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**Title**

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**Abstract**

Learner autonomy is a primary learning outcome of Higher Education in many countries. However, empirical evaluation of how student autonomy progresses during undergraduate degrees is limited. We surveyed a total of 636 students' self-perceived autonomy during a period of two academic years using the Autonomous Learning Scale. Our analysis suggests that students do not perceive themselves as being any more autonomous as they progress through University. Given the relativity of self-perception metrics, we suggest that our results evince a "red queen" effect. In essence, as course expectations increase with each year, each student's self-perceived autonomy relative to their ideal remains constant; we term this the "moving goalpost" hypothesis. This article corroborates pedagogical literature suggesting that providing students with opportunities to act autonomously and develop confidence is key to developing graduates who have the independence that they need in order to be successful in the workplace. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Henri, D. C., E-Mail: d.henri@hull.ac.uk