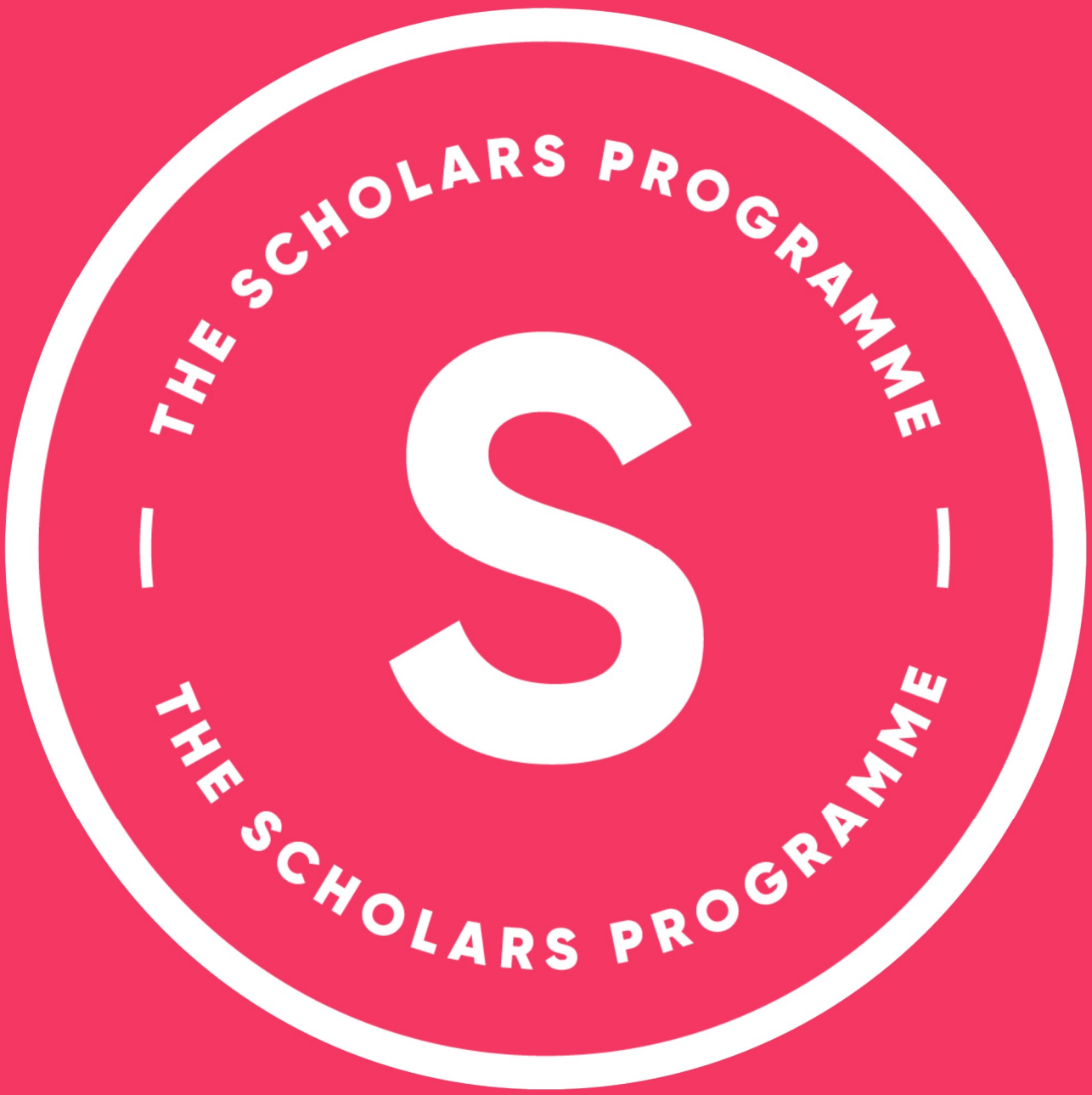
Standardisation Booklet



Key Stage 4

Arts, Humanities & Social Science Programmes

Year 2025 - 2026

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE BRILLIANT CLUB

Contents

Contents 2

Guidance for Tutors 3

Mark Scheme Table 4

Task 4

Candidate A: 6

Candidate B: 9

Candidate C: 14

Guidance for Tutors

Dear Tutors,

At The Brilliant Club, we are committed to ensuring that all students who take part in our programmes are assessed in a fair way. Because of that, it is important that we ensure that all tutors who are marking and providing feedback on students' baseline and final assignments do so in a standardised way, in accordance with our university style mark schemes.

