THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

LSE Principles and Guidance for AI-assisted Marking & Feedback

Executive Summary

The paper below, approved by Education Committee in November 2025, establishes clear principles for AI-assisted marking and feedback across all programmes at LSE, namely:

- Transparency first: You must tell students when and how you use AI tools
- Human oversight is always present - staff conduct primary reading and assessment; AI assists, it does not decide or replace human agency.
- Use institutionally approved AI tools -- Claude AI or Microsoft Copilot -- to ensure data protection compliance.
- Do not upload student work into AI tools without their explicit consent
- Academic judgment stays with you: AI cannot determine marks, conduct moderation, or make final assessment decisions

The guidance also clarifies what AI tools *cannot* do: they cannot replace you as the primary marker, cannot substitute for second markers or moderators, and cannot detect student use of AI. However, AI tools offer genuine opportunities to enhance feedback quality, manage workload more sustainably, and support colleagues with accessibility needs. This document takes no position on whether you *should* use AI—only on how to do so responsibly *if you choose to*.

We have also created **seven practical scenarios** (pages 6-8) outlining how AI tools might be used in ways that are transparent, ethical, and respectful of student trust. These include:

- Managing marking loads while maintaining quality (Scenario A) – scaling feedback for 100+ essays without compromising depth
- Supporting staff accessibility (Scenario B) – using voice transcription to reduce RSI strain
- Enhancing existing feedback practices (Scenario C) – converting handwritten annotations to clear, structured feedback
- Calibrating feedback (Scenario D) – ensuring encouraging comments align with the grades awarded
- Learning from patterns (Scenario E) – for example, discovering that a percentage of students struggled with argument structure, not referencing
- Closing the expert-novice gap (Scenario F) – checking whether your feedback makes sense to a second-year undergraduate
- Supporting moderation (Scenario G) – identifying where markers interpret criteria differently to focus calibration discussions.

For further reading….

If you are already using AI tools: Check your practice against the principles (Section 3) and guidelines (Section 4) to make sure you are using LSE approved tools and being transparent with students.

If you are considering using AI tools: Read the scenarios to see what is possible and what effective practice might look like. Choose a scenario that resonates with your context and try it out in a small, low-stakes way first.

If you are not planning to use AI tools: That is perfectly acceptable - this guidance does not require you to. But understanding what colleagues are doing will help when discussing marking practices with your them.

For further questions or advice, contact eden@lse.ac.uk.

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LSE Principles and Guidance for AI-assisted Marking & Feedback

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Approved by Chair's Action, 7 November 2025, further to discussion and feedback at Education Committee, 15 October 2025 (paper EC.25.06)

1. Introduction

1.1 This paper proposes a set of principles and accompanying guidance to inform the use of AI-assisted marking and feedback at LSE including moderation. It is proposed that these principles and the accompanying guidance are actioned for a pilot year in 2025/26 and then reviewed. The principles and guidance outlined in this paper do not apply to dissertations on taught programmes which are excluded in the pilot year.

1.2 This paper is not proposing that AI is used to replace, human activity, judgement and oversight in marking and feedback. It provides educators with principles and guidelines for responsibly incorporating GenAI into their marking and feedback processes. The paper offers a framework to ensure that colleagues adopt ethical and secure approaches when integrating AI tools into their practice with the aim of creating a responsible approach that harnesses the strengths of GenAI while preserving trust between staff and students. By establishing clear protocols, we hope to encourage safe experimentation while protecting students, maintaining educational quality and enhancing the achievement of learning outcomes.

1.3 The paper draws a clear distinction between AI-assisted marking and feedback and automated marking and feedback:

- **AI-assisted marking and feedback**: Human educators use AI tools to support and enhance their work, with full human oversight and final decision-making at every stage
- **AI-generated marking and feedback**: AI systems independently generate marks and feedback with minimal or no human involvement.

1.4 The principles and guidance outlined in this paper take a neutral position on whether staff should or should not use Generative AI (GenAI) to assist their marking and feedback, and moderation practices. However, the use AI-generated marking and feedback, where AI systems independently generate marks and/or feedback with minimal or no human involvement **is not permitted**. The only exception to this prohibition is for automated marking of objective assessment formats such as multiple-choice questions (MCQs), online quizzes, or similar computer-marked assessments where automated marking has been an established practice predating GenAI tools.

