Welcome to our 5th Issue!

A lot has happened since the last edition: the membership of the Association continues to grow; the eAA website has been updated (more on that below); we’ve just announced the winners of the Scottish e-Assessment Awards (and plan to extend the Awards to the other nations next year); we’ve also launched the International Journal of e-Assessment (IJEA) and; we successfully ran the largest e-Assessment conference in the UK.

Read on to find out what else we’ve been doing and to catch up with all the news, events and developments in the exciting field of technology-enhanced assessment.

Contents

Upcoming Events 2
e-Assessment Scotland 2011 Conference 2
Online Assessment Options - Kubbu 2
New Assessment Scenarios 3
Are You Sure You Know the Answer? 3
Launch of the International Journal of e-Assessment 4
Effective Assessment in a Digital Age 4
ACCA to Deliver All Examinations Online 4
Questionmark Tests Your Knowledge of Assessment 5
Measuring Musicality 5
FREE Membership of the e-Assessment Association 6
Scottish e-Assessment Award Winners Announced 6
PeerWise - Familiarity Breeds Content 7
eAA Mission Statement 7
Corporate Membership 7
Snippets 8
Next Issue 8

Did you know it’s free to join the e-Assessment Association in 2011/2012?

eAA Announcements

If you have a moment, please take the time to visit our new-look website at www.e-assessment.com

It’s still a work in progress, but we’re adding more content each week, case studies, events and news from the sector. You can also follow updates on our Twitter feed at @eAssess

As a truly landmark event - and an indication of the growing strength of our organisation - the eAA has gained its first employee. We’re delighted to welcome Geoff Chapman (pictured) as our marketing coordinator. His job will include promoting the services of the Association and maintaining our web presence.

We plan to run two AGMs next year - a Corporate AGM at the e-Assessment Question conference in London in March and then a Member AGM at eAssessment Scotland 2012 in August. They represent a good opportunity to meet with the Board and your fellow members of the Association.

With the launch of the International Journal of e-Assessment, we plan to release a special edition highlighting examples of good practice from our corporate members. Look out for more on this on our website and mailing list.
e-Assessment Scotland 2011

With just under 300 attending this year’s eAssessment Scotland 2011 conference, we’re delighted to announce that not only are we the largest e-Assessment conference in the UK, but we’re growing too! And it’s not just the number of people attending – the event now spans two days, with three ‘masterclass’ workshops on the Thursday afternoon.

The Friday started with a welcome from our own Cliff Beevers, chair of the Association, and was followed by a great line-up of keynotes, seminar presentations and workshops.

The major e-Assessment vendors were on hand to demonstrate new products and services.

Poster presentations showcased exciting projects, case studies and developments taking place in the UK and beyond. Nora Moge, from the University of Edinburgh, won a public vote for her poster on allowing students to use their own laptops for essay-type examinations.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the support of key sponsors such as Questionmark, our exhibitors, the organising partners (including the University of Dundee, Soffed, SQA, Higher Education Academy and eLearning Alliance), and most of all, all of you who came along to share in the excitement of the day!

We’re already putting plans together for eAssessment Scotland 2012 - and taking the feedback onboard, we’re looking for ways to increase audience participation in sessions, working on plans to run a parallel online conference and also host the eAA’s Member’s AGM, to which you are cordially invited!

You will be able to find all the presentations, posters and videos of the keynotes (Steve Wheeler, Becka Colley, Pamela Kato and Donald Clark) on the eAssessment Scotland website: www.e-assessment-scotland.org

Online Assessment Options - Kubbu

When delivering online assessment to students, it’s common to use in-house systems, but when these aren’t available - there are a number of online services that you can use.

Kubbu is one such service, with a clean Flash interface and a good range of activities. Free and pro accounts cater for most needs.

See for yourself at: www.kubbu.com

28th-30th September
European - Assoc. of Test Publishers Conference
Prague
http://bit.ly/n8Gy0R

5th October
OpenLearn - Rationale Behind New Question Types for Moodle 2 Online

9th-11th October
Questionmark European Users Conference 2011
Brussels

27th October
JISC Effective Assessment in a Digital Age Workshop
Glasgow

10th-12th November
AEA Europe Conference
Belfast

16th November
Writing Effective Quiz and Assessment Questions Online

17th November
Assessment Tomorrow Conference
Edinburgh
http://bit.ly/n4HPp1

Delegates registering on the Friday

eAssessment Scotland 2011, organising partners

We’re already putting plans together for eAssessment Scotland 2012 - and taking the feedback onboard, we’re looking for ways to increase audience participation in sessions, working on plans to run a parallel online conference and also host the eAA’s Member’s AGM, to which you are cordially invited!

