



the e-assessment association

# Newsletter November 2018

**Dear Members,**

It seems that 2018 has literally whizzed-by (or perhaps this is just me getting older!) but what a year it has been. As you'll hear in greater detail below in relation to some of these, your Board has been actively promoting debate and awareness around e-assessment in a number of events and conference throughout 2018 including:

- SQA eAssessment conference, Edinburgh - February;
- Westminster Forum Projects seminar, London - February
- eAssessment Question conference, London - April
- 2nd Annual eAssessment Awards Dinner, London - April
- Transforming Assessment international e-assessment webinar - June
- E-ATP conference in Athens - September
- International Baccalaureate's eAssessment 2020 and Beyond seminar, Cardiff - October
- Federation of Awarding Bodies conference, Leicester - October
- Surpass conference, Bristol - October
- Beyond Multiple Choice conference, Washington D.C., USA - November
- AEA Europe conference, Arnhem - Nijmegen, The Netherlands - November

For me, the fact that the eAA is being invited to attend and speak at these events is evidence of the growing interest in the role technology enhanced assessment has to play in our education system. In addition, 2018 also saw an exam regulator actively seek out opinion and input from the eAA in how technology can influence and shape 21st century high stakes assessment, which is really refreshing to see and should be applauded.

The diversity of the work that you, our members, get involved in within e-assessment is borne out by both the increasing number of entries to our own annual eAssessment Awards (more on this below), the active development of our two Special Interest Groups around [e-Assessment in maths](#) and [remote invigilation](#) and the broad range of articles that members submit to us for publication in this newsletter or that you share via our [LinkedIn group](#). With this in mind I wanted to remind everyone that any member who wants to share their thoughts with the e-assessment community can submit an article at any time to our admin, by emailing [marketing@e-assessment.com](mailto:marketing@e-assessment.com)

Perhaps the biggest news of this edition is the launching of the [2019 e-Assessment Awards](#). Started in 2016, the Awards are now entering their third year. We hope you will all help spread the word, submit an entry and/or nominate someone for the Lifetime Contribution Award. Previous winners of the latter award include Bob Gomersall of BTL Group and Angela Verschoor of CITO, who were delighted to receive recognition for their work. There are many more outstanding contributors to the world of e-assessment. Send in your 400 word nominations today via the link on the awards' website [here](#).

As our industry continues to grow and evolve, we look forward to more and more opportunities to meet our peers to listen, network, learn and debate, be this at one of the conferences we attend, the eAssessment Awards or virtually via the association's Twitter feed ([@eAssess](#)) or [our LinkedIn group](#). Because in the words of Dr Seuss,

***"It is better to know how to learn than to know."***

With those wise words, I will leave you to enjoy reading the rest of this newsletter. Thank you for all the support you have given the association in 2018, even if this is just by being a member, and I wish you all the best for the forthcoming festive season and New Year!

Best wishes,

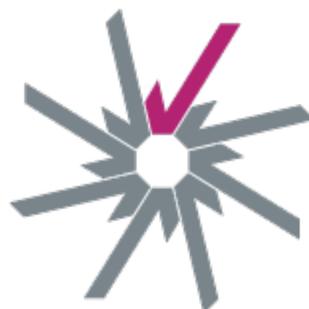
Matt Wingfield

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## Contents

- [The 2019 e-Assessment Awards NOW LIVE!](#)
- [Innovation, Concept Mapping & New Connections](#)
- [Feedback for Learning](#)
- [When people collaborate, good things happen.](#)
- [World News Round-up](#)
- [E-ATP 2018](#)
- [eAA Response to Technical Qualifications Consultation](#)



**e-Assessment**  
Awards 2019

## Announcements, news, updates

- The Association launches the 2019 Awards programme, sponsored by PSI International for the third year in a row - thank you!
- e-Assessment growth continues in high-stakes exams, with more and more choosing the right elements of technology. See our news round-up for the highlights since our last newsletter.
- Coming soon - a webpage listing feature for independent consultants, to help you find the right advice.
- The eAA formally responded to the Consultation on Ofqual's approach to regulating Technical Qualifications. Read more in this newsletter.
- Growth in numbers. The eAA now has over 1500 members across 30 countries worldwide, nearly 1900 followers on Twitter and over 700 members on our [LinkedIn group](#).



