Confident Assessment

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CINDERELLA

In educational development,

Assessment = Askungen ?

About me

Educational developer at Lund University, Sweden

Previously head of University Teaching Academy, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

I might say

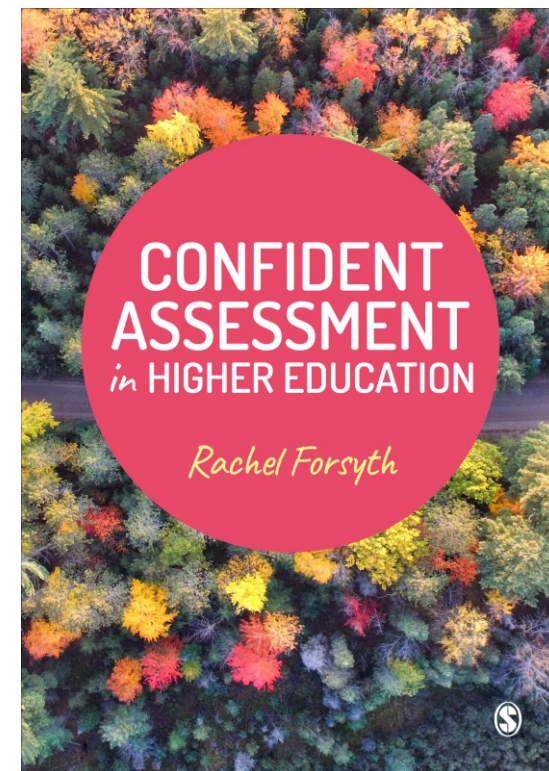Assessment or examination

Marking or grading

interchangeably

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Forsyth: Confident Assessment in Higher Education (Sage, 2022)

Coming in 2025, Using Generative AI in Higher Education (with Sam Illingworth, Bloomsbury publishing)

Think about an assessment experience

What are your feelings about that experience?

Was it :
   good?
   bad?
   Indifferent?

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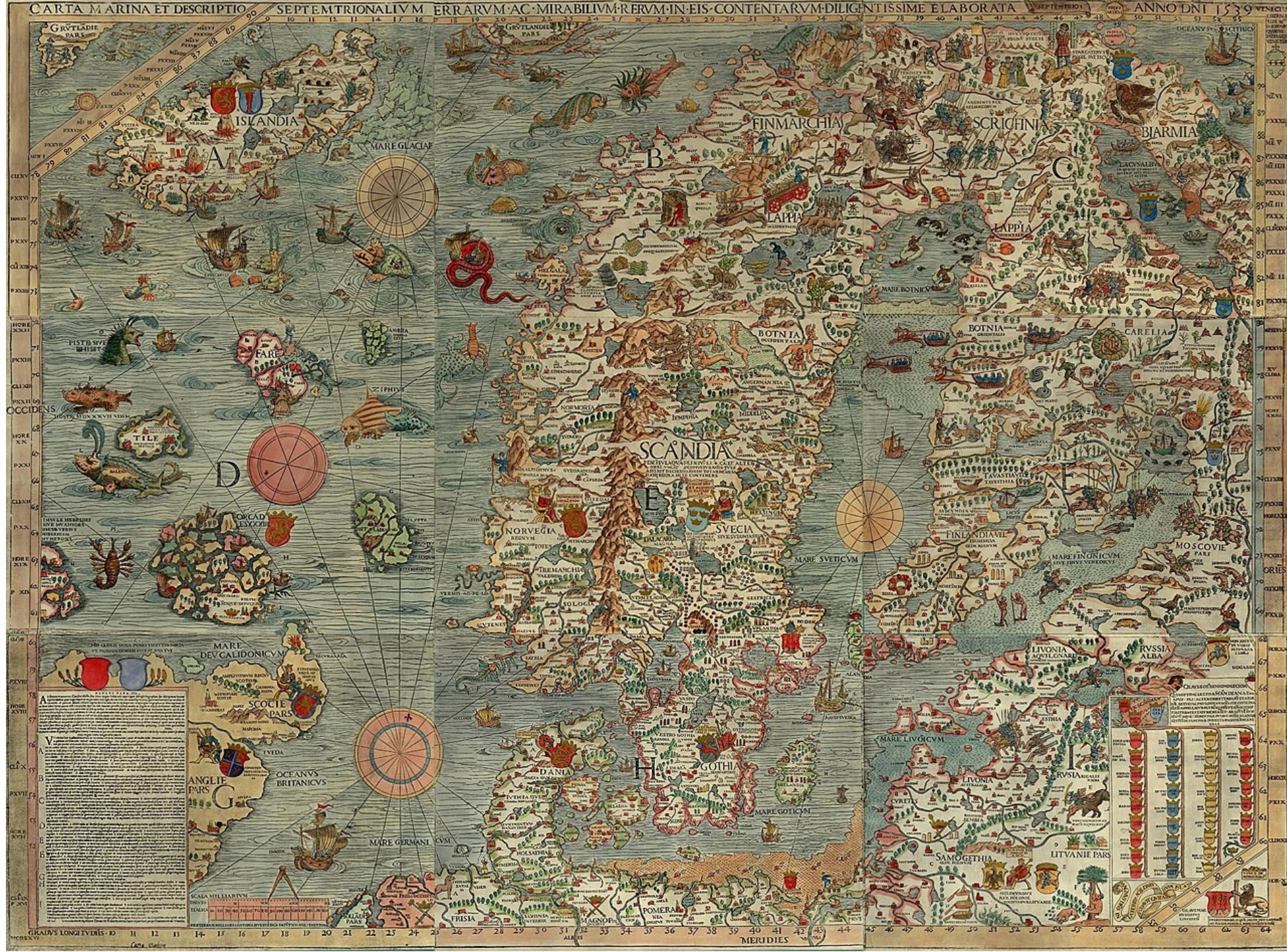
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Les Lavandières de la Nuit by
Jean-Édouard Dargent, c1861,
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Complex educational changes are wicked problems

