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Title

Developing generic skills through university study austra: a study of arts, science and engineering in Australia / Paul B. T. Badcock ; Philippa E. Pattison ; Kerri-Lee Harris

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Abstract

This study examined relationships between important aspects of a university education and the assessment and development of generic skills. A sample of 323 students enrolled in single or double arts, engineering and/or science degrees from a research-intensive university in Australia were administered the Graduate Skills Assessment to measure four generic skills?critical thinking, interpersonal understandings, problem solving and written communication. As expected, students? grade point average was generally found to be significantly related to scores for all four skill scales both within each discipline area and across the total sample. Reporting of academic achievement through the GPA therefore provides some measure of students? generic skill levels. However, since relationships were modest, GPA should be considered an imperfect indicator of levels of generic skills attainment. In addition, we found only limited evidence that students? skill levels increased with progression through their studies, with study length being consistently related only to Problem Solving. Finally, our analyses revealed significant, interdisciplinary variations in students? skill

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scores. Results are discussed with respect to theoretical, practical and methodological implications.

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