This booklet has been designed to be used as part of our PhD tutor training – Marking and Feedback and is to be used to complete the final part of the session.

The resources included in this booklet focus on a Key Stage 4 course from a discipline which straddles Arts & Humanities and the Social Science areas of study. They are real assignments from real students who took part in The Scholars Programme last year. If you would find it helpful to review the course materials associated with this course, you can find them linked in the module introduction.

Using the mark scheme provided, please follow our marking procedures, awarding the given assignments a mark out of 100 for each element of the mark scheme, Subject Knowledge, Critical Thinking and Written Communication, and then average those scores to achieve the final mark out of 100. When you have finished marking all of the assignments, please complete and submit the training module survey which will ask you input the marks for each strand, the final mark and the grade awarded.

Once you have entered your marks, you will find out if your marking is in line with our expectations. You will then be able to begin marking your baseline and final assignments as soon as you receive them.

I hope that you find this standardisation process a useful one,

With best wishes,

Angie Baker
Head of Learning and Programme Design

The Brilliant Club is a registered charity in England and Wales (no. 1147771) and Scotland (no. SC048774).
The Brilliant Club is a registered company limited by guarantee in England and Wales (no. 7986971).

Mark Scheme Table

	Subject Knowledge	Critical Thinking	Written Communication
1st	The essay shows a breadth of knowledge and understanding of the key concepts and issues, through engaging with and interpreting a wide range of relevant sources. Knowledge is used to build and support highly effective arguments.	Analyses key ideas, information, and arguments. Interprets meaning and makes connections. Identifies and critically evaluates key arguments and statements, deciding on their credibility, strength and relative significance, drawing convincing conclusions.	The essay has a clear and engaging structure, taking the reader on a journey from the introduction to the conclusion. The writing style is appropriate; key terms are used with fluency. There are no, or very few, errors in spelling or grammar. Referencing is used consistently and matches the style taught in the course.
2:1	The essay shows an understanding of key concepts and issues, drawing on a range of relevant sources Knowledge is used to build and support effective arguments	Analyses key ideas, information and arguments. Identifies relevant arguments and statements, deciding on their credibility and strength, drawing reasonable conclusions. Shows some understanding of the relative importance of arguments.	The essay has a clear structure and the arguments are easy to follow. The introduction outlines the essay effectively and the conclusion summarises the arguments. The writing style is appropriate; key terms are used correctly. There are few errors in spelling or grammar. Referencing is mostly consistent and matches the style taught in the course.
2:2	The essay shows an understanding of key concepts and issues, with no major misconceptions. Beginning to apply this knowledge to build and support arguments.	Begins to analyse ideas, information and arguments. Identifies some arguments and statements and attempts to evaluate their quality. Not yet showing understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses of arguments.	The essay structure could be made clearer to better guide the reader through the arguments. The writing style can sometimes be informal. Occasionally key terms are not used when it would be appropriate to do so. There are some errors in spelling or grammar, but they do not get in the way of communicating the content. There is some consistency to the referencing.
3rd	Shows a developing understanding of key concepts and issues, with some misconceptions. Not yet applying this knowledge to build and support arguments.	Begins to analyse ideas and information. Describes statements and arguments while not yet evaluating them.	The grammar, spelling, style, and structure of the work need improving in order to communicate ideas to the reader. The essay has no or a limited introduction and conclusion. Key terms and references are not always used correctly.

Task

Essay Question: **How does collaboration contribute to creative solutions? Answer with reference to case studies, academic readings, and your own experience** (2000 words)

This essay should combine secondary research (from the case studies and readings we've discussed in sessions, or any others you choose), and primary research that draws from your own experiences of collaboration in your project teams or from tasks undertaken in class.

Think objectively and critically about your experience. Does working together make the process easier or more difficult? Use academic quotations and citations to back up your argument. You can refer to the readings and case studies discussed in class or undertake your own research.

The following tips and pointers are to help you to think about, design, and then complete your reflective essay:

What was your experience of collaboration, think in terms of the information you have read as well as your personal experience, and how tasks undertaken as part of this course have a bearing on your experience:

- Reflect on your own teamwork experiences during this course, how did teamwork impact the quality of your creative work?
- What were the positives? What areas could have been improved? What would you change in future? Could your team have done anything differently to improve the final outcome?
- How did collaboration help (or maybe hinder) the creative process?
- How can you include other case studies and apply relevant theory of others, to support your arguments?

Apply and annotate relevant theories we've covered (or that you've found in your own reading) to your experience (also see the reading list for further literature).
For example:

- **Csikszentmihalyi's 'Flow' theory**: Did you feel a sense of focus and creative flow within your team? Did having freedom to create help you work better together?
  or
- **Belbin's Team Roles theory**: Did different members of your team take on different roles that improved the workflow or contextualise job roles? Did structure and clear roles help with managing tasks and creativity?

