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**Abstract**

The formative merits of university education are at risk of being reduced from graduateness in the sense of broad academic cultivation to professional training with a strong emphasis on employability. The difficulty in opposing this trend is the absence of a clear framework for academic cultivation. The aim of this study is to construct a model that uses the formative function of university education as a starting point, that distinguishes graduateness from employability, and that integrates theories on reflective thinking, scholarship, moral reasoning and lifelong learning. This approach offers the possibility of making use of insights from established theoretical traditions in the study of the intellectual development of students. For this study, a questionnaire was developed to investigate graduateness, or intellectual cultivation, among students in a research university. Structural equation modelling revealed that the expected structure was confirmed by the data. Reflective thinking has the strongest influence on lifelong learning; however, scholarship and moral citizenship are also

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important elements. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Steuer, J. M., E-Mail: [j.m.steur@rug.nl](mailto:j.m.steur@rug.nl)