You will be able to find all the presentations, posters and videos of the keynotes (Steve Wheeler, Becka Colley, Pamela Kato and Donald Clark) on the eAssessment Scotland website: www.e-assessment-scotland.org

Online Assessment Options - Kubbu

When delivering online assessment to students, it’s common to use in-house systems, but when these aren’t available - there are a number of online services that you can use.

Kubbu is one such service, with a clean Flash interface and a good range of activities. Free and pro accounts cater for most needs.

See for yourself at: www.kubbu.com
Are You Sure You Know the Answer?

Test scores can tell you a lot – and it’s routine to use scores to judge the level of competency or knowledge that someone has achieved. However, under certain circumstances, they can also be misleading. Take for example the following maths question:

An object is thrown vertically upward from the top of a building of height h. If the initial speed is 64 ft/sec and the object hits the ground 5 seconds later. What is the height of the building?

Now if you answered d) 80 feet, then I would have to assume that you were some kind of mathematical genius (in comparison to myself at least) and forever be in awe of your mental faculties. Or, I might harbour a suspicion that you... guessed the answer.

That’s where Certainty-Based Marking (CBM) comes in - a simple method of adding an extra step to questions where students indicate how certain they are about their answers. The LAPT tool, developed at UCL, can be used to measure the students’ level of certainty. It works as a standalone assessment system, or can be plugged into the Moodle 1.9 quiz engine to provide CBM functionality.

The interface presents the student with four additional options when answering questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certainty Level</th>
<th>No idea</th>
<th>C=1 (low certainty)</th>
<th>C=2 (medium certainty)</th>
<th>C=3 (high certainty)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mark if correct</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penalty if wrong</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The choice that the student makes has an impact on the score that is awarded for the question. The table below summarises the points awarded based on the level of certainty chosen. Note that it’s still possible to avoid negative scores by limiting your choice to C=1.

The advantages to using CBM are that students are encouraged to spend more time thinking about the question and that teachers have a greater insight to the thought process behind answers. CBM test scores can tell you a lot (more) about your students’ understanding of subjects, revealing potential misconceptions, where they indicate a high confidence in the wrong answer.

There are other tools which allow you to incorporate CBM in your assessments, such as the previous version of Interwrite’s (now eInstruction) PRS system, which included ‘high’ and ‘low’ confidence buttons on their ‘clickers’.

Visit the LAPT website: [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lapt/](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lapt/)


If you’re interested, the maths example was from [www.analyzemath.com](http://www.analyzemath.com), a New Assessment Scenarios

At the end of last year, the people at Futurelab produced a report outlining some of the main challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in the field of technology-enhanced assessment.

The publication describes three scenarios for assessment in a hypothetical future:

**Multi-data assessment**, where accountability is organised around the collection of different types of evidence.

**Enhanced instructional planning**, where teachers act as instructional designers to shape learning and to encourage formative assessment in a structured way.

**Interpretive assessment**, in which aspects of assessment are based on the notion of interpretation to understand how learners behave in authentic contexts.

The report also includes four case studies that illustrate effective practice in technology-enhanced assessment.


ACCA to Deliver All Examinations Online

ACCA (the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) announced in the summer that it had signed a contract with Summit Consulting Group to deliver all ACCA examinations online through an innovative eAssessment programme.

ACCA were winners of the Scottish eAssessment Award for their Foundations in Professionalism Module

Helen Brand, ACCA’s chief executive, says, ‘ACCA will be able to test students’ knowledge and skills in a way which more accurately reflects real-life workplace scenarios and activities. Also, feedback has shown that employers and students want greater flexibility and options for when our globally recognised qualifications can be taken – not just twice a year as is the current model with ACCA.’

The first papers will transition to the new system in 2012 with all papers being phased over the next few years. ACCA already offers Computer Based Exams (CBE), first introducing them in 1998, and has since implemented e-paper production and e-marking of its scripts.

Launch of the International Journal of e-Assessment

The e-Assessment Association, in partnership with Cambridge Assessment and the Computer-Assisted Assessment (CAA) conference organisers, are delighted to announce the launch of the International Journal of e-Assessment (IJEA). The IJEA is an interdisciplinary journal that aims to publish expert opinion on a range of e-assessment matters, exchanging evidence-based research results and relevant industry trends as well as presenting practical experiences gained from developing and implementing technology-enhanced assessment.

Editions of the Journal are available on the IJEA website: http://bit.ly/qK61Ua

You will need to register for an account on the site, but after that, access to all of the published editions is free.

The first edition of the Journal featured 11 papers presented at this year’s CAA conference. Among the papers are:

- *What is it that is really acting as a barrier to widespread use of summative e-assessment in UK higher education?*
- *Marking complex assignments using peer assessment with an electronic voting system and an automated feedback tool*
- *Towards automatic generation of e-assessment using semantic web technologies*

The second edition contains a policy paper from an eAA expert panel. Papers can be downloaded from the Journal’s website in PDF format.