Candidate A:

Candidate A's Response

Abstract

This essay questions how collaboration contributes to creative solutions?' Throughout this essay I will link personal experiences as well as case studies to answer this question. My firsthand experiences that I will use to help provide evidence to answer this question will be from my own time and the time I have spent doing the Scholar's Programme. Furthermore, I will be using the newfound knowledge learnt on this course, that will link to this essay and its purpose. Also, I will be adding the benefits and setbacks of working collaboratively.

The theories that I will draw upon are Stein et al, Vygotsky, L, and Robinson.K. These will be referenced when I am referring to them and using them to help stabilise my opinions at the current state of time.

Introduction

In this essay I will be exploring the concept of collaboration and how it enriches development and working practices in the completion of a creative project.

It will involve me, trying to explain the beauty of working with other people and using each other's individual strengths to create the best possible solution to the question or problem. My investigation will investigate how this affects the project, and also the impact this has on individuals within the group.

During this course there have been multiple times that collaboration has been instilled consciously and unconsciously. For example, when others are struggling with the task at hand collaboration will happen when others provide their knowledge and opinion on the topic, or when we were giving different pseudo life-threatening scenarios, and we had to figure out a way to save ourselves and others. While doing this, the pupils subconsciously came up with the best way to survive, using collaboration. Each member of the group came up with their own ideas and solutions showing the beauty of how everyone's mind works and functions in diverse ways.

The collaborative learning theory suggests that group learning helps students develop their higher-level thinking, oral communication, self-management and leadership skills. Meaning students develop long lasting, and important skills that are necessary and are nurtured during the course and will be useful throughout their life. Vygotsky's collaborative theory (2019, p.10) states that cognitive development occurs because of social interactions. This theory suggests collaboration helps the development and growth of a child's mind due to the social interactions taking place, proving that our mind work in unique ways, like fingerprints, no one has the same one, just like our minds, no one thinks like anyone else does, but that everyone has their own strengths and weaknesses. For example, I struggle voicing my opinions in fear I will get it wrong, however people around me will view it as growing and learning from their mistakes and take advantage of their ability to talk and have their own opinion, even if they are unsure if it is right in the end they will develop something new whether its pride or confidence or learning from their mistake and making sure to remember and take in the new information they did not know beforehand. This shows how collaboration can improve the lives of many as students can learn off others have reciprocate their strengths.

How does collaboration contribute to creative solutions?

In this section I will focus on how collaboration contributes to a more positive and well-rounded outcome.

Collaboration has many benefits aside from creating creative solutions. It also has intellectual advantages, it also provides the increase of friendship, and you get to know more about the people around you who were once strangers. This will also help people come out of their comfort zone (confidence) and prepare them for their future in terms of social interactions, employment opportunities, and personal growth. Working with others can assist and expand the mind and stabilise the solution to contributed ideas.

A practical example of collaboration is within sports teams. In my own experience in being part of a Football team not only helped to build my confidence, but this translated into the team being more focused, more team motivated and in turn meant that we worked together and won more often than not. This was the result of cause and effect.

Stein et al (2019) state that in their study winning was not the main focus, instead of investigating the 'what' (results), they were interested in 'why' – so why they won. What did they do well that allowed them to have the upper hand in the game and in the end win over all? There are many underlying factors for winning, and as I have found, the focus on winning per se is an impossible task, therefore a wider, deeper and more 'collaborative' approach is needed.

As Stein et al align with my experience, when I felt appreciated and praised by my peers, I returned the compliments and this built a stronger and versatile team. This allowed me to feel more confident in my actions and feel less hesitant to make my own decisions and try to help the team win. I have transferred these skills into my everyday life, such as in lessons when you need to take part in collaborative work, I will use divergent thinking for the best possible answer and encourage my peer's opinions and advice on the question, so we as a group receive good grades by our teachers and have a boosted mood of pride, and even when doing independent projects, I hesitate less when it comes to decision making and self-management, making it easier for myself to come up with solutions.