1.5 We encourage staff to engage in continuous professional development to be able to recognise both the limitations and potential of AI tools.

1.6 This guidance focuses on AI-*assisted* (not automated) marking and feedback, and moderation.

1.7 This work is the result of a cross-institutional collaboration between LSE, King's College London and the University of Southampton[1].

1.8 The Committee is invited to consider and endorse the proposed principles for AI-assisted marking and feedback, and to comment on the accompanying guidance.

2. Why Guidance is Needed

2.1. Generative AI (GenAI) use is increasing throughout higher education and creating some profound changes in our practice. We know our students are actively engaging with GenAI tools with both positive and negative outcomes. They are keen to be taught, and learn more about its application, especially for their future careers (see, for example, the LSE Student Manifesto)

2.2. However, we know less about how academic staff are using the technology. Emerging evidence suggests that many staff are experimenting with GenAI tools while a significant minority are choosing not to engage with the technology (Walker, et al 2025). Staff using GenAI tools are seeing benefits but may be less aware of the implications for feedback and assessment.

2.3. Our next task is to develop staff guidelines to address challenges including ethical dilemmas, legal ramifications, social implications, and concerns about trust, data privacy and security, and quality assurance. Without proper guidance, integrating GenAI into educational practices could undermine the integrity and quality of education we provide. We also need consider the possible benefits in terms of timesaving, reductions in workload and possible improvements in quality.

2.4. While human oversight is essential, there are several ways in which AI-assisted tools could support the marking and feedback practices and improve staff effectiveness including:

- Enhancing and clarifying feedback (for example, changing tone or reducing jargon) that human markers initially write
- Recording, transcribing, and summarising verbal feedback from meetings (such as supervisory meetings or oral examinations)
- Combining individual marker feedback into coherent collective reports
- Using marker feedback to identify patterns and streamline approaches to teaching
- Closing the 'threshold knowledge' gap between expert and novice using an LLM
- Using AI tools to generate draft rubrics aligned with module and programme outcomes
- Connecting human-generated feedback notes to specific rubric criteria for structured and personalised responses
- Converting handwritten notes to digital text or spoken feedback to improve readability and engagement

LSE's moderation process remains unchanged by this guidance. AI tools cannot:

- Make marking decisions independently

[1] The collaborating authors were: Kate Borthwick (University of Southampton), Martin Compton (KCL), Claire Gordon (LSE), Lee Mager (LSE), Simon Walker (LSE) and Steven Williams (LSE).

- Replace the primary marker's academic judgement
- Replace second markers or moderators in any capacity
- Substitute for discussion with colleagues or effect any calibration.

3. Principles of AI-assisted Marking and Feedback, and Moderation at LSE

3.1 The following principles are proposed to underpin the use of AI-assisted marking and feedback, and moderation at LSE:

- Staff must clearly communicate to students when and how they use AI tools for marking and feedback
- Educators should conduct the primary reading and assessment of student work, except in specific circumstances
- Human oversight is essential to ensure accuracy and appropriateness
- Where AI-assisted feedback has been appropriately used, challenges to academic judgement will not be accepted, in line with standard university regulations
- Staff must use LSE approved GenAI tools - such as Claude AI and Microsoft Copilot - for any AI-assisted activities related to assessment, including feedback, marking, and moderation. These tools are selected to ensure compliance with data protection regulations (e.g. UK GDPR), and offer enterprise-grade assurances around security, data integrity, privacy, and responsible AI use.
- GenAI tools may help develop marking criteria and assessment rubrics and assessment design.
- Academic staff should not use GenAI tools to detect students' use of GenAI, as these tools are unreliable
- AI tools may assist with aspects of the marking process, but cannot replace human academic judgment in determining marks, conducting moderation, or making final assessment decisions—these responsibilities remain entirely the responsibility of academic staff.

