

SPARK^{PLUS}

Power to learn

User Guide V3.12



Keith Willey and Mike Howard



TABLE OF CONTENTS

MODES IN SPARKPLUS	4
MODES OVERVIEW	6
GROUP CONTRIBUTION MODE	7
STUDENT BENCHMARKING	8
MULTIPLE ASSESSOR MODE	9
MULTIPLE-CHOICE MODE	12
MULTIPLE CHOICE MULTIPLE ATTEMPT	13
SURVEY MODE	15
CLICKER MODE	16
SUBJECTS	17
SUBJECT SETUP SCREEN	19
ADDING STUDENTS TO A SUBJECT	21
GROUP CONTRIBUTION	22
INTRODUCTION TO GROUP CONTRIBUTION TASKS USING SPARKPLUS	24
CREATING A NEW TASK	27
GENERAL TASK SETUP	28
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN	34
MONITORING	39
RESULTS	45
EXCLUSIONS AND NON CONTRIBUTORS	49
STUDENT BENCHMARKING	50
INTRODUCTION	52
IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS	53
CREATING A NEW TASK	55
GENERAL TASK SETUP	56
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN	60
MONITORING	65
RESULTS	66
MULTIPLE ASSESSOR MODE	70
INTRODUCTION	72
CREATING A NEW TASK	75
GENERAL TASK SETUP	76
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN	79
MONITORING	86
RESULTS	87
MULTIPLE CHOICE	90
INTRODUCTION	92
CREATING A NEW TASK	94
GENERAL TASK SETUP	95
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN	98
MONITORING	104

RESULTS	105
MULTIPLE-CHOICE MULTIPLE ATTEMPT	107
INTRODUCTION	109
CREATING A NEW TASK	113
GENERAL TASK SETUP.....	114
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN	118
MONITORING.....	124
RESULTS	125
SURVEY / FEEDBACK / FORMATIVE REVIEW	127
INTRODUCTION	129
CREATING A NEW TASK	130
GENERAL TASK SETUP.....	131
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN	133
MONITORING.....	136
RESULTS	137
CLICKER.....	138
INTRODUCTION	140
CREATING A NEW TASK	141
GENERAL TASK SETUP.....	142
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN	143
RUNNING A CLICKER ACTIVITY.....	148
MONITORING.....	149
RESULTS	150
TROUBLESHOOTING.....	151
FORGOTTEN PASSWORD.....	152
UPLOADING STUDENTS INTO SUBJECTS	153
GETTING STUDENTS INTO TASKS	154

MODES IN SPARK^{PLUS}

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MODES OVERVIEW	6
GROUP CONTRIBUTION MODE	7
STUDENT BENCHMARKING	8
SCORE MODERATION	8
RESULTS	8
MULTIPLE ASSESSOR MODE	9
TUTOR BENCHMARKING	9
ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND RUBRIC DEVELOPMENT	9
OUT OF CLASS PREPARATION FOR IN-CLASS DISCUSSION	10
DEATH OF WRITING FOR THE TUTOR	10
FEEDBACK FROM DIFFERENT COHORTS	10
SPEEDING UP THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS	11
FACE-TO-FACE A THING OF THE PAST	11
MULTIPLE-CHOICE MODE	12
MULTIPLE CHOICE FOR SELF-EVALUATION	12
BE CREATIVE WITH QUIZZES	12
MULTIPLE CHOICE MULTIPLE ATTEMPT	13
FEEDBACK IS IMMEDIATE	13
INCLUDE IMAGES AND COMMENTS	13
AUTOMATIC GRADING	13
ONLINE COLLABORATION AN ADVANCED OPTION	13
PASSWORD PROTECTION OF QUIZZES	14
SURVEY MODE	15
ANONYMOUS SELF ENROLMENT	15
CLICKER MODE	16

MODES OVERVIEW

SPARK^{PLUS} currently has eight available modes, the operation of which are described in the following section. It is a tool without peer in that it uses a common interface to facilitate a wide variety of pre-class and in-class individual and collaborative assessment and learning activities. While other tools may offer one or a few modes that support activities reported to be similar to those available in SPARK^{PLUS}, none provide the combination of functionality, features and flexibility.

Group Contribution Mode

Students assess each other's contribution to group project or work.

Student Benchmarking Mode

Student assessments are compared to a benchmark assessment and peers.

Multiple Assessor Mode

All the assessments are shown on the slider, accommodates comparisons of self with peers and/or experts. Supports identified or anonymous reporting.

Multiple Choice Mode

Facilitates multiple choice questions, with or without explanation of reason for chosen answer and free response questions

Multiple Choice - Multi Attempt Mode

Multiple choice questions where you specify the number of attempts allowed. Immediate feedback is provided. Flexibility to determine mark for the attempt they chose the correct answer.

Survey/Formative Review Mode

Same as multiple choice except not graded and participants can be asked to provide consent (useful for research projects)

Clicker Mode

Student use mobile phones, tablets or PCs to answer questions in class, results displayed via histogram, comments categorised for different answer responses.

Collaborative mode

This is not a separate mode. It's an additional feature for some of the modes. It currently works in Multiple-Assessor and Multiple Choice Multiple Attempt. It allows students to review individual ratings and reasoning (identified or anonymously reported) and subsequently collaborate to regrade, assess, provide an opinion on or answer questions about a learning activity.

Note: most modes support publishing options that allow students to compare their judgement answers and reasoning with instructors and peers.

GROUP CONTRIBUTION MODE

Group work is used to facilitate peer learning and encourage students to develop a range of professional skills. SPARKPLUS overcomes a major issue with group projects, that the group mark does not reflect the contribution of individual members. The Group Contribution Mode addresses this through a combination of self and peer assessment. Assessing individual students' learning performance and contribution as part of the group can address these concerns.

Assessment strongly influences learning, any activity designed to improve peer learning, collaboration and the development of professional skills should be supported by assessment that promotes it.

Self and peer assessment may be used to not only promote these objectives but address the inequities of equal marks for unequal contributions. Group members are responsible for negotiating and managing the balance of contributions and then assessing whether the balance has been achieved.

Not only does SPARKPLUS make group work fairer, produces learning-oriented / developmental feedback it promotes the development of a range of professional skills.

SPARKPLUS enables students to confidentially rate their own and their peers' contributions to a team activity. Being a criteria-based SPARKPLUS allows academics the flexibility to choose or create specifically targeted criteria to allow any task, activity or attribute to be assessed. SPARKPLUS automates data collection, collation, calculation and distribution of feedback and results.

SPARKPLUS produces two assessment factors:

- The Relative Performance Factor (RPF) is a weighting factor determined using both the self and peer rating of a student's contribution. It is typically used to change a team mark for an assessment task into an individual mark as follows:

$$\text{Individual mark} = \text{team mark} * \text{Individual's RPF}$$

- The Self Assessment to Peer Assessment (SA/PA) factor is the ratio of a student's own rating of themselves compared to the average rating of their contribution by their peers. The SA/PA factor has strong feedback value for development of critical reflection and evaluation skills. A SA/PA factor greater than 1 means that a student has rated their own performance higher than the average rating they received from their peers and vice versa.

Together these two factors can be used to promote honest reflective assessment and developmental feedback by identifying suspected free riders, over and under-raters and saboteurs (see <http://sparkplus.com.au/factors/>).

SPARK^{PLUS} also allows students to provide anonymous written feedback to their peers and affords a number of options including radar diagrams for graphically reporting both individual and team results.

STUDENT BENCHMARKING

The student benchmarking mode develops professional skills including judgment, critical evaluation, self-evaluation and the provision of feedback. An instructor can create an assessment of an exemplar piece of work, activity or task against which students can compare their own understanding and/or judgment. Instructors can choose from a number of predefined rating scales or create their own, however typically for benchmarking a Standard Assessment scale is used (for example Unsatisfactory (Z), Pass (P), Credit (C), Distinction (D) and High Distinction (HD)).

Students enter their assessments by moving a series of continuous assessment sliders against a number of criteria. They can also provide comments to support and explain their ratings. Instructors can also enter their assessments and an explanation of their ratings against each criterion.

The calculation of a student's feedback score is generated using a formula that calculates a mark based on the differences between theirs and their instructor's assessments.

SCORE MODERATION

SPARKPLUS allows moderation of the feedback scores by adjusting individual scores to fit within two specified boundaries.

The specified boundaries are the students' highest score, the one closest to the instructor's rating and the lowest, the score furthest from instructor's rating.

The instructor can change these minimum and maximums to better reflect the experience level and skills of the students.

A holistic bar allows instructors to fine tune their grading (the individual criterion bars move proportionally tracking the movement of the holistic slider). This sets the minimum and maximum feedback scores provided to the class. The feedback scores for the remaining student cohort are calculated to fit within these two moderation limits according to a chosen formula (a number of different formulas are provided to accommodate different assessment objectives).

RESULTS

When the results are published each student can see their ratings and comments, the instructor's ratings and comments and the average ratings of the remaining student cohort for each criterion. There is also the facility to provide each student with an individual feedback score/grade for the activity.

Benchmarking activities require students to do some individual thinking and exercise their judgement before class where they will discuss the activity with their peers.

MULTIPLE ASSESSOR MODE

The Multiple Assessor mode is useful to develop professional skills including judgement and critical evaluation, co-construction of standards and providing feedback. We use the multiple assessor mode for:

- Students to compare their self-assessments and reasoning to those of their peers and/or an expert/s
- Self-evaluation through comparison
- The development of academic standards and the understanding of assessment criteria
- Providing feedback and assessment of submitted work and or presentations from a range of stakeholders
- Achieving a consensus opinion in the assessment of awards, tenders, projects etc
- Providing feedback from a range of stakeholders in regard to professional development during internships for engineers, nurses, teachers etc.

The following briefly describe how the multiple assessor mode is used to facilitate a number of these activities.

TUTOR BENCHMARKING

While a key factor in learning oriented assessment activities and demonstrating learning outcomes is the provision of feedback to students, the capacity of academics to provide quality judgements and feedback is often taken for granted. Without appropriate consensus around the meaning and understanding of academic standards there is no assurance that assessment standards and practices are valid and/or reliable. In addition, if academics don't understand or can't articulate the standards they are assessing, how can they provide students with quality learning oriented feedback on their work.

The multiple assessor mode is used for Tutor Benchmarking exercises to co-construct academic standards and improve the quality of grading and feedback provided to students.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND RUBRIC DEVELOPMENT

Similarly the multiple assessor mode can develop both students' understanding of assessment criteria and the expected standards before assessment tasks are undertaken. In these activities students will be given a piece of work to judge against the assessment criteria for an upcoming assignment or project. Again they provide their judgements and reasoning. The program allows the comparison of assessments from different groups of students or to an expert or experts. I use these activities for students to develop a class agreed marking rubric. Hence the assessment rubric is developed from students understanding and judgement rather than being provided by an academic. We have found this process helps students learn and make informed decisions on how they will demonstrate the assessment

learning outcomes rather than finding out after the fact (on receiving their grade) how they may have misinterpreted the assessment criteria.

OUT OF CLASS PREPARATION FOR IN-CLASS DISCUSSION

The multiple assessor mode is also useful in facilitating out of class activities to promote informed in-class discussion typically used in a flipped instruction approach.

Similar to the activities described above students are asked to provide judgements and opinions in response to a set of criteria about a piece of work, designs, news item, readings etc. The results are then published before class (in most cases anonymously). Students can then compare their opinions and judgements to those of their class peers and subsequently reflect on the similarities and differences to re-evaluate their own judgement and opinions. In a sense students are collaborating or sharing before they even come to class. This makes the in-class discussion both more productive and able to start from a more mature level.

DEATH OF WRITING FOR THE TUTOR

A variation of the activities described above is to put students in groups to self and peer review each other's work. Again the results are shared anonymously, and subsequently in-class collaborative group discussions are conducted where they reassess and provide feedback on each piece of work. The fact that individual opinions and judgements are recorded and shared discourages groupthink and reduces the chances of dominant personalities or opinions monopolising the discussions. This type of activity enables students to benefit and learn from everyone's work in the group not just from the assessment and feedback they receive on their own.

FEEDBACK FROM DIFFERENT COHORTS

The multiple assessor mode can be set up to provide feedback from different cohorts. For example, students can receive feedback on their presentation or submission from their peers, academics and/or a group of external experts. A comparison between different assessor cohorts enables students to micro-evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their capacity / capability.

For example, let's consider a nurse who is undertaking a practical work placement. They could receive feedback from patients, fellow nurses, doctors and administration staff. There are differences in the skills required to deal with each cohort. Let's assume that a nursing student receives positive feedback from their peer nurses, doctors and the administration staff but only average feedback from their patients. They are now able to identify the area of their development/training they need to address.

SPEEDING UP THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Our university is among one of several organisations using the multiple assessor mode to speed up the process of assessing grants, projects, tenders and awards. Similar to the process described above panellists prior to meeting are asked to make their assessments and explain their reasoning. The results are published for individuals to review and reflect and if necessary re-evaluate their assessments before the assessment meeting. During the meeting it is easy to identify the projects that everyone agrees should and should not be funded, allowing most of the time to be focused on discussing differences in opinions about submissions that are borderline.

FACE-TO-FACE A THING OF THE PAST

The multiple assessor mode also facilitates collaborative assessments to be conducted online. Again participants make their individual assessments prior to the first online meeting, the program then switches to a collaborative mode where participants (typically in groups) can all interact online through sharing the same screen. This screen allows the participants to both view/compare (identified or anonymously) the individual members assessments and to enter their collaborative assessment and comments.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE MODE

Multiple choice style quizzes are a useful way to provide students with feedback on their progress. They can be used by students to evaluate their learning or as means of preparation before class. Alternatively, you may also wish to set up a multiple choice quiz that can be completed during class as part of a discussion topic or to provide feedback on what students do and do not understand. Both of these activities allow in-class discussion / interaction / feedback to be dynamic and focus on where it is most needed.

SPARKPLUS offers the opportunity to include an image and/or comment to be associated with each question. The comment boxes are extremely valuable as they allow students to explain their reasoning for choosing a particular answer.

SPARKPLUS may be set to allow students to compare their answers and reasoning to that of their peers allowing them to reflect on any differences and re-evaluate their own judgement. Hence, students are in effect collaborating or sharing even before they come to class allowing in-class discussion to be more productive and start from a more advanced level.

MULTIPLE CHOICE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

While SPARKPLUS does allow multiple-choice quizzes to be automatically graded we most often use them for formative purposes to facilitate self-evaluation, discussion and targeted feedback. However, we have successfully conducted summative activities. For this purpose SPARKPLUS allows instructors to choose to display both the questions and answers in random order. This reduces the chances of students being able to interpret the answer choices by looking at another student's screen.

While SPARKPLUS allows the instructor to publish the correct answers and their reasoning (explanation of solution) to students, we typically don't use this option. In our research we have found that students' discussions are often brought to a premature close if they are presented with the instructor's answer and reasoning, incorrectly thinking that this is all they have to learn.

BE CREATIVE WITH QUIZZES

The use of formative activities allows instructors to be creative and have quizzes with more than one correct answer for example looking at the problem from two different perspectives, no correct answers or just a simple free response questions to allow students to exercise their critical evaluation, judgement and subsequently provide an opinion. The focus of these formative activities is to promote learning, provide an opportunity for students to compare and consider their reasoning, judgement and understanding with their peers, promote discussion and provide a form of self-evaluation against the learning outcomes.

Students can also be put into groups to do these exercises and questions can be either multiple-choice, multiple-choice with comment box or free response.

MULTIPLE CHOICE MULTIPLE ATTEMPT

Multiple-choice multiple-attempt extends the learning opportunities afforded by traditional multiple-choice activities through increased interaction and collaboration and the provision of immediate feedback to both students and instructors.

FEEDBACK IS IMMEDIATE

In multiple-choice multiple attempt activities students are provided with immediate feedback about their chosen answer choice. A correct answer choice turns green while an incorrect choice turns red. Hence a student can attempt the question and immediately receive feedback about their answer. If a student's answer is incorrect they can reconsider the question and have another attempt. Hence students may continue answering a question until choosing the correct answer, while reflecting on the question and the information provided by incorrect choices to learn and clarify what they do and do not understand.