## [The 2019 e-Assessment Awards NOW LIVE!](#)

eAA launches the 2019 e-Assessment Awards. In the words of our new media partner, World Exam Tech,

*"The e-Assessment sector continues to grow and thrive with innovation, enterprise and ingenuity from across the practitioner, vendor and regulatory communities. The e-Assessment Awards are a reflection of the 'boots-on-the-ground' good practice that continues to positively impact learners."*

We urge all of our members to consider entering for an award or being sure to pass on the word to others. A successful awards programme specifically for e-assessment can shine a spotlight on the amazing and diverse work taking place worldwide - to the benefit of everyone.

Thank you to [PSI International](#) who have agreed to support the Awards for the third year in a row as our headline sponsor - without their support, we would not be able to work on this project. Thanks also to [RM Results](#), Scottish Qualifications Authority, [SQA](#) and [ACER UK](#) who have stepped up to sponsor one of the individual awards.

Graeme Clarke, Head of Digital Assessment Services at SQA explained the reasons for their support,

*"SQA is proud to again sponsor the Best Use of Summative Assessment award at the e-Assessment Awards 2019. Through the ambitious and bold use of digital technologies in the delivery of assessment there continues to be significant opportunity to transform the experience of learners, providers and awarding bodies."*

*"There is still much to be done, but we believe that through these awards and the wider work of the e-Assessment Association and its members, that transformation has made a great start."*

Tim Downie from RM Results adds,

*"RM Results is proud to sponsor the 2019 e-Assessment Award for Best Transformational Project. With technology developing at an unprecedented*

*pace, e-assessment has the potential to truly transform the assessment landscape over the coming years."*

Dr Desmond Bermingham, Chief Executive, Australian Council for Educational Research UK is excited to be sponsoring this year's Best Research Award,

*"ACER recognises the vital role that the e-Assessment Association has had and continues to have within the field of educational research and we look forward to discovering this year's winner."*

If you are interested in sponsoring one of the remaining Awards, please get in touch - all income from sponsorship goes directly back into making the Awards project a huge success.



## Innovation, Concept Mapping & New Connections

In 2009, the U.S. Department of Education published the Science Framework for the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress, the largest continuing and nationally representative assessment of what U.S. students know and can do in various subjects.

*Blog post by Brian Moon, Chief Technology Officer of Perigean Technologies and President of Sero! Learning Assessments. Co-Director of Beyond Multiple Choice 2018.*

The Framework recommended for the first time a set of Interactive Computer Tasks, to advance the NAEP by reflecting trends toward electronic assessment. One of the 'Interactive Computer Tasks' it called for was the use of concept mapping – a long overdue recognition of the potential of this technique to reveal deep insight into learning. As the co-editor of *Applied Concept Mapping: Capturing, Analyzing, and Organizing Knowledge*, I was ecstatic to see the development and imaging the possibilities. Disappointingly, the Interactive Computer Task was not included in subsequent NAEP deployments. But I saw opportunity in the oversight, namely to

develop tools to support it. In 2016, my company was awarded a major grant from the U.S. Department of Defense to develop just such a toolkit. We were planning to fill the gap and sought ways to tell others our plans, particularly international educators and assessors, as we knew that concept mapping was even more popular beyond the US borders.

Soon after starting development, I discovered the e-Assessment Association on Twitter. At the time, the eAA was promoting the inaugural International e-Assessment Awards, seeking advances in e-assessment technologies and practices that were really making a difference, to be hosted during the 12th e-Assessment Question in London. The synergy was obvious to me, but I wondered whether the process would recognize an approach that, while recommended, had yet to be deployed. The Innovation category seemed to match where we were, so I threw in our hat.

