Cultivating a Community of Practice Approach for Improving Accounting Education

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to use Australian accounting higher education as an illustrative case study application of the cultivated community of practice model for understanding and achieving improvements. The paper draws on recent Australian regulatory and market events relating to academic standards, as well as national collaborative efforts between accounting professional bodies, employers and higher education providers over 2010. While the most immediate result was the reaching of consensus on threshold learning outcomes for accounting bachelor and coursework master graduates, the engagement and ensuing context resulted also in momentum, appetite and commitment to further collaborative change in relation to academic standards. While the focus of the paper is on assessment practice in accounting, it could be applied to any higher education discipline where there is a perceived need for change. Academic leaders with responsibility for quality and curriculum renewal both in accounting and beyond, and academic standards in particular, would find this paper of interest.