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Unlimited opportunities to resit examinations in higher education – patterns of use and underlying factors

Assessment plays an important part in students' experience of higher education. This includes experiences of failing, and for many students, facing resit examinations. The aspect of resits is however an understudied field. This study aims to address this gap by presenting an analysis of the use of resit examinations by students enrolled in an introductory course in political science in a higher education system where such are generously offered, namely at a university in Sweden. The paper concludes that students who are more likely to face resit examinations consist primarily of younger male, beginner students along with students with previous experiences of failing courses at the university. The results are in line with existing research on dropouts in tertiary education. Implications of the findings and recommendations for further studies are discussed.

Keywords: assessment; higher education; resit examinations; Sweden