INCLUDE IMAGES AND COMMENTS

SPARKPLUS offers the opportunity to include an image and/or comment to be associated with each question. The comment boxes that appear once the correct answer has been chosen are extremely valuable as they provide the opportunity for students to explain their understanding of why the answer is correct. This is also particularly useful to instructors as together with the analysis of how many attempts were required to choose the correct answer it enables common misconceptions or areas where students are having difficulties to be identified.

AUTOMATIC GRADING

SPARKPLUS allows multiple choice multiple attempt quizzes to be automatically graded according to an instructor entered marking scheme that allows diminishing partial credit to be awarded for subsequent attempts. For example, we often use 100% for the first attempt, 50% for the second attempt, 25% for the third attempt and 0% for any subsequent attempts.

Most frequently we use multiple-choice multiple attempt for collaborative formative activities where students discuss the questions and answers in small groups to facilitate self-evaluation and learning. Students find the combination of collaborative activities and the immediate feedback particularly engaging making learning fun. The feedback afforded to both students and instructors of such activities for example conducted at the beginning of a class allows subsequent discussions to be more productive, focused and to start from a more advanced level.

ONLINE COLLABORATION AN ADVANCED OPTION

SPARKPLUS also allows advanced options such as online collaboration where groups of students undertake their collaborative quizzes online all viewing the same screen

on their personal computers while talking via Skype or some other suitable communication software.

We have also found multiple-choice multiple attempt mode useful in conducting threshold exams. These are exams where students have to demonstrate they have achieved the learning outcomes at a satisfactory level before they can progress to the next topic, assessment activity or undertake their final exam.

PASSWORD PROTECTION OF QUIZZES

SPARKPLUS provides instructors with many choices in designing their assessments including password protection of quizzes, manual or predetermined start and stop times and to display both the questions and answers in random order. In addition, a questions format can be either multiple-choice, multiple-choice with comment box or free response.

SURVEY MODE

This mode allows SPARK^{PLUS} to be used to administer surveys. Surveys are useful for obtaining information and feedback about your teaching methods, learning activities and what students do and don't yet understand.

We regularly use surveys SPARK^{PLUS} for:

1. At the end of a class particularly if we have introduced a new type of learning activity we may ask students to complete a short three question survey with the option of providing free response feedback. We have found that students are keen to contribute in these surveys, particularly when they can see that their feedback makes a difference. Students also appreciate being able to look at the published results as it enables them to benchmark their own understanding and engagement with their class peers.
2. We have also found it useful to have a short survey about the learning outcomes associated with a difficult topic. We might for example ask students how confident they are that they could address particular learning outcomes, or alternatively ask them for feedback on what they still don't understand. This information is used to make instructional choices and influence the design of additional in-class and out of class learning activities.
3. We use this mode to conduct surveys before and after workshops / forums and for student satisfaction surveys.
4. The tool allows the instructor/researcher to enter a consent form that participants must agree to before being given access to the survey. This tool is extremely useful for conducting surveys for research where ethical consideration means consent must be obtained.

ANONYMOUS SELF ENROLMENT

In the cases of research surveys, forums and workshops it is likely you may not have prior knowledge of survey participants. In this case SPARK^{PLUS} allows anonymous self-enrolment.

Note: the anonymous self enrolment feature is normally disabled as a security precaution (user training is required to prevent long-term access to non-institutional staff and students). However, it can be made available to staff on request through an alternative SPARKPLUS installation.

CLICKER MODE

Clickers are the colloquial name for a participant response system often used by academics to increase in class student engagement and participation. They may also be used in seminars and conferences to solicit information and opinions from delegates. SPARK^{PLUS} removes the need for participants to be given a handheld transmitter or clicker by allowing participants to use their phone, tablet, PC or other Internet capable device to respond to questions posed by the instructor/presenter.

SPARK^{PLUS} allows many variations in the way a task is set up and hence conducted, including the following:

- The questions are displayed on each student's individual device. This allows the clicker mode to be used during a webinar or audio conference when participants may be in different locations or not have the capacity to view a common screen.
- The results may be published allowing students to view the answers and responses at a later date or alternatively to reflect on the results before class to facilitate informed in class discussion.
- Students can be put into groups. This allows the results from each group to be compared or the combined results to be viewed. For example experts, postgraduate and undergraduates could be placed in different groups.
- Questions can either be multiple-choice, multiple-choice with comment box or free response.

SUBJECTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUBJECTS	17
SUBJECT SETUP SCREEN.....	19
ADDING STUDENTS TO A SUBJECT	21

SUBJECT SETUP SCREEN

LOG IN

Log in to SPARK^{PLUS} using your username and password. If you have forgotten either your username or your password please see '**Forgotten your Username or Password**' in the troubleshooting section.

CREATING A SUBJECT

1. Click on the Setup link from the top main menu and click on the '**New Subject**' button in the Active Subjects list.
Remember you must have a subject selected before you can perform any subject management.
2. Enter the Name, Code, Semester, Year and Status to the entry boxes. You also must enter a Chief Instructor. Click 'Click to select' under the Chief Instructor label and an account search window will pop up.
 - 2.1. To find an account, enter an appropriate search term, for example, entering 'Dav' will find anything with 'Dav' in it, such as David Williamson, William Davidson, etc. You can enter account IDs or email addresses.
 - 2.2. Click on the desired account and the search window will disappear and the Chief Instructor area will display the selected account name.
3. Click 'Submit' to store the new subject. If another subject is already in the system with the same name, code, semester and year, you will be notified that the subject already exists and you'll need to change one of the fields to be able to save the subject.

CLONING AN EXISTING SUBJECT

Another way to create a new subject is to clone (make a copy of) an existing subject with its tasks. This is particularly useful if you are delivering the same subject to a new cohort of students.

TO CLONE A SUBJECT:

1. Select the subject from the Active Subjects list and click "Clone Subject".
2. Enter a new name, code, semester or year.
3. By default all tasks are cloned. To change how or which tasks are cloned click the "Show Task Clone Options" button.

Task Clone Options

All tasks from the original subject are listed in a table and each column has controls for cloning each task.

- 3.1. The first column labelled "Clone?" has a checkbox which controls whether that task will be cloned.
 - 3.2. The second column has two controls: one to change the name and the other to make the cloned task active (visible to students) or not
 - 3.3. The "Keep Group Names" column will copy all the group names from the task (the group members aren't copied).
 - 3.4. The "Keep Criteria" column copies all the criteria or questions from the task.
 - 3.5. The Assessment Start and End columns control the start and end for the assessment period for each task cloned. You can use the ▼ button to copy the dates down to the lower tasks in the list.
4. Click the "Submit" button to complete the clone and a new copy of the subject with the details entered will appear. If there is an error displayed, make the necessary changes and click "Submit" again.

ACTIVATING A SUBJECT

1. In the 'SUBJECT STATUS' section you can change the subject to be either Active (visible to students) or Inactive (invisible to students - tasks are also not visible to students). Note that when a subject is inactive the subject name is displayed in pink text.

ADDING STUDENTS TO A SUBJECT

After you have set up your subject as previously described you will be returned to the subject setup screen where you can activate the subject and enrol students.

Students can be added to a subject using either standard enrolment or if integrated enrolment from your Learning Management System (recommended) if available, at UTS this is UTSONline.

STANDARD ENROLMENT

1. If you choose to use standard enrolment it is recommended that students be uploaded from a text file.
2. Choose 'Upload'
3. Download the template and prepare a text file that contains the information in the following format:

FirstName	LastName	AccountID	Email
John	Smith	123456789	j.smith@email.com

Use browse to select your prepared file and then choose submit

Note: Only Administrators have the option of uploading passwords but we recommend to not upload passwords. It's recommended to let everyone use the forgotten password procedure to set their passwords.

ENROLMENT FROM UTSONLINE (RECOMMENDED)

1. Select the desired subject
2. In the ENROLMENT section click the Setup button
3. A pop-up window will appear listing all the subjects in UTSONline for which you are the subject coordinator
4. Select the desired subject
5. Choose whether or not you want students to be removed automatically when you click the update enrolments button
6. Select 'Save' and you'll be returned to be subject setup screen
7. Click the 'Import Enrolment' button

GROUP CONTRIBUTION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO GROUP CONTRIBUTION TASKS USING SPARKPLUS.....	24
CREATING A NEW TASK.....	27
GENERAL TASK SETUP	28
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN.....	34
MONITORING.....	39
RESULTS.....	45
EXCLUSIONS AND NON CONTRIBUTORS	49

INTRODUCTION TO GROUP CONTRIBUTION TASKS USING SPARK^{PLUS}

Group work is used to facilitate peer learning and encourage students to develop a range of professional skills. However, students report that group projects may be unfair and a demotivating experience. Often these feelings are associated with team members feeling that their own success is dependent on other team members who don't participate to the same level as them. Assessing individual students' learning performance and contribution as part of the group can address these concerns.

Since assessment strongly influences learning, any activity designed to improve peer learning, collaboration and the development of professional skills should be supported by assessment that promotes it.

Self and peer assessment may be used to not only promote these objectives but address the inequities of equal marks for unequal contributions. Group members are responsible for negotiating and managing the balance of contributions and then assessing whether the balance has been achieved.

Over the last decade our focus in using self and peer assessment has changed from making group work fairer (something it has been shown to achieve) to using it to produce learning-oriented / developmental feedback and promote the development of a range of professional skills.

SPARK^{PLUS} enables students to confidentially rate their own and their peers' contributions to a team activity. Being criteria-based SPARK^{PLUS} allows academics the flexibility to choose or create specifically targeted criteria to allow any task, activity or attribute to be assessed. SPARK^{PLUS} automates data collection, collation, calculation and distribution of feedback and results.

SPARK^{PLUS} produces two assessment factors:

- The Relative Performance Factor (RPF) is a weighting factor determined using both the self and peer rating of a student's contribution. It is typically used to change a team mark for an assessment task into an individual mark as follows:

$$\text{Individual mark} = \text{team mark} * \text{Individual's RPF}$$

- The Self Assessment to Peer Assessment (SA/PA) factor is the ratio of a student's own rating of themselves compared to the average rating of their contribution by their peers. The SA/PA factor has strong feedback value for development of critical reflection and evaluation skills. A SA/PA factor greater than 1 means that a student has rated their own performance higher than the average rating they received from their peers and vice versa.

Together these two factors can be used to promote honest reflective assessment and developmental feedback by identifying suspected free riders, over and under-raters and saboteurs (see <http://sparkplus.com.au/factors/>).

SPARK^{PLUS} also allows students to provide anonymous written feedback to their peers and affords a number of options including radar diagrams for graphically reporting both individual and team results.

RPF (Relative Performance Factor)

The RPF factor is a weighting factor that can be used to change a team mark for an activity or part of an activity into an individual mark.

$$\text{RPF Factor} = \sqrt{\frac{\text{Total ratings for individual team member}}{\text{Average of total ratings for all team members}}}$$

Individual mark = team mark * Individual's RPF

For example, if a team's project mark was 80 out of 100 and a team member receives a RPF factor of 0.9, they would receive an individual mark of $80 * 0.9 = 72$ to reflect their lower than average team contribution as perceived by a combination of themselves and their peers. Even if not used to moderate summative assessment the RPF factor can be used formatively to provide feedback to assist student development.

In applying the RPF (Performance) factor we recommend that the maximum mark be capped at 100% to reflecting the maximum available mark for demonstrating the particular learning outcome or outcomes achievement. For example, if the project mark for a high-performing team was 95% and the highest contributor to this team received an RPF factor of 1.1, then without capping this student would receive a mark greater than 100%.

$$95\% * 1.1 = 104.5\% > 100\%$$

We never recommend that students should receive more than the maximum marks allocated for demonstrated achievement of the associated learning outcomes as this is a distortion that reduces assessment validity. It can also promote strategic group behaviour where team members focus on maximising their individual grade rather than focusing on improving the achievement of the overall team. We strongly recommend that students are informed of this rule/adjustment before engaging in the assessment activity. This is most easily achieved by including it in the student assessment handout or subject outlines.

SA/PA (SELF ASSESSMENT TO PEER ASSESSMENT FACTOR)

The second factor calculated is the SA/PA (Feedback) or Self Assessment to Peer Assessment factor. It is the ratio of a student's own rating of themselves compared to the average rating of their contribution by their peers. This has strong feedback value for future development both for self-critical reflection and peer evaluation.

$$\text{SAPA Factor} = \sqrt{\frac{\text{Self ratings for individual team member}}{\text{Average of ratings for individual by team members}}}$$

It provides students with feedback about how the rest of the team perceives their contribution. For example, a SA/PA factor greater than 1 means that a student has rated their own team contribution higher than their contribution was rated on average by their team peers. Conversely, a SA/PA factor less than 1 means that a

student has rated their own contribution lower than they were rated on average by their team peers.

CREATING A NEW TASK

1. LOG IN

Log in to SPARKPLUS using your username and password. If you have forgotten your password see Forgotten Password in the Troubleshooting section.

2. CREATING A NEW TASK

Tasks can only be created inside of an existing subject.

2.1. For the purpose of this guide we are assuming that a subject already exists. If you need to first set up a subject, see 'Creating a Subject'.

3. To create a task you must first select an existing task by clicking any task name under your chosen subject heading and clicking the 'New Task' button.

4. On the next screen select 'Group Contribution', which is located under the 'Select a Mode' title and click 'Next'.

GENERAL TASK SETUP

1. TASK NAME

1.1. Give the task a name

NOTE: the mode will automatically be set to 'Group Contribution' as set in the previous step.

2. STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

2.1. When you first set up the task, we recommend that you set the status to 'Inactive', this disables student access to the task.

NOTE: Remember to change this to active when you're ready for students to start using the task.

3. TASK TIMELINE

3.1. Set the date and time when the task begins and ends.

4. STUDENTS AND GROUPS

4.1. Group size: Enter the minimum and the maximum permissible group size.

5. RATING OPTIONS

5.1. Assess all peers at once?

Select the option that best suits your task.

5.1.1. No (without total slider) - this hides the *total slider.

5.1.2. No (with total slider) - this shows the *total slider.

5.1.3. Yes (without total slider) - this enables you to assess all peers at once, but you cannot opt to show the *total slider.

Typically for norm-based assessment tasks where you are rating the contribution to a team task or activity we recommend selecting 'Yes' to rate all peers at once.

* The total slider enables you to holistically adjust all the assessment sliders to fine tune your overall rating for an individual. This works through an additional slider that adjusts the individual slider ratings proportionally to achieve the desired overall rating.

5.2. Norm-based Sliders

Checking this option forces students to make norm-based assessments. For example it prevents students from rating all members of the group as being well above average.

NB. The Force Sliders to be norm based option is only available if the Assess all peers at once option is set to "yes".

5.3. Rating Style

Choose between 'Slider' or 'Buttons'

5.3.1. Slider: continuous scale slider

5.3.2. Buttons: the slider will "snap" to the centre of each slider division – this option can be used when you don't need or want assessors to make interim ratings.

5.4. Rating Scale

Choose between:

5.4.1. Well below average.

Named after the first entry in the ratings scale. A norm based scale with five equal divisions. This is the recommended option.

5.4.2. No Contribution

Named after the first entry in the ratings scale. A norm-based scale with unequal divisions. If a student has not contributed to a task you would rate them on the 'no contribution' section of the scale.

5.4.3. Custom

You may create your own scale and rating labels. It is highly recommended that if you create your own scale you make it norm-based.

5.5. Rating Labels

This area displays the ratings labels and mark values for your chosen option.

If you have selected 'Custom' rating scale above you can add / delete and edit labels here.

5.6. Display the ratings slide divisions equally.

If you don't select this option the divisions of the rating scale will be presented proportionally to their assigned value.

5.7. Students can enter comments?

This enables each student to give written feedback or comments for the peer members of their group.

5.7.1. Set to 'yes' or 'no'.

5.8. Comments Compulsory?

When comments are compulsory, a student is only deemed to have completed their submission when they have entered comments that meet or exceed the minimum word count for each group member

5.8.1. If you wish comments to be compulsory enter a tick in the box.

5.8.2. If you have selected to make comments compulsory enter a figure in the box to indicate a minimum word count.

5.9. Maximum Word Count

Set a maximum word count for comments. This may be used to force students to be precise and specific in the feedback they provide rather than entering verbose comments.

