

Radical re-alignments (?)

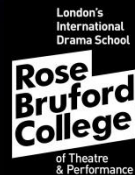
innovations in curriculum design / assessment

“we recommend a radical rethink of assessment practices and regulations”

HEA (2013) A Marked Improvement

Paul Kleiman

www.cielassociates.co.uk

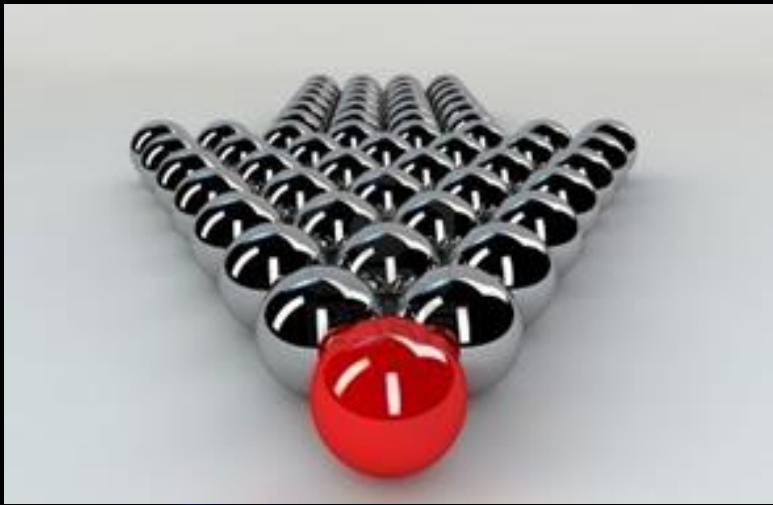




Task 1:

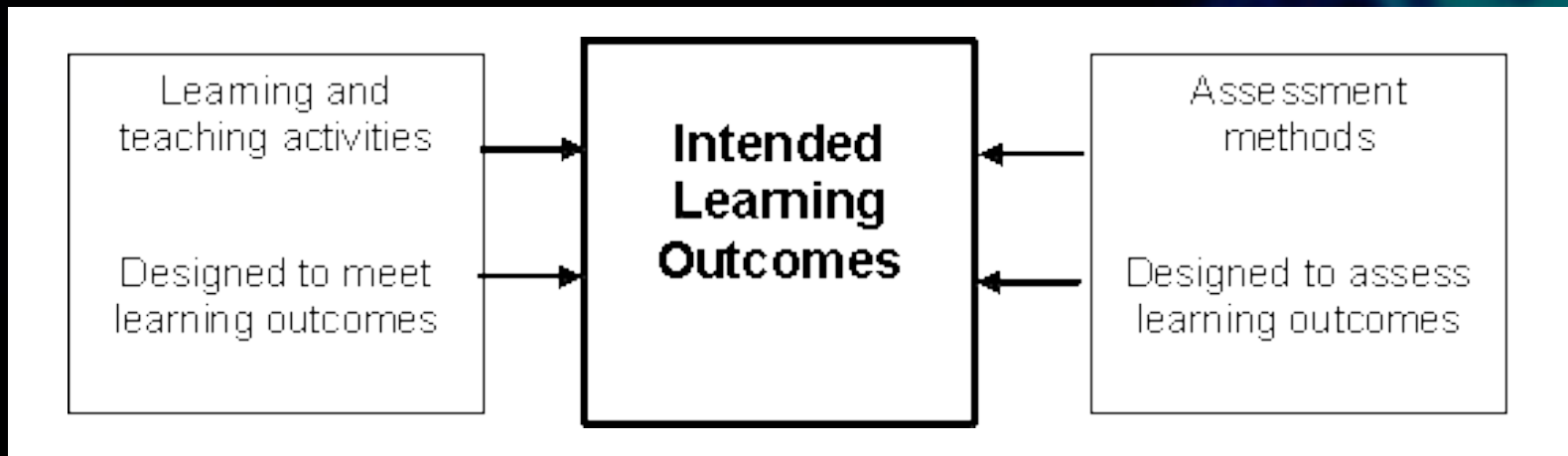
**visualise by
drawing/make marks on paper**