4. Guidelines for Implementation

4.1. Using the principles as a starting point, we propose the following guidelines:

- Staff are encouraged to use GenAI tools safely, securely, ethically, and appropriately.
- Staff should use institutionally approved GenAI tools that comply with GDPR and relevant privacy regulations. These tools provide enterprise-grade assurances of security, data privacy, and training restrictions for Large Language Models (LLMs). If unsupported GenAI tools are used, staff should explain their rationale and obtain student and institutional consent.
- Staff must not include student details or upload student work into GenAI tools without explicit permission. This prevents personal data from being collected, stored, accessed, and shared

without consent.

- Staff should follow institutional and any agreed department guidelines to ensure their AI-assisted feedback and marking aligns with agreed practices. Transparency should start with academics and extend to students.

- Staff should critically reflect on how AI-assisted practices affect student perceptions of authenticity, trust, and fairness. Staff are encouraged to seek student feedback on these practices.

- Staff must provide human oversight at every stage of their approach. GenAI can generate incorrect responses based on probabilities and biases. While GenAI excels at summarising information and solving known problems, it can produce simplified or incorrect outputs.

- Staff should ensure AI-assisted feedback does not independently determine marks or academic judgements. Marking responsibilities remain strictly with human educators.

- Staff may use spell-checking, grammar-checking, and proofreading tools (such as Grammarly or similar) without restriction when preparing feedback. These tools are not considered AI-assisted marking under this policy, as they focus on mechanical accuracy rather than academic judgment or content generation.

5. Research Context and Rationale

5.1 In this section we share additional insights from ongoing research on staff and students' perceptions of and trust in AI generated marking and feedback.

5.2 Whilst GenAI offers efficiency and scalability in feedback provision, its use raises important concerns about trust in educational relationships (Liu 28:2025). Some tools promise immediacy, greater precision, consistency, and time-saving benefits (Albadarin et al., 2023). These benefits lead to high approval rates among staff and students (Barrett and Pack, 2023).

5.3 A recent AIinHE survey of 6000+ students showed that students value GenAI feedback for its immediate, accessible, understandable, and objective responses. However, students rated human feedback higher for trustworthiness. They noted that academics provide feedback that is relevant, contextualised, personalised and expert. Students question the authenticity of AI-generated comments, finding them impersonal and ethically inconsistent, especially when their own GenAI use may be discouraged (AIinHE, 2025).

5.4 Trust is also influenced by educators' competence with GenAI and their willingness to guide students through its complexities. Different approaches across departments may confuse students and undermine trust. To preserve trust, Barrett and Pack (2023) advise educators to prioritise transparency.

5.5 Emerging research may be worth sharing with students. For example, Nazaretsky et al. (2024) found that students often prefer human feedback, particularly after learning who provided it. However, students who mistakenly assume AI-generated feedback comes from humans tend to rate it higher.

Appendix: Examples of Effective Practice

These scenarios follow the above guidelines and offer insights into ways that academic staff can use AI transparently and in an assistive capacity, always ensuring human oversight and judgment remain central.

Scenario A -- Scaling Feedback While Maintaining Quality

Lecturer A is responsible for marking over 100 essays within a two-week window. Conscious of the limitations this workload places on the depth of individual feedback, they adopt a hybrid approach using their university's approved or supported LLM tool, Copilot. Without ever uploading student work directly, Lecturer A composes an anonymised summary for each student, noting which marking criteria were met and the approximate percentage achieved for each. They input this summary alongside the official rubric into Copilot, prompting it to generate supportive, criterion-referenced feedback. This feedback is then carefully reviewed, adapted, and personalised before being uploaded to the marking platform. Students are made aware of this process in advance and shown a demonstration, reinforcing transparency and trust.

Scenario B -- Harnessing Accessibility Features

Lecturer B experiences recurring pain from repetitive strain injury (RSI), making traditional typing-intensive marking methods challenging. To reduce physical strain, they have begun using the voice chat functionality of an AI tool while reviewing assignments. They verbally articulate their comments during the review, ensuring all input remains anonymised and free of identifying details. The AI transcribes the spoken reflections in real time and is then prompted to produce a concise summary, isolating one key strength and one or two developmental areas to support student progression. Students are made aware of this process in advance and shown a demonstration, reinforcing transparency and trust.