In a case study of Pixar Animation Studios can loosely link to my experience as a normalised meeting in their company is when teams come together and speak their mind and opinions to aim for better projects, the idea motivates open communication and creative solutions. Compared to this study, my experience is very much similar by voicing what I think may support my teams and lead us with more solutions to beat the opposing teams. This can also link to divergent thinking which we were taught on the course. Divergent thinking (Robinson 2011) is when you allow yourself to see the situation and come up with multiple solutions, all with their own benefits, this happens a lot while doing sport, for example if you're playing football and dribbling with the ball but the opposing teams is catching up to you and blocking you from continuing in your path, you will need to come up with a way to get past them. What you could do was continue on your way with confidence and power and hope it's enough to push your way past them, or you could find a teammate and pass the ball to them, or you could go back on yourself causing the opposite team to change position and move, leaving you with a way to get past. Doing this you are enhancing your mind to other ideas and have multiple options to go to if one goes wrong. You are supported in your situation and can stay calm and confident in your mind. Giving your team a advantage to win.

On the other hand, collaboration has some drawbacks. Depending on what type of person you are, collaborating with others can be a major struggle for them and you. It may lead to arguments and disagreements that can result in a lack of solution and work done together. It may also create a lack of trust and enjoyment in the situation giving low encouragement and morale in the group. In addition to this, from the low encouragement it could result in lack of communication creating unclear roles and assigned jobs in the group for individuals to do, which could result to duplicated tasks and tasks that have been left undone. Furthermore, this could also result in the pupil's confidence and self-reassurance decreasing, making them feel less appointed to sharing their opinions in fear of problems being created. This could then impact them long-term, making them struggle in scenarios in everyday

life. Meaning, this could stop them from allowing their opinions to be voiced and heard in major situations, such as work meetings and specified hobbies that one could enjoy. On the topic of hobbies, an individual may feel less motivated to do as such and have a decreased enjoyment in doing them. This may affect their mental and physical health.

Conclusion

To sum up everything that has been stated, Collaboration has many more advantages and benefits than working individually, it provides skills that, if used regularly, can be used subconsciously. It will also give you an increased number of connections to people. Even if you are not good at collaborating, you will still learn things on the way and still have improved thinking decisions.

Reference List

Robinson, K., 2011. *Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative*. Chichester: Capstone Publishing.

Stein, M., Janetzko, H., Seebacher, D., Jäger, A., Nagel, M., Hölsch, J., Kosub, S., Schreck, T., Keim, D.A. and Grossniklaus, M., 2017. How to make sense of team sport data: From acquisition to data modeling and research aspects. *Data*, *2*(1).

Vygotsky, L., 2019. Collaborative learning. *Collaboration, communications, and critical thinking: A STEM-inspired path across the curriculum*, *43*.

Candidate B:

Candidate B's Response

Abstract (97 words)

Collaboration is fundamental in achieving success in academic and professional environments by fostering innovation, learning, and diverse perspectives. Effective collaboration requires clear goals, roles, communication, trust, flexibility and a balance between teamwork and individual contributions. Recognising potential challenges such as groupthink and addressing them through diverse viewpoints and accountability is crucial. Building trust, celebrating success, and fostering continuous learning enhance collaborative efforts. Firsthand experiences and historical perspectives highlight the benefits and drawbacks of collaboration, showing that success often come from teamwork and diverse perspectives. Collaboration enhances efficiency and creative solutions, making it essential for navigating modern challenges.

Introduction (445 words)

In this essay I will be discussing how collaboration is fundamental to achieving success in both academic and professional environments. I will be focusing on theories such as, Belbin's "Team Work at Roles" (2010), Csikszentmihalyi's "Creativity: Flow and the Pyschology of Discovery and Invention" (1996) and Tjosvold and Wisse's examination of "Power and Interdependence in organisations" (2009). Collaborative aspects such as innovation, learning and diverse perspectives. Key points of collaboration include interdependence, communication and roles and responsibilities.(Belbin, 2010; Tjosvold & Wisse, 2009; Hackman,2002) Features such as interdependence are important in collaborative settings, as it creates a scenario that combines the separate efforts to make a big picture, which results in more efficient and refined conclusions; as opposed to those made by a singular contribution. These specific aspects have been implemented in our project and activities throughout the course. E.g., problem-solving scenarios, in which we had to think of solutions aiming to survive in the crisis given to us. We found solutions as we worked as a collaborative group, and developed a variety of solutions, showing that collaboration potentially encourages efficient solutions. The collaborative environment we were placed in, wherein we could share our ideas freely, provided an opportunity to engage in teamwork while examining team processes.