**Your ideal curriculum
Your ideal assessment regime**

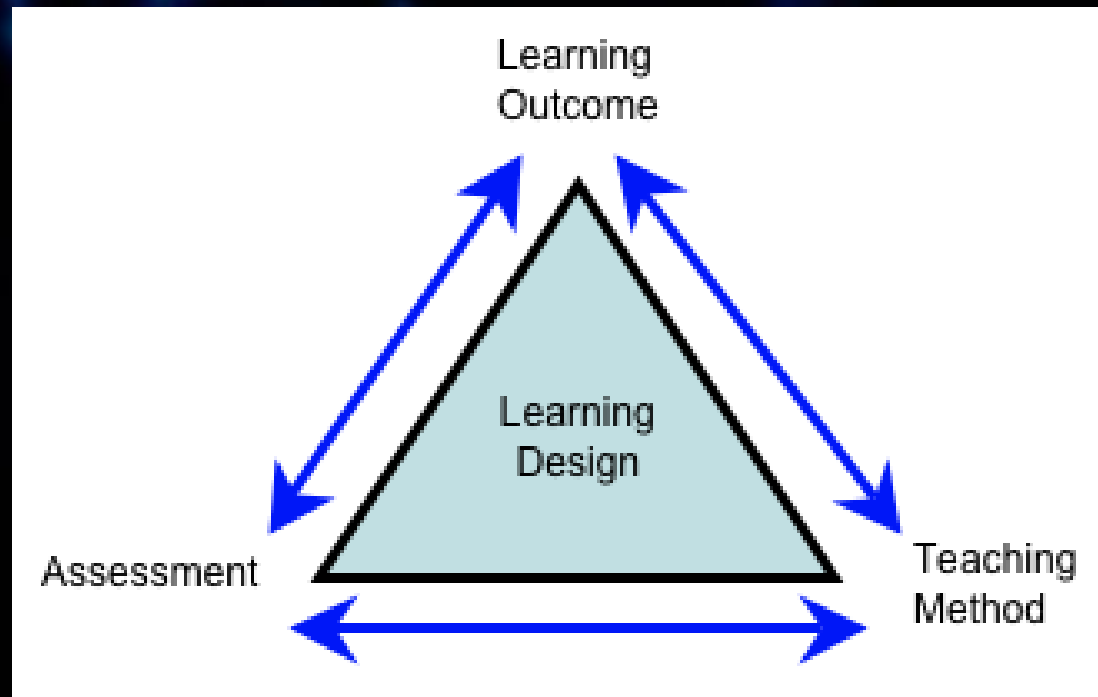


ALIGNMENT



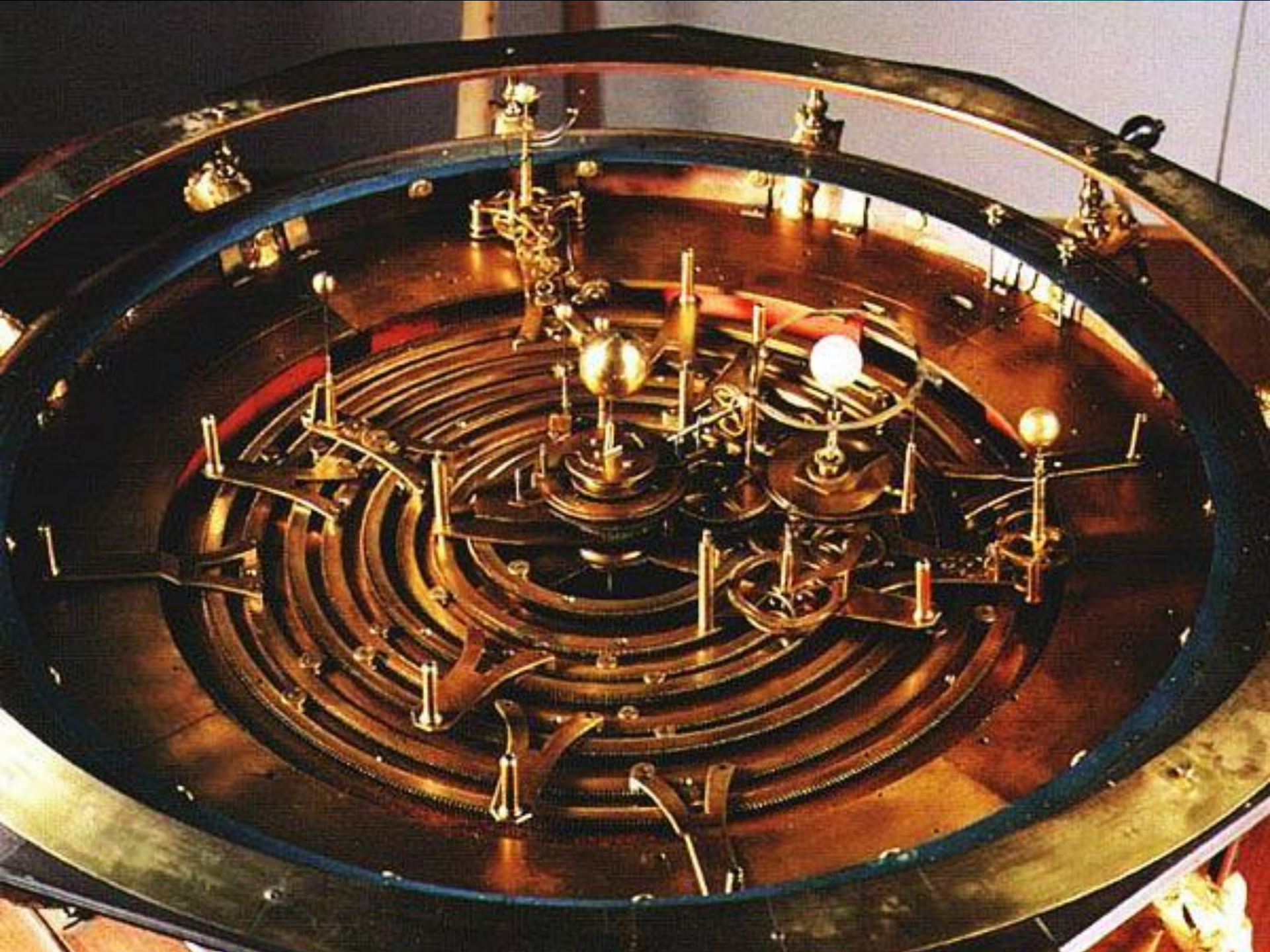


CONSTRUCTIVE ALIGNMENT



Biggs 1992







CLASH of the PARADIGMS

Positivist

There's a reality 'out there' that can be studied, captured and understood

Explanation, Control
Objectivity, Measurable,
Value-free, Universal,
Generalisable, External,
Quantifiable, Data reliant,
Can be transmitted and acquired

Teacher as Expert,
Researcher as Neutral
"The student WILL be able to...."



