

Anonymous Marking Policy

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Middlesex University

Anonymous Marking Policy

Introduction

1. Anonymous marking is a system where the identity of the student (student name, student number or other personal identification) is not disclosed to the marker at the time of grading and feedback.
2. The aim of anonymous marking is to heighten assurance that assessment processes operate on the principles of fairness, consistency, and impartiality. Anonymous marking helps protect against explicit or implicit bias in relation to assessing the quality of our students' work. The policy forms part of Middlesex University's commitment to fair and inclusive assessment design and practice.

Scope

3. This policy applies to all summatively assessed units, modules and programmes of study at Middlesex University, its international campuses, and at academic partner institutions.

Principles of Anonymous Marking

4. Anonymous marking will be applied to all summative assessments wherever possible, practical and appropriate
5. Formative assessments, designed to develop and enhance a students' learning as they work towards their summative assessments, **will not normally require anonymous marking**. Formative assessments are often supported by informal, personalised and discursive feedback, and may include dialogue and discussions of draft work and assessment process. In these cases, anonymous marking would be counter-productive to learning.
6. In cases where there is a close connection between formative and summative assessment briefs and stages, anonymous marking may be considered at the formative stage to protect against recognition of student identity at the summative stage. Discretion to use anonymous marking for formative assessment lies with the module leader.
7. Module leaders will be responsible, with relevant support, for enabling the electronic submission of summative work to enable its anonymous marking. In cases where electronic submission is not appropriate or possible, module leaders will establish alternative processes for the submission and anonymous marking of summative assessments, describing these processes clearly in guidance for students.
8. Programme Leaders will be responsible, with relevant support, for providing students with the rationale for, and submission processes required for effective anonymous marking. Programme guidance (e.g. handbooks) will signpost this policy to students. Module Leaders will be responsible for defining exemptions to anonymous marking at module and assessment level.

9. Anonymous marking must be sustained until the assessment process for a piece of work, including internal moderation, is complete, and until the final grade has been agreed for the assessed component.

10. Exemptions to anonymous marking of summative assessments will be agreed as part of programme validation, review or re-approval, or (where relevant) noted as part of module assessment changes. Exemptions to anonymous marking should be explained to students as part of their assessment guidance at module level.

Exemptions to Anonymous marking

11. Middlesex University recognises that anonymous marking of summative assessment is not always possible or appropriate. In relation to the University's practice-based approach to assessment, where a student is often assessed as part of 'live' contexts of showcase, scenario, work-based learning and practical demonstration, student anonymity is not desirable and may not be possible.

12. In relation to reflective or personalised assessments, students may be encouraged to be transparent about background, ethnicity, identity or their specific role in project or group work. These requirements may prevent robustly anonymous marking. In such cases, anonymous marking may be exempted.

13. Exemptions to anonymous marking may include:

- a. Viva voces
- b. In-person presentations, debates, posters, pitches and showcases
- c. Online presentations where the identity of the student is evident
- d. In-person performance
- e. Live practice-based assessments
- f. Assessments of observable behaviours and competencies
- g. Live work-based assessments and field work
- h. In-person group work, and group work where markers can identify student identity in relation to defined roles or contributions to assessed work
- i. Clinical exams such as OSCEs (Objective Structured Clinical Exam) and OSPEs (Objective Structured Practical Exam)
- j. Dissertations, projects and portfolio assignments where the marker has familiarity with the distinct theme, approach or medium of output the student is taking, and therefore can easily connect assessed work to student identity.

14. Assessment moderation should be anonymous where possible: the internal moderator should not be aware of student identity in relation to full or sampled moderation of assessed work.

15. For internal moderation of Dissertations and final year projects (Level 6 and 7), anonymous marking should be explored. However, it is understood that for many practical and learning and teaching reasons, anonymous moderation of these assessments is difficult to implement or guarantee, and therefore reasonable exemptions will be accepted.