

**OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES FOR**

**ANONYMOUS MARKING**

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# Introduction

## All written examination scripts are to be marked anonymously.

## Where anonymous marking is extended to course work, the arrangements are to be included in the Board of Examiners’ marking policy and to be communicated to candidates through the programme handbook.

## Anonymity ends at the point at which the marking procedure is complete, and the marks are handed over to the person who transfers the marks to the mark sheet by name rather than examination number.

## The examination number for each candidate is generated within QL, but it is not visible to users of QL, including members of Planning and Academic Administration. The examination number is different from the registration identity number.

# Responsibilities of Planning and Academic Administration

## An examination number is allocated to each student where the Board of Examiners determines that course work and/or examined work is to be marked in whole or in part anonymously.

## Planning and Academic Administration will make appropriate provision to ensure that examination numbers are made available to the School Administrator nominated by the Head of School concerned. These examination numbers are provided in strict confidence.

## Where anonymous marking is used for examination scripts only, Planning and Academic Administration will make the examination numbers available to the School Administrator after the date that registration for the course or module has passed.

# Responsibilities of School Staff

## It is the responsibility of the School to inform Planning and Academic Administration, in writing, at least two months before the date of submission for the first assessment for the courses that are involved to ensure that examination numbers are available in good time.

## Where anonymous marking is used for examination scripts only, the examination numbers will be made available to the School Administrator after the date that registration for the course or module has passed. The information should be held securely within the School until such time that it is required for marking.

## The nominated School Administrator is required to acknowledge receipt of examination numbers, in writing.

## Schools may format the examination number information for their own purposes.

## The Head of School is to determine the release of the information, but this is to be done in such a way that would ensure that the number remains confidential and not ordinarily available to examiners.

## To maintain security, the examination numbers must not be used by Schools to generate material that would identify candidates, particularly to examiners. Schools should use the registration identity number for general administrative purposes.

## After collection of examination scripts, staff are to ensure that the scripts in the batch are mixed. This is to ensure that the order of the scripts is distorted to prevent identification based upon alphabetical ordering, thus helping to protect the anonymity of candidates.

## The markers are to complete the marking anonymously. This means that any agreement on the final mark is to be reached before the anonymous marking is considered complete. If an additional marker is appointed to resolve a disagreement, this process is to be completed anonymously. The markers are to sign the sheet that identifies candidates by their examination number to confirm the marks awarded.

## Once the markers have completed the marking, the batch of scripts, together with the mark list identifying the candidate by examination number is handed over to another person (e.g. the School Administrator or an academic colleague) who transfers the marks to the mark sheet by name, and not by examination number. Anonymity ends at this point.

## Staff in Schools may match the names of candidates to the University examination number only after the marking process has been completed.

## The matching sheets are made available only to the School Administrator nominated by Head of School concerned, who is expected to store the matching lists securely until the marking process is complete. After the marking process has been completed, the sheets may be released to the member of staff responsible for processing the marks.

## Although not a requirement, two or more Schools in the same faculty may choose to undertake reciprocal arrangements to guard against breaching anonymity until the finalised list is available. Under these arrangements, the final list should be presented to either the Programme Director or the Head of School in the first instance. Such a procedure may be used if there is particular concern to institute administrative procedures to ensure anonymity.

## It is important that great care is taken in transferring marks from scripts to mark lists using candidates’ examination numbers. It is essential to avoid errors, especially since the work has to take place in a short time scale.

# Responsibilities of the Board of Examiners

## A Board of Examiners will decline to accept a script if the candidate, on any part of the script, includes a name that enables the examiners to identify the candidate. The candidate will be required to sit at a later date.

## It is for the Board of Examiners to determine whether anonymous marking is to be extended to coursework and, if so, to specify which categories of coursework. Where anonymous marking is extended to course work, the arrangements are to be included in the Board’s marking policy and to be communicated to candidates through the programme handbook.

# Responsibilities of Schools for the Anonymous Marking of Coursework

## A School should produce an ‘Examined Coursework Cover Sheet’ to enable candidates to identify themselves by examination number. It is important that candidates do not write their name on any of the pages they attach to the cover sheet (so that proper anonymity is preserved), but that they do write their examination number on each sheet, or indicate it as a footer, (in case pages should become detached from the cover sheet for any reason). This instruction needs to be included in information given to candidates, including the cover sheet. Where part of the provision entails consideration for spelling, grammar and syntax, candidates with disabilities submit a cover sheet provided for this purpose. Where course work is marked anonymously, the cover sheet should contain only the candidate’s examination number.

## Schools should include a statement in the programme handbook of the Board’s marking policy for coursework, and should advise students that where a pro forma is provided it should identify the candidate by examination number only.

# Responsibilities for the Anonymous Marking of Coursework

## Where the programme has coursework assessed anonymously, the examination numbers may be released by Planning and Academic Administration once candidates are registered on the programme.