Historical perspectives like Tjosvold and Wisse's (2009) examination of power and interdependence in organisations, highlight the importance of co-operation to achieve better collaborative outcomes; when responsibility is distributed equally, group members tend to rely on each other which, in turn, creates a more dependent and functional group as it creates trust between everyone. However, this might create confusion or tension among members, when combining the ideas to create an overall conclusion, as some might contradict each other. This theory of dysfunction between group members was introduced by Lencioni (2002), where he identifies potential dysfunctions in group settings e.g., inattention to results and absence of trust. Another example is Csikszentmihalyi's 'flow' theory (1996), and by observing his theory in collaborative group settings – it can help create an atmosphere where everyone is stimulated and focused, which eventually leads to innovative solutions. Contemporary views, however, focus on creativity, innovation, and adaptive leadership. An example of this is Belbin's 'Team roles at work' (2010) offer insights on how to analyse teams and enhance performance by utilising the strengths of each team member. By understanding the introduced roles like the coordinator or the implementer, it boosts productivity in group projects by ensuring that each member utilises their unique abilities and strengths. However, applying too much focus on roles can limit a team

member's ingenuity, as they might feel they must stick to the assigned role and only do what they are told to do.

How does collaboration contribute to creative solutions?

Main Body – Section 1 – For (711 words)

In this section I will discuss the benefits of collaboration by highlighting how it combines diverse perspectives leading to creative solutions and innovative ideas.

Collaboration combines diverse perspectives, making creative solutions – it also helps make amazing innovations, such as airplanes or even the International Space Station (ISS). When people with diverse backgrounds and skills come together, they bring a variety of perspectives, which can inspire people to create innovative ideas. Different viewpoints are key to solving complex problems that need creative solutions. Using the unique insights from each group member by working together can lead to better and more effective results, as opposed to what a singular person could do alone. Collaboration can also make things, like problem solving, much more efficient in group settings. (Tjosvold & Wisse, 2009)

Belbin's "Team roles at work" (2010), highlights the importance of different roles within a team, such as the 'coordinator' and the 'implementer', to maximise productivity and creativity. By understanding and utilising the strengths of each group member, collaboration ensures that all individual's unique abilities contribute to innovative solutions. This method enables groups to make use of the collective strengths of their members, leading to more efficient and effective problem-solving. For the group project, his theory was not applied as we shared our work equally and combined our work, as there were only two of us. However, I would say that our group related more to Tjosvold & Wisse's examination of power and interdependence.

Tjosvold & Wisse's examination of power and interdependence (2009) in organisations emphasise the value of teamwork. When responsibility is distributed equally, team members rely on each other, fostering trust and creating a more cohesive and functional group that can generate creative solutions. The mutual reliance and support within our collaborative group helped enhance our ability to work together and our efficiency. Because of our balanced workload, I was able to focus on my assigned task and did not have worry about the rest of the work since I knew that my partner would take care of it, as it was their piece of work. Due to our established friendship prior to the project, we worked smoothly as a team and had no problems in terms of cooperation – this made our collaborative experience enjoyable, however, this is not the case for all collaborative groups. Their theory also aligns with the ideas presented in Belbin's "Team roles at work" and Gardner's theory, by emphasising the necessity of interdependence and trust in collaborative settings.

Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (2011) highlights the importance of recognising and leveraging diverse types of intelligence within a team. Collaboration allows for the merging of diverse intelligences. Though in simpler aspects, his theory was present in our final project. E.g., our mathematical abilities were used to calculate change for money given to us during our bake sale, artistic abilities for the presentation of our bake sale table.

Gardner's theory also corresponds to De Bono's theory as leveraging different types of intelligence within a team encourages lateral thinking and innovative problem-solving. De Bono's theory of lateral thinking (2010) emphasises the value of thinking outside the box and approaching problems with an open mind, from different angles. By challenging conventional thinking patterns and encouraging unconventional approaches, collaborative groups can produce unique and effective solutions.

Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory (1996) suggests that in collaborative group settings, a state of flow can be achieved when group members are fully engaged and stimulated. This increased focus and creativity results in innovative solutions that come from working together. The flow state can significantly enhance the productivity and creativity of collaborative groups. Linking this with Belbin's roles, a well-balanced group where each member is in their optimal role can more easily achieve the state of flow, resulting in higher levels of creativity and ingenuity. This theory was present throughout the course, where I felt immersed in most of our sessions. I focused and brainstormed unique ideas, along with my peers. By connecting his theory to NASA's Apollo 13 mission, both the astronauts and mission control were deeply immersed in their tasks. This level of focus and creativity was crucial in ensuring the crew's safe return and resulted in innovative solutions such as the "mailbox" (lithium hydroxide canister) device, used to remove C02 from the LM.

Main Body – Section 2 – Against (353 words)

In this section I will discuss the potential challenges and drawbacks of collaboration – and how it does not always make solutions much more efficient and innovative.

Though collaboration is credited for creating innovative solutions, there are compelling arguments that suggest it may not always be the most efficient approach for fostering creative solutions.

