

Undergraduates carry out research in groups: A case study from an accounting and finance course

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Abstract

Set within an accounting and finance course, this paper brings together two major issues within business undergraduate education, namely: the development of students as independent learners through research projects; and the use of assessed group tasks. A group research project was introduced into the final year of the degree, and the author used action research to gather evidence and to reflect on the innovation. The group research was judged to have produced strong work and to have offered good opportunities for learning in an innovative and challenging manner. The benefits of working within groups led to engaged and interdependent learning that encouraged students to take responsibility for their own learning tasks. Furthermore, groups undertaking research within the sphere of interest of a research tutor offered real benefits for the development of engaged student learning, and for connecting research and teaching. However, students encountered difficulties in operating the group research alongside their dissertation.

Key words: undergraduate research, independent learning, group research, assessing research