How to mark anonymously using Blackboard Assignments

This guide describes how to set up and use a Blackboard Assignment if you want to mark anonymously. This method of marking coursework is in line with the requirements of University policy in the Marking and moderation of assessments section in the Examinations and Assessment Handbook http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/exams/staff/exa-handbook.aspx

Anonymous marking

This option allows you to create an assignment submission where no one has access to and cannot determine the identity of the person who submitted the assignment. The identity of the person who submitted the work remains unknown throughout the marking process.

When an assignment is set up it creates a column in the Grade Centre where all of the students’ submissions are stored. All identifying information within Blackboard is removed from the submissions in the Grade Centre to preserve anonymity.

A unique attempt ID is allocated to a student’s submitted work for tracking purposes.

Anonymous marking can be used in conjunction with the delegated marking option if assignments need to be double marked.

Considerations

Let your students know that their assignment will be marked anonymously.
Remind students not to include any identifying information on their submitted work.
Students can see within Blackboard if their assignment has been marked anonymously.
You may want to restrict the number of attempts a student can make to avoid any confusion during the marking process over which attempt to mark.
Submission set up

1. Go to your course and enter the content area where you want to set up the assignment.
2. Create an assignment as normal, by clicking Assessment > Assignment.
3. Provide a title, description, point value and due date as standard.
4. Under Grading click Grading Options.
5. Tick the box beside Enable Anonymous Marking.
6. And choose when you want to Disable Anonymous Marking, you have two options from the drop-down menu:
   a. After all submissions are graded – requires a Due Date to be set for the assignment and once this has passed and the work has been given a mark, anonymity is removed.
   b. On Specific date – Allows you to provide a date when anonymity is automatically removed. You return to edit this date if required.

You can choose to turn anonymous marking on or off until a student submits work to the assignment. Anonymous Grading can be removed at any time by un-ticking the box beside Enable Anonymous Marking. It is not possible to turn it back on.

If anonymous marking is turned off during marking, any work that is subsequently marked will not be tracked as ‘Graded Anonymously’ and the student will be able to see this.
Marking an Assignment anonymously

7. The markers can go to the Grade Centre to find the students’ assignments they need to mark.

8. They can access the work in Needs Marking or Assignments and from the Full Grade Centre.

9.

Opening assignment attempts

From the Full Grade Centre or Assignment

The Full Grade Centre or Assignments provides a spreadsheet like view and a column for the assignment is created when the assignment is set up.

All details in the column are greyed out, while anonymous marking is enabled, so you cannot see who has submitted or if a mark has been entered.

Hover your cursor over the column header for the assignment and click the more options button that appears. Form the drop-down menu that opens select Grade Attempts.

From Needs Marking

Needs Marking allows you to see all of the assignments you need to mark and filter them.

If multiple attempts are allowed, only students’ most recent attempt will be visible in Needs Grading.

Under the User Attempt column the student name is replaced with ‘Anonymous student’ and a unique Attempt ID.

To open and mark an individual assignment, click on the Anonymous Student link under User Attempt.

To begin marking all of the assignments, hover your cursor over the assignment title under the Item Name column. Click on the Grading actions button that appears beside the title of the assignment and click Grade All Users.
Proof of anonymous marking

Evidence that an assignment has been marked anonymously is recorded, so that staff and students can verify this has taken place. Instructors

Staff view

You can see if an attempt was marked anonymously by going to the Grade Centre > Full Grade Centre or Assignments.

Hover your cursor over the column header for the assignment and click the more options button. From the drop-down menu that opens select View Grade History. A list of the students and their submission attempts are shown. ‘Graded Anonymously’ is shown in brackets next to the Attempt.

To see an individual student’s Grade History, hover your cursor over the cell for the assignment in the row for the student. Click the More Options button that appears and click Grade Details from the drop-down menu. Click Grade History on this page.

Student view

Students can see if their assignment is going to be marked anonymously at the point of submission at the Upload Assignment page.
Students can see a ‘Graded Anonymously’ icon when viewing their marks and feedback to confirm that their assignment was marked anonymously.

When looking in My Grades.

And from the Review Submission History page.

Further Help

Please see additional guides on Assessment located on the Support for Staff tab in Blackboard.

Further help can be found on the Blackboard Help site at:
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Assignments/Grade_Assignments/Anonymous_Grading

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