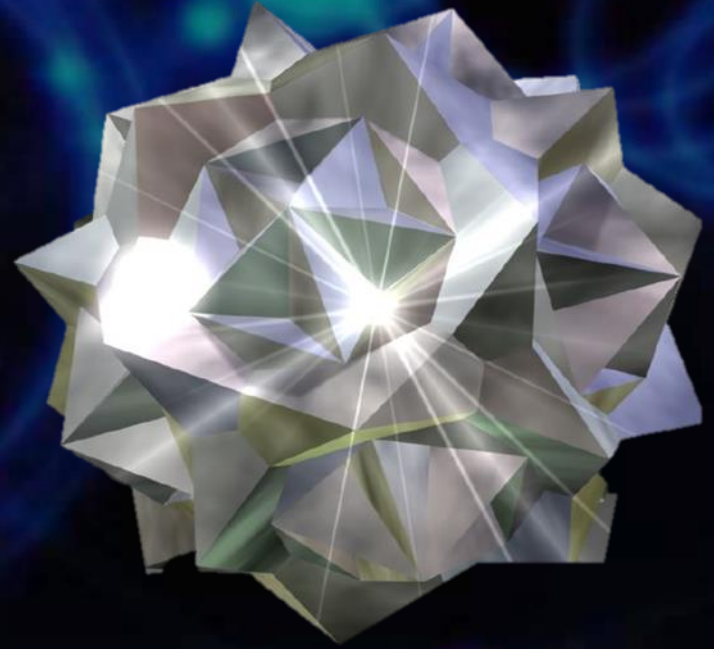
Interpretive

'Truth' is a matter of consensus amongst informed and sophisticated constructors, not of correspondence with an objective reality. (Guba & Lincoln)

Understanding, Subjectivity,
Contextualised, Value dependent,
Multiple-realities, Fuzzy, Partial,
Negotiated, Constructed

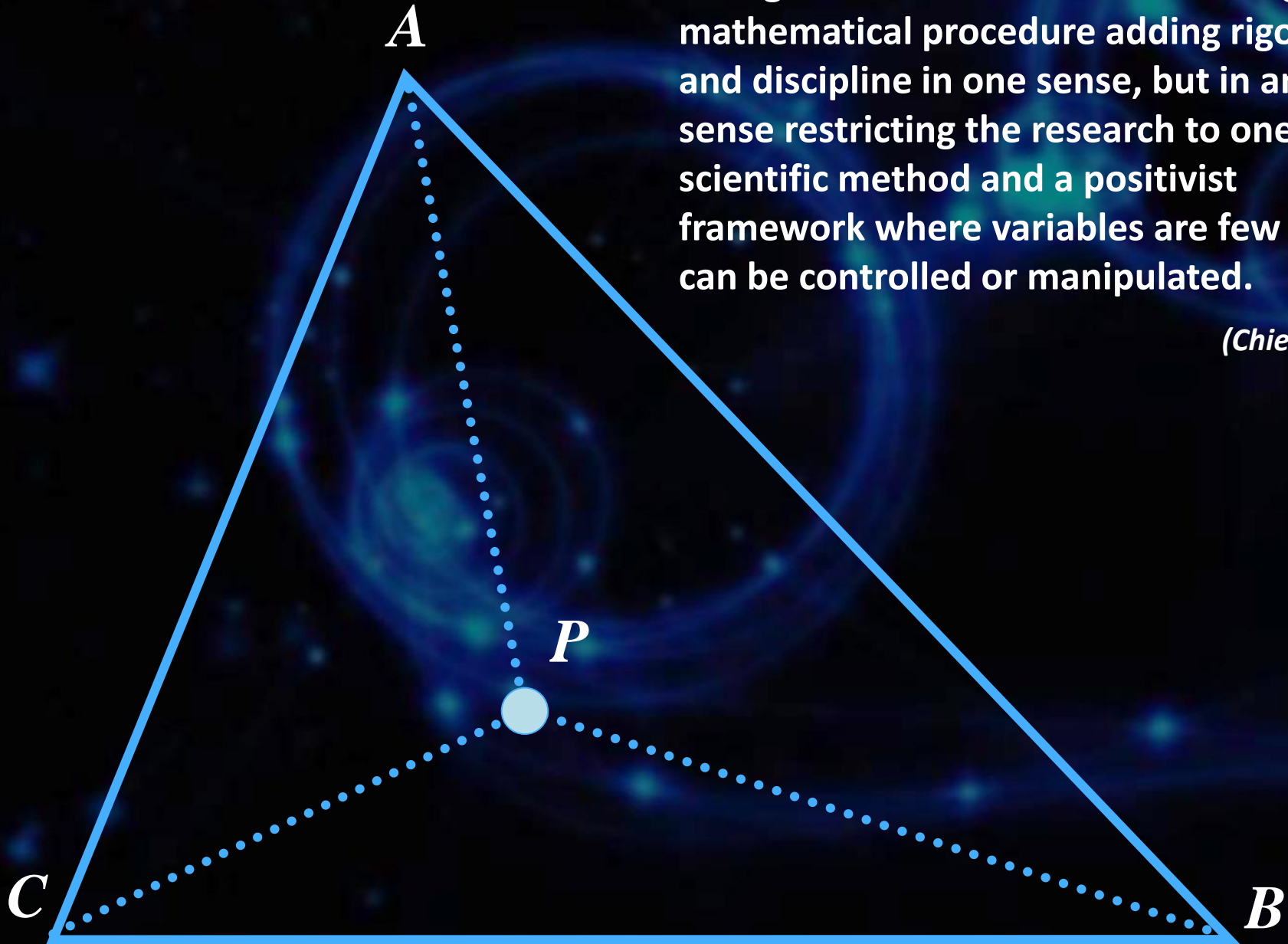
Teacher/Researcher as Participant
"The student MIGHT be able to...."

