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**Abstract**

It is widely acknowledged that the curriculum and knowledge in higher education (HE) are especially visible through (and often constructed by) assessment practices. If this is the case, it matters greatly what perspectives and theoretical tools are brought to bear on the task of understanding these practices. Having briefly set out three perspectives on assessment in HE (the technical, humanist and interactionist), this paper introduces a 'learning cultures' perspective, drawing upon the work of Bourdieu, developed as part of a recent research project on English Further Education. The application of this perspective in HE is introduced through a vignette outlining a recent assessment episode and notes on how it may be explored. The paper argues that whilst some contemporary work on HE assessment incorporates elements of a cultural perspective, there are potential practical benefits to a more thoroughgoing adoption of a 'learning cultures' approach. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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