Scenario C -- Bridging Traditional and Digital Practices

Lecturer C prefers the immediacy and freedom of handwritten annotation when reviewing student work. Historically, these handwritten notes were then typed into the feedback platform - a time-consuming duplication of effort. More recently, Lecturer C has started photographing their feedback notes and using an approved LLM to transcribe the content. The LLM is prompted to reframe the handwritten comments into a clear, structured feedback format organised into bullet points under three headings: strengths, areas for development and points for action. This preserves the authenticity of the lecturer's voice while enhancing clarity and readability for students. Students are made aware of this process in advance and shown a demonstration, reinforcing transparency and trust.

Scenario D -- Calibrating Grades to Align with Feedback Comments

A new teaching assistant is enthusiastic about giving students a positive and encouraging experience in formative feedback. This backfires when students note a mismatch between the superlatives in the comments and the low indicative grades given, leading to appeals and disgruntlement among students who assumed their grade should have been higher given the highly positive comments. In a subsequent formative assessment, the teaching assistant deploys a GenAI tool to input the official marking criteria and rubric against their anonymised feedback comments to

validate alignment between the grade awarded and the feedback language. This helps nudge the teaching assistant to moderate their language to match the marking criteria more closely.

Scenario E – Identifying patterns across feedback

Lecturer E wants to use a recent assessment as an opportunity to reflect on their teaching and the content of their course. After marking the submissions, they compile all their anonymised feedback into a single document. They upload this document into their institution's approved LLM tool and instruct it to identify recurring themes and patterns. While Lecturer E had believed referencing was the primary challenge based on several memorable cases, the LLM's analysis shows that 60% of students actually struggled with argument structure, a pattern they had not consciously registered during individual marking. These insights inform targeted adjustments to teaching materials for the following semester. Students are made aware of this aggregate analysis process, which helps demonstrate how their collective performance shapes curriculum development.

Scenario F – Bridging the expert-novice communication gap

Lecturer F recognises that their deep familiarity with their subject matter may create unintended barriers in how they communicate feedback – a cognitive bias known as the 'curse of knowledge', whereby experts struggle to remember what it's like not to understand something. Having marked a series of second-year undergraduate essays, they input their anonymised feedback into an approved LLM tool and prompt it to adopt the persona of a student at that specific academic level. The tool is instructed to interpret the feedback from this novice perspective, identifying which strengths and areas for improvement are clearly communicated and which passages might be ambiguous or contain unexplained jargon. Lecturer F subsequently revises their feedback to include concrete examples and clearer explanations. This helps to ensure that developmental advice is accessible regardless of students' prior exposure to academic discourse

Scenario G – Supporting moderation calibration

A course team is preparing for a moderation meeting to review marking consistency across multiple markers for a core second-year course. The course convenor has noticed in previous years that moderation discussions focus on memorable outlier cases rather than patterns. This year, after all marking has been completed, the course convenor compiles the anonymised feedback comments from all markers (removing student names and identifiers) and with the assessment criteria uploads this aggregated document to Claude or Co-pilot using appropriate prompts to identify: (a) which marking criteria generated the most variation in how markers interpreted student performance, and (b) areas where marker language was notably consistent or inconsistent. The convenor shares this analysis with fellow markers in advance of their meeting, using it as a discussion prompt rather than as evidence of marking quality. During the moderation meeting itself, academics engage in their standard practice of reviewing sample scripts across grade boundaries, discussing borderline cases, and calibrating their understanding of the marking criteria. The AI analysis helps to focus their conversation on specific criteria where calibration may be most needed, but all moderation decisions—including any adjustments to marks, recommendations for re-marking, or refinements to the rubric for future use—are made through collegial academic discussion and based on human judgment. Students are informed that anonymised feedback may be analysed to support marking consistency, while emphasising that all moderation decisions remain with academic staff

In each of these scenarios, GenAI has been used in a responsible and transparent manner that demonstrates the benefits of AI-assisted feedback to students. Taking this approach does not compromise trust, academic integrity or fairness. Augmenting the clarity, depth and consistency of

feedback and streamlining grading processes will enhance the quality of the education provided to our students.

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