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Chinese students' perceptions of the effects of Western university examination formats on their learning

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Abstract

The recruitment of Asian students into western universities has highlighted the debate about commercialisation of education, academic standards and the role of culture and language in approaches to learning. This article investigates Chinese students' perceptions of how two typical examination formats (multiple choice and essay) affect their learning. A survey with follow-up interviews indicates that Chinese students generally approach assessment using deep approaches to learning regardless of examination format. Chinese students report using memorisation, not as a surface approach to learning but as a strategy for overcoming the challenges of assessments in English as a second language and for developing understanding. For Chinese learners, both essay and multiple-choice examination questions have the potential to engage them in deep approaches to learning provided students are given the opportunity to align perceptions of assessment tasks with the complexity of the questions through practice and feedback. Implications for institutional assessment

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policy and for staff working with international students are discussed. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)