On Valentine's Day 2017, I received a notification that my entry had been shortlisted – we'd caught someone's attention! A week later I met online with the panel of judges – folks I did not know and who did not know me. I demonstrated our prototype platform, answered their questions, and watched their heads nod. I booked my arrangements to London and looked forward to my first time back since graduate school. I had few expectations – my hopes were to meet some new colleagues, gauge the European assessment network and markets, and enjoy London. At the e-Assessment Question, I spent my time translating terms – invigilat-what? – enjoying quality presentations that had obvious relevance for our work and meeting fellow innovators and education and training professionals who were clearly seeking to enhance the learning value of assessment through computerization. I met a couple of the judges who had selected us for the shortlist. They shared that they truly appreciated our innovation, though their appreciation had not fully developed until they saw it live during our online meeting. They offered several invaluable suggestions about how to move our progress forward.

By the time the awards dinner arrived, I'd already realized the value of the trip. As the Innovation awards were called out, I also began to realize the company we were keeping – truly innovative companies with established track records of success. The presenter began to introduce the Highly Commended award, noting that the winner may have won had they been further along their pathway... and that the eAssessment Association would look forward to seeing much more from this company... We captured the award! Number 2 out of 19 entries – not too shabby for the first showing of our potential.

The last memorable conversation I'd have in London was with the organizers. I discovered that while they'd hosted similar events throughout the world, they'd not yet found a U.S.-based partner to co-direct. The synergy was, again, clear as day. We agreed to initiate planning.

Since these early experiences with the eAA, several events have propelled us forward. Sero! was selected for participation in the Innovation Lab for the Association of Test Publishers conference, shortlisted for the Learning Assessments category in the prestigious Reimagine Education competition, and selected as a Seed CEO presenter for the ASU GSV Summit. Not only do these recognitions speak to the potential of Sero!, but in my mind, they validate the spot-on foresight of the eAA Awards process and judges.

We have also advanced our partnerships. On November 7 and 8, 2018, Perigean Technologies and Assessment Tomorrow hosted the inaugural Beyond Multiple Choice Conference and Exhibition, at the International Spy Museum (!) in Washington DC. The event coalesced professionals working in K12, higher education and workforce, from educational, governmental and industrial organizations, to survey the state of practice in computer-based testing and e-assessment, in the U.S., Europe, Canada, and India.

The response to the initial announcements of the event were revealing – learning and training professionals pursuing e-assessment are clearly looking for approaches that move beyond multiple choice and for opportunities to explore the space with like-minded folk. As a result, the speaker roster included leaders in assessment, cognitive and learning sciences, and advanced technologies, from large and small organizations. BMC2018 was truly a cross-section of the industry and offered many opportunities for colleagues to start or advance their own pathways, close to home or on foreign soil.

I look forward to continuing to nurture the success and relationships we've built, and to helping others jumpstart their own. eAssessment is here to stay. And so am I.

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## Feedback for Learning

Once students' work has been assessed, and feedback provided, is this the end of the assessment cycle?

Article by [Dr Naomi Winstone, Director, Surrey Assessment and Learning Lab, University of Surrey.](#)



Assessing work and providing feedback is just one tiny part of the assessment process, yet often too much emphasis is placed on what assessors (be that a teacher, learning system, etc.) do; the role of students is often relatively neglected (Winstone, Nash, Parker & Rowntree, 2017).

As a cognitive psychologist, I am primarily interested in how people process information to facilitate learning. During my career, I have worked closely with students, as a Director of Studies and an Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching).

These roles gave me insight into the many and varied ways in which common models of assessment are not fit for purpose.

In Higher Education (and now to a lesser extent in pre-tertiary education), modular curricula lead to a compartmentalised approach to education, and many students are socialised into adopting a passive role within a transmission-focused education system. Within such a system, we face many challenges:

- The effectiveness of feedback is often positioned as the responsibility of the educator. This is possibly the case if we view feedback as a product that can be delivered to students, but not if we see feedback as a process whereby feedback informs students' ongoing development as learners (Nash & Winstone, 2017).
- Evidence attests to the fact that students often read feedback just once, and remember very little information from it (Nash, Winstone, Gregory, & Papps, 2018).
- Whilst students may be aware from their assessment feedback that there are particular elements of their work that they can improve, knowing how to effect these improvements is a challenge (Winstone, Nash, Rowntree, & Parker, 2017).

