**Group Communication**

**General communication**Within my group we have used different forms of communication, including face-to-face (verbal/talking) and communication through technology.

Depending on which team member I am communicating with, I have to adapt the way I communicate. Some of the team members I know well, so I can communicate very informally, and makes jokes and references to films and books. However, I do not know some of the other team members as well, so I cannot be quite so informal. For example, they may have a different sense of humour and not find a joke funny.

My group often uses technology to communicate. We send documents via email, and when we need to communicate from home we use social networking such as Yammer.

Trying to communicate through email did not really work for our group – it was fine for sending documents, but we rarely replied to emails. For communication, it was better to use Yammer – the more real-time nature meant there was more pressure to reply.

**Interpersonal skills**For effective group communication we must use a variety of interpersonal skills.

One of the most important of these is Active Engagement. This is showing the person speaking that you are listening and engaging with is being said. If this is not done, it can offend the speaker, as they may think they are being ignored.

Body language is also important – it reveals more about what you think of someone than words, so it is important to use positive body language, otherwise people will take what is being said negatively, regardless of what is actually being said.

The setting of communication also has a large impact. If there are distractions or it is too noisy, it becomes difficult to talk.

Our group had no problems with interpersonal communication, although we occasionally became distracted due to the informal nature of our conversation.

**Communication in writing**We regularly use some form of writing communicate, including email, word processing documents and social networking.

Despite the lack of body language and intonation, text-based communication can be worded to provide almost as much information about the writer. Because writing is not done in real time, words can be chosen much more carefully than when talking face-to-face.

Also, use of emoticons ☺ in informal communication (such as IM or social networking) can give insight into how the message was intended.

The non-real time aspect of writing also means much more information can be written in one go than can be said – it would be rude to talk non-stop for half an hour during a conversation for example, but it’s acceptable to email a report that takes half an hour to read.

The only problems in our group with communication in writing were distractions – everything was typed on a computer, so we were occasionally distracted by other things on the computer.