Lencioni's "The Five Dysfunctions of a Team" (2002) identifies potential challenges or issues within a team such as lack of trust, fear of conflict and avoidance of accountability. These dysfunctions can obstruct collaboration and suppress creativity, making it challenging to find innovative solutions through teamwork. The pressure to comply can restrain unique and diverse ideas, resulting in less innovative outcomes. Katzenbach & Smith's "The Wisdom of Teams" (1993) further highlights this point by noting that successful collaboration requires precise management and clear goal alignment. Without proper guidance, groups may struggle with issues where the desire for agreement limits individual creativity and innovative ideas. The lack of strong leadership and clear direction can lead to challenges in harmony between the group members and creativity, which consequently results in less effective solutions.

Hackman's "Leading Teams: Setting the Stage for Great Performances" (2002) points out that not all teams are designed for success. Teams that lack clear goals, proper structure, and sufficient resources may struggle to collaborate effectively, resulting in less optimal creative outcomes. The time and effort required for these activities can drain the energy needed for creative thinking and problem solving. This theory aligns with Robinson's "Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative" (2011) which emphasises the need for individual creativity and cultivation of unique talents. He argues that overly strict collaborative frameworks can supress individual creativity and prevent people from reaching their full creative potential.

Belbin's "Team Work at Roles" (2010) suggest that, whilst diverse roles within a team can have its benefits, an overemphasis on specific roles can constrain creativity. Team members may feel limited by their assigned roles and be less likely to think outside the box, resulting in less innovative solutions. The pressure to adhere to defined roles can limit the flexibility required for creative thinking.

Conclusion (748 words)

In conclusion, collaboration is a powerful tool for achieving success in both academic and professional environments. By effectively managing collaborative efforts and addressing potential challenges, teams can harness the full potential of each member, leading to successful and innovative outcomes. Effective collaboration involves clear communication, mutual respect, and a willingness to embrace diverse perspectives, which foster an environment where each team member feels valued and empowered to contribute their unique skills and ideas.

To foster this type of environment, teams must focus on establishing clear goals and roles. Defining objectives and assigning responsibilities ensures that everyone is aligned and working towards a common goal. It is also important to set realistic deadlines and milestones, which helps maintain momentum and keeps the team motivated. Regular check-ins and updates maintain alignment and address any arising issues promptly. This approach helps teams stay on track and adjust their strengths as needed, ensuring that collaborative effort remains focused and productive. (Hackman, 2002)
Building trust is crucial for successful collaboration. Trust encourages open communication and reduces fear of conflict, allowing team members to express their ideas freely. Team-building activities and a culture of mutual support strengthen relationships and build a sense of togetherness among group members. Trust is the foundation upon which strong, cohesive teams are built, and it enables members to rely on one another and work more effectively as a team. Fostering transparency in decision making processes can further enhance trust and ensure that all team members feel included and valued. (Lencioni, 2002)

Recognising and mitigating potential downsides of collaboration, such as groupthink and diffusion of responsibility, is essential. Encouraging diverse viewpoints and critical thinking can prevent groupthink, while clear accountability structures ensure everyone takes ownership of their contributions. (Hackman, 2002) By addressing these potential drawbacks, teams can maintain a healthy and dynamic team that fosters innovation and creativity. (Tjosvold & Wisse, 2009)
Flexibility is key to managing collaboration effectively. (Hackamn, 2002; Belbin, 2010; Katzenbach & Smith, 1993) Teams should be open to adapting their approaches and structures as needed to accommodate changing circumstances and new insights. This adaptability allows teams to adjust quickly when faced with unexpected challenges or opportunities, ensuring that they remain resilient and innovative. Our group was willing to compromise regarding when and where we would run a bake sale to raise money for Cancer Research UK and UNICEF, as we had conflicting schedules and little time to execute the project. We eventually settled with doing the bake sale on a Thursday lunch, as it gave people enough time to be notified about it and to bring in money, and it would not be as chaotic on a Friday as the whole school would have had the same lunch time.

