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Abstract

Student engagement has increasingly been positioned as a defining characteristic of high quality teaching and learning in higher education. This is because as a concept it can comfortably serve the purposes of various stakeholders across learning and teaching, institutional management, and national policy contexts. However, as many commentators have pointed out, its meaning is not clear. In this chapter, we argue that this is not, as some suggest, due to a lack of criticality on the part of researchers or because engagement is poorly defined, but rather because student engagement has many meanings. We argue that by analysing the focus and degree of student engagement, it is possible to address the problems associated with the apparent vagueness of student engagement. This conceptual ground clearing allows us to ask more challenging questions about the relations between

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different foci and degrees of student engagement, and explore the implications of these questions for future research and policy initiatives related to student engagement. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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