6. STUDENTS FEEDBACK OPTIONS

These options determine what the students will see when the results are published. Before the results are published all the students will see is their own ratings.

6.1. Display options

- 6.1.1. Publish results only when at least [x] students have submitted in each group. It's best to enter 3 or more to protect students' anonymity as this prevents students from being able to interpret from the factors how other team members rated them or their peers when 2 or fewer students have submitted.
- 6.1.2. Allow students to see the rated profile
Shows or hides the sliders and therefore shows or hides the self rating, the average rating from peers and the student average rating given to peers
- 6.1.3. Publish average rating (the average assessment given by a student)
This displays the average rating given by students to their peers on the slider. This can only be displayed if "Allow students to see the rated profile" is switched on.
- 6.1.4. Publish overall self and peer average ratings in one slider
Displays a slider that shows the combined total weighted contribution from all criteria. This can be particularly useful when you use weighted categories.

6.2. Factor Display options

- 6.2.1. Publish overall Self Assessment / Peer Assessment Factor (SA/PA)
This factor is number which shows a comparison of a student's view of their overall contribution to the group view of their over all contribution. A value greater than one means the student's assessment of themselves is higher than the assessment from their peers and vice versa for a value less than one. A value of one is ideal because that means the student's assessment of themselves matches the assessment from their peers.
- 6.2.2. Publish overall Relative Performance Factor (RPF)
This factor is a number that indicates a student's overall relative performance compared to other group members. A value greater than one means the student's performance is better than the average

performance of all the group members and vice versa for a value less than one. A value of one means the student's average performance is the same as the average of the group.

6.2.3. Publish category Self Assessment / Peer Assessment Factor (SA/PA)
This is the same as the overall SA/PA but at the category level. Useful if you need to report on parts of the assessment.

6.2.4. Publish category Relative Performance Factor (RPF)
This is the same as the overall RPF but at the category level. Useful if you need to report on parts of the assessment.

6.3. Written Feedback Display Options

6.3.1. Publish feedback
This gives you the option to display to the students the written feedback from the other students. If you use this option, it's advisable to use the feedback moderation available in the results screen before publishing the results.

6.4. Group Publish Options

6.4.1. Publish the Group Radar Diagram and results table?
Use this option to show the student a radar diagram of the factors from each member of the group.

6.5. Display options for groups with less than the minimum submission?

Click this to reveal the following options for dealing with groups that have less than the minimum submissions. You set the minimum number of submissions using the "Publish results only when at least [x] students..." setting. The SA/PA factor is never revealed when there are not enough completed submissions in the group.

6.5.1. Factor Display options

6.5.1.1. Publish overall RPF to groups with less than minimum submission

6.5.1.2. Enable this option to show the overall RPF that's calculated from the few that submitted. See the "Publish overall Relative Performance Factor (RPF)" option above for more information.

6.5.1.3. Publish the category RPF to groups with less than minimum submission.

6.5.1.4. Enable this option to show the category RPF that's calculated from the few that submitted.

6.5.2. Group Results Display options

The below options determine whether the the other group member's

RPFs are displayed on the group radar diagram. They are only displayed if the "Publish the Group Radar Diagram" option is enabled.

6.5.2.1. Publish the groups overall RPF when less than minimum submissions

6.5.2.2. Publish the groups category RPF when less than minimum submissions

7. FACTOR CALCULATIONS

7.1. Calculation Method

Select the calculation method (displayed in the associated graph) from the pulldown menu you want to use to calculate the RPF.

7.1.1. **Normal:** Original SPARK^{PLUS} formula often preferred for first-time users and early-stage classes (for example: first year) who may be yet to develop their judgement and capacity to provide fair and informed ratings as it is less harsh on students who contribute below average to the group.

7.1.2. **Knee:** Preferred option for non-first-time users, late-stage classes or activities in which participants are assumed to have the skills to provide informed ratings/judgement. Produces an RPF that more accurately predicts the true performance for students who have contributed less than average for their group.

7.1.3. **Linear:** not recommended for use with norm-based activities. Typically only used by experienced users who may wish to incorporate activities using non-norm-based assessment scales.

7.2. RPF Factor Limits

Tick the box if you wish to limit RPF factors. After ticking the box enter your selected limits. You may wish to use this option to discourage those students who made take on more than their fair of the group's work in an effort to boost their RPF. For example in this case you can set the minimum limit at 0 (zero) and maximum limit at 1.15. We do not generally recommend setting a lower limit above zero for example 0.5 as this may encourage students to make no contribution knowing that in this case they would still be awarded at least 50% of the group mark.

8. STUDENT CREATED GROUPS

Students can form their own groups. The group names can be from a list that is uploaded or the students can create their own group names.

Students can create the groups clicking the "Manage Group" button. They then select a group and select the students they wish to invite into the group and click "Submit". The students that have been invited will see a message on their Manage Group screen asking them if they wish to accept or decline the invitation. If the amount of students that decline makes the group smaller than

the minimum group size then the group is completely emptied and reset so it can be selected to build a new group.

- 8.1. Enable students to form their own groups from your uploaded list
You can enable students to form their own groups by checking the 'Allow students to form their own groups from your uploaded list' checkbox. When this option is selected the group formation date fields and other relevant fields are displayed.

8.2. GROUP FORMATION BEGINS

- 8.2.1. Enter dates for the beginning of the Group Formation period*

8.3. GROUP FORMATION ENDS

- 8.3.1. Enter date and date for the end of the Group Formation period*

*The dates must be set to start and end before the rating period (which is set at the top of the page under the heading 'TIMELINES').

8.4. STAFF CREATED NAMES

If you are supplying the group names you must have enough group names to enable all the students to be able to be in a group. For example if there are 40 students enrolled and the maximum group size is 5 you will need at least 8 group names.

You create the group names after saving the task. See Students and Groups in the Task Overview section.

8.5. ALLOW STUDENTS TO CREATE GROUP NAMES?

Choose this option to allow students to create group names.

You must also create or upload group name prefixes, which are required to manage how many groups are created by the students. One prefix per group is allowed here.

You create the prefixes after saving the task. See Students and Groups in the Task Overview section.

8.6. Invitations to join a group are to be confirmed in xx hrs

Students have the specified time to accept or decline an invitation. If the time expires before a student decides, they are dropped from the group.

9. SAVE YOUR SETTINGS

- 9.1. Click Submit to save your task setup and progress to the Task Overview Screen.

If you have missed something you will not be able to progress, a screen alert will guide you through anything you have missed or entered incorrectly.

TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN

On this screen you can see the settings of the task and enter additional information such as students and groups or criteria.

STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

We recommend that this should be set to inactive during setup – you can change it to active when you're ready for the students to see the task in their task list. When the assessment period is set to start at a future time it enables the students to know what tasks are coming up.

TIMELINES

Here you can see the Rating period and Rating period extensions.

Edit Rating Period

To edit the rating period you must select the 'Modify Task' button to return to the 'Task Setup Screen'.

Grant Rating Period Extensions

You can give extensions to individual students or give an extension to a group. The extension has a start and an end.

1. To give an extension click either the 'Student Rating Period Extensions' or the 'Group Rating Period Extensions' button. This loads the Alter Rating Period window.
2. Click the checkboxes for the people or groups that you wish to extend then click the 'Alter Rating Period' at screen bottom left.
Note to change the list from students to groups click the appropriate radio button at screen top right.
3. The screen now has fields to enter a start date and an end date. Enter the desired dates and times and click submit. The selected students or groups are listed and if the list is incorrect click the back button to change the selection of students or groups.
4. Click Submit to save the new dates for the selected students or groups.

Remove Rating Period Extensions

1. To remove rating period extensions click either the 'Student Rating Period Extensions' or the 'Group Rating Period Extensions' button.
2. Click the checkboxes for the students whose rating period you wish to remove.
3. Click the 'Remove Extension' extension button at screen bottom left. You'll be asked to confirm and the rating periods will be removed.

CRITERIA

This is where you can enter or upload your criteria. There are two ways to set up criteria:

- entering criteria manually or
- uploading a pre-prepared text file.

Entering Criteria Manually

Click 'Enter' to open the criteria screen.

1. MANUAL WEIGHTING

Choose to manually weight the categories or not – this is useful if you wish to have some categories of criteria more heavily weighted than others. You can enter 0 to have a category that is feedback only and does not contribute to the factor calculations.

2. CATEGORY

Enter your category name and select a display type (you set the display options in the previous screen).

3. CRITERIA

Next type the criteria – this can be free text supported by an image if necessary (see Corresponding Image below).

4. CORRESPONDING IMAGE

One corresponding image for each criteria can be uploaded by clicking 'Browse' to navigate to the image on your computer. Images will be resized to the option selected (default is 650w x 500h). Please note if your image contains text and is considerably larger than the image sizes available the text may be difficult to read once uploaded - bear this in mind when selecting images.

5. ADDITIONAL CRITERIA

Every category can have multiple criteria – to add more criteria, click 'Add Criteria'.

6. ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES

You can add more categories by clicking the 'Add Category' button at the bottom-left of the screen.

7. COMMENT BOX PROMPT

(only displayed if you've enabled Comments – see: Students can enter comments in the General Task Setup Section).

When you have entered all the categories and criteria, enter a prompt to be displayed above the comments box - If you leave this blank the default text will be used, which is 'Enter your Feedback'.

8. SAVING YOUR CRITERIA

Click 'Save' when you've finished.

9. RETURN TO OVERVIEW SCREEN

When you have finished entering all the criteria click 'Close' to exit this screen and return to the overview screen.

Uploading Criteria using a pre-prepared text file

Click 'Upload' to open the upload window.

1. DOWNLOADING THE TEMPLATE

On this screen there will be a button labelled "Criteria Template". Click this to download a sample text file.

It will look something like this:

Category	Criterion
Cat 1	Criterion a
Cat 1	Criterion b
Cat 1	Criterion c
Cat 2	Criterion a
Cat 2	Criterion b

2. UPLOADING YOUR CRITERIA

You can upload your file, once complete, by clicking 'Choose File' and navigating to the file saved on your local computer. You will be able to modify this data or add supporting images manually, if you choose, by clicking 'modify'.

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

Here you can see how many students are enrolled in the subject and how many have been included in this task.

To participate in a Group Contribution task, students must be placed in groups. You can generate random groups by clicking "Create Random Groups" and following the prompts. If you want to use specifically allocated groups (rather than random ones) you must set them up manually or upload them as described below.

There are two ways of setting up groups.

- Either by entering the group names manually, or
- By uploading a pre-prepared text file.
- Students forming their own groups

Setting up student groups manually

Click the 'Manage Groups' to open the Groups screen.

1. Click 'New' to create a new group.

Continue until you have set up all the groups you require.

2. If you want to create many groups using names like "Group 1", "Group 2" etc you can use the "Create Multiple" feature by carefully following the prompts.

3. When you have setup your groups you are now ready to add students.

4. Select the desired group from the drop down at the top of the left-hand panel.
5. The right hand panel will display all the students enrolled in the subject.
6. To add students to the selected group click a students name on the right and click the '<- Add' button and the student will appear in the list on the left.
7. You can allocate alias names to each student if you choose.
8. Once you have created your groups close the Manage Groups window and the the main overview screen will refresh to update the student counts.

Setting up student groups by uploading a pre-prepared text file

1. Click 'Upload'
2. On the upload window there will be a button labelled Template labeled "Template for students in groups". Click the button to download a sample text file.

Note: If you don't have a student list, click the enrolled students button to download one.

The template file format will look something like this:

AccountID	GroupName
12345678	Group 1
12345679	Group 1
12345680	Group 2
12345681	Group 2

3. If you have many groups to set up, but want to add students manually later you can upload the group names by selecting 'Upload Group Names'. Follow the supplied template and upload the file.
4. Files are uploaded by clicking 'choose File' (or equivalent) and navigating to the file saved on your local computer.

Students forming their own groups

You can enable students to form their own groups in the task setup. If it is enabled you also can have students create their own group names.

1. Students forming groups using your group names
Upload or create enough groups for all the students to be in a group. Eg if you have 40 students and the max group size is 5 then you'll need at least 8 group names.
2. Students forming groups using their own group names
When this option is enabled, the Prefix management buttons are available. The prefixes are used to manage how many groups are created by the students. When the students create a group they must select a prefix. That way you have

control over how many groups are created. Eg if you have 40 students and the max group size is 5 then you'll need at least 8 prefixes.

RATING OPTIONS

You will see a summary of your rating options and see a sample slider.
To modify these click 'modify task'.

FEEDBACK OPTIONS

You will see a summary of your student feedback options.
To modify these click 'modify task'.

FACTOR CALCULATIONS

This is where you can review the options you set up on the 'Task Setup Screen'.
To modify these options click 'modify task'.

COMPLETING YOUR TASK SETUP

When you're ready you can change the status to 'Active' to make your task live.

MONITORING

To access the monitoring tab click the Monitoring Icon at the top of the screen. This screen is used to identify problem groups and problem students. There are two options for dealing with problem students - exclude their ratings or mark them as a non-contributor (for more information see Exclusions in the Results section).

TIMELINE

This section enables you to view student progress while they are using the task and enables you to communicate with group members who have not yet submitted.

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

The graph plots students RPF against their SA/PA factor. The orange bars divide the graph to group students with certain characteristics. See the section below “Interpreting Factors” to gain a better understanding of how the factors interplay to give the students the characteristics we’re looking for.

Graph Presets

There are 3 options to using the Graph:

- Standard Graph

The graph is divided into preset sections (orange bars not movable) and each box is labelled. Roll over each of the labels on the bottom right to better understand each graph division.

- Manual - Movable

The orange bars can be moved to divide the graph in any way desired. For example you can use it to isolate students in the far bottom left (possible saboteurs) to email them feedback.

- Show Potential Non-Contributors

The orange bars move to preset locations to isolate students that may be non-contributors (students that didn’t participate due to being unenrolled or similar reason). The group filters isolate the groups that have potential non-contributors and the potential non-contributors cohort can be viewed or emailed via the “Potential Non-Contributors” section above the Graph Presets.

The Graph Symbols

The graph and key on the right hand side both identify students who have been excluded, have made partial submissions, or who are suspected of being over raters (see <http://sparkplus.com.au/factors/>). The associated show and e-mail buttons can be used to view and contact the students respectively.

Excluded

Students’ ratings can be excluded from the calculations (see Exclusions in the Results section) and they are shown on the graph with a red outline.

Non-Contributor

Students that have been set as Non Contributors are not shown on the graph (note the lack of a symbol above) but can be shown in a list or emailed.

Partial Submission

Students that have not completed their submissions are shown on the graph with an orange outline.

Over Rater

The **over-rater threshold** can be set using the slider provided. Students who have submitted an average rating (calculated by averaging all the ratings they gave to themselves and all their team peers) above the selected level will be listed in the over-rater category. For example these may be students who have rated themselves and their peers as being well above average on all criterion.

NB. If the "Force sliders to be norm based" option has been selected in task setup, the over rater section is not available because the force norm-based option stops students from being able to over-rate.

Selected Group

When a group is selected, all members of the group are shown on the graph as green dots.

Clicking on any individual dot on the graph will highlight the other members of their group.

Alternatively you can use the **pulldown menu** below the graph to select a group to highlight the group's students on the graph.

The spread of dots can help detect whether there were problems in the group.

Over Rater in Selected Group

The over raters in the selected group are identified by a dark green dot. See Over Rater and Selected Group above for more information.

Show Group list filters

You can use the filters to isolate groups to easily view a subset of the groups. There are 6 filters available:

- **In selected box(es)**
The groups that have students in the selected graph boxes are shown in the list. Select a box by clicking on the box background. NB if there are no boxes selected no groups will be shown in the list.
- **With excluded students**
Groups that have students whose ratings have been excluded will be shown in the list. To learn about excluding students' ratings see "Exclusions and Non Contributors" in the Results section.
- **With non contributors**
Only groups that have had one or more members designated as non contributor are shown in the list.

- **With less than min submissions**
Groups that don't have the minimum number of valid submissions are shown. Examples of invalid submissions are: no or partial submission, excluded or designated as a non contributor.
- **With RPF Overridden**
Groups that have at least one student that has had their RPF overridden.
- **Group name starts with**
Enter one or two characters and only groups whose name starts with those characters are shown in the list. This feature is very useful to match group names to instructors. Eg groups starting with "GT" could be handled by "Greg Thompson".

