

International Postgraduate Student Experiences of Block Mode Delivery

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This qualitative study delves into the impact of the trademarked VU Block Model® on international post-graduate students' educational experiences, aiming to discern its influence on student engagement, satisfaction, and academic achievement. Utilizing a phenomenological approach, the research examines the perceptions of eight international students enrolled in both traditional and block mode units of study. Thematic analysis of interview transcripts reveals five key themes: Assessment, Academic Engagement, Information Assimilation Time, Intensive Learning and Teaching, and Mode Preference. Notably, the structure of assessments emerges as a significant factor influencing stress levels and academic outcomes. The intensive learning and teaching theme highlights the efficiency and intensity of the VU Block Model®, leading to improved academic results. Despite the accelerated learning pace in block mode, small class sizes positively impact student engagement. While block mode is generally favored for its focused content delivery, individual preferences vary. Overall, this study provides critical insights into how block and traditional semester delivery modes affect international post-graduate students' learning and teaching experiences, with implications for curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and student engagement enhancement within higher education. Limitations include the specificity of the cohort and the small sample size, which warrant further investigation.