Academic Policy Statement APS29: Anonymous Marking Assessment Policy

1. What is anonymous marking?

1.1 Anonymous marking is a system whereby the identity of the student (e.g., student name, student number or any other personal identification information), is not made known to the academic at the time of marking. The aim is to provide assurance that assessment processes operate on the principles of fairness, consistency and impartiality.

1.2 This policy is part of our commitment to provide such assurance to our students, as reflected in the Partnership Agreement priorities with Middlesex Students' Union, agreed in 2019 in response to student feedback.

2. Requirements for anonymous marking

2.1 We operate a system of anonymous marking for examination scripts and for assessments that contribute to students' final mark for a module (i.e., summative assessments) where possible, practical and appropriate. This means the marker will be unaware of students' identity at the time of marking summative assessments, wherever this is possible, in terms of teaching and assessment approaches and practicality.

2.2 We recognise there are some forms of assessment where anonymity is not practical, possible or appropriate and intermediary markers are not available. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

2.2.1 Viva (e.g., face-to-face or audio),

2.2.2 Presentations, posters, oral hearings,

2.2.3 Moots (mock court assessments),

2.2.4 Performance activities/pieces,

2.2.5 Practice-based assessments and assessment of observable behaviours e.g., SOBs (Student Observable Behaviours)

2.2.6 Placement/work-based assessments, field work,

2.2.7 Group work (where members of the group are identified or pre-requisite information is known to the staff),

2.2.8 Clinical exams such as OSCEs (Objective Structured Clinical Exam), OSPEs (Objective Structured Practical Exam) etc.

2.2.9 Projects, dissertations, reports, case studies, portfolios, reflective practice assignments, products (i.e., where the supervisor/marker may recognise the author of the work by the unique title and/or focus of the work or context of the work).

2.2.10 Assessment scenarios where the marker gains pre-requisite/foreknowledge of students' assessed work e.g., through personalised formative feedback processes, or organising the assessment.

2.3 There may be circumstances when anonymous marking is part of the assessment process, but anonymity is limited or cannot be guaranteed due to specific circumstances. Such assessment scenarios may include, but are not limited to, the following:

2.3.1 Small cohorts,

2.3.2 Reasonable adjustments made to assessments to support students' needs,

2.3.3 Assessment deadline extensions, deferrals and/or reassessment opportunities,

2.3.4 Academic integrity, misconduct and appeal cases.

2.4 Academic staff are encouraged to work with the Centre for Academic Practice Enhancement (CAPE) to support anonymous marking of summative assessments where appropriate, practical or possible.

2.5 Where anonymous marking is not appropriate, practical or possible, academic staff continue to rely on reference to clear and transparent assessment criteria, moderation sampling processes or second marking. Our engagement with external examiners also aims to assure our assessment processes are appropriately designed and applied and carried out in a manner that is fair and equitable to all students.

2.6 We believe it is important to provide our students with the support and guidance needed to help them develop and prepare for final summative assessments. Therefore, anonymous marking is not currently required as part of learning activities and assessments that do not contribute to students' final grades (i.e., formative assessments). This is because formative assessments are supported with informal, and often personalised, feedback and may include discussions with staff to develop students' understanding.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Anonymous marking for all written invigilated examinations is standard procedure.

3.2 Academic staff (e.g., Module Leaders, Programme Leaders and Directors of Programmes) are responsible for arranging electronic submission of summative assessed work for each module on Turnitin or establishing alternative processes for anonymous marking if summative assessments are not submitted online and not exempt from anonymous marking.

3.3 Academic staff (e.g., Module Leaders, Programme Leaders and Directors of Programmes) are responsible for providing their students with information explaining the process for summative assessment submission for anonymous marking (e.g., in relevant handbooks, on the VLE MyLearning area for the programme and module, and in the description field of each Turnitin assignment etc).

3.4 Exemptions to anonymous marking of summative assessments (in addition to those listed in 2.2) must be agreed at the point of programme validation/review events and/or by approval for module changes at Faculty/School Committees.

3.5 Academic staff (e.g., Module Leaders, Programme Leaders and Directors of Programmes) are responsible for providing their students with information on any summative assessments that are exempt from anonymous marking or where there may be limits to anonymity in the marking process (e.g., in relevant handbooks, on the VLE MyLearning area for the programme and module, and in the description field of each Turnitin assignment etc).

3.6 Academic staff are expected to raise student awareness of the processes undertaken in all aspects related to assessment (e.g., including validation and review processes, external examining oversight, moderating and second marking) that underpin our approach to providing fair assessment experiences. Additionally, students' responsibilities and guidance on anonymous marking are available on My Learning Student Essentials.

3.7 Anonymity should remain in place until the marking process is complete. Marks must not be amended once a student's identity has been revealed. If changes are required, the reason must be minuted at the relevant assessment board.

Revision history	*The policy was considered and approved by Learning and Teaching Committee and endorsed by Academic Board on 28 April 2020. This policy is due for review by July 2025.*
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