We wanted to find a way to move away from piecemeal approach to assessment, to one where students were empowered to bring together every element of feedback information they were exposed to; from their assignments, discussion with peers, tutorials with staff, and their own self-evaluation. We worked with students to design a feedback e-portfolio: *the Feedback Engagement and Tracking System (FEATS)*. The tool has three aims:

1. To enable students to synthesise feedback from multiple assessments, from multiple markers, and from peer feedback and informal feedback dialogues; [Click here to view a short video on this point.](#)
2. To access tools and resources that facilitate development on the basis of feedback; [Click here to view a short video on this point.](#)
3. To set and monitor action plans to support this development, and to promote dialogue with tutors. [Click here to view a short video on this point.](#)

We want learners to develop the skills to be able to regulate their own learning, and take ownership of their own development on the basis of feedback. Thus, an important element of the e-portfolio is a student-facing analytics dashboard which summarises and synthesises the outputs of students' engagement with their feedback. Our evaluation of the portfolio demonstrates that students can see beyond individual modules and grades to gain a sense of their global development as learners, and feel empowered to improve their work. In addition, staff have been encouraged to reflect upon their own feedback provision to ensure that it best supports students' development. With FEATS, grading and educator feedback are merely the input into the process. The impact of assessment on students' learning is realised through students' engagement with, and action upon, the feedback they receive.

## References:

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## When people collaborate, good things happen.

*Blog by Karen Pernyes, Membership & Marketing Co-ordinator for the eAA*

Last month I was invited to attend the 2018 Surpass Conference organised by BTL Group to bring together users of their Surpass Platform. There to promote the e-Assessment Association and the e-Assessment Awards, I was struck by how aligned the objectives of the conference were with the e-Assessment Association's own objectives.

Delegates were there to share thoughts and best practice ideas and collaborate as a group who all share a common goal to improve e-assessment.

It was a 'conference', in the sense that it had speakers, a stage, workshops, and far too many opportunities to drink yet more coffee (oh go on then..), but really it was a showcase of the power of collaboration. Regardless of educational sector, geographical location or scale of project; it was clear that everyone present had something to share and something to learn.

Here are some of the key messages I took away from the event that resonated with the aims and objectives of the Association:

**Collaboration is key: we have more in common than we do apart**

The key theme throughout the conference was collaboration, and that through collaboration, organisations (and the industry) can move forward faster together. Representatives from organisations using e-assessment spanning many different sectors, such as financial, medical, language testing, were all in attendance. Despite each having a different sets of requirements when it comes to assessment design and delivery, for example, from delivering examinations in multiple languages, to the ability to support large scale BYOD testing across multiple time zones, they all ultimately share the same common goal of providing a positive experience for candidates and to 'significantly improve the assessment experience for everyone.'

As the African proverb says 'if you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.'

### **'I see bears on the road'**

Emelie Bral of Breda University of Applied Sciences, used this Dutch saying to highlight that we too often focus on the potential negatives rather than the possibilities when considering a new idea or approach, whilst at the same time ignoring the obstacles we already face with our incumbent systems. The view we all hear so often is that more can 'go wrong' with digital testing, seeing traditional paper-based testing as a 'safer' option yet fail to recognise that it's not without significant problems.

These thoughts echoed the idea from Gavin Busuttil-Reynaud, eAA Board member, in his presentation earlier in the day, that *'the key challenge is not with the technology, but with change management. If change is for the better, we just need the courage to do it.'*

### **Are we thinking enough about 'why', rather than 'what' and 'how'?**

Professor Angela McFarlane asked us all to reflect on 'what good looks like'. Angela asked whether we are focussing enough on not just how and what we're doing in assessment, but 'why'. She suggested that the increasing use of exam data to hold educators to account has unintended consequences, such as an emphasis on teaching to the test, where an ability to demonstrate knowledge of specific content covered in terminal assessments comes at the expense of the broader educational experience.

*'I should have liked to be asked to say what I knew. They always tried to ask what I did not know. When I would have willingly displayed my knowledge, they sought to expose my ignorance. This sort of treatment had only one result: I did not do well in examinations.'* – **Winston Churchill**

Gavin Busuttil-Reynaud of AlphaPlus Consultancy, and eAA Board Member, then demonstrated a bold contrast between what's happening in Welsh and English schools. Unlike in England, test results data from this adaptive e-assessment project in Wales will not be publicly available and not used as an accountability measure.

