

Anonymous Marking Policy

Approved by:	Effective date:	Next review:
	1 September 2021 (only for courses part of the pilot)	March 2022 (for possible wider rollout in September 2022)

Policy Guidance statement

The Policy defines anonymous marking, explains why the University is implementing it whenever possible. It also provides information about instances when assessments are exempt from anonymous marking, when anonymity is lifted. Finally, it sums up how both staff and students play an essential part in implementing the Policy.

Who needs to know about the Regulation / Policy / Procedure / Guidance?

- SMT
- Heads of School and Department
- Teaching Staff
- Staff who directly support Course Teams in Faculties
- PAA Staff
- Students

Purpose of the Policy

The Policy defines anonymous marking and explains why the University is implementing it whenever possible. It also provides information about instances when assessments are exempt from anonymous marking, when anonymity is not possible or can be lifted. Finally, it sums up how both students and staff play an essential part in implementing the Policy.

Contacts

Learning and Teaching Enhancement (LTE) is responsible for:

- Providing advice and assistance
- Guidance and templates
- Accessing training

The team can be contacted by emailing: LTE-ADMIN@canterbury.ac.uk

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This Policy only applies to a selected number of modules and courses in the academic year 2021/22, which are part of a pilot.

1. What is anonymous marking and why does the University use it?

- 1.1. Anonymous marking is a practice which ensures that the identity of students (including those studying at the University's collaborative partners) remains unknown to staff who mark their assessments. The student ID¹ is used in place of the student name at the time of submission of assessments (and reassessments) as well as during the marking and moderation (or double marking) process. The student name is disclosed only during the administrative process for entering marks on the University's student record system, with some exceptions listed below.
- 1.2. Anonymous marking is one of the University's key strategies to "support success for all students", as stated in the University's [Learning and Teaching Strategy](#). The University is proud to have a very diverse student body. Our practices need to reflect our commitment to inclusivity. The University needs to address the gap in black students' attainment compared with white students. Anonymous marking provides some reassurance to students that assessments are conducted fairly and impartially. It also protects markers from accusations of conscious and unconscious bias.
- 1.3. Anonymous marking is one element in a much broader set of inclusive practices put in place to ensure a high-quality learning experience for all students. It does not prevent students from receiving bespoke support as it is still possible for them to discuss their progress (measured in an ipsative manner, i.e. compared with their previous performances) with their tutors once the mark has been released.

¹ Students with a Student ID starting with the first three letters of their surname must remove the three letters in the anonymisation process.

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2. Which assessments does this policy cover?

2.1. The University recognises that it is impossible to anonymise some types of assessment, such as oral presentations, performances, or professional practical work. Additionally, it may not always be in students' interest to have some of their assessments marked anonymously. It is especially the case for a student requiring regular and personalised feedback on work that demonstrates their unique achievement, such as supervised dissertations or creative work.

2.2. However, the University is committed to using anonymous marking as much as possible. Appendix 1 presents a list of all types of assessments used at the University and states, for each type:

- when anonymous marking systematically happens
- when anonymous marking is very likely to happen unless specific pedagogical reasons make it impossible
- when anonymous marking is not pedagogically or technically possible or appropriate.

2.3. Anonymous marking is technically possible for assessments submitted via Turnitin and for on-site and take-home examinations. The University endeavours to carry out regular work to enhance the possibility of anonymous electronic submissions on other platforms.

2.4. When marking is not anonymous, the University has processes in place which provide assurance that marking is done fairly and impartially: each assessment is marked against a set of criteria known to students in advance of submission, and the [Marking Procedures](#) specify the contribution of moderators, double markers and external examiners.

2.5. Anonymous marking does not prevent Special Arrangements (arrangements made for specific students as part of reasonable adjustments made in respect of disclosed disabilities, e. g. allowance for spelling, grammar and punctuation) to be highlighted to markers.

2.6. Feedback on formative work is not provided in an anonymous manner. This formative work has a much narrower scope than the related summative assessment. It aims to develop some, not all, elements of knowledge and skills to be achieved in the summative assessment. It is important that students receive personalised feedback during their developmental stage. It may include a dialogue with tutors, where their progress is discussed concerning their previous work.

2.7. There are two exceptions to the non-anonymised provision of feedback on formative work. The anonymity of formative submissions must be set up:

- when students use a draft electronic submission point simply to obtain and check a similarity report, and their submission is not going to be used to provide feedback

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- when students submit a *final* draft of their work for feedback, the nature of the work being identical to the summative assessment requirements.

2.8. This Policy does not cover assessments set and marked by accrediting bodies external to the University, e.g. End Point Assessments for Higher Degree Apprenticeships.

3. When can the identity of an anonymised submission be established?

3.1. Every effort should be made to resolve errors in the assessment submission process without revealing the student's identity to the marker. However, as per the [Marking Procedures](#), anonymity may need to be lifted by administrators in some instances. An example is when a student has not submitted their work to the correct submission point.

3.2. Anonymity may be lifted when an assessment is referred to the [Academic Misconduct](#) process. Where Academic Misconduct is suspected, the anonymity of the student will be maintained until the formal investigation is initiated by the Course Director. Anonymity will not be disclosed upon suspicion only.

3.3. Anonymous marking may not guarantee anonymity in the following circumstances:

- when the cohort on a module or course is small
- when a student submits their work at a different time from the rest of their cohort because they have been awarded an extension, have a deferral or reassessment, or have a re-presentation as a result of an Academic Misconduct investigation.
- when reasonable adjustments mean that a student is the only person in the cohort to submit their assessment in a particular format or at a specific time.

