

**Title**

Student perceptions of an explicitly criterion referenced assessment activity in a differential equations class

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**Abstract**

This report presents the findings of a study into the perceptions held by students regarding the use of criterion referenced assessment in an undergraduate differential equations class. Students in the class were largely unaware of the concept of criterion referencing and of the various interpretations that this concept has among mathematics educators. Our primary goal was to investigate whether explicitly presenting assessment criteria to students was useful to them and guided them in responding to assessment tasks. The data and feedback from students indicates that while students found the criteria easy to understand and useful in informing them as to how they would be graded, it did not alter the way they actually approached the assessment activity.

**Keywords**

differential equations, assessment experiment, criterion referenced assessment