



Exploring Carousel Learning Through the Student Experience

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Abstract

This paper explores the benefits and challenges of studying a Master's degree online through a carousel model of delivery. It draws on the reflective experience of a recent graduate over a two-year period. Carousel delivery offers flexibility through multiple entry points across the academic year, enabling students—particularly those in employment; to join programmes at a time that suits their circumstances (Ebrahim & Naicker, 2026). This model supports autonomy and self-directed learning (Ebrahim & Naicker, 2026); however, it also introduces challenges linked to its fully online and accelerated nature. Specifically, effective and consistent tutor communication is critical to support students studying in relative isolation (Stein & Graham, 2020). Additionally, the delivery of intertwined modules, such as Research Methods offered ahead of the Dissertation on a rolling basis rather than sequentially, can create a fragmented and stop-start learning experience. Despite these challenges, carousel delivery provides universities with strategic advantages by widening access to diverse and global student populations (Stein & Graham, 2020; Ebrahim & Naicker, 2026). The paper highlights both the pedagogical implications and strategic value of carousel delivery, emphasising the need for institutions to address communication and curriculum coherence to enhance the overall student learning experience (Stein & Graham, 2020).

Keywords

carousel learning, online learning, student experience, flexible delivery, higher education

References

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