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Abstract

The development of employability skills is an important graduate outcome of most contemporary university degrees. Given the critical role of academics in teaching and assessing curriculum, they are held responsible for furthering the employability skills development of university graduates; yet little is known about the factors that hinder academics in integrating employability skills into the university curriculum. Based on the Theories of Action Framework, this research compared academics' espoused understanding of employability skills and reported practice against their actual practices to identify the hindrances. Their understandings of employability skills and of their espoused practice were collected through interviews with academics and content analysis of curriculum documents. The data, drawn from direct observation of teaching and assessment practices and follow-up interviews, were analysed to investigate actual teaching and assessment practices. The findings indicate a disjuncture between espoused practice and actual practice. The disjuncture can be explained by the individual nature of teaching and assessment practice that is influenced by academic experience,

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position, and disciplinary boundaries. As such, academics face a number of competing challenges, constraints, and demands within the scope of their practice that impede the consistent and systematic integration of employability skills in the university curriculum. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)