The e-Assessment Association are working on a special edition of the Journal to be released early next year. Look out for more information on this edition on the eAA website.

Effective Assessment in a Digital Age

If you missed the JISC publication of ‘Effective Assessment in a Digital Age’ last year, then it’s definitely worth downloading a free copy of the report, which contains an overview of current trends in the field.

There are also 10 case studies drawn from the FE and HE sectors, which detail how particular approaches such as audio feedback, scenario-based assessment tasks and peer assessment have been successfully implemented.


Supplementary material available at: http://bit.ly/nDkc7M

JISC ran a series of workshops to support the release of the publication, with the final one scheduled for October 27th in Glasgow. For more details and to book a place, visit: http://bit.ly/qvKQbi
Measuring Musicality

BBC’s Lab UK is a website that hosts large-scale experiments, involving hundreds of thousands of participants. Rarely does scientific research get the opportunity to engage such large numbers, but with a combination of online assessment techniques and the reach of the BBC platform, Lab UK can make large-scale research projects a reality.

Earlier in the year, the ‘Music, Mind and Brain’ research group at Goldsmiths College and Lab UK devised an online test to gauge the ‘musicality’ of participants. The test comprised of questions based on a Likert-type scale and a series of interactive musical tasks:

- listening to musical clips and then ordering the clips according to genre;
- tapping along to a melody to measure the beat;
- identifying whether pieces of music were on or off the beat of an accompanying metronome
- deciding whether two pieces of music were the same when played at different pitches

The last two question types were interesting as they employed a confidence-based element (see the piece on ‘CBM’ on page 3). The design decision to present the interactive task-based questions between standard question types also helps to maintain interest through a test that takes roughly 25 minutes to complete.

The Guardian newspaper picked up on the story and invited a number of notable musicians to take the test, which produced mixed but largely positive results. You can find out how they did here: [http://bit.ly/pvTQy0](http://bit.ly/pvTQy0)

Feedback from the test itself is quite informative, with a detailed breakdown of performance on the interactive tasks and scores (based on overall participation percentages) for the areas of:

- Enthusiasm for music
- Musical perception
- Emotional connection
- Social creativity
- Musical curiosity

The test ends with written summaries and a number of recommendations for the BBC Radio shows you might be interested in, based on your results. The project is set to run for 18 months, with outcomes published on the BBC site at some point next year.

Find out more and take a test to determine your own musicality at: [http://bbc.in/q2bcck](http://bbc.in/q2bcck)

To learn about the results from other UK Lab experiments visit: [http://bbc.in/nyESrg](http://bbc.in/nyESrg)

---

Questionmark Tests
Your Knowledge of Assessment

On the Questionmark blog, John Kleeman recently posted the first in a series of quizzes designed to test your knowledge of assessment. The first topic is ‘cut scores’ on which you’re presented with five True/False questions.

Although it’s a very simple test, it’s a good example of how existing e-Assessment tools in your organisation could be used to test knowledge in a range of areas.

It also presents an opportunity to generate discussion. If you can attach a forum or commenting feature to a quiz, then it allows people to start debating issues around your quiz. For example, John uses negative scoring for incorrect answers - an assessment design decision that often sparks healthy debate. Could you stimulate interest in assessment by running your own quizzes?


If you would like to read up on cut scores, then ETS’s ‘Cut Scores Primer’ offers a good overview on the subject: [http://bit.ly/n5BT1N](http://bit.ly/n5BT1N)
Scottish e-Assessment Award Winners Announced

Now in its third year, the Scottish e-Assessment Awards were announced at the eAssessment Scotland conference last month. The Awards recognise excellence and innovation in using technology to improve the assessment experience of learners.

Open to all sectors, we received a record number of entries, surpassing last year’s total. The judges were hard-pressed to make decisions given the quality of submissions - nevertheless, a decision had to be made, and the winning entries below were presented with their Awards by the chair of the e-Assessment Association, Cliff Beevers:

- **Using PeerWise for Formative Peer eAssessment in Introductory Physics Courses**
  - Physics Education Research Group, University of Edinburgh

- **Foundations in Professionalism Module**
  - Association of Chartered Certified Accountants

- **Enhancing Practical Learning through Online Communities**
  - Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

- **Helping to Raise Standards in Financial Advice**
  - Calibrand

- **Harnessing Social Web 2.0 Tools for Continuous e-Assessment of Language Learners**
  - University of Edinburgh

To find out more about the winning entries, please visit the Awards page on the eAssessment Scotland conference website at: [http://www.e-assessment-scotland.org/awards](http://www.e-assessment-scotland.org/awards)

The Awards are organised by the e-Assessment Association in partnership with Soffed Ltd. Next year, we plan to extend the Awards to the rest of the UK, with regional heats in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. If you are involved with e-Assessment and would be interested in submitting an entry then please look out for announcements about the Awards early next year.