The number of groups that match the filters is shown above the group list drop down.

Hide Names

The **Hide Names** option is to de-identify students in case you wish to use this screen in discussions with any particular student or groups. If this box is not checked a student's name and factors will be displayed in a rollover window when the mouse pointer is placed over any individual dot on the graph.

Search For Student

Use this button to load an overlay to find a student. Enter a partial or whole name and matching students from the subject will be shown. Click on the desired student and click "Select Student's Group" and the overlay will disappear and the chosen student's group will be selected. To identify the student, roll over each of the highlighted markers on the graph to find them.

HOW TO USE THE GRAPH BOXES

Depending on the Graph Preset selected (see "Graph Presets" earlier) you can highlight by clicking on any of the twelve boxes produced by the orange dividers on the graph. You can click on several boxes to highlight a number of them at the same time. You can then use the e-mail and show buttons associated with the 'Selected Graph Boxes' (at screen bottom right) to contact and/or view the students whose factors fall within the highlighted boxes.

For example let's say that you want to send an e-mail to all students with a SA/PA factor greater than 1.1. First adjust the left-hand vertical orange bar so that it sits on a SA/PA factor of 1.1. Next click on the three boxes along the left-hand edge of the graph. Select the e-mail button in the 'Selected Graph Boxes' section. An e-mail window will open up with the selected students identified. Proceed to send an e-mail to the students. For example, you may wish to e-mail these students as follows:

An analysis of the assessment results has identified that you have rated your contribution to your group considerably higher than the average rating of your contribution you received from your team peers. This could be for a number of reasons including the following:

- You over rated the contribution of all team members (an over rater)
- You deliberately over rating your own contribution in the attempt to achieve a higher performance factor
- You have not received feedback from your peers about the level of your performance and hence believe that you have contributed at a higher level than your peers feel you have contributed.
- I would suggest that you reflect on the results you have received and if necessary seek feedback from your group peers to explore any discrepancies that you believe exist.

Similarly you could choose to identify other categories of students and provide them with appropriate feedback as required.

INTERPRETING FACTORS

Resources (detailed explanations and videos related to interpreting the SPARK^{PLUS} factors) to enable instructors to make the best use of the functionality available on this screen can be found at <http://sparkplus.com.au/factors/>

SA/PA is plotted left to right with a high SA/PA to the left. The vertical orange lines divide the SA/PA into 3 groups:

1. **High SA/PA:**

Students have given themselves a higher rating than they were on average rated by their team peers. This could be for a number of reasons ranging from a student not receiving honest feedback from their group about their performance to a deliberate attempt by a student to sabotage the results (see <http://sparkplus.com.au/factors/> for a more detailed explanation and videos related to interpreting the SPARK^{PLUS} factors).

2. **Mid-range SA/PA:**

Students ratings of themselves match the average rating they received from their team peers

3. **Low SA/PA:**

Students have given themselves a lower rating than the average rating they receive from their team peers.

RPF is plotted vertically with a high RPF at the top. The horizontal orange lines divide the RPF into 3 groups:

1. **High RPF:**

High achievers – have contributed more to the task

2. **Mid-range RPF:**

Have contributed an average or fair amount to the task

3. **Low RPF:**

Poor contribution to the task

INTERPRETING THE GRAPH

Combining the divisions of SA/PA and RPF you see twelve boxes. The three boxes on the far right are for the students who do not have a SA/PA. Students do not have a SA/PA when:

- they have not completed their submission
- have had their assessments excluded (see section about excluding)
- have been identified as a non-contributor (see section about non-contributors).

Generally the students will be grouped by the below characterisations in those boxes.

If you are using the “Standard Graph” graph preset then the characterisations are shown under the Graph Presets. Roll over each to see a full description.

If using the “Manual - Movable” graph preset then the below characterisations can describe the students found in each box.

If using the “Show Potential Non-Contributors” graph preset then only use it for that feature.

1. **Top Left:**

Have performed above average but rated themselves even higher. Students in this category are often high achieving but may think they are better than they are or alternatively have taken on additional work believing it is the only way that it will meet their standard and subsequently resent the poorer contributions of their peers. They could also be a high achieving over rater. Students in this category should be encouraged to take a more collaborative and less dominant role in their team.

2. **Top Middle:**

Have performed very well (above-average contribution) and rated themselves fairly.

3. **Top Right:**

Have performed very well but rated themselves modestly (often typical of a high performing student who voluntarily agreed to take on more than their fair share of the required work)

4. **Middle Left:**

Have performed around the average of their team but see their contribution as more significant rating themselves even higher

5. **Middle Centre:**

Have contributed fairly and have judged themselves accordingly. Students in this category are typically competent, good contributors and collaborators in team activities. (Note: the factors are a result of norm-based assessment. Hence an average or even above-average contribution to a poor team may still be unsatisfactory. Similarly, a student who contributes below average to an

excellent team may have demonstrated the activity learning outcomes at a high level).

6. Middle Right:

Have performed around the average of their team but rated themselves modestly

7. Bottom Left:

Have over-rated themselves while the rest of the group have rated them as being a poor contributor – the results for students in this category are typically investigated further to identify whether they are a saboteur (see <http://sparkplus.com.au/factors/>).

8. Bottom Middle:

Have been a poor contributor but they recognise this having judged themselves as contributing significantly below average.

9. Bottom Right: Guilty

Have not contributed enough and, possibly out of guilt, have under-rated themselves

10.No SA/PA Top (High RPF)

Have performed very well (above-average contribution)

11.No SA/PA Middle (Mid Range RPF)

Have contributed fairly.

12.No SA/PA Bottom (Low RPF)

Have been a poor contributor.

Note: the above characterisations are a guide only

RESULTS

To access the Results tab click the Results Icon at the top of the screen.

TIMELINE

This section enables you to view student progress while they are using the task and enables you to communicate with group members who are not contributing.

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

You can view student results as the student will see them.

You can also delete ratings and group ratings if you've set up some test data for demo purposes – please note be 100% certain that you wish to do this as there is no undo option.

RESULT DETAILS AND MODERATION

Enables you to review various aspects of the task results and moderate written feedback. Each of the buttons will load the Results List screen with various options pre-selected. Use the Custom View button to select your own display options.

Search for Student

The Results list screen has a “Search for Student” button at screen top right. Use this button to load an overlay to find a student. Enter a partial or whole name and matching students from the subject will be shown. Click on the desired student and click “Select Student's Group” and the overlay will disappear and the chosen student's group will be selected.

Results List Loading Buttons:

1. 'View Written Feedback'

- 1.1. This button allows you to view student comments and feedback on either a group by group or entire cohort basis. The feedback can be further sorted by assessor or assessee by selecting the appropriate button.

2. 'Overall Factors'

- 2.1. This button allows you to view the RPF and SA/PA factors for a single team or the entire cohort. In the results screen the RPF is displayed in an edit box. This enables the RPF to be overridden - for more information see the Overriding RPF section.

Note: The "View factors..." button (at screen top right) of the Results List screen toggles between showing the factors as they would be published to the students or showing all the factors. The publish options in task setup determine what the students see when the results are published. This is only relevant for groups that have less than the minimum number of submissions.

3. 'Category and Overall Factors'

3.1. This button allows you to view the overall and category RPF and SA/PA factors for a single team or the entire cohort

4. 'Avg Ratings'

4.1. This button allows you to view the overall and category average rating received by a student for a single team or the entire cohort.

This is particularly useful when you have many criteria and you wish to get a sense of how the students were rated on average compared to each other.

5. 'Ratings'

5.1. This button shows the ratings submitted by students for a single team or the entire cohort.

The feedback can be further arranged by assessor or assessee by selecting the appropriate button

5.1.1. Ratings can be converted to grades (grades are the letters from the slider) eg on the "Well Below Average" scale, a rating of 70 equates to "AA" (Above Average). The grades are suffixed with a plus "+", minus "-" or no suffix depending on where the score falls in the slider division:

Score	Suffix
In first 25%	-
Between 25% and 75%	No suffix
Above 75%	+

5.1.2. Click the "Convert Scores To Grades" to toggle the scores to grades and vice versa.

5.1.3. Ratings (scores) or grades can be downloaded by clicking the download button.

6. 'Exclusions/Non Contributors'

Use this view to exclude students' ratings or designate students as non-contributors.

6.1. To exclude click the checkbox(es) in the "Excluded" column for the students that need to be excluded.

6.2. To designate non-contributors click the checkbox(es) in the "Non Contributors" column for the students that are non contributors.

7. 'Custom View'

7.1. Allows any combination of results information to be displayed. All the display options are shown as checkboxes in the darker area at the top of

the screen along with a "Load" button. Use the checkboxes to decide what to display and then click the "Load" button.

Download Results

When the Results List window is displaying data, the download button (at screen top right) will download what you're seeing as a CSV file. This enables you to do any further processing of the data in your chosen spreadsheet editing application e.g. Excel.

Radar Diagrams

Allows individual student or group radar diagrams with factor tables to be viewed and printed.

Note: multiple diagrams can be printed by highlighting the first students/groups name and holding down the shift key and selecting the end of your desired list to download consecutive diagrams or the control key to add individually selected diagrams.

OVERRIDING AN RPF

When an RPF is displayed in the results listing window it is displayed in an edit box. This enables the RPF to be overridden. The "RPF Overridden" column will show a tick for the people that have had their RPF overridden.

To override the RPF, enter a value into the box and hit return or enter on your keyboard.

To remove the overridden RPF and return the RPF to the original calculated value delete the value in the box and press return or enter on your keyboard.

Note: This feature is intended to be used sparingly - only when it's clear the person needs their RPF changed.

HOW TO MODERATE INAPPROPRIATE FEEDBACK

How to disable all Written Feedback

To disable all feedback from being published to students

1. Click on Modify Task from underneath the Active Subjects list
2. Deselect Publish Feedback from the Feedback Options section towards the bottom of the page.
3. Click Submit to save your changes

How to disable Written Feedback from individuals

You can disable feedback from individuals, for example because it is inappropriate, from the results screen.

1. In the Result Details and Moderation section click the View Feedback button

2. The Results List screen pops up with a group selector. You can either select a group or all students. Comments can be further arranged by assessor or assessee by selecting the appropriate button.
3. The window will reload showing feedback comments from your chosen group with checkboxes to disable comments from individual students.

Note: the withheld comments are displayed in pink. Withholding the feedback comments does not delete them, it just stops them from being published. This means that an academic can still access the comment if for example any misconduct action needs to be taken if the comments are inappropriate.

PUBLISH RESULTS

Click the 'Publish Results' button to publish results to students.

Note: When results are published the students can see the results as per the publish options selected in the task setup screen. Before the results are published you can see the results as a student will see them by clicking the "View Results as Student" button. Also, after the results are published you can't modify the task.

EXCLUSIONS AND NON CONTRIBUTORS

EXCLUDING STUDENTS' RATINGS

Sometimes one or more students in a group may try to “bunk” the system by entering high ratings for themselves and low ratings for others. This usually becomes evident because their SA/PA value ends up high. Sometimes it can be very high if the other members of the group marked that person to be a poor contributor.

The Monitoring screen is a very good place to find these students. They are normally in the bottom left of the graph (high SA/PA - low RPF). It can also help to read the comments given to and by these students to help learn the group dynamic.

Excluding the ratings entered by these students can help “normalise” the RPFs for the rest of the group. The skewed ratings from the person who tried to “bunk” the system (sometimes referred to as a saboteur) have been removed so only “good” ratings are used to calculate the RPFs.

You can use the Monitoring screen or the Results Details screen to exclude students ratings.

DESIGNATING A STUDENT AS A NON CONTRIBUTOR

When a student is designated as a non-contributor their ratings and all the ratings given to them are ignored in the calculations of the factors. In other words it's the same as if they were not in the group.

It is very important to find non-contributors because generally they get extremely low ratings and therefore the factors for the other members of the group can be quite high - this is unfair because it inflates the RPF for the other members. For example if a non-contributor is left undesignated in a group the other members could get RPFs as high as 1.4 - which then can push their group mark extremely high.

Generally the way to identify non-contributors is through them having very low RPFs - from about 0.3 to as low as zero.

Use the “Show Potential Non-Contributors” graph preset in the Monitoring screen to find the student groups that have potential non-contributors and view the comments to determine whether the student is a non-contributor or an extremely low performer.

You can also designate students as non-contributors from the Results Details screen.

STUDENT BENCHMARKING

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STUDENT BENCHMARKING	50
INTRODUCTION.....	52
IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS.....	53
CREATING A NEW TASK.....	55
GENERAL TASK SETUP	56
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN.....	60
MONITORING.....	65
RESULTS.....	66

INTRODUCTION

The student benchmarking mode is useful to develop professional skills including judgement, critical evaluation, self-evaluation and the provision of feedback. It enables an instructor to create an assessment of an exemplar piece of work, activity or task against which students can compare their own understanding and/or judgment against their peers and their instructor. Instructors can choose from a number of predefined rating scales or create their own, however typically for benchmarking a Standard Assessment scale is used (for example the UTS scale is Unsatisfactory (Z), Pass(P), Credit (C), Distinction (D) and High Distinction (HD)).

Students enter their assessments by moving a series of continuous assessment sliders against a number of criteria. They can also provide comments to support and explain their ratings. Instructors can also enter their assessments and an explanation of their ratings against each criterion.

The calculation of a student's feedback score is generated using a weighted mean squared error of the differences between their's and their instructor's assessments.

SPARK^{PLUS} facilitates moderation of the feedback scores by adjusting individual scores to fit within two specified boundaries. These boundaries are set by SPARK^{PLUS} anonymously providing instructors with the student submissions that differ the most from and is closest to their own ratings. Instructors subsequently grade the judgement demonstrated in these two submissions against each criterion. A holistic bar allows instructors to fine tune their grading (the individual criterion bars move proportionally tracking the movement of the holistic slider). This sets the minimum and maximum feedback scores provided to the class. The feedback scores for the remaining student cohort are calculated to fit within these two moderation limits according to a chosen formula (a number of different formulas are provided to accommodate different assessment objectives). Typically for most benchmarking assessment applications we recommend using the parabolic formula with limits. The parabolic formula recognises the typically non-linear relationship frequently applied in grading. For example if a participant demonstrates satisfactory judgement they may receive a 50%Pass for a particular activity. Let's say another participant's judgement is twice as good they may receive a 70% credit not a 100% as would be the case if a linear relationship was employed. Similarly a participant may have to demonstrate judgement an order of magnitude better to receive >85% or a HD (High Distinction).

When the results are published an instructor may choose options that allow each student to see their ratings and comments and/or the instructor's ratings and comments and/or the average ratings of the remaining student cohort for each criterion. There is also the facility to provide each student with an individual feedback score/grade for the benchmarking activity.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Benchmarking activities are typically designed to require students to do some individual thinking and exercise their judgement before class where they discuss the activity with their peers.

The following is a typical student benchmark activity:

1. Students are provided with a sample piece of work, for example:
 - A de-identified student's submission used with permission from a previous semester
 - A design solution for a project, building or even a workplace occupational health and safety issue
 - A news item, opinion or reading etc.
2. After discussing the assessment criteria each student assesses before class the sample work and provides comments explaining their ratings.
3. In the next class/tutorial students (often in groups) discuss their ratings of the work and collaboratively re-assessed the work against the criteria.
4. The instructor then leads a discussion exploring agreement and differences between group ratings and also discusses various assessment of the work.
5. After the tutorial students can log on to SPARK^{PLUS} to compare their individual assessments to the academic's assessments for each criterion and to read the academic's comments. In addition, they can view their mark calculated based on how close the their individual assessment was to the instructors assessment.

Students are encouraged in their discussions to explore the different opportunities to learn. They may choose to ask / answer / or debate questions raised by differences between their peers, different groups or the instructor and in the process improve their own understanding or address gaps in their learning. It is our experience that in collaborative exercises most students tend to adopt a combination of these learning methods, but we strongly encourage those that feel they have nothing to learn from their peers to take the opportunity to teach.

