *Quality of academic work*

Examples of behavioural issues may include:

- *Intra-group communication*
- *Late or lack of response to team communication*
- *Missed internal deadlines*
- *Breakdowns in trust*
- *Interpersonal conflict*
- *Participation*
- *Lack of accountability*
- *Breach of confidentiality*

For other factors that can contribute to team dynamics please refer to the Learning in Teams document provided at the beginning of your program.

## Issues that require immediate attention of the Instructor and Program Office

- Evidence of plagiarism or cheating: [Academic Integrity](#)
- Evidence of harassment or discriminatory language or behaviour: See here for the link to [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) and a link to the [Student conduct process](#)
- Personal or confidential issues that may impact a learner's ability to participate effectively in the program (e.g., physical or mental illness, change in financial status, family emergencies, work circumstances, etc.). Link here for [information about RRU counselling services](#) and Link here for [information about RRU Accessibility services](#)

## 1: WORK TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE WITHIN THE TEAM

The Team Coach works to restore teams so members can work together. In the event this restorative work is unsuccessful, then the Team Coach will support and guide your team through the processes described below. The preference is to restore teams to function rather than turning to punitive measures. In all cases, teams should maintain a record of their work, including agreements, planning, communication, and meetings. These records are the documentary evidence for resolving disagreements and conflicts. Team Coaches make every effort to maintain transparency and openly discuss this process with all members of the team.

Students are encouraged to follow **the steps below** to promptly address and proactively resolve team issues. Your Team Coach is available to assist with this process:

- Identify and **document** the specific issue and the impact on the team
- Create time and space to address the issue directly and respectfully;
- As a team, brainstorm and **document strategies** for addressing the concern, applying team development, theory, leadership, and conflict resolution skills;
- Review your Team Agreement to see if anything needs to be **added, altered or revisited**;
- Develop an agreed upon description and timeline of what needs to happen to satisfy the team's expectations;
- Contact your Instructor for clarification on academic and performance concerns;
- **Document this process and share with all members of your team.**

## 2: ONGOING, UNRESOLVED, URGENT AND ESCALATING CONCERNS: Request support from the Team Coach

If the team has not been able to resolve the issue, or the issue is more **urgent** in nature, students are encouraged to contact the Instructor, Program Office, and the Team Coach and provide documentation of the concern. There may be times when the Team Coach has identified a significant issue or is asked by the student team, Instructor(s), or the Program Office to intervene.

- a) When notified of a concern, the Team Coach will work to identify and resolve issues affecting the team's ability to function. The Team Coach will follow-up with next steps that may include:
  - Coaching individuals who are encountering difficulties;
  - Engaging in a phone call, conference call, Skype, Google hangout call, Wechat video call, Collaborate session, individual and / or team to facilitate discussions about specific concerns;
  - Meeting with the full team for a facilitated discussion;
  - Guidance and recommendations to support proper process for resolution.

- b) If the issue remains unresolved after working with the Team Coach, the Team Coach in collaboration with the Instructor and/or Program Head, may follow any or all of the below steps:
- Refer team members to additional RRU support services as required;
  - Report concerns to the Instructor and Program Office;
  - Contact Instructors to discuss the situation;
    - If the issue continues to remain unresolved, the course Instructor may determine that member(s) of the team receive a different grade on team assignment(s).
  - Meet with the full team for a facilitated team discussion;
- c) If the issue continues to remain unresolved, the Team Coach refers the issue to the Program Head who will determine if a **Letter of Expectation** is required.