

Selecting the Right Tool for the Job: The Impact of Assessment Modes in Promoting Performance and Fostering Student Judgment in Graduate Attributes

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Assessment tasks designed to assure graduate attributes have been a focus in the revision of quality assurance requirements in Australian Higher Education (for example, Barrie et al., 2012). These assessment tasks need to be relevant and authentic to real world situations, as well promoting student engagement and ownership. Building on their previous work (2013) that investigated student's ability to calibrate their judgement over time, the authors have gone on to examine students' ability to judge their performance in assessments that nurtured graduate attributes, for example, communication in essays, critical thinking in case studies. Students in two degree programmes (Design (n=823) and Business (n=494)), who voluntarily chose to self-assess were used to explore the impact of these graduate attribute nurturing assessments on their ability to judge their own work. Overall, findings found performance was highest in complementary tasks for critical thinking, oral and group work, with case studies/critical essays showing the highest level of student performance across all graduate attributes. When examining students ability to calibrate in relation to tutor grades the findings show most accuracy in critical thinking and oral communication tasks, with again the highest level of accuracy in case studies/critical essays. Of interest was that the lowest accuracy was for collaboration in group work exercises, presumably due to equal weighting issues. Lastly a correlation was conducted to see if there was a relationship between calibration ability and the weighting of the task. Overall findings show that the more heavily weighted tasks were associated with more accurate calibration.