The SPARK^{PLUS} multiple assessor mode provides more sophisticated feedback and capacity to compare ratings between peers or groups of peers. Student benchmarking is however recommended when you have a large cohort who you wish to engage with the assessment criteria before an upcoming assessable activity. Benchmarking activities not only develop student's judgement and critical valuation but enables them to make informed decisions on how to approach an assessment task and demonstrate the associated learning outcomes. Without such activities students often find out after the fact (on receiving their post-assessment grade and feedback) that they have misinterpreted or misunderstood the assessment criteria and/or learning outcomes associated with an activity.

IMPORTANT NOTE: When this mode was first developed it was often used for summative activities with a student's grade being determined by their feedback

score. However, it soon became apparent that as the sophistication/complexity/interpretive nature of activities increased the instructor often through the class discussion and/or after considering students' ratings and reasoning realised that they had not considered some meaning and they had to change their ratings. We quickly came to appreciate that assessment standards are socially constructed and even with a well-defined rubric are open to interpretation until they are engaged with, used and discussed. While some early-stage subjects still use the feedback scores as a means of a summative assessment we prefer to use the student benchmarking for formative activities most frequently associated with assisting students to develop their judgement and understanding of criteria before they undertake their assessment tasks.

CREATING A NEW TASK

1. LOG IN

Log in to SPARKPLUS using your username and password. If you have forgotten your password see Forgotten Password in the Troubleshooting section.

2. CREATING A NEW TASK

Tasks can only be created inside of an existing subject.

2.1. For the purpose of this quick guide we are assuming that a subject already exists. If you need to first set up a subject, see 'Setting up a Subject'.

3. To create a task you must first select an existing task by clicking any task name under your chosen subject heading and clicking the 'New Task' button.

4. On the next screen select 'Student Benchmarking', which is located under the 'Select a Mode' title and click 'Next'.

GENERAL TASK SETUP

1. TASK NAME

Give the task a name

NOTE: the mode will automatically be set to 'Student Benchmarking' as set in the previous step.

2. STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

2.1. When you first set up the task, we recommend that you set the status to 'Inactive', this disables student access to the task.

3. NOTE: Remember to change this to active when you're ready for students to start using the task.

4. TASK TIMELINES

4.1. Set the date and time when the task begins and ends.

4.2. Auto add students

Click the checkbox to automatically add all enrolled students into the task when you click submit.

5. RATING OPTIONS

5.1. Allow Total Slider for Rating Adjustments

This enables students to holistically fine tune or adjust their overall weighted assessment rating. A total (holistic) slider moves the individual criterion bars proportionally tracking movement (adjustment) of the holistic slider.

5.2. Rating Style

Choose between 'Slider' or 'Buttons'

5.2.1. Slider: continuous adjustable slider

5.2.2. Buttons: slider will "snap" to the centre of each slider division – this option can be used when you don't need or want assessors to deliberate over interim adjustments. For example when using a Likert scale.

5.3. Rating Scale

Choose between:

5.3.1. Graded Assessment

5.3.2. Likert Scale 5 Point

5.3.3. Likert Scale 7 Point

5.3.4. Or Custom Scale

5.4. You can also select to display the ratings slider divisions equally
If you don't select this option the slider divisions will be presented proportionally to the value that you have specified calculated as a percentage of 100. For example a value of 50 means this division will take up half of the slider, a value of 25 means this division will take up a quarter of slider

5.5. Students can enter comments?

This enables students the capacity to provide written feedback or comments to support and/or explain their ratings.

Choose between:

5.5.1. yes one comment box (overall comment box for all criteria)

5.5.2. yes comments per category (provide one comment box for each category of criteria)

5.5.3. no commenting allowed (no comment boxes will be displayed)

5.6. Comments Compulsory?

5.6.1. When comments are compulsory, a student is only deemed to have completed their submission when they have entered the minimum word count in each of the text boxes provided

5.6.2. If you wish comments to be compulsory enter a tick in the box.
If you have selected to make comments compulsory enter a figure in the box to indicate a minimum word count.

5.7. Maximum Word Count

5.7.1. Set a maximum word count for comments.

6. STUDENTS FEEDBACK OPTIONS

6.1. Allow students to see the sliders

Decide if students should see the sliders or not

6.2. Publish overall benchmark score

If checked the overall benchmark score for all students will be displayed.

6.3. Publish final score

If checked the final score is published.

6.4. Publish category benchmark score

If checked each category benchmark score is displayed.

6.5. Publish overall benchmark results in one slider

If checked all ratings will be consolidated into one slider.

6.6. Publish written feedback.

This gives you the option to display written feedback from each student. If

you use this option, it's advisable to use the feedback moderation available from the results screen.

- 6.7. Publish average benchmark ratings
If checked the average benchmark ratings will be displayed for all students.
- 6.8. Publish instructor ratings x Days x Hours after publish date
you can delay publication of instructor ratings.
This is useful if you would like the students to re-examine their assessments before releasing the benchmark._
- 6.9. Publish instructor comments x Days x Hours after publish date
you can also delay publication of instructor comments.
This is useful if you would like the students to re-examine their assessments before releasing the benchmark._
- 6.10. Publish to students with incomplete submissions
If checked students who haven't completed the tests will see the results.

7. BENCHMARK RESULT CALCULATIONS

This is where you choose the calculation method and whether to allow moderation.

The raw results are based on how close the student ratings is to the benchmark ratings entered by the instructor.

For example, if the instructor benchmark for a criterion is a mid-distinction rating and the student assesses the same criterion with the same rating then the raw (unadjusted) result for this criterion is calculated as 100. When the student rating is higher or lower than the instructors benchmark rating the result for the criterion will be less than 100.

7.1. Calculation Method Choose between:

7.1.1. Linear no limits:

This will produce the raw scores without moderation. The results are a basic comparison of the benchmark to the student assessment. Not generally recommended for typical benchmarking activities.

7.1.2. Linear fit within limits:

This will adjust the raw scores to fit within the moderation limits using a linear function. That is, the result is calculated as per the 'Linear No Limits' but you can set a lower and upper limit for the results between which all student results are 'fitted' in a linear fashion. Not generally recommended for typical benchmarking activities.

7.1.3. Parabolic fit within limits:

This will adjust the raw scores to fit within the moderation limits using a parabolic function. Recommended for most benchmarking activities. In general we regard the parabolic fit algorithm with moderation to produce the most reliable and fair benchmark scores. This is particularly important if your activity is summative (results contribute to a student's grade).

8. Click Submit to save your task setup and progress to the Task Overview Screen

If you have missed something you will not be able to progress, a screen alert will guide you through anything you have missed or entered incorrectly.

TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN

On this screen you can amend any information you have entered and enter additional information such as students and groups, questions and answers.

STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

We recommend that this should be set to inactive during setup – you can change it to active when you're ready for the students to see the task in their task list. When the assessment period is set to start at a future time it enables the students to know what tasks are coming up.

TIMELINES

Here you can see the Rating period and Rating period extensions.

Edit Rating Period

To edit the rating period you must select the 'Modify Task' button to return to the 'Task Setup Screen'.

Grant Rating Period Extensions

You can give extensions to individual students or give an extension to a group. The extension has a start and an end.

1. To give an extension click either the 'Student Rating Period Extensions' or the 'Group Rating Period Extensions' button. This loads the Alter Rating Period window.
2. Click the checkboxes for the people or groups that you wish to extend then click the 'Alter Rating Period' at screen bottom left.
Note to change the list from students to groups click the appropriate radio button at screen top right.
3. The screen now has fields to enter a start date and an end date. Enter the desired dates and times and click submit. The selected students or groups are listed and if the list is incorrect click the back button to change the selection of students or groups.
4. Click Submit to save the new dates for the selected students or groups.

Remove Rating Period Extensions

1. To remove rating period extensions click either the 'Student Rating Period Extensions' or the 'Group Rating Period Extensions' button.
2. Click the checkboxes for the students whose rating period you wish to remove.
3. Click the 'Remove Extension' extension button at screen bottom left. You'll be asked to confirm and the rating periods will be removed.

CRITERIA AND BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT

This is where you can enter or upload your criteria and set the benchmark assessment.

There are two ways to set up criteria:

- entering manually or
- upload using a pre-prepared text file.

Entering Criteria Manually

Click 'Enter' to open the criteria screen.

1. MANUAL WEIGHTING

Choose to manually weight the categories or not – this is useful if you wish to have some categories more heavily weighted than others. You can enter 0 (zero) to have a category that is feedback (formative) only and does not contribute to the factor calculations.

2. CATEGORY

Enter your category name and select a display type (you set the display options in the previous screen).

2.1. Display

If Comments per Category has been enabled you can specify how the category is displayed:

2.1.1. Comments Box and Sliders

Criteria can be entered and each criterion has a slider in the assessment screen. Plus a comment box for the category is also displayed. You can enter a prompt for the comment box.

2.1.2. Comments Only (hide sliders)

No criteria can be entered. Only a comment box is displayed along with the comment box prompt.

2.1.3. Sliders Only (hide Comments Box)

Only the criteria and sliders are displayed.

3. CRITERIA

Next type the criteria – this can be free text supported by an image if necessary (see d. Corresponding Image).

4. CORRESPONDING IMAGE

One corresponding image for each criteria can be uploaded by clicking 'Browse' to navigate to the image on your computer. Images will be resized to the option selected (default is 650w x 500h).

Note: if your image contains text and is considerably larger than the image sizes available the text may be difficult to read once uploaded - bear this in mind when selecting images.

5. ADDITIONAL CRITERIA

Every category can have multiple criteria – to add more, click ‘Add Criteria’.

6. ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES

You can add more categories by clicking the ‘Add Category’ button at the bottom-left of the screen.

7. COMMENT BOX PROMPT

(only displayed if you’ve enabled Comments – see General Task Setup Section).
When you have entered all the categories and criteria, enter a prompt to be displayed above the comments box - If you leave this blank the default text will be used, which is ‘Enter your Feedback’.

8. SAVING YOUR CRITERIA

Click ‘Save’ when you’ve finished.

9. RETURN TO OVERVIEW SCREEN

When you have finished entering all the criteria click ‘Close’ to exit this screen and return to the overview screen.

Uploading Criteria using a pre-prepared text file

Click ‘Upload’ to open the upload window.

1. DOWNLOADING THE TEMPLATE

On this screen there will be a button labelled “Criteria Template”. Click this to download a sample text file.

It will look something like this:

Category	Criteria
Overall Design	How would you rate this design in regard to meeting the specified requirements?
Overall Design	How would you rate this design in regard to risk?
Overall Design	How would you rate this design in regard to resource management?
Budget	How would you rate this design in regard to fixed costs?
Budget	How would you rate this design in regard to variable costs?

2. UPLOADING YOUR CRITERIA

You can upload your file, once complete, by clicking ‘Choose File’ and navigating to the file saved on your local computer. You will be able to modify this data or add supporting images after you have uploaded manually, if you choose, by clicking ‘modify’.

VIEW SAMPLE STUDENT RATING SCREEN WITH YOUR CRITERIA

Click to see a pop-up window containing a generic version of the screen students will see during the activity.

BENCHMARK ASSESSMENTS CURRENTLY ACTIVATED

If the text is pink and there is a red cross to the left then the benchmark assessment has not been entered. Click “Enter” to open a screen where you can enter the benchmark assessment. This is the assessment that will be compared to the students’ assessments.

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

If you ticked ‘automatically add all students’ on the setup screen when you set up a new task then you will already have all the students in the task. However if you have opted not to have all students automatically added you will need to manually set them up here.

In this partition you will see how many students are enrolled - you can add all students by clicking ‘Add all students’ and following the prompts. This places the students into the “Ungrouped Students” list.

Alternatively if you require students to be placed into groups you must first set up those groups.

There are two ways of setting up groups.

- Either by entering the group names (with aliases if appropriate) manually, or
- by uploading a pre-prepared text file.

Setting up student groups manually

Click the ‘Manage Groups / Aliases’ button to open the Groups screen.

1. Click ‘New’ to create a new group.
Continue until you have set up all the groups you require.
2. If you want to create many groups using names like “Group 1”, “Group 2” etc you can use the “Create Multiple” feature by carefully following the prompts.
3. When you have setup your groups you are now ready to add students.
4. Select the first group from the drop down at the top of the left-hand panel.
5. The right hand panel will display all the students enrolled in the subject. To add students to a specific group click a name and click the ‘<- Add’ button to create your student group. You can allocate alias names to each student if you choose.
6. Once you have created your group close the ‘Manage Groups / Aliases’ window and refresh the main overview screen to update the student counts.

Setting up student groups by uploading a pre-prepared text file

1. Click ‘Upload’ to upload a pre-prepared file.

Note: If you don't have a student list, click the 'Enrolled Students' button (from the main screen) to download one.

2. On the upload window there will be a button labelled, '*Template for students in groups with aliases*' and a button labelled '*Template for students in groups*'. Click the appropriate button to download a sample text file.

The template file will look something like this:

AccountID	GroupName
12345678	Group 1
12345679	Group 1
12345680	Group 2
12345681	Group 2

3. If you have many groups that you want to set up, but want to add students later, you can upload the group names by selecting 'Upload Group Names'. Follow the template that you can download from the upload window and upload the file.
4. You can upload your file by clicking, 'choose File' (or equivalent instruction depending on your computer platform and browser) then navigating to the file location on your local computer.

RATING OPTIONS

You will see a summary of your rating options and see a sample slider. To modify these click 'modify task'.

FEEDBACK OPTIONS

You will see a summary of your student feedback options. To modify these click 'modify task'.

COMPLETING YOUR TASK SETUP

When you're ready you can change the status to 'Active' to make your task live.

MONITORING

To access the monitoring tab click the Monitoring Icon at the top of the screen.

TIMELINE

This section enables you to view how many students have completed their assessments and enables you to communicate with group members who are not submitting.

RESULTS

To access the Results tab click the Results Icon at the top of the screen.

TIMELINE

This section enables you to view student progress while they are using the task and enables you to communicate with group members who are not contributing.

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

You can view student results as the student will see them.

You can also delete ratings and group ratings if you've set up some test data for demo purposes – **please note** be 100% certain that you wish to do this as there is no undo option.

RESULT SUMMARY

Enter Limits

Allows you to enter the moderation limits if you chose to use either the parabolic or linear formula with limits when you set up the task.

1. Select "Enter limits"
2. First you will be asked to set the minimum limit
3. The blue triangle indicates the ratings of the student that differed the most from your ratings shown (orange triangle).
4. Click on the sliders and use the orange bar to rate the students judgement. For example assuming you have used an assessment scale (Z,P,C,D,HD) if the student's judgement is extremely poor rating a piece of work as a HD when you rated it as a P, you might rate their judgement as unsatisfactory (Z).
5. After rating each criterion you can use the total slider to adjust your ratings holistically.
6. Save your results using the 'Save Min Results' Tab at the bottom right hand corner of the screen.
7. Then choose the tab 'Set Max Result' in the upper left corner and repeat the process rating the judgement of the student who submitted ratings that are closest to the instructor benchmarks.
8. After you saved your results close the window

View Comments

This screen allows you to view the comments divided by the ratings entered by the students. For example you select a category, select a rating level and then all the comments from students who rated at that level are displayed.

If “Any Rating” is chosen, the comments are displayed grouped by slider division.

View Benchmark Summary

Select this button to view a summary of the benchmarking results. The

- The histograms show the frequency with which each category rating was selected. Click on a histogram to expand it or use the ‘Expand All’ option. The rating divisions can be further broken down using the ‘Rating Scale Division Splits’ option on the top left hand side of the screen.
- Select the combination of information that you want to display on each slider from the options provided at the bottom of the screen.

RESULT DETAILS AND MODERATION

Enables you to review various aspects of the task results and moderate written feedback. Each of the buttons will load the Results List screen with various options pre-selected. Use the Custom View button to select your own display options.

1. ‘View Written Feedback’

1.1. This button allows you to view student comments and feedback on either a group by group or entire cohort basis.

2. ‘Overall scores ’

Allows instructors to view the raw (Score) and moderated (Final Score) benchmarking scores for participants on either a group by group basis or for the entire cohort.