Through clear communication, trust-building, flexibility, and a balance between collaboration and individual work, teams can maximise their potential and achieve remarkable outcomes. While teamwork is essential for many tasks, individual contributions are equally important. Providing team members with the self-sufficiency to work independently when needed can enhance their creativity and allow them to cultivate their ideas more thoroughly before presenting them to the group for further refinement. (Robinson, 2011) In today's world effective collaboration remains crucial for achieving success and fostering innovation. Moving forward, the importance of collaboration will only continue to grow, making it an essential skill for tackling challenges in today's modern world.
Effective collaboration also requires an environment that encourages continuous learning and improvement. Teams should be encouraged to reflect on their performance regularly and seek feedback from both within and outside of the group. This process of reflection and feedback helps identify areas for improvement and allows teams to implement changes that enhance their effectiveness over time. Providing opportunities for professional development and skill building can further empower team members to grow and contribute more effectively to collaborative efforts.
Celebrating success and acknowledging the contributions of individual team members can boost morale and foster a positive collaborative environment. Recognising achievements, whether big or small, encourages a sense of accomplishment and motivates team members to continue striving for excellence. (Hackman, 2002)

Without collaboration, my success on the project would not have been as significant. Collaboration enhances efficiency. (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993) Throughout the course, all my solutions were the result of teamwork, which broadened my perspective and revealed more creative ways to handle various situations. This course taught me that success does not always follow a single, linear path and that seeking assistance can lead to even better outcomes through the power of collaboration.

Reference List

Belbin, M., 2010. Team Roles at Work. 2nd ed. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Csikszentmihalyi, M., 1996. Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention. New York: Harper Perennial.

De Bono, E., 2010. Lateral Thinking: A Textbook of Creativity. London: Penguin.

Gardner, H., 2011. Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences. New York: Basic Books.

Hackman, J.R., 2002. Leading Teams: Setting the Stage for Great Performances. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Katzenbach, J.R. and Smith, D.K., 1993. The Wisdom of Teams: Creating the High-Performance Organization. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Lencioni, P., 2002. The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Robinson, K., 2011. Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative. Rev. ed. Oxford: Capstone.

Tjosvold, D. and Wisse, B., 2009. Power and Interdependence in Organizations. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Candidate C:

Candidate C's Response

The Power of Collaboration in my Street Dance Team

Collaboration is a very important part of being in a street dance team if anything it is the most important part. It is also a skill that is important in everyday life. When you dance with a group, it's not just about showing off your own moves and proving to the judges or your dance teacher you can do something but it's about working together to show off your skills as a group and how you can come together and build something. I dance in a street dance team with 14 other people. Some I have known for a while and are my best friends but some i didn't know before the team but we learn who each other are and it doesn't make a difference because we all collaborate, and 've learned that without teamwork, we wouldn't be able to perform at the competitions as we do today. Every part of dancing as a group, from learning the routines to showing the routines in front of other people at our dance school or even parents and carers need trust, communication, and cooperation. Without collaboration, our routines wouldn't flow together and we most likely won't know what to do on the big day, and we wouldn't get the same opportunities like we do today we may not even be able to place .

In this essay, I will explain to you how collaboration is used in my street dance team. I will be talking about how we work together to learn the routines we have been set, how we support each other through practicing (we talk to one another about areas we are struggling on and we go through it together showing independence) , how we use teamwork and collaboration to create choreography that we are all capable to do, and how we rely on one another during performances and the outcome we achieve. I will also talk about how being part of a dance team has helped me understand the value of collaboration, not just in dance but in my life as a whole because it is such an important skill to have because we use it every day but we don't even realise as it just feels like a natural thing to do.

Learning and Practicing Together

The biggest ways we collaborate is by learning and practicing routines together that we have been set. When our dance teacher teaches us the choreography she has created, we have to make sure we all understand the steps and perform them in sync we often split off into multiple smaller groups where we talk more with the people in positions around us and become comfortable with the people around us. In multiple cases when practising people have accidentally bumped into each other but it's not about what has happened it is about how we solve it which starts with collaboration and discussion. even one person is offbeat, it can throw off the whole routine which is why it is so important that we work together as a team because we don't want to ruin it for everybody else in my team. That's why we practice over and over again, helping each other when someone struggles with a move.

During practice, we often break into smaller groups to go over difficult sections of the routine. This is a good way to collaborate because we can help each other out instead of just relying on our dance teacher to help. Sometimes, one of us figures out a way to describe a move in an easier way to make it more clear what we are trying to do, and we share it with the rest of the team. Other times, we count the beats together or even sing the song in our heads to make sure everyone is in sync.

Collaboration also helps when we forget steps which can happen to us at the best of times . Instead of getting frustrated at the mistakes, we remind each other what comes next and encourage them to be resilient. We can then go through it so that we are all caught up. If someone is struggling, we encourage them instead of making them feel bad. This positive attitude and growth mindset helps everyone improve. It is what holds the team together and makes practice a fun and supportive environment, where we don't have to feel judged for forgetting or struggling in an area of the dance.