From Triangulation to Crystallisation

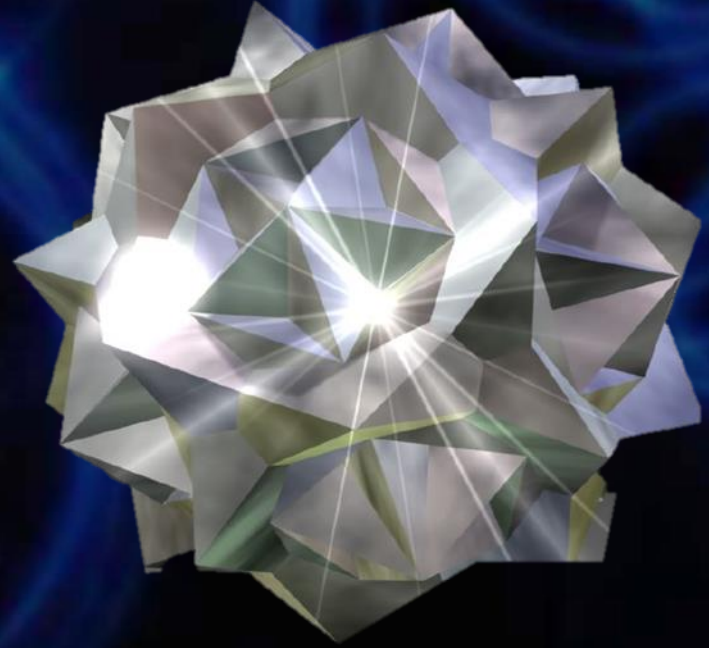


Triangulation carries with it the image of a mathematical procedure adding rigour and discipline in one sense, but in another sense restricting the research to one of scientific method and a positivist framework where variables are few and can be controlled or manipulated.

(Chien, 2004)