3.4. Student names are not obscured during the transfer of marks onto the student record system. Anonymity is not used for Boards of Examiners, Extenuating Circumstances, Complaints, Appeals, Academic Misconduct cases and other panels where knowing students' identity supports the effective management of processes.

3.5. If a student thinks that an assessment in their module should be marked anonymously, but the Module Handbook states that it will not, they should, at the beginning of each semester/trimester, raise the matter with the student representatives and the module leader. They can seek support from the Students' Union.

4. How do we all support the anonymous marking process?

4.1. To support the effectiveness of the anonymous marking process, all stakeholders must proactively implement this Policy and other guidance provided.

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- 4.2. Students should anonymise their work following guidance provided by their module or course, and use only their student ID in their work. They should refrain from revealing their name in the body of the assessments which are covered by this Policy.
- 4.3. For on-site examinations (organised centrally or locally), the University (or its collaborative partners for their own campuses) requires students to use their student ID on their scripts.
- 4.4. For locally organised on-site examinations, the module or course team's responsibility is to ensure that the anonymisation process is guaranteed.
- 4.5. Course teams are responsible for arranging anonymous electronic submissions points for each assessment (and reassessment) where anonymous marking is used.
- 4.6. Course teams provide information to their students on the anonymous marking process for specific assessments, in Module Handbooks and assessment briefs, on the VLE and other suitable means. It includes a statement of which assessments are marked anonymously and those exempt from anonymous marking, in alignment with the list in Appendix 1.
- 4.7. Assessments marked anonymously, and associated feedback, should be returned in the same timely manner as other assessments, as determined in the [Timely Feedback Policy](#) and the [Marking Procedures](#).

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Appendix 1: anonymous marking by type of assessment

Assessment types which state “Yes” or “Likely” for anonymous marking usage must either use Turnitin or be organised on-site or through a computer-based system that allows anonymous marking. Consult with Learning and Teaching Enhancement (LTE) on systems available.

Anonymous marking	Activity Type	Activity Descriptor
Yes	Written Exam	Timed examination organised centrally by the University, which students complete on-site.
Yes	Multiple Choice Exam	Timed multiple-choice examination organised centrally by the University, which students complete on-site.
Yes	Open-Book Exam	Timed examination organised centrally by the University, which students complete on-site, and for which they can bring in a book or other material to the exam room, or for whose question is released in advance of the day of the exam
Yes	Computer-Based Exam ²	Exam organised via specific Computer-Based Testing services
Yes	Written Local Exam	Sometimes referred to as written Time-Constrained Assessment (TCA), organised locally by the course
Yes	Open-Book Local Exam	Sometimes referred to as open-book Time-Constrained Assessment (TCA), organised locally by the course
Yes	Multiple Choice Local Exam	Sometimes referred to as multiple-choice Time-Constrained Assessment (TCA), organised locally by the course
Yes	Computer-Based Local Exam ³	Sometimes referred to as computer-based Time-Constrained Assessment (TCA), organised locally by the course
Yes	Take-Home Exam	Timed examination organised centrally by the University, which students complete online in their chosen environment
Likely	Group Coursework	e.g. Group poster, group fieldwork report
Yes	Essay	e.g. Medieval history essay
Likely	Reflective Writing	e.g. Reflective diary, reflective Journal
Likely	Digital Assignment	e.g. Blog, wiki, PowerPoint/Sway slides, podcast

² For computer-based exams on Blackboard, anonymity is reached only by virtue of marking being automatically done by Blackboard. Anonymity is therefore full for closed questions only. If open questions are included, markers have to manually intervene and will see students’ names when marking. There is a pseudo-anonymity option but it is entirely trust-based and relies on each marker knowing to initiate it.

³ See footnote above

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Likely	Individual Poster	e.g. Leaflet, booklet
Yes	Case Study	
Yes	Review / Critical Review	e.g. literature review, critical analysis, critical commentary
Likely	Written Coursework	Written work other than essay, report, creative writing assessment, or others mentioned in this table
No	Preparatory Assessment	Written brief, research proposal, plan
Likely	Written Report	Business report, legal report
Likely	Fieldwork Report	
Likely	Laboratory Report	
Likely	Work Placement Report	Assessment of Practice Tool (APT), work-based learning report
Likely	Clinical Report	
No	Individual Study or Dissertation	Dissertation, Research study, systematic literature review, thesis
Likely	Portfolio	Design portfolio, production portfolio, teaching portfolio
No	Physical Artefact	Sculpture, painting, new product
Likely	Digital Artefact	Website, social media campaign, Computer software
No	Exhibition	Artistic or other presentation of creations
No	Group Practical	Group performance, Group Presentation
No	Individual Performance	Artistical performance in music, dance, drama, etc.
No	Clinical Skills	Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation (OSCE), skill demonstration, clinical role play/simulation
No	Technical Skills / Practical Skills	Laboratory Skills, Media/Arts Skills, Computer-Aided Design (CAD), simulation
No	Individual Presentation	Presentation done in class or recorded and shared
Likely	Aural Assessment	Listening exercise organised locally
No	Oral Assessment	Debate, discussion, interview, language oral
No	Viva Voce	A conversation between assessor/s and student on a prepared topic, thesis, etc.
Likely	Set Exercises	Data interpretation/analysis, problem-solving

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Department Owner	Learning and Teaching Enhancement

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Document Information	Description of Document Information
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