

Grading, Ethics, & Harm

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An opening

- ◆ Is grading university work harmful to students and if so how?
- ◆ *“when universities, ...give serious consideration to students’ experience of stress and anxiety when redesigning assessment frameworks, they risk being accused of ...**compromising standards.**”*
([McVitty 2022](#) on emotionally literate pedagogy)


What do we mean by compassion?

- ◇ Compassion means the noticing of social or physical distress to others and the commitment to reduce or prevent that distress (Gilbert 2017:189).
- ◇ Motivation to act / acting to alleviate suffering (Strauss et al 2016:15).

Background / Context

- ◆ Research at UAL into the student and staff experiences of pass / fail during the pandemic.
- ◆ QAA funded project – Belonging through Assessment: Pipelines of Compassion -
<https://belongingthroughassessment.myblog.arts.ac.uk/>

Summary of our research



- ◆ Impact of grading on stress & anxiety.
- ◆ Influence of grading on learner self-identity and self-worth.
- ◆ Impact of grading on collaboration (peer interactions) and student-staff relationships.
- ◆ Impact of grading on creativity and assessment outputs (self-censorship).
- ◆ Assessment literacy issues (staff and students).

Questions

- ◆ In what ways is grading harmful?
- ◆ How can we make assessment / grading more compassionate?