### **'The future is not waiting for us' – Rebecca Rosenlund, telc**

telc Language Tests haven't simply moved from paper to on-screen, but took the opportunity to be truly innovative and create new, digital tests from scratch.

They considered business goals and conducted stakeholder research before embarking on a new kind of language testing. They recognised that digital testing provides an opportunity for change and gave thought about what they could do differently to allow students to demonstrate their skills, whilst also increasing efficiency in their previously paper-based process.

This fits so neatly with the philosophy of the e-Assessment Association and is one of our key aims:

The eAA builds awareness of the benefits that technology brings to assessment, particularly around delivering better learning and assessment, rather than just greater efficiency.



## World News Round-up

Brief news round-up since our last newsletter. Click on the country listed to be redirected to the news article.

[Lithuania.](#) "National Examination Centre Lithuania successfully implements e-marking reducing the time it took to mark an exam by 60 per cent."

[London, UK](#) ACT, The Association of Corporate Treasurers, successfully launched brand new eAssessment and remote invigilation system early, in time for July exams.

[Singapore.](#) The Ministry of Education announces a series of moves to remove grades from primary and secondary schools in a bold move to show students that "learning is not a competition".

[Worldwide.](#) Oxford University Press launches new on-screen, adaptive English language test

**Australia.** South Australian high school students gear up to become the first in the nation to sit their final Year 12 exams online.

If you hear a great news story, why not get in touch. You can send us a DM on Twitter (@eAssess) or email us via [marketing@e-assessment.com](mailto:marketing@e-assessment.com)



## E-ATP 2018

The eAA is proud to work collaboratively with many organisations and the European division of the Association of Test Producers, and their annual conference, is no exception.

For the second year running, the Association secured a breakout session at the event in Athens focussing on three case studies from the winners of the 2018 e-Assessment Awards.

Chaired by eAA Vice Chairman, Patrick Craven from City & Guilds, we brought together Voula Kanistra from Trinity College London (Best Research winners with Lancaster University), Louella Morton from Testreach representing The Nautical Institute (winners of Excellence in Export) and eAA Board Member, Tim Burnett from BTL presenting on behalf of Innovate Awarding (winners of the Innovation Award).

After the session, Tim kindly took a few eAA members aside to ask for their views on the conference as a whole. If this is an event you have yet to attend, then it is worth taking a few moments to listen to their feedback. [Click here to watch](#) (2:09 mins). In a separate short chat with eAA Vice-Chairman Patrick Craven (City & Guilds), Tim and Patrick talk about the value of the annual event to our members. [Click here to watch](#) (1:09 mins)

We hope to see more of you in Madrid next year. We are proud to support this event and appreciate the support we receive in return. E-ATP placed flyers promoting the Association and our Awards Programme in every one of the 300 delegate bags and published our awards advert in the conference brochure.

Click [here](#) to go to the E-ATP conference website.

# eAA Response to Technical Qualifications Consultation

July 2018



The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England. In July 2018, Ofqual published a consultation document around their plans for regulating the new Technical Qualifications that will form part of the new T-Levels being introduced by the government for first teaching from 2020.

The Board of the Association felt that given the lack of any reference to the use of e-assessment within this consultation document, and indeed the inclusion of suggested assessment approaches that we felt would prove restrictive to the use of e-assessment approaches to support the delivery of these technical qualifications, that the eAA should formally respond to the consultation document.

We took on board feedback from members and responded only to the following questions:

- Q12 (single assessment window and the impact on e-assessment options)
- Q34 + 35 (marking for core skills and occupational specialisms being undertaken only by AOs)
- Q52 (innovation barriers)

We have now published our response on our website. Click [here](#) to open up our response in a new window.

Thank you to those members who responded to our calls for thoughts on this issue.

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*However we'd far rather you stayed and in fact encouraged your colleagues to join too. So in the words of KC and the Sunshine Band from 1979, "Please don't go."*

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