



CITY OF LONDON COLLEGE

CHANGING FUTRES - ASPIRING SUCCESS

Anonymous Marking Policy

2026

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1. Introduction - Fairness, transparency and academic integrity are fundamental principles underpinning the assessment of students in higher education. Assessment processes must be designed and implemented in ways that ensure the reliability of academic judgement, the credibility of awards, and the confidence of students, staff and external stakeholders. Anonymous marking is widely recognised across the UK higher education sector as a key mechanism for protecting academic impartiality and maintaining trust in assessment processes.

Anonymous marking refers to the process by which student work is assessed without markers having access to identifying information about the student. By removing identifying information during the marking stage, institutions aim to eliminate conscious or unconscious bias and ensure that assessment decisions are based solely on the academic merit of the work submitted. Within the regulatory framework of the UK higher education system, anonymous marking supports institutional compliance with expectations relating to academic quality, fairness, equality of opportunity, and transparency. The practice aligns with sector expectations articulated in the UK Quality Code and is commonly adopted by higher education providers to reinforce fairness and objectivity in the assessment process. Anonymous marking is frequently implemented to reduce the risk or perception of bias and to promote confidence in assessment outcomes among students and staff.

This policy establishes the College's approach to anonymous marking, ensuring alignment with the assessment principles and Student Regulations Framework (SRF) used by Plymouth Marjon University (PMU). The policy also supports compliance with the regulatory requirements of the Office for Students (OfS), the expectations of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), and the procedural frameworks of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

The policy is designed to ensure that:

- assessment processes are fair, transparent and equitable;
- academic judgement is independent and evidence-based;
- academic standards are protected and comparable across programmes;
- regulatory requirements relating to quality, standards and student protection are satisfied.

In accordance with the PMU Student Regulations Framework, anonymous marking forms part of the University's assessment practices. The identity of students should normally be unknown to markers for summative assessments at Level 5 and above wherever possible, and examination scripts are expected to be marked anonymously unless a programme has an approved exemption recorded in its programme specification. The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Ensure fairness, impartiality and consistency in the marking of student assessments.
2. Protect the integrity and credibility of academic standards and awards.
3. Minimise bias or the perception of bias in assessment decisions.
4. Align institutional assessment practices with regulatory expectations.
5. Provide clear guidance on when and how anonymous marking must be applied.
6. Ensure students and staff understand the circumstances in which anonymity may not be possible.

This policy applies to:

- All undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes.
- All summative assessments including examinations, coursework, dissertations, projects and portfolios.
- All academic staff, associate lecturers and markers involved in assessment.
- External examiners engaged in assessment oversight.
- Collaborative partners delivering programmes leading to the University's awards.

The policy applies to all assessments contributing to module marks, progression decisions or award classifications and supports compliance with the regulatory framework of the Office for Students.

Condition B1: Quality and Academic Experience - Anonymous marking contributes to ensuring that assessment practices are designed and delivered in a way that supports a high-quality academic experience and provides confidence that marking decisions are based solely on academic merit.

Condition B2: Resources, Support and Engagement - Effective anonymous marking systems, including secure digital submission and assessment platforms, ensure that assessment processes are administered consistently and transparently.

Condition B3: Student Outcomes - By reducing the risk of bias in assessment, anonymous marking supports fair attainment outcomes and contributes to institutional efforts to monitor and address awarding gaps.

Condition B4: Assessment and Awards - Anonymous marking strengthens the reliability and validity of assessment practices and supports consistent application of marking criteria and grade descriptors.

Condition B5: Sector-Recognised Standards - Robust and impartial marking practices contribute to ensuring that academic awards are credible and comparable across the UK higher education sector.

Condition C1: Consumer Protection - Transparent marking procedures ensure that students are treated fairly and that assessment processes are clearly explained in student-facing documentation.

Condition C2: Student Complaints Scheme - Fair assessment practices reduce disputes and support effective resolution of academic appeals and complaints.

Condition E: Governance and Management - Institutional oversight of marking practices ensures that academic governance structures maintain confidence in academic standards.

Condition F: Information - Students are provided with clear information about assessment methods and marking procedures.

The UK Quality Code requires higher education providers to maintain reliable and valid assessment practices that ensure academic standards are maintained and that students are treated equitably. Anonymous marking contributes to these expectations by supporting fair and consistent assessment decisions, strengthening confidence in academic judgement, protecting objectivity in marking processes and supporting moderation and external examining

The College adopts the following principles:

1. **Fairness and impartiality** - Assessment must be conducted solely on the basis of academic merit.
2. **Transparency** - Students must understand how their work will be assessed and when anonymous marking applies.
3. **Consistency**- Anonymous marking procedures must be applied consistently across programmes where feasible.
4. **Academic integrity** - Assessment processes must protect the integrity of academic judgement.
5. **Quality assurance** - Anonymous marking should operate alongside moderation, double marking and external examination, but may not be possible in some forms of assessment, including presentations, performances, practical demonstrations, clinical or professional practice assessments, viva voce examinations and studio-based or portfolio assessments where identity is integral. Where anonymity cannot be maintained, assessment processes must include alternative

safeguards such as second marking, moderation, clear assessment criteria and external examiner oversight. The College ensures that appropriate systems support anonymous marking, including:

- anonymised submission processes within digital learning platforms
- student candidate numbers or identifiers
- administrative separation between identity and submission records
- secure handling of student data

Anonymous marking operates alongside established quality assurance mechanisms including:

- internal moderation
- double marking where appropriate
- external examiner review
- Module Assessment Boards
- Progression and Award Boards

Sampling arrangements for moderation should include work across the range of marks to ensure consistency of marking decisions. Students must comply with submission instructions designed to preserve anonymity, including:

- using candidate numbers rather than names where required
- removing identifying information from submitted work
- following formatting instructions in assessment guidance.

Failure to comply may require resubmission or administrative intervention. Students who believe that marking procedures were not applied fairly may raise concerns through the University's academic appeals or complaints procedures. Where internal procedures are exhausted, students may seek independent review through the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

Responsibility for implementation and oversight lies with the Board of Governors and the Academic Board, with responsibilities for academic standards and approval of assessment regulations. The Quality and Standards Committee monitors assessment practices, moderation and compliance with Programme Leaders ensuring compliance at programme and module level. In addition, External Examiners provide independent scrutiny of marking practices and standards.

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