3. ‘Category And Overall Benchmark Scores ’

Allows instructors to view the overall and category raw (Score) and moderated (Final Score) benchmarking scores for participants on either a group by group basis or for the entire cohort

4. ‘Ratings’

4.1. This button allows you to view the ratings submitted by students for a single team or the entire cohort.

4.1.1. Ratings can be converted to grades (grades are the letters from the slider) eg on the “Graded Assessment” scale, a rating of 70 equates to “C” (Credit). The grades are suffixed with a plus “+”, minus “-” or no suffix depending on where the score falls in the slider division:

Score	Suffix
In first 25%	-
Between 25% and 75%	No suffix
Above 75%	+

4.1.2. Click the “Convert Scores To Grades” to toggle the scores to grades and vice versa.

4.1.3. Ratings (scores) or grades can be downloaded by clicking the download button.

5. 'Custom View'

5.1. Allows any combination of results information to be displayed. All the display options are shown as checkboxes in the darker area at the top of the screen along with a "Load" button. Use the checkboxes to decide what to display and then click the "Load" button.

Download Results

When the Results List window is displaying data, the download button (at screen top right) will download what you're seeing as a CSV file. This enables you to do any further processing of the data in your chosen spreadsheet editing application e.g. Excel.

PUBLISH RESULTS

Click the 'Publish Results' button to publish results to students.

Note: When results are published the students can see the results as per the publish options selected in the task setup screen. Before the results are published you can see the results as a student will see them by clicking the "View Results as Student" button. Also, after the results are published you can't modify the task.

HOW TO MODERATE INAPPROPRIATE FEEDBACK

How to disable all Written Feedback

To disable all feedback from being published to students

1. Click on Modify Task from underneath the Active Subjects list
2. Deselect Publish Feedback from the Feedback Options section towards the bottom of the page.
3. Click Submit to save your changes

How to disable Written Feedback from individuals

You can disable feedback from individuals, for example because it is inappropriate, from the results screen.

1. In the Result Details and Moderation section click the View Feedback button
2. The Results List screen pops up with a group selector. You can either select a group or all students.
3. The window will reload showing feedback comments from your chosen group with checkboxes to disable comments from individual students.

Note: the withheld comments are displayed in pink. Withholding the feedback comments does not delete them, it just stops them from being published. This

means that an academic can still access the comment if for example any misconduct action needs to be taken if the comments are inappropriate.

MULTIPLE ASSESSOR MODE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MULTIPLE ASSESSOR MODE	70
INTRODUCTION	72
CREATING A NEW TASK	75
GENERAL TASK SETUP.....	76
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN	79
MONITORING	86
RESULTS	87

INTRODUCTION

The Multiple Assessor mode is useful to develop professional skills including judgement and critical evaluation, co-construction of standards and providing feedback. We use the multiple assessor mode for:

- Students to compare their self-assessments and reasoning to those of their peers and/or an expert/s
- Self-evaluation through comparison
- The development of academic standards and the understanding of assessment criteria
- Providing feedback and assessment of submitted work and or presentations from a range of stakeholders
- Achieving a consensus opinion in the assessment of awards, tenders, projects etc
- Providing feedback from a range of stakeholders in regard to professional development during internships for engineers, nurses, teachers etc.

The following briefly describe how the multiple assessor mode is used to facilitate a number of these activities.

TUTOR BENCHMARKING

While a key factor in learning oriented assessment activities and demonstrating learning outcomes is the provision of feedback to students, the capacity of academics to provide quality judgements and feedback is often taken for granted. Without appropriate consensus around the meaning and understanding of academic standards there is no assurance that assessment standards and practices are valid and/or reliable. In addition, if academics don't understand or can't articulate the standards they are assessing, how can they provide students with quality learning oriented feedback on their work.

The multiple assessor mode is used for Tutor Benchmarking exercises to co-construct academic standards and improve the quality of grading and feedback provided to students.

Below we describe how the multiple assessor mode may be used to facilitate Tutor Benchmarking:

PRIOR TO ASSESSMENT MEETING

Individual assessors / tutors are provided with a copy of two pieces of work to grade against specified criteria, entering their assessment (grades, reasoning and feedback comments) into the multiple assessor tool in SPARK^{PLUS}.

DURING ASSESSOR/TUTOR MEETING

Collaborative discussion and assessment: Tutors compare their grading and reasoning (usually displayed anonymously) and reflect on any differences.

Individual grading and reasoning is discussed in small groups before the groups collaboratively re-grade and provide feedback comments on each report.

A facilitator often the course co-ordinator leads a discussion focusing on exploring any differences in grading and/or reasoning that have emerged in the small group discussions.

A confirmation task is undertaken where tutors assess an additional piece of work to confirm their understanding and capacity to articulate their reasons for their assessments. This is again followed by a discussion of the results focusing on exploring differences in opinions.

STUDENT UNDERSTANDING OF ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND RUBRIC DEVELOPMENT

Similarly the multiple assessor mode can be used to develop both students' understanding of assessment criteria and the expected standards before assessment tasks are undertaken. In these activities students will be given a piece of work to judge against the assessment criteria for an upcoming assignment or project. Again they provide their judgements and reasoning. The program allows the comparison of assessments from different groups of students or to an expert or experts. I use these activities for students to develop a class agreed marking rubric. Hence the assessment rubric is developed from students understanding and judgement rather than being provided by an academic. We have found this process helps students learn and make informed decisions on how they will demonstrate the assessment learning outcomes rather than finding out after the fact (on receiving their grade) how they may have misinterpreted the assessment criteria.

OUT OF CLASS PREPARATION FOR IN-CLASS DISCUSSION

The multiple assessor mode is also useful in facilitating out of class activities to promote informed in-class discussion typically used in a flipped instruction approach.

Similar to the activities described above students are asked to provide judgements and opinions in response to a set of criteria about a piece of work, designs, news item, readings etc. The results are then published before class (in most cases anonymously). Students can then compare their opinions and judgements to those of their class peers and subsequently reflect on the similarities and differences to re-evaluate their own judgement and opinions. In a sense students are collaborating or sharing before they even come to class. This makes the in-class discussion both more productive and able to start from a more mature level.

DEATH OF WRITING FOR THE TUTOR

A variation of the activities described above is to put students in groups to self and peer review each other's work. Again the results are shared anonymously, and subsequently in-class collaborative group discussions are conducted where they reassess and provide feedback on each piece of work. The fact that individual

opinions and judgements are recorded and shared discourages groupthink and reduces the chances of dominant personalities or opinions monopolising the discussions. This type of activity enables students to benefit and learn from everyone's work in the group not just from the assessment and feedback they receive on their own.

In addition, an instructor can also provide feedback which we recommend is only published after the group has had their discussion and collaboratively re-evaluated their assessment. Again, this means that students are benefiting from an expert/tutor's feedback on a number of pieces of work not just their own.

FEEDBACK FROM DIFFERENT COHORTS

The multiple assessor mode can be set up to provide feedback from different cohorts. For example, students can receive feedback on their presentation or submission from their peers, academics and/or a group of external experts. A comparison between different assessor cohorts enables students to micro-evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their capacity / capability.

For example, let's consider a nurse who is undertaking a practical work placement. They could receive feedback from patients, fellow nurses, doctors and administration staff. There are differences in the skills required to deal with each cohort. Let's assume that a nursing student receives positive feedback from their peer nurses, doctors and the administration staff but only average feedback from their patients. They are now able to identify the area of their development/training they need to address.

SPEEDING UP THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Our university is among one of several organisations using the multiple assessor mode to speed up the process of assessing grants, projects, tenders and awards. Similar to the process described above panellists prior to meeting are asked to make their assessments and explain their reasoning. The results are published for individuals to review and reflect and if necessary re-evaluate their assessments before the assessment meeting. During the meeting it is easy to identify the projects that everyone agrees should and should not be funded, allowing most of the time to be focused on discussing differences in opinions about submissions that are borderline.

FACE-TO-FACE A THING OF THE PAST

The multiple assessor mode also facilitates collaborative assessments to be conducted online. Again participants make their individual assessments prior to the first online meeting, the program then switches to a collaborative mode where participants (typically in groups) can all interact online through sharing the same screen. This screen allows the participants to both view/compare (identified or anonymously) the individual members assessments and to enter their collaborative assessment and comments.

CREATING A NEW TASK

1. LOG IN

Log in to SPARKPLUS using your username and password. If you have forgotten your password see Forgotten Password in the Troubleshooting section.

2. CREATING A NEW TASK

Tasks can only be created inside of an existing subject.

2.1. For the purpose of this quick guide we are assuming that a subject already exists. If you need to first set up a subject, see 'Creating a Subject'.

3. To create a task you must first select an existing task by clicking any task name under your chosen subject heading and clicking the 'New Task' button.

4. On the next screen select 'Multiple Assessor', which is located under the 'Select a Mode' title and click 'Next'.

GENERAL TASK SETUP

1. TASK NAME

1.1. Give the task a name

NOTE: the mode will automatically be set to 'Multiple Assessor' as set in the previous step.

2. STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

2.1. When you first set up the task, we recommend that you set the status to 'In-active', this disables student access to the task.

NOTE: Remember to change this to active when you're ready for students to start using the task.

3. TASK TIMELINES

3.1. Set the date and time when the task will begin and end.

4. STUDENTS AND GROUPS

4.1. Group Size

Use the size settings if you plan for students to form their own groups. It stops groups from being too small or too big. Or click "Unlimited" to have no limit on the group size.

4.2. Students allowed to be in more than one group?

You may wish the same assessor (student, expert, academic etc) to be in more than one group. To do this you need to enable people to be in multiple groups (set this option to 'Yes') before organising individuals into groups (see an explanation later in this document).

If there isn't any requirement for an assessor to be in more than one group select 'No'.

4.3. Enable assessor roles in groups?

Assessor roles are useful if reporting by different cohorts is required. In other words you may have a cohort of assessors that have the role of "expert" and another cohort that have the role of "student". The reports can show the assessments from those different cohorts.

Assessor roles are aliases (see section "About Aliases"). Assessor roles are useful when students are forming their own groups as they are prompted to select an assessor role as they join the groups.

5. RATING OPTIONS

5.1. Allow Total Slider for Rating Adjustments?

5.1.1. This enables you to adjust all the assessment sliders for an individual relative to each other at the one time. This works through an additional slider that is 'the total' of all of the other sliders combined.

5.2. Rating Style

5.3. Choose between 'Slider' or 'Buttons'

5.3.1. Slider : continuous scale slider

5.3.2. Buttons: slider will "snap" to the centre of each slider division – this option can be used when you don't need or want assessors to deliberate over interim adjustments.

5.4. Rating Scale

Choose between one of the predefined scales:

5.4.1. Standards Assessment

5.4.2. Graded Assessment

5.4.3. Likert Scale 5 Point

5.4.4. Likert Scale 7 Point

5.4.5. or Custom

5.5. Rating Labels

This area displays the ratings labels and mark values for your chosen option.

If you have selected 'Custom' above you can add / delete and edit labels here.

5.6. Display the ratings slider divisions equally

If you don't select this option the slider divisions will be presented proportionally to the value that you have specified calculated as a percentage of 100. For example a value of 50 means this division will take up half of the slider, a value of 25 means this division will take up a quarter of slider

5.7. Students can enter comments?

This enables students the capacity to provide written feedback or comments to support and/or explain their ratings.

Choose between:

5.7.1. yes one comment box (overall comment box for all criteria)

5.7.2. yes comments per category (provide one comment box for each category of criteria)

5.7.3. no commenting allowed (no comment boxes will be displayed)

5.8. Comments Compulsory?

When comments are compulsory, a student is only deemed to have completed their submission when they have both entered their ratings and comments that meet or exceed the designated minimum word count

- 5.8.1. If you wish comments to be compulsory enter a tick in the box.
- 5.8.2. If you have selected to make comments compulsory enter a figure in the box to indicate a minimum word count.

5.9. Maximum Word Count

Set a maximum word count for comments. This may be used to force students to be precise and specific in the feedback they provide rather than entering verbose comments.

6. STUDENTS FEEDBACK OPTIONS

These options determine what the students will see when the results are published. Before the results are published all the students will see is their own ratings.

- 6.1. Publish all groups to all students
If checked the results from all groups will be viewable by everyone.
- 6.2. Publish sliders
If checked sliders will be visible if you have used them.
- 6.3. Publish overall ratings in one slider
If checked an aggregate (combined weighted) rating will be shown in an overall slider.
- 6.4. Publish feedback
If checked the comments provided by students will be available when the results are published.
- 6.5. Publish to students with incomplete submission?
If checked students who haven't completed their submission (provided their ratings and supporting comments) will see the results.

7. LABELS

This is where you name your singular and plural groups. If for example you are using the activity to assess grant applications you may want to change the labels to 'Application' and 'Applications'.

- 8. Click Submit to save your task setup and progress to the Task Overview Screen.

NOTE: If you have missed something you will not be able to progress, a screen alert will guide you through anything you have missed or entered incorrectly.

TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN

On this screen you can enter additional information such as criteria and students and groups.

STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

As covered earlier, we recommend that this should be set to inactive during setup – you can change it to active when you're ready for the students to see the task in their task list.

TIMELINES

Here you can see the Rating period and Rating period extensions.

Edit Rating Period

To edit the rating period you must select the 'Modify Task' button to return to the 'Task Setup Screen'.

Grant Rating Period Extensions

You can give extensions to individual students or give an extension to a group. The extension has a start and an end.

1. To give an extension click either the 'Student Rating Period Extensions' or the 'Group Rating Period Extensions' button. This loads the Alter Rating Period window.
2. Click the checkboxes for the people or groups that you wish to extend then click the 'Alter Rating Period' at screen bottom left.
Note to change the list from students to groups click the appropriate radio button at screen top right.
3. The screen now has fields to enter a start date and an end date. Enter the desired dates and times and click submit. The selected students or groups are listed and if the list is incorrect click the back button to change the selection of students or groups.
4. Click Submit to save the new dates for the selected students or groups.

Please note the ability to set different start and end dates can be very useful for classes where you need students to access the same task at different times. For example two tutorial groups running on different days.

Remove Rating Period Extensions

1. To remove rating period extensions click either the 'Student Rating Period Extensions' or the 'Group Rating Period Extensions' button.
2. Click the checkboxes for the students whose rating period you wish to remove.
3. Click the 'Remove Extension' extension button at screen bottom left. You'll be asked to confirm and the rating periods will be removed.

CRITERIA

This is where you can enter or upload your criteria.

There are two ways to set up criteria:

- entering manually or
- upload using a pre-prepared text file.

Entering Criteria Manually

Click 'Enter' to open the criteria screen.

1. MANUAL WEIGHTING

Choose to manually weight the categories or not – this is useful if you wish to have some categories more heavily weighted than others. You can enter 0 (zero) to have a category that is feedback (formative) only and does not contribute to the calculations.

2. CATEGORY

Enter your category name and select a display type (you set the display options in the previous screen).

2.1. Display

If Comments per Category has been enabled you can specify how the category is displayed:

2.1.1. Comments Box and Sliders

Criteria can be entered and each criterion has a slider in the assessment screen. Plus a comment box for the category is also displayed. You can enter a prompt for the comment box.

2.1.2. Comments Only (hide sliders)

No criteria can be entered. Only a comment box is displayed along with the comment box prompt.

2.1.3. Sliders Only (hide Comments Box)

Only the criteria and sliders are displayed.

3. CRITERIA

Next type the criteria – this can be free text supported by an image if necessary (see d. Corresponding Image).

4. CORRESPONDING IMAGE

One corresponding image for each criteria can be uploaded by clicking 'Browse' to navigate to the image on your computer. Images will be resized to the option selected (default is 650w x 500h).

Note: if your image contains text and is considerably larger than the image sizes available the text may be difficult to read once uploaded - bear this in mind when selecting images.

5. ADDITIONAL CRITERIA

Every category can have multiple criteria – to add more, click 'Add Criteria'.

6. ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES

You can add more categories by clicking the 'Add Category' button at the bottom-left of the screen.

7. COMMENT BOX PROMPT

(only displayed if you've enabled Comments – see General Task Setup Section).
When you have entered all the categories and criteria, enter a prompt to be displayed above the comments box - If you leave this blank the default text will be used, which is 'Enter your Feedback'.

8. SAVING YOUR CRITERIA

Click 'Save' when you've finished.