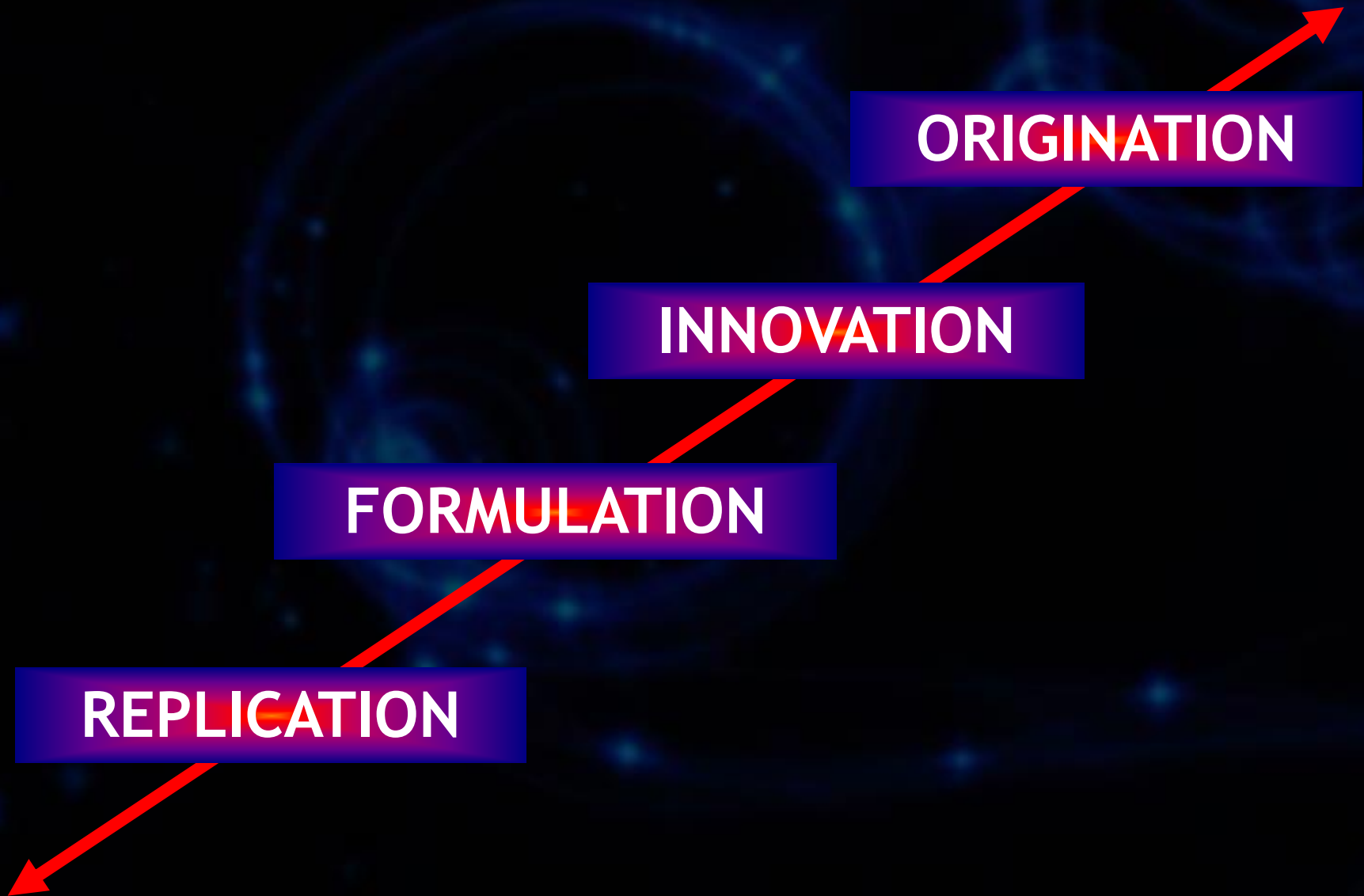
From Triangulation to Crystallisation



“The central image for “validity” ...is not the triangle - a rigid, fixed, two-dimensional object. Rather, the central imaginary is the crystal, which combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach.”

(Richardson, 2000, p. 934)

THE CREATIVE CONTINUUM



Far from
Certainty

Edge of Chaos

CHAOS

Order
Conformity,
Standardisation
Compliance
Reliability
Predictability
Replication

Excitement, Passion,
Adventure, Innovation,
Originality, Anxiety,
Disorientation, Risk,
Creativity, Inspiration,
Flow, Play, Fun!

Low.....Complexity.....High

STASIS

Certainty

Agreement

Far from Agreement

TRANSFORMATION

Conceptions of Knowledge

Dualism

Knowledge as 'given'

Knowledge as multiple & equal

Knowledge as provisional

Relativism

Knowledge used to reason among alternatives

Knowledge used for self-actualisation

Conceptions of Learning

Reproduction

Acquiring information

Memorising strategically

Applying knowledge

Seeking meaning

Reflecting and understanding

Seeing things in a different way

Conceptions of Teaching

Teacher centred Content oriented

Imparting information

Transmitting structured knowledge

Directing active learning

Facilitating understanding

Encouraging conceptual change

Student centred Learning oriented

Some challenges

- Dealing with complexity
- Designing learning, teaching, assessment that is 'fit for creative purpose'
- Challenging the ubiquity of Learning Outcomes
- Dealing with professional judgement and subjectivity.
- Dealing with 'engrooved practices'.
- Mind your Language!

Complexity

Small changes can have big impacts

Similar conditions produce very dissimilar outcomes

If it works once, no guarantee it will work again

Regularity & conformity > > > irregularity & diversity

Effect not continuous straightforward function of cause

Learning via interaction with complex environments

Outcomes unpredictable, long-term predictions impossible

- Learning is complex, multidimensional
- Cannot be captured effectively and comprehensively by any single instrument or analytical procedure
- The more assessment involves qualitative information, the more subjectivity is involved.
- **HOWEVER...**Stricter assessment criteria + more structured and proscribed content = **improved reliability**
- **BUT...**above would **“obliterate the essence of qualitative assessment in terms of flexibility, personal orientation and authenticity”**.

Design challenges/tensions

Teacher Centred < > Student Centred

Content Oriented < > Learning Oriented

Replication < > Originality

Theory < > Practice

Education < > Training

Art < > Craft

Process < > Product

Effort < > Achievement

Assessment for Learning < > Assessment for Audit

Design: some principles

Good design...

- is innovative
- is focused on enhancing users' experience
- is aesthetic
- is logical - its form follows its function
- is unobtrusive
- is honest
- is enduring
- is sustainable
- is consistent right down to the details
- is minimal design

Challenging Learning Outcomes

What might be the arguments against?

Arguments against Learning Outcomes

- Against creativity, risk, experimentation
- Encouraging consumerist attitudes
- LOs are inherently 'fuzzy', open to interpretation
- Antithetical to student-centred L&T

“There is a growing realisation that, first, it is very difficult for anyone to understand what learning outcomes and criteria actually mean, or for two people to understand the same thing – including teachers and markers.”

(Gibbs, 2014).

“To some extent the whole notion of pre-defined learning outcomes becomes spurious. If this is true, then the best that learning outcomes can hope for is that they are loose notions of what it is intended a student might learn.”

(Scott, 2011).

“LOs are justified as proof of a new concern with the quality of teaching and student learning. In reality, they are part of the drift in higher education towards skill-programming and away from cultivation of cognitive freedom and love of thinking.”

(Noonan, 2016)

Arguments against Learning Outcomes

Teacher: *How many diamonds have you got?*

Student: *I don't have any diamonds*

Teacher: *Then you fail!*

Student: *But you didn't ask me about my jade and rubies.*

Conclusion: *Learners amass treasure not just diamonds.*

(Biggs J. 1996 p352)

Arguments against Learning Outcomes

As long as....

- the expected learning outcomes are carefully set and defined;
- assessment tasks are designed to enable the student to meet those learning outcomes;
- assessment and grading are carried out fairly and reliably against carefully designed criteria

then the system is deemed to work!

