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Author

FLETCHER, Richard B.

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Abstract

Assessment in higher education serves multiple purposes such as providing information about student learning, student progress, teaching quality, and program and institutional accountability. Yet, little is known about faculty and students' attitudes regarding different aspects of assessment that have wide-ranging implications for policy and practice in tertiary institutions. To investigate these views, parallel surveys of conceptions of assessment were administered to faculty and undergraduate students across four tertiary institutions including universities, an indigenous tertiary institution, and an institute of technology. A mean and covariance structures approach was used to test for measurement invariance and latent means differences between faculty and students regarding their conceptions of assessment. Results revealed differences in the latent means across the two groups. Faculty were likely to view assessment as a trustworthy process aiding teaching and learning, whereas students viewed assessment as focussed primarily on accountability and perceived assessment as irrelevant or even ignored in the teaching and learning process. These findings highlight the importance of ensuring that assessment policy and practices are fit for purposes, and are being carried

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out with integrity in ways that are transparent to and understood by both staff and students. While these results show how staff and students view assessment practices, one should keep in mind that while the sample was large and did incorporate different types of tertiary institutions, the inclusion of a broader range of disciplines would make the conclusions more generalizable. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Fletcher, Richard B., E-Mail: R.B.Fletcher@massey.ac.nz