Another important part of learning the routines is spacing and the position we are set and stand in. In street dance, formations are really important because they make the performance look exciting. We have to work together to make sure we are standing in the right spots and moving at the right times otherwise we can throw off the other people in our team or bump into them which is not an ideal situation. If one person is too far to the left or to the right, it can make the whole formation look messy instead of the shape the judges are meant to see. That's why we constantly check on each other and adjust our positions during rehearsals so we know exactly what is happening for the actual thing.

Supporting Each Other in Practice

Dancing is physically draining and sometimes practice can be exhausting we go through days where we are not our usual self and we might want a day off but this affects our team because we then struggle catching up with the routines and it sets us back. This is where collaboration is needed the most. We have to bring each other together and help with our mental health and other problems. When we see one of our teammates getting tired or frustrated, we encourage them to keep going because we all feel the same at this moment in time but when we are at the comp there is lots of adrenaline and the feeling of being proud of our team for what we have constructed and made come to life over the past months. A simple high-five or a "You got this!" can make a big difference in someone's confidence and we always bring each other together before and after.

We also help each other improve by giving constructive feedback. This is feedback that we give that's not being insulting or just telling them what they did wrong but telling them how to make it better and what they can do to improve their performance for next time. If someone is struggling with a move, we don't just tell them they're doing it wrong—we show them how to fix it and what it should look like. For example, if a teammate is having trouble with footwork, we slow it down for them and practice together until they get it right which shows maturity within the team even if we are messing around with our friends. At the end of each lesson, we record our routines and watch them back so we can see what needs improvement but it also helps because we can watch it back later to help remember the routine and work on the timing. This helps us work together to fix mistakes and make the performance as clean as possible. It is very beneficial and we can definitely see the different which makes it all worth it.

the same goal, it keeps us motivated and focused because we all want the same outcome.

Creating Choreography as a Team

Street dance is all about creativity and self-expression, so we don't just follow instructions and what our teacher come up with—we add our own ideas too. Sometimes, our coach lets us choreograph small sections of the routine. This is where teamwork really matters because we have to listen to each other's ideas and combine them into something that works for the whole group. Our dance teacher likes to give us the freedom to add things to a routine she had already made.

Choreographing together can be challenging because everyone has different styles and opinions some people don't like doing certain moves or even struggle with certain moves so we have to take that into consideration . However, we have learned how to compromise and blend our ideas together to make a routine for our competitions. If one person suggests a move that doesn't quite fit, we change it slightly instead of rejecting it and forgetting about it completely. We also experiment with different transitions to make sure the routine flows smoothly sometimes we do one thing but change it after a couple of weeks to make it run smoother.

Freestyle sessions are another great way we collaborate. In street dance, freestyle is an important skill because it allows us to show ourselves and develop our own unique style. During practice, we often take turns freestyling while the rest of the team watches. This helps us learn from each other and pick up new moves even if sometimes the other people in our team aren't a fan or our ideas. Sometimes, we do combine our freestyle moves into the routine, making our performances more personal and exciting especially when one person in the group does a solo within the team dance. For example

everybody in the dance holds a pose and one person does there own solo and draws the attention of the audience who usually will start cheering louder.

Music selection is another area where we work together. Since street dance is influenced by hip-hop, funk, and other styles Like house, we often discuss which songs we want to dance to. We listen to different tracks and decide which one fits the vibe we want for our routine. Everyone has a say in this decision, and we make sure to pick something that gets us all excited to dance. Once we make our comments and contributions our dance teacher mixes a track with around 4 songs but only snips of each one. The dance is usually around 4 minutes for the first two comps and then we add a new song in time for nationals to make the routine longer.

Relying on Each Other During Performances

Performing in front of an audience is both exciting and nerve-wracking. This is where collaboration is most important because we have to trust each other completely. If one person forgets a step or misses a cue, we have to adapt quickly without letting the audience notice we draw attention to .

One way we support each other on stage is through eye contact and body language. If someone looks nervous, a quick nod or smile from somebody else in the team can help them feel more confident we normally do this when we are moving positions or facing the back to make it more discreet. We also use subtle cues to remind each other of the next move, like a small hand gesture or a head tilt this is quite rare though because we have a group chat where we send each other videos to help us with practicing.

Another important part of performing is energy. Street dance is all about attitude and energy, so we have to hype each other up. Before we go on stage, we do a team chant or handshake to boost our confidence. When we get called up we all run and cheer making us feel more confident and as soon as the music comes on we smile and all of teh nerves and fear leave and we have lots of fun. During the performance, we feed off each other's energy, making sure we stay pumped up until the last move. But we also have to pace ourselves so we don't all use all of our energy up in the first song because the last song will look very dull. Overall, we do very well as a team but it all comes down to collaboration and working together as a team.

thebrilliantclub.org