“Essentially it is a closed system which, like any closed system, will tend to encourage and enforce replication and formulation rather than innovation and originality.”

After the period of learning the student will be able to: bang a nail into a plank of wood without splitting the wood.

What type of wood? What type of nail?

After the period of learning the student will be able to: bang the appropriate nail into a plank from a range of commonly used timbers without splitting the wood.

What about accuracy and safety?

After the period of learning the student will be able to: bang the appropriate nail, accurately and safely, into a plank from a range of commonly used timbers without splitting the wood.

Are we cabinet making or building boats? What does 'commonly used timbers' mean?

Professional judgement and subjectivity

“The most valid assessment of the creativity of an idea or creation in any field is the collective judgment of recognized experts in that field.” (Baer & McKool 2009)



Consensual Assessment Technique (CAT)



What we're actually doing....

Assessment: some guiding principles/ideas (1)

Assessment most effective when:

- it aligns with mission and values;
- it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time;
- it deepens learning and helps to establish a culture of shared purpose and continuous improvement;

Assessment: some guiding principles/ideas (2)

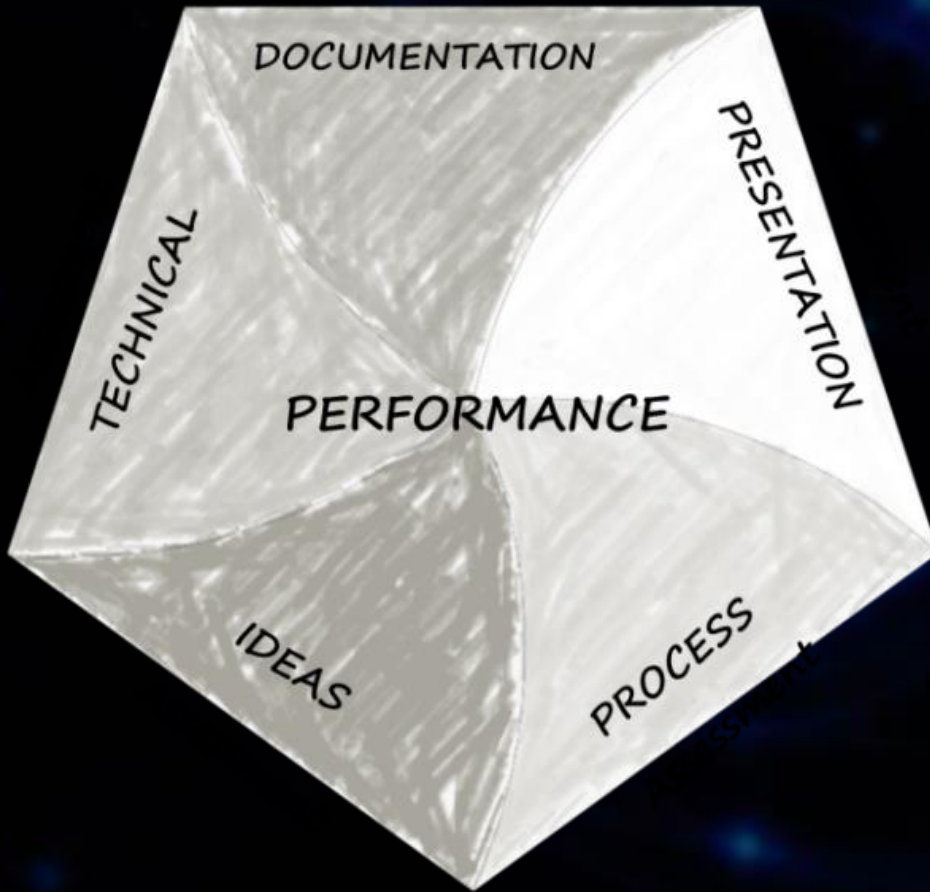
Assessment most effective when:

- it is an integrated and balanced part of the learning and teaching environment, not a 'bolt-on';
- it is undertaken in an environment that is receptive, supportive, and enabling, i.e. it 'works' - for the teaching staff, for the institution and, above all, for the students;
- the assessment burden is minimised – for students and staff (*'as little as possible but as much as necessary'*)

