

# Development of an Electronic Marking Assistant

Caroline Smith, Roger Stone  
Loughborough University

## Abstract

*This poster reports the findings of a HEA funded project to develop and pilot an Electronic Marking Assistant (EmMA). Although similar developments have been proposed in the past, this system differs in that it maintains a direct relationship between the marking and the assessment criteria and indirectly, the intended learning outcomes for the module concerned. The marking assistant was used in the assessment of 300 Computer Science programming assignments and 17 Information Science essays. Created using JavaScript and PHP, the marking assistant offered 2 volunteer staff a convenient marking interface displaying assessment criteria, available marks, pre-loaded feedback comments and free text options. During marking, raw, component marks were converted to a weighted overall mark by the marking assistant and feedback comments selected or written by staff were recorded for each student along with any generic feedback given. Students were able to access their individual electronic feedback quickly and conveniently after marking.*

*Computer Science students welcomed the initiative, reporting increased convenience of electronic feedback over conventional methods. The format of the feedback could also explain the encouraging result that students appeared to engage with their feedback, reviewing it before submitting other work.*

*For the staff involved, an unexpected benefit of the project was the opportunity to critically review their assessment practice.*

*Although, in its current format, the marking assistant is most likely to be of use for certain assessment methods, the project has prompted a wider discussion of the place of electronic marking tools within the host institution.*