---

**FREE Membership of the e-Assessment Association**

For a limited time, the e-Assessment Association is waiving its annual membership fee of £50.

Take advantage of this unique opportunity and sign up now! Becoming a member of the eAA will enable you to:

- discuss new and creative approaches that can support organisational excellence and help improve the quality of e-Assessment;
- share experiences, practice, skills and knowledge with other experts;
- network with other teachers, tutors, academics, awarding body representatives, training providers, software developers and vendors;
- influence educational policy through debate;
- have access to new developments in e-Assessment;
- look at the latest ‘case studies’ and ‘good practice’ exemplars.

To become a member of the eAA today, visit: [http://tinyurl.com/bz6xqv](http://tinyurl.com/bz6xqv)

If you would like to enquire about corporate membership, please contact: members@e-assessment.com for more information.

---

**eAA Newsletter Issue 05: September 12th, 2011**
PeerWise - Familiarity Breeds Content

One of the hardest things about the assessment process is writing the questions for your student. Even the humblest multiple choice question requires you to have a sound understanding of the subject (when it comes to explaining the answer in the feedback!). Making sure that the question is valid, reliable and will challenge your students means that writing a good question is ultimately a test of your own knowledge, skills and experience.

So why not give the task to students?
If you are looking to get your students started on authoring their own assessment questions, then one of the best tools you can use is PeerWise, an online repository of multiple-choice questions that are created, answered, rated and discussed by students.

PeerWise is hosted at the University of Auckland and it only takes a few minutes to request a (free) account and set up a space for your class. The interface is refreshingly simple to use and clear instructions on the site (accompanied by screencast tutorials) mean that you will be up and running in no time at all.

Students write their questions (which can feature images and equations), optionally adding feedback to explain the correct answer. This step is recommended as it provides evidence of the authors' understanding of the subject. Students are then free to answer other questions developed by peers, leaving comments and rating them for difficulty. There's also the option to 'follow' favourite authors.

A scoreboard highlights top scoring participants and 'badges' can be collected for performing tasks, e.g. a 'Genius' badge for answering 10 questions correctly in a row. These kind of 'achievements' are common to video gaming and can contribute significantly to engagement.

The Physics Education Research Group at the University won a Scottish e-Assessment Award for their use of PeerWise as a formative tool (see page opposite). You can listen to an interview with Simon Bates, where he describes how successful PeerWise has been with students - with some questions being of such a high standard that one even made it to a final summative test: http://bit.ly/pfMbVe

Visit the PeerWise website at: http://peerwise.cs.auckland.ac.nz/


eAA Mission Statement

"The eAA campaigns for the widening of the effective use of e-Assessment in support of learning. The eAA will do this by encouraging individuals and organisations to make good use of e-Assessment, by explaining the issues to the public and by influencing educational thinking and policy."

Corporate Membership

The eAA is delighted to welcome JISC to the ranks of corporate membership!

Current corporate members of the eAA include:

- AlphaPlus
- AQA
- Assessment Tomorrow
- BTL
- Calibrand
- Cambridge Assessment
- CARET
- City & Guilds
- eCom Scotland
- Pearson VUE
- Prometric
- RM Assessment
- SCHOLAR
- Scottish Qualifications Authority
- TAG Developments
- UFI/learndirect
- WJEC / CBAC
**Issue 6**

The next edition of the eAA newsletter is scheduled for December.

There’s no particular theme for the next newsletter, but if you happen to have information on remote invigilation solutions, then we would be interested in hearing from you!

As always, we welcome your feedback on this edition and any suggestions for future topics. If you have an e-Assessment-related story that you would like to share with the community, then we would be delighted to hear from you. Items should be submitted electronically to the Editor, Kenji Lamb, at Soffed Ltd.: klamb@soffed.com

(deadline for contributions is 30th November, 2011)

---

**Snippets**

**BTL Achieves ISO 9001 Accreditation**  

The accreditation confirms that BTL has put together a system to continuously monitor and improve quality – something which is essential when delivering services to the examinations industry.

**Managing Paper Tests with Quizinator**  
http://www.quizinator.com

Quizinator is an online resource library that organises and manages your assessment questions. To create a new test paper, simply arrange the questions from your library with drag and drop, and save.

**Evernote - A Personal e-Portfolio Solution?**  

Martin Hawksey reevaluates Evernote as a potential e-Portfolio solution as the platform introduces additional functionality to the free service.

**Blackboard Quiz Generator**  

A simple tool that converts questions authored in Word or Notepad into a zip file that can be uploaded into a Blackboard VLE. Make sure to read the documentation first: http://bit.ly/omKyzZ