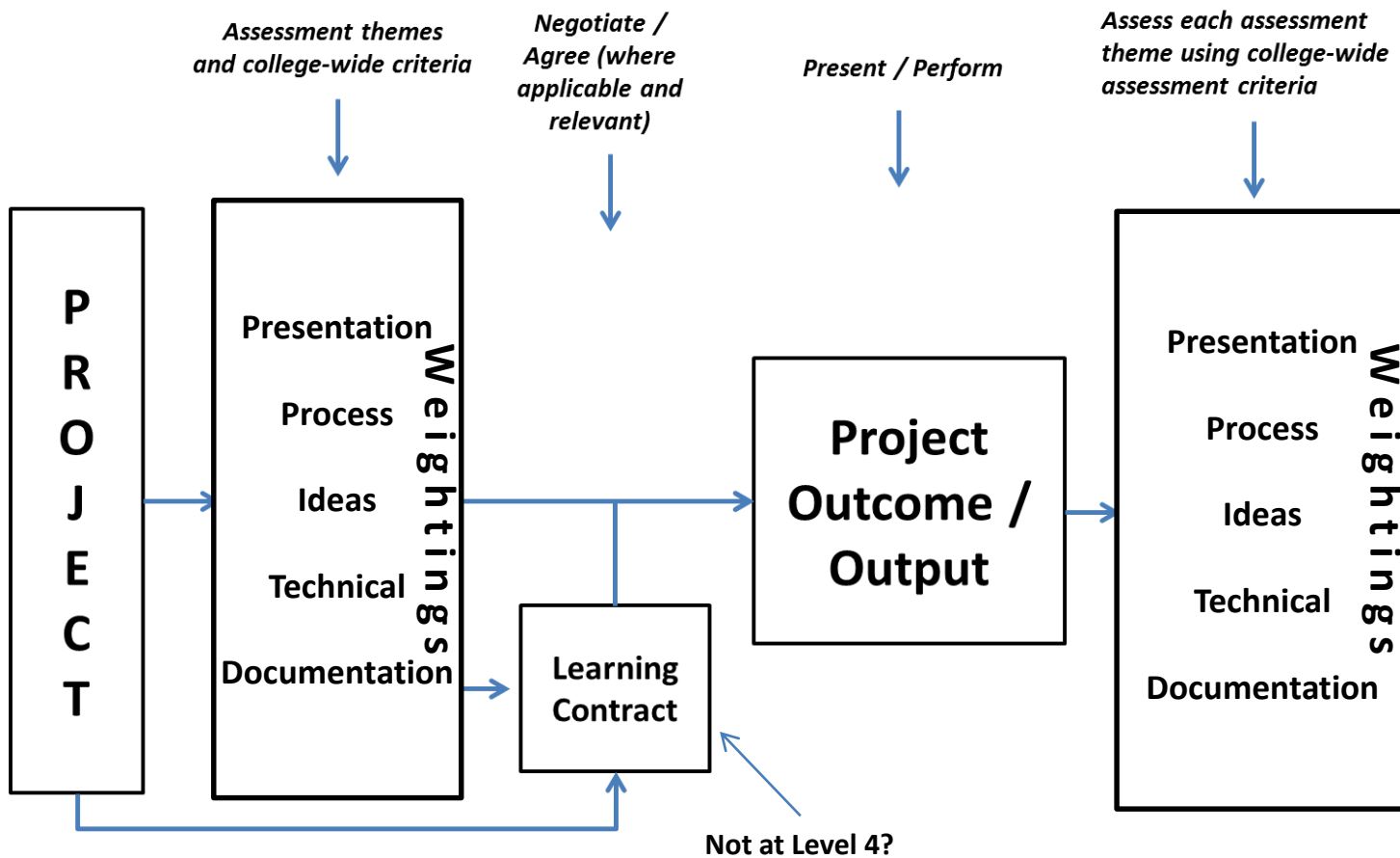
Assessment: some guiding principles/ideas (3)

- that students perceive assessment to be coherent, consistent, fair, valid and equitable between and across programmes and modules.
- the form, content and implementation of the assessment process should be reflect disciplinary discourses and practices;
- the uncertainties and anxieties associated with creative practice can be mitigated (though not removed entirely)

Assessment: Five fields or lenses



*the notion of
performance
(as an artist, learner,
creator, maker, thinker,
researcher, etc.) is at the
core.*



Replacing Learning Outcomes

- **Clarity of expectation, rather than a focus on outcomes is the key.**
- **Students respond to clear and high expectations, and that standards are best embodied in exemplars.**

“Expect more and you will get more. High expectations are important for everyone - for the poorly prepared, for those unwilling to exert themselves, and for the bright and well motivated. Expecting students to perform well becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy when teachers and institutions hold high expectations of themselves and make extra efforts.” (Chickering and Gamson, 1987)

Key assessment question.....

To what extent does the work demonstrate/achieve/fulfil/...etc ?

Non-existent

Negligible

Minimal

Poor

To some extent

Weak

Unsatisfactory

Adequate

Passable, but only just

Competent, but no more

Good

To a large extent

Very good

Excellent

Outstanding

Wonderful

Exceptional

ASSESSMENT SHEET (v5) - DRAFT

Student name..... Module.....

Assignment title..... Date.....

A1	Excellent in ALL respects "Exceptional"	B	Good / Very Good / "To a large extent"	E	Marginal fail / "Not quite adequate"	F3	Very Poor / "Non-existent"
A2	Excellent in ALMOST ALL respects) "Outstanding but not exceptional"	C	Satisfactory / "Competent"	F1	Weak / "To some extent", Evidence of some but insufficient effort/ achievement		
A3	Excellent in MOST respects	D	Threshold Pass / "Just adequate"	F2	Poor / "To a minimal extent", "Minimal effort/achievement"		

Student name..... Module.....

Assignment title..... Date.....