9. RETURN TO OVERVIEW SCREEN

When you have finished entering all the criteria click 'Close' to exit this screen and return to the overview screen.

Uploading Criteria using a pre-prepared text file

Click 'Upload' to open the upload window.

1. DOWNLOADING THE TEMPLATE

On this screen there will be a button labelled "Criteria Template". Click this to download a sample text file.

It will look something like this:

Category	Criteria
Overall Design	How would you rate this design in regard to meeting the specified requirements?
Overall Design	How would you rate this design in regard to risk?
Overall Design	How would you rate this design in regard to resource management?
Budget	How would you rate this design in regard to fixed costs?
Budget	How would you rate this design in regard to variable costs?

2. UPLOADING YOUR CRITERIA

You can upload your file, once complete, by clicking 'Choose File' and navigating to the file saved on your local computer. You will be able to modify this data or add supporting images after you have uploaded manually, if you choose, by clicking 'modify'.

VIEW SAMPLE STUDENT RATING SCREEN WITH YOUR CRITERIA

Click to see a pop-up window containing a generic version of the screen students will see during the activity.

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

You can see how many students are enrolled in the task - you can add all students in the subject to a task by clicking 'Add all students' and following the prompts. This places the students into the "Ungrouped Students" list.

Alternatively if you require students to be placed into groups you must first set up those groups.

There are three ways of setting up groups.

- Either by entering the group names (with aliases if appropriate) manually, or
- By uploading a pre-prepared text file, or
- Have students create their own groups

Setting up student groups manually

1. Click the 'Manage Groups/ Aliases' to open the Groups screen. See 'Group Management screen' for more information.

2. Click 'New' to create a new group.

Continue until you have set up all the groups you require.

3. If you have many groups you can use the 'Create Multiple' feature. This creates the number of groups required with a number as the suffix. You're prompted for the number of groups and the group name prefix. For example you may want 10 groups and need the called "Group xx". You would enter "Group " as the prefix and 10 when prompted for the number of groups.

4. When you have setup your groups you are now ready to add students.

5. Select the first group from the drop down at the top of the left-hand panel.

6. The right hand panel will display all the students enrolled in the subject. To add students to a specific group click a name and click the '<- Add' button to add the selected student to the selected group. You can allocate alias names to each student if you choose.

7. Once you have created your group close the Manage Groups / Aliases window and refresh the main overview screen to update the student counts.

Setting up student groups by uploading a pre-prepared text file

1. Click 'Upload' to upload a pre-prepared file

Note: If you don't have a student list, click the 'Enrolled Students' button (from the main screen) to download one.

2. On the upload window there will be a button labelled "Template for students in groups with aliases" and a button labeled "Template for students in groups". Click the appropriate button to download a sample text file.

3. The template file (with Aliases) will look something like this:

AccountID	GroupName	Alias
12345678	Blah	Assessor 1
12345679	Blah	Assessor 2

- If you have many groups that you want to set up, but want to add students later you can upload the group names by selecting 'Upload Group Names'. Follow the template that you can download from the upload window and upload the file.
- Files are uploaded by clicking 'choose File' and navigating to the file saved on your local computer.

RATING OPTIONS

You will see a summary of your rating options and see a sample slider. To modify these click 'modify task'.

FEEDBACK OPTIONS

You will see a summary of your student feedback options. To modify these click 'modify task'.

COMPLETING YOUR TASK SETUP

When you're ready you can change the status to 'Active' to make your task live.

STUDENTS BEING ABLE TO BE IN MORE THAN ONE GROUP

You can choose to have students in more than one group. This is useful when you need people to be assessing in more than one group.

You can think of the groups in multiple assessor as groups of assessors and the group name identifies what is being assessed.

There are two main scenarios where this applies:

Scenario 1. Assessing an individual in a group.

An individual can assess themselves and all other group members are assessing them also. Use this scenario to get a report on the assessments of individuals.

In this scenario, a group would be created for each person being assessed and the group would use the name of the person being assessed. Then the person being assessed is placed in the group along with the assessors.

For example

Group Name: Joanne Test -> the group is named according to who is being assessed

Group Members: Joanne Test
Colin Test
George Test
Michelle Test

If Colin, in the above group, needs to be assessed then a group needs to be set up for him. In this scenario, the setting “allow students to be in multiple groups” would need to be switched on.

When the students log in, they see the list of groups they are in. REMEMBER the group name identifies what they are assessing. In the above case the group name is “Joanne Test”. Therefore the student is performing an assessment of “Joanne Test” and every other member of the group is doing likewise.

Scenario 2. Assessing an objective, goal, outcome or piece of work

Such as a grant application or generic piece of work or the ability to meet a deadline, contribute fairly, communicate effectively, etc.

In this scenario, create groups with names that clearly identify what is being assessed and place who needs to assess the appropriate groups.

GROUP MANAGEMENT SCREEN

Use the group management screen to set up your student groups manually (see “Setting up student groups manually” further down).

The Group Management screen has other functions which can aid the setup of groups for the scenarios outlined above.

You can access the group management screen by clicking the ‘Manage Groups/ Aliases’ button. Note about aliases: these can be used for anonymity. They default to the students’ names but can be changed.

The other functions in the group management screens are available at the bottom of the screen under the heading of “Task Operations”. There are four buttons: Change All Aliases, Change All Aliases to Names, Add Every Student to All Groups, Create a Group for each Student.

Change All Aliases

Use this button to change everybody’s alias. It prompts for an alias prefix and everyone’s alias is changed to the prefix with a number. For example if there are four students in the task and you chose “Assessor “ as the prefix, the aliases would be changed to “Assessor 1”, “Assessor 2”, “Assessor 3” and “Assessor 4”.

Change All Aliases to Names

This button will reset the aliases back to the students’ names. If you don’t need anonymity any longer you can use this to reveal the students’ names.

Add Every Student to All Groups

Sometimes you may want any student to be able to assess anything. Remembering that the group name identifies what is being assessed, you can use this option to enable all students to be able to assess all groups.

Create a Group for each Student

The first scenario (Assessing an individual in a group) can be thought of as self and peer review. In the case of needing each member of the group to assess everyone else in the group, you can use this function to set up all the groups (remember that the group name identifies what is being assessed). There are two steps to get the

required groups set up (students allowed in more than one group has to be switched on):

Step 1 – create the groups as normal eg:

Group Name: Group 1

Group Members: George, Michelle, Joanne and Colin

Step 2 – click the “Create a Group for each Student” button

Following the above scenario you would end up with a group for each student as follows:

Group Name: Group 1 – George

Group Members: George, Michelle, Joanne and Colin

Group Name: Group 2 – Michelle

Group Members: George, Michelle, Joanne and Colin

Group Name: Group 1 – Joanne

Group Members: George, Michelle, Joanne and Colin

Group Name: Group 1 – Colin

Group Members: George, Michelle, Joanne and Colin

The students would log in and see a list of groups (Group 1 – George etc) and assess each accordingly. The comparative group result screen shows the results given to each group (remember each group in this scenario is representing a student).

ABOUT ALIASES

Aliases are used in SPARKPLUS to provide a way to display students anonymously but they also provide a way to report on subsets of assessors. For example there may be assessors with the alias of "student" and assessors with an alias of "expert". The reports can isolate the assessments from each alias so (from the example) a comparison can be made between the "expert" assessors and the "student" assessors.

MONITORING

To access the monitoring tab click the Monitoring Icon at the top of the screen.

TIMELINE

This section enables you to view how many students have completed their assessments and enables you to communicate with group members who are not submitting.

RESULTS

To access the Results tab click the Results Icon at the top of the screen.

TIMELINE

This section enables you to view student progress while they are using the task and enables you to communicate with group members who haven't submitted their ratings.

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

You can view student results as the student will see them.

You can also delete ratings and group ratings if for example you've set up some test data for demo purposes - please note be 100% certain that you wish to do this as there is no undo option. In most cases involving students we regard the ratings and comments provided as assessment submissions and hence are never deleted.

RESULT SUMMARY

Depending on the options you have chosen in your setup by choosing the appropriate button you can view a comparative summary (compares assessments provided to different groups) or a summary of ratings given to any particular group.

View Benchmark Summary

Select this button to view a summary of the benchmarking results. The

- The histograms show the frequency with which each category rating was selected. Click on a histogram to expand it or use the 'Expand All' option. The rating divisions can be further broken down using the 'Rating Scale Division Splits' option on the top left hand side of the screen.
- Select the combination of information that you want to display on each slider from the options provided at the bottom of the screen.

Comparative Summary

If students in more than one group has been enabled the Comparative Summary screen is available.

This shows a summary of the assessments per assessor group. It is particularly useful in scenarios where the group represents the item being assessed (eg a student, a grant application etc).

The results are shown per category and totalled along with histograms graphically showing the spread of assessments. The histograms show the assessments from the currently sorted column.

Use the student selector to show just the assessor groups that the student was assigned to.

Use the alias selector to show a break down of the results for each alias. This is particularly useful if Assessor Roles have been used.

The data displayed on the Comparative Summary screen can be downloaded as a CSV for further processing in your desired spreadsheet editor (eg Excel).

RESULT DETAILS AND MODERATION

Enables you to review various aspects of the task results and moderate written feedback. Each of the buttons will load the Results List screen with various options pre-selected. Use the Custom View button to select your own display options.

1. 'View Written Feedback'

Note this button is only available if "Students can enter feedback?" has been enabled in the task setup.

1.1. This button allows you to view student comments and feedback on either a group by group or entire cohort basis.

2. 'Ratings'

2.1. This button allows you to view the ratings submitted by students for a single team or the entire cohort.

2.1.1. Ratings can be converted to grades (grades are the letters from the slider) eg on the "Graded Assessment" scale, a rating of 70 equates to "C" (Credit). The grades are suffixed with a plus "+", minus "-" or no suffix depending on where the score falls in the slider division:

Score	Suffix
In first 25%	-
Between 25% and 75%	No suffix
Above 75%	+

2.1.2. Click the "Convert Scores To Grades" to toggle the scores to grades and vice versa.

3. 'Custom View'

3.1. Allows any combination of results information to be displayed. All the display options are shown as checkboxes in the darker area at the top of the screen along with a "Load" button. Use the checkboxes to decide what to display and then click the "Load" button.

Download Results

When the Results List window is displaying data, the download button (at screen top right) will download what you're seeing as a CSV file. This enables you to do any further processing of the data in your chosen spreadsheet editing application e.g. Excel.

HOW TO MODERATE INAPPROPRIATE FEEDBACK

How to disable all Written Feedback

To disable all feedback from being published to students

1. Click on Modify Task from underneath the Active Subjects list
2. Deselect Publish Feedback from the Feedback Options section towards the bottom of the page.
3. Click Submit to save your changes

How to disable Written Feedback from individuals

You can disable feedback from individuals, for example because it is inappropriate, from the results screen.

1. In the Result Details and Moderation section click the View Feedback button
2. The Results List screen pops up with a group selector. You can either select a group or all students.
3. The window will reload showing feedback comments from your chosen group with checkboxes to disable comments from individual students.

Note: the withheld comments are displayed in pink. Withholding the feedback comments does not delete them, it just stops them from being published. This means that an academic can still access the comment if for example any misconduct action needs to be taken if the comments are inappropriate.

PUBLISH RESULTS

Click the 'Publish Results' button to publish results to students.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MULTIPLE CHOICE	90
INTRODUCTION.....	92
CREATING A NEW TASK.....	94
GENERAL TASK SETUP.....	95
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN.....	98
MONITORING.....	104
RESULTS	105

INTRODUCTION

Multiple choice style quizzes are a useful way to provide students with feedback on their progress. They can be used by students to evaluate their learning or as means of preparation before class. Alternatively, you may also wish to set up a multiple choice quiz that can be completed during class as part of a discussion topic or to provide feedback on what students do and do not understand. Both of these activities allow in-class discussion / interaction / feedback to be dynamic and focus on where it is most needed.

SPARK^{PLUS} offers the opportunity to include an image and/or comment to be associated with each question. The comment boxes are extremely valuable as they allow students to explain their reasoning for choosing a particular answer.

SPARK^{PLUS} may be set to allow students to compare their answers and reasoning to that of their peers allowing them to reflect on any differences and re-evaluate their own judgement. Hence, students are in effect collaborating or sharing even before they come to class allowing in-class discussion to be more productive and start from a more advanced level.

While SPARK^{PLUS} does allow multiple-choice quizzes to be automatically graded we most often use them for formative purposes to facilitate self-evaluation, discussion and targeted feedback. However, we have successfully conducted summative activities. For this purpose SPARK^{PLUS} allows instructors to choose to display both the questions and answers in random order. This reduces the chances of students being able to interpret the answer choices by looking at another student's screen.

A typical use of this mode would be as follows:

1. An instructor uses SPARK^{PLUS} to ask their students to evaluate their learning from an out of class learning activity by answering a series of a multiple-choice question. Students are also required to enter the reason for their answer choice in the text box provided.
2. Students complete the task at least one day before the next scheduled class
3. The instructor publishes the student results allowing students to compare their answers (via a histogram showing how many students chose each answer) and reasoning to their peers.
4. Students reflect on any differences and re-evaluate their own understanding before the class session.
5. The instructor views the results to make instructional choices for the next class, for example identifying areas or topics that students are having difficulty understanding and preparing appropriate in-class activities to address these difficulties.
6. We often start the next class with students working in groups to discuss their answers and reasoning and collaboratively re-answering the quiz. This is typically followed by a class discussion and/or activities designed to address any outstanding issues.

We encourage students to use their peer discussions to explore their understanding their own judgement to arrive at an answer. While SPARKPLUS allows the instructor to publish the correct answers and their reasoning (explanation of solution) to students, we typically don't use this option. In our research we have found that students' discussions are often brought to a premature close if they are presented with the instructor's answer and reasoning, incorrectly thinking that this is all they have to learn.

The use of formative activities allows instructors to be creative and have quizzes with more than one correct answer for example looking at the problem from two different perspectives, no correct answers or just a simple free response questions to allow students to exercise their critical evaluation, judgement and subsequently provide an opinion. The focus of these formative activities is to promote learning, provide an opportunity for students to compare and consider their reasoning, judgement and understanding with their peers, promote discussion and provide a form of self-evaluation against the learning outcomes.

Students can also be put into groups to do these exercises. This allows the results to be viewed by each group. Hence if you have a class of 500 students and you put them in groups of 20, students will have 20 different opinions to compare which is much more manageable than reading 500 comments provided by the entire cohort. The same groups can also be used for subsequent in-class discussions.

Alternatively, you may wish to categorise the groups in another way, for example experts, or undergraduates from different majors could be placed in different groups. This allows the results from each group to be compared or the combined results to be viewed.

Finally, the questions can be either multiple-choice, multiple-choice with comment box or free response.

CREATING A NEW TASK

1. LOG IN

Log in to SPARKPLUS using your username and password. If you have forgotten your password see Forgotten Password in the Troubleshooting section.

2. CREATING A NEW TASK

Tasks can only be created inside of an existing subject.

2.1. For the purpose of this quick guide we are assuming that a subject already exists. If you need to first set up a subject, see 'Creating a Subject'.

3. To create a task you must first select an existing task by clicking any task name under your chosen subject heading and clicking the 'New Task' button.

4. On the next screen select 'Multiple Choice', which is located under the 'Select a Mode' title and click 'Next'.

GENERAL TASK SETUP

1. TASK NAME

Give the task a name

NOTE: the mode will automatically be set to 'Standard Multiple Choice' as set in the previous step.

2. STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

2.1. When you first set up the task, we recommend that you set the status to 'In-active', this disables student access to the task.

NOTE: Remember to change this to active when you're ready for students to start using the task.

3. TASK TIMELINES

3.1. Decide how the assessment period will be set.

3.2. Use Start and Stop buttons to set the assessment period manually

3.2.1. Start and Stop buttons are ideal for quizzes to be carried out in the classroom when you want to have the flexibility to start and stop the quiz to suit your specific circumstances.

3.3. Set a predetermined date and time the task begins and ends

4. MULTI-CHOICE ANSWER OPTIONS

4.1. Multiple Choice Question and Answer Display Order

Choose if you would like to display the multiple choice questions and answers in the order you enter them or in a random order.