1. No clear definition of the problem

2. Never ending solutions and amendments: no stopping point

3. No right or wrong evaluation or solution

4. No immediate test of solution

5. No trial and error phase

6. No criteria to know if all solutions have been identified

7. Each wicked problem is unique

8. Wicked problems can be the result of another problem

9. Framing of the problem affects and limits potential solutions

10. Pressure on policy makers

(Rittel and Webber 1973)

After Forsyth et al, 2015

Assessment literacy

Core principles

- **Validity** - the assessment task measures the intended learning outcomes.
- **Security** – certainty that the student did the work
- **Reliability** – consistent outcomes
- **Fairness** - equal opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the intended outcomes

Core requirements

- Clear learning outcomes
- Clear links to curriculum
- Manageability
- Clarity

Possible purposes of assessment

To judge current competence	To judge current knowledge	To judge capacity for future learning
To encourage focus on particular aspects of the curriculum	To reward the meeting of teacher expectations	To accredit a minimum level of professional competence
To differentiate performance among students	To validate the effectiveness of teaching	To permit progression to the next level of study
To permit award of a final qualification	To demonstrate maintenance of academic standards	To identify areas for individual future development
To recognise an ability to follow instructions	To recognise the ability to perform under pressure	To confirm that intended learning outcomes have been achieved
To build student confidence	To reduce the number of students on the course	To judge teacher competence in preparing students for assessment

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Setting: what type of task?

Learning outcome	Suitable tasks
Define the basic concepts of [a specific topic in the subject area]	
Summarise literature from [a specific topic in the subject area]	
Explain the differences between [different schools of thought in the subject area]	
Critically analyse results of experiments undertaken to investigate [a specific topic in the subject area]	

Marking: adapting marking criteria

Level	Previous criterion for a pass	New criterion
First year undergraduate / bachelors	Information from primary and secondary sources is collected and applied to authentic problems under supervision.	Information from primary and secondary sources is collected and applied to authentic problems under supervision. The source validity is evaluated, including the use or potential use of GenAI tools.
Second year undergraduate / bachelors		A simple project is designed and carried out to collect, analyse, and critique information from primary and secondary sources in a realistic context under supervision.The source validity is evaluated and compared with historical approaches.
Third year undergraduate / bachelors	planned, and carried out using an appropriate range of primary and secondary sources. The results and/ or outcomes are evaluated accurately.	A complex authentic project is designed, planned, and carried out using an appropriate range of primary and secondary sources. The results and/or outcomes are evaluated accurately with full consideration of the quality of the tools used or rejected, including GenAI tools.

More emphasis on process

From Powell and Forsyth, 2024

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After Forsyth et al, 2015

Four questions to ask about the assessment

1. **Validity**: Did it let students demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes?

2. **Manageability**: Was it straightforward to mark, give feedback, and moderate?

3. **Clarity**: Did students understand what to do and see how this task fits into their course overall?

4. **Satisfaction**: Did I enjoy marking it?

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Forthcoming seminar

14 maj Optionality in Assessment : Friend or Foe?

14 maj 2025 11:00 till 11:50 | Seminarium

Om evenemanget

Plats:
Enheten för Undervisningsstöd, Gamla Kirurgen 3rd floor

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Spara evenemanget till din kalender

Optionality in Assessment : Friend or Foe? | Transforming education in a digital world

References and more reading

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Authentic assessment

"an assessment task which is authentic needs to be set in a realistic and rich context, to represent a worthwhile task, perhaps involving external stakeholders, and require higher-order skills to complete it." (Villarroel et al., 2018)

Nieminen principles for inclusive assessment (2022)

- rethinking accommodations

- anti-ableist work

- celebration of human diversity

- student partnership

- interdependence

Co-creation

- Allow students choices
- Discuss how things are going
- Be prepared to adapt
- Work with external stakeholders