A1	Excellent in ALL respects "Exceptional"	B	Good / Very Good / "To a large extent"	E	Marginal fail / "Not quite adequate"	F3	Very Poor / "Non-existent"
A2	Excellent in ALMOST ALL respects) "Outstanding but not exceptional"	C	Satisfactory / "Competent"	F1	Weak / "To some extent", Evidence of some but insufficient effort/ achievement		
A3	Excellent in MOST respects	D	Threshold Pass / "Just adequate"	F2	Poor / "To a minimal extent", "Minimal effort/achievement"		

To what extent....		A1	A2	A3	B	C	D	E	F1	F2	F3
PRESENTATION	Is the work is structured/ designed/ presented/ performed throughout in a manner which is entirely suited to the subject-matter, exhibits high levels of creative imagination and originality in artistic choices, and allows for a powerful engagement with the relevant audience?										
PROCESS	Is there compelling evidence of a consistently high level of engagement with and commitment to the project / assignment - over the timescale of the project/assignment - in terms of research, time management and practical application?										
IDEA	Does the work demonstrate a clear ability to communicate ideas of significance through exhibition/presentation/ performance/writing?										
TECHNICAL	Have the technical aspects of the work - within the student's control - been skilfully dealt with, there is a complete and satisfying fusion of the technical and the creative, and there are no technical problems that prevent the concept of the work being realised?										
DOCUMENTATION	Is there a compelling and detailed account (e.g. journal/ sketch books/ recording of data/ reflection /analysis) of a dynamic, creative and productive process of research, exploration and technical experimentation which has evolved over a period of time?										

PRESENTATION	PROCESS	IDEAS	TECHNICAL	DOCUMENTATION
To what extent ...	To what extent ...	To what extent...	To what extent...	To what extent...
The work is structured/ designed/ presented/ performed throughout in a manner which is entirely suited to the subject-matter and allows for a powerful engagement with the relevant audience.	There is compelling evidence of the student's high level of engagement with and commitment to the project/assignment - over the timescale of the project/assignment - in terms of research, time management and practical application.	A clear ability to communicate ideas of significance through exhibition/presentation/ performance/writing.	All technical aspects of the work within the student's control have been skilfully dealt with, and there are no technical problems that prevent the concept of the work being realised.	There is a compelling and detailed account (journal/ sketch books/recording of data/reflection/analysis, etc) of a dynamic, creative and productive process of research, exploration and technical experimentation which has evolved over a period of time.
The student has exhibited high levels of creative imagination and originality in artistic choices demonstrated	In a group-based or collaborative context, the student's work is judged to be integral to the project's success by virtue of its intellectual insight, sustained commitment, and disciplined organisation.	The intellectual/creative ideas to be found in the work or upon which the work is based, constitute a valid, highly individual perspective on the issues being addressed.	There is a complete and satisfying fusion of the technical and the creative.	
The form of presentation/ construction/execution of the work entirely appropriate, and offers few, if any, grounds for criticism.	The ability to detect and solve major problems associated with the project, to collaborate with others for the benefit of the whole group, and to exhibit/present/perform the project in a highly favourable light using high levels of personal and practical skills.	The brief the student has been given, or has developed and agreed, has been followed in every respect and subjected to an insightful and critical appraisal where appropriate.	Where a technical issue is of particular importance, the ability that is evident is of an extremely high standard.	
Ensured that all matters pertaining to the exhibition/presentation / performance which should have been considered have been addressed.		The work reveals a deep and wide-ranging awareness of current practices/trends/ debates in regard to the arts and culture, and contributes a fresh approach to the task.	The work has been organised and managed efficiently and within all budgetary and time constraints.	
The presentation skills required are extremely good and offer few, if any, grounds for criticism		There is evidence of relevant and extensive research on current practice.		

GRADES

PASS

A1 =Exceptional (excellent in ALL respects), A2 =Outstanding (excellent in ALMOST ALL respects)

PASS

A3=Excellent (excellent in MOST respects), B=Very Good/Good,

PASS

C=Competent/Satisfactory, D=Just adequate (threshold pass)

FAIL

E=Marginal Fail, F1=Weak (resit), F2= Poor (resit), F3=Very Poor/Non-existent (resit)

ENTER ENTER
 WEIGHTINGS GRADES HERE
 HERE

Use "0" (zero) USE "-" (dash)
 if N/A if N/A

FIELD	WEIGHTING %	GRADE	UNWEIGHTED MARK	WEIGHTED MARK	FAIL FLAG
Presentation	30	A1	95	28.5	
Process	30	A3	75	22.5	
Idea	20	B	65	13	
Technical	10	C	55	5.5	
Documentation	10	D	45	4.5	
Total weighting must = 100%		WEIGHTING OK			
TOTAL PERFORMANCE MARK				74.00	
TOTAL PERFORMANCE GRADE				A-	
GRADE POINT AVERAGE				4.00	

TUTOR COMMENT/FEEDBACK

TUTOR(S) SIGNATURE _____



Paul Kleiman

www.cielassociates.co.uk



Middlesex
University
London

Therefore - Find and Replace

- **Validity** with **Credibility, Coherence, Consistency, Trustworthiness, Authenticity**
- **Certainty** with **Relativity**
- **Generalised Explanation** with **Local Understanding**
- **Is it true?** with **Does it work?**
- **Single Point Perspective** with **Multiple Perspective**
- **The Triangle** with the **Crystal**

Arguments against LOs

- **militate against intellectual experimentation and discovery**
- **creativity cannot be pre-determined**
- **they promise certainty when learning might be unpredictable**
- **foster climate that inhibits capacity to deal with uncertainty**

Arguments against LOs

- **the “rigidification of pedagogy”**
(Richard Hil (2012) Whackademia)
- **neither increasing specificity nor generalisation work**
(the nail into plank example)
- **devalue the art of teaching**
- **a managerial / disciplinary instrument masquerading as a pedagogic one**

The complex and multidimensional nature of phenomena cannot be captured effectively and comprehensively by any single instrument or analytical procedure.

However...
the use of multiple methods reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question.

From De Vries et al 2012

