I have just discovered that a member of my team has had access to another team’s work and has copied extensively in both the team’s ‘Build’ and the final report. In addition to this, another member of my team knows about this and has actively supported the behaviour.

With regards to ethical principles, what these members have done, without a doubt was wrong. There is a distinct difference between seeking help from someone and crediting the work somebody else has done as one’s own. The member who had copied extensively from another group has plagiarised which is an action that is not tolerated for, especially in the real world, where severe consequences can impend. The act of plagiarism itself greatly undermines the professionalism for the work which is being produced and is essentially stealing from another person’s ideas. The person who was aware of this has done just as wrong by not only keeping quiet about the wrongdoings, but also through actively encouraging the act of plagiarism.

In a situation like this, the two members who had participated in the plagiarism need to be informed that what they have done is in fact wrong and irresponsible. They should also be warned that if they do not reproduce the work such that it is their own, course coordinators will be notified about the situation. The situation should be approached with great seriousness as the actions of two members could potentially jeopardise the work of the whole group.

While there are many factors which can lead to difficulties of resolving ethical dilemmas, at the end of the day, anyone who is aware that work produced by their own group has been plagiarised would be just as responsible as those who had committed the act. Therefore, when someone becomes aware of plagiarism they should take action immediately to prevent consequences for themselves, regardless of any tension it may cause within the group.