Topic: Importance of accountability

With the Scoping Document completed our ENGG3000/2000 group had begun work on the Detailed Design. We were tasked with turning our preliminary design into a concrete design in CAD, as well as creating schematics for circuits, structures, and assemblies. We were also required to present a Design Review, to get feedback on the viability and effectiveness of the design.

After a meeting with the team, we needed to determine the most effective way to allocate work to meet the workload, and especially when we wanted things completed by. We allocated sections of the presentation to be completed by each team member and with a set due date of 2 days before the presentation (28/09/23). We allocated work to the design document, although we failed to set a due date, and opted to allow team members to choose their own section.

As a result, we were able to get valuable feedback from out tutors during the design review. We were able to refine and rework parts of our design to be more consistent and efficient. However, the work for the Design Document was very minimal with only the bare essentials converted over from the scoping document. The same week, more clear goals were set about which member was responsible for which section, and due dates were set as well.

I wanted to reflect on accountability, and why it’s important in any sort of project. People can often feel like a taskmaster when assigning work and due dates, myself included. I wanted to reflect on the role of accountability in a fair and balanced team.

During my ENGG3000 class I’ve had to co-lead a team with my friend Oliver Gordon. I’m not used to taking leadership positions, and as a result I was hesitant to start giving people tasks. I realised quickly that accountability and proper task allocation was needed for this type of project. Both my team and I would leave things until way too late before making a start, many would be up until 1AM the night before. I felt overwhelmed with work and struggled to build up the motivation to work.

Having a set due date and clear subtasks between members makes the task simpler. It means nobody is being saddled with too much or too little work, it also holds team members to account for their work or lack thereof. Accountability helps ensure that every team member puts in their fair share of work, and also helps to identify and more effectively what task to assign to what team member.

In the future I will strive to implement this in future group projects, of which there will be many. A system of accountability similar to the Kanban Board our team used on Jira is a quick and easy way of making sure members are contributing.