

Student Perceptions of e-Exams: Hopes and Fears

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Abstract

This presentation looks at the a priori perceptions of students on the topic of e-exams as gathered via an institution wide pre-implementation survey administered in late 2013 ahead of a planned trial program for e-exams. The online survey at a large Australian university garnered just over 480 responses from undergraduate students across a wide range of discipline areas from Arts to Zoology. Twenty-four Likert scale items on e-exams gathered opinions on issues such as pedagogical suitability, fairness, security, cheating, technical reliability, keyboard proficiency, physical comfort, equipment provision and preferences for pen-on-paper or computer based testing. Two open text response questions aimed to further elicit students' concerns and opinions. Data was analysed using Man-Whitney's U Test across programs (discipline groups), gender and by level of experience of computerised exams. The findings reveal, as expected, a relatively low level experience with computer based testing across the institution, that brought out both hopes and fears from a relatively 'naive' perspective. The findings represent a comprehensive round up of the concerns of this important stakeholder group that will enable appropriate implementation strategies to be developed as we move to introduce e-exams more widely.

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