Important note about random answers: If you decide to have questions such as a, b c or all of the above and have chosen a random order for the answers, there is no guarantee that the 'all of the above' answer will display as the last option – you can get around this by rewriting your answer for example to read, 'none of the other answers are correct'.

4.2. Results

Choose to display results as a percentage or a mark that's calculated out of a specific number. for example if you have 10 questions and an overall mark of 80 the system will automatically set the correct incremental mark per question.

4.3. Rating Scale & Labels

4.3.1. This is where you set your task's answer options (the actual answers are entered later in the process - *see Questions under TASK OVERVIEW section*). You can choose between Multiple Choice (5 choices or fewer) or True or False.

Please note when entering your questions and answers you can enter

more or less choices than the amount selected in this step. This just determines the default amount of choices.

4.4. Students can enter feedback?

- 4.4.1. Set to yes or no to add a comment box to any question. Even if you want to only use a comment box for one question you need to select yes. Individual questions can then be allocated a comment box or set to be a free response question only (no answer choices provided) in the question upload file or using the modified questions option.

4.5. Comments Compulsory?

- 4.5.1. If you wish comments to be compulsory enter a tick in the box.
- 4.5.2. If you have selected to make comments compulsory enter a number in the box to indicate a minimum word count. When comments are compulsory, a student is only deemed to have completed their submission when they have both answered the question and comments that meet or exceed the designated minimum word count.

4.6. Maximum Word Count

- 4.6.1. Set a maximum word count for comments.

5. STUDENTS FEEDBACK OPTIONS

5.1. Publish result

If checked the overall results will be viewable by the students who have completed the test.

5.2. Publish result per question

If checked the results per question will be viewable by the students who have completed the test.

5.3. Publish written feedback

If checked written student feedback will be viewable by the students who have completed the test.

5.4. Publish Instructor Answers

If checked the Instructor Answers will be viewable – you can then set the days or hours after the publish date for them to be viewable.

5.5. Publish Instructor Comments

If checked the Instructor Comments will be viewable – you can then set the days or hours after the publish date for them to be viewable.

5.6. Publish to students with incomplete submission?

If checked students who haven't completed the tests will see the results. Recommend 'view students results only' for students with incomplete submission

5.7. Show result summary (histograms of student responses)

5.7.1. If checked students will see the summary results presented on a histogram.

6. Click Submit to save your task setup and progress to the Task Overview Screen.

If you have missed something you will not be able to progress, a screen alert will guide you through anything you have missed or entered incorrectly.

TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN

On this screen you can amend information you have entered and enter additional information such as students and groups, questions and answers.

STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

As covered earlier, we recommend that this should be set to inactive during setup – you can change it to active when you're ready for the students to see the task in their task list. When the assessment period is set to start at a future time it enables the students to know what tasks are coming up.

TIMELINES

Here you can see the Rating period.

If you have opted to over-ride the start and stop time you can click 'Start / stop or clear' here at any point (following the questions being setup, of course).

If you have NOT opted to over-ride the start and stop time you can edit the rating period or give rating period extensions.

Edit Rating Period

To edit the rating period you must select the 'Modify Task' button to return to the 'Task Setup Screen'.

Grant Rating Period Extensions

You can give extensions to individual students or give an extension to a group. The extension has a start and an end.

1. To give an extension click either the 'Student Rating Period Extensions' or the 'Group Rating Period Extensions' button. This loads the Alter Rating Period window.
2. Click the checkboxes for the people or groups that you wish to extend then click the 'Alter Rating Period' at screen bottom left.
Note to change the list from students to groups click the appropriate radio button at screen top right.
3. The screen now has fields to enter a start date and an end date. Enter the desired dates and times and click submit. The selected students or groups are listed and if the list is incorrect click the back button to change the selection of students or groups.
4. Click Submit to save the new dates for the selected students or groups.

Remove Rating Period Extensions

1. To remove rating period extensions click either the 'Student Rating Period Extensions' or the 'Group Rating Period Extensions' button.
2. Click the checkboxes for the students whose rating period you wish to remove.

3. Click the 'Remove Extension' extension button at screen bottom left. You'll be asked to confirm and the rating periods will be removed.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

This is where you can enter or upload your questions.

There are two ways to set up your questions:

- entering questions manually or
- uploading a pre-prepared text file.

Entering Questions Manually

Click 'Enter' to open the question entry screen.

1. DISPLAY

Choose an option from the pulldown menu (the second and third choices are only displayed if you've enabled comments – see: "Students can enter feedback?" in the General Task Setup Section)

Choose from:

1.1. Multiple-choice answer with comment box

1.2. Comment box only

1.3. Multiple-choice answer only

2. QUESTIONS and ANSWER CHOICES

2.1. Next enter the question. This can be accompanied by an image (see CORRESPONDING IMAGE below).

2.2. Enter answer choices

2.3. Add Answer Choices

Use the "Add Answer" button to add more answer choices.

2.4. Reordering Answer Choices

Drag the answer letter up or down to change the order of the answer choices.

2.5. Set the Correct Answer

Click the radio button next to the answer that is correct.

3. CORRESPONDING IMAGE

3.1. One corresponding image for each question can be uploaded by clicking 'Browse' to navigate to the image on your computer. Images will be resized to the option selected (default is 650w x 500h). Please note if your image contains text and is considerably larger than the image sizes available the text may be difficult to read once uploaded - bear this in mind when selecting images.

4. COMMENT BOX PROMPT

4.1. (only displayed if you've enabled comments – see “Students can enter feedback?” in the General Task Setup Section plus the display setting has to show the comment box - see Display above).

Enter a prompt to be displayed above the comments box - If you leave this blank the default text will be used, which is 'Enter your Feedback'.

5. ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

5.1. You can add as many questions as you need – to add more questions, click 'Add Question' at screen bottom left.

5.2. To reorder the questions drag the question numbers in the question number panel at the top of the screen. Move the question by dragging the drag symbol in the top left of the question number box.

6. SAVING YOUR QUESTIONS

6.1. Click 'Save' when you've finished.

7. RETURN TO OVERVIEW SCREEN

7.1. When you have finished entering all the questions click 'Close' to exit this screen and return to the overview screen.

Uploading Questions using a pre-prepared text file

1. OPENING THE UPLOAD WINDOW

Click 'Upload' to open the upload window.

2. DOWNLOAD THE TEMPLATE

On this screen there will be a button labelled “Question Template”. Click this to download a sample text file.

3. FORMATTING YOUR DATA

Please note the formatting required. Asterisks are used to denote differences between upload data, such as: questions, answers, images, etc.

3.1. No asterisk

A line with no asterisk is a possible answer. Each answer needs to be on a new line. To have a line break in an answer insert a pilcrow ¶.

3.2. One asterisk:

You can specify the correct answer by placing a single asterisk (*) before the correct answer. This is optional - you can specify the correct answers later. Each answer needs to be on a new line. To enter a line break enter a pilcrow ¶.

3.3. Two Asterisks:

Your uploaded file needs to have double asterisks (**) to denote the start

of each new question. The question must be on one line. To enter a line break enter a pilcrow ¶.

3.4. Three Asterisks:

You can also prompt for written responses to each question by entering triple asterisk (***) then the prompt on a new line after the answers.

3.5. Four Asterisks:

Images (not applicable when creating an upload file)

3.6. Five Asterisks:

This is where you can write your reasoning for the correct answer – this will only be revealed to the students when results are published and “Publish Instructor Comments” is enabled.

PLEASE NOTE: To enter a ¶ on Windows hold Alt and enter 20 on the number pad. To enter ¶ on a Mac hold Option and press 7.

4. A typical upload text file will look something like this (note in this example the first question has only 3 answer choices with no comment box, the second question has 2 with a comment box and an instructor written answer while the third question has 5 answer choices with a comment box):

Questions

**What is the colour of the sky?

*blue

pink

red

**Is grass green?

*True

False

***Please explain your chosen answer

***** Most species of grass produce a bright pigment called chlorophyll. Chlorophyll absorbs blue and red light, but mostly reflects green light, this accounts for grass being green.

**What is your favourite ice cream flavour?

Chocolate

Vanilla

Hokey Pokey

Boysenberry

None of the other provided answers

***If you chose None of the other answers provided, please enter your favourite flavour in the text box below

5. When your file is complete upload the file by clicking ‘Choose File’ and navigating to the file saved on your local computer.

6. UPLOADING YOUR QUESTIONS

You can upload your file, once complete, by clicking ‘Choose File’ and navigating

to the file saved on your local computer. You will be able to modify this data or add supporting images manually, if you choose, by clicking 'modify'.

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

You can see how many students are enrolled in the task - you can add all students in the subject to a task by clicking 'Add all students' and following the prompts. This places the students into the "Ungrouped Students" list.

Alternatively if you require students to be placed into groups you must first set up those groups.

There are three ways of setting up groups.

- Either by entering the group names (with aliases if appropriate) manually, or
- By uploading a pre-prepared text file

Setting up student groups manually

1. Click the 'Manage Groups/ Aliases' to open the Groups screen. See 'Group Management screen' for more information.
2. Click 'New' to create a new group.
Continue until you have set up all the groups you require.
3. If you have many groups you can use the 'Create Multiple' feature. This creates the number of groups required with a number as the suffix. You're prompted for the number of groups and the group name prefix. For example you may want 10 groups and need the called "Group xx". You would enter "Group " as the prefix and 10 when prompted for the number of groups.
4. When you have setup your groups you are now ready to add students.
5. Select the first group from the drop down at the top of the left-hand panel.
6. The right hand panel will display all the students enrolled in the subject. To add students to a specific group click a name and click the '<- Add' button to add the selected student to the selected group. You can allocate alias names to each student if you choose.
7. Once you have created your group close the Manage Groups / Aliases window and refresh the main overview screen to update the student counts.

Setting up student groups by uploading a pre-prepared text file

1. Click 'Upload' to upload a pre-prepared file
Note: If you don't have a student list, click the 'Enrolled Students' button (from the main screen) to download one.
2. On the upload window there will be a button labelled "Template for students in groups with aliases" and a button labeled "Template for students in groups". Click the appropriate button to download a sample text file.

3. The template file (with Aliases) will look something like this:

AccountID	GroupName	Alias
12345678	Blah	Assessor 1
12345679	Blah	Assessor 2

4. If you have many groups that you want to set up, but want to add students later you can upload the group names by selecting 'Upload Group Names'. Follow the template that you can download from the upload window and upload the file.
5. Files are uploaded by clicking 'choose File' and navigating to the file saved on your local computer.

MULTI-CHOICE ANSWER OPTIONS

You will see a summary of your survey answer options and see a sample slider. To modify these click 'modify task'.

STUDENT FEEDBACK OPTIONS

You will see a summary of your student feedback options. To modify these click 'modify task'.

COMPLETING YOUR TASK SETUP

When you're ready you can change the status to 'Active' to make your task live.

MONITORING

To access the monitoring tab click the Monitoring Icon at the top of the screen.

TIMELINE

This section enables you to view student progress while they are using the task and enables you to communicate with group members who are not contributing.

RESULTS

To access the Results tab click the Results Icon at the top of the screen.

TIMELINE

This section enables you to view student progress while they are using the task and enables you to communicate with group members who are not contributing.

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

You can view student results as the student will see them.

You can also delete ratings and group ratings if you've set up some test data for demo purposes – please note be 100% certain that you wish to do this as there is no undo option.

RESULTS SUMMARY

Selecting 'View Multi-choice Summary' or 'View Comments' (if comments are enabled) enables an instructor to review the comments or answer choices of students via a histogram. The results can be viewed by individual groups or the entire cohort by selecting the appropriate tab from the pulldown menu. Comments associated with a particular answer choices can be viewed by clicking on the slider.

RESULT DETAILS AND MODERATION

Enables you to review various aspects of the task results and moderate written feedback

1. 'View Written Feedback'

Note this button is only available if "Students can enter feedback?" has been enabled in the task setup.

- 1.1. This button allows you to view student comments and feedback on either a group by group or entire cohort basis.

2. View Overall Scores

- 2.1. This button allows you to see the overall scores for each student

3. Questions and Total Scores

- 3.1. This button allows you to see the score for each question and the overall scores for each student

4. Student Answers

- 4.1. This button allows you to the answers provided by students for each question on either a group by group basis or for the entire cohort.

5. Custom View

- 5.1. This button allows any combination of student activity including answers and comments to be selected viewed and downloaded

PUBLISH RESULTS

Click the 'Publish Results' button to publish results to students.

HOW TO MODERATE INAPPROPRIATE FEEDBACK

How to disable all Written Feedback

To disable all feedback from being published to students

1. Click on Modify Task from underneath the Active Subjects list
2. Deselect Publish Feedback from the Feedback Options section towards the bottom of the page.
3. Click Submit to save your changes

How to disable Written Feedback from individuals

You can disable feedback from individuals, for example because it is inappropriate, from the results screen.

1. In the Result Details and Moderation section click the View Feedback button
2. The Results List screen pops up with a group selector. You can either select a group or all students.
3. The window will reload showing feedback comments from your chosen group with checkboxes to disable comments from individual students.

Note: the withheld comments are displayed in pink. Withholding the feedback comments does not delete them, it just stops them from being published. This means that an academic can still access the comment if for example any misconduct action needs to be taken if the comments are inappropriate.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE MULTIPLE ATTEMPT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MULTIPLE-CHOICE MULTIPLE ATTEMPT	107
INTRODUCTION	109
CREATING A NEW TASK	113
GENERAL TASK SETUP.....	114
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN	118
MONITORING.....	124
RESULTS	125

INTRODUCTION

In general multiple choice style quizzes are a useful way to provide students with feedback on their progress. They can be used by students to evaluate their learning or as means of preparation before class. Alternatively you may choose to use a multiple choice quiz during class as part of a discussion topic or to provide feedback on what students do and do not understand. These types of activities allow in-class discussion/interaction/feedback to be dynamic and to be focused on where it is most needed.

Multiple-choice multiple attempt extends the learning opportunities afforded by traditional multiple-choice activities through increased interaction and collaboration and the provision of immediate feedback to both students and instructors.

IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK FOR STUDENTS

In multiple-choice multiple attempt activities students are provided with immediate feedback about their chosen answer choice. A correct answer choice turns green while an incorrect choice turns red. Hence a student can attempt the question and immediately receive feedback about their answer. If a student's answer is incorrect they can reconsider the question and have another attempt. Hence students may continue answering a question until choosing the correct answer, while reflecting on the question and the information provided by incorrect choices to learn and clarify what they do and do not understand.

SPARK^{PLUS} offers the opportunity to include an image and/or comment to be associated with each question. The comment boxes that appear once the correct answer has been chosen are extremely valuable as they provide the opportunity for students to explain their understanding of why the answer is correct. This is also particularly useful to instructors as together with the analysis of how many attempts were required to choose the correct answer it enables common misconceptions or areas where students are having difficulties to be identified.

AUTOMATIC GRADING

SPARK^{PLUS} allows multiple choice multiple attempt quizzes to be automatically graded according to an instructor entered marking scheme that allows diminishing partial credit to be awarded for subsequent attempts. For example, we often use 100% for the first attempt, 50% for the second attempt, 25% for the third attempt and 0% for any subsequent attempts.

Most frequently we use multiple-choice multiple attempt for collaborative formative activities where students discuss the questions and answers in small groups to facilitate self-evaluation and learning. Students find the combination of collaborative activities and the immediate feedback particularly engaging making learning fun. The feedback afforded to both students and instructors of such activities for example conducted at the beginning of a class allows subsequent discussions to be more productive, focused and to start from a more advanced level.

CONDUCTING THRESHOLD EXAMS

We have also found multiple-choice multiple attempt mode useful in conducting threshold exams. These are exams where students have to demonstrate they have achieved the learning outcomes at a satisfactory level before they can progress to the next topic, assessment activity or undertake their final exam. In this case Multiple-choice multiple attempt quizzes are not only fairer than normal multiple-choice quizzes in that they allow partial credit to be awarded for subsequent attempts that the immediate feedback provided promotes reflection and learning making these activities a form of learning oriented assessment.

STUDENTS CAN ENTER THEIR REASONING

SPARK^{PLUS} offers the opportunity to include an image and/or comment to be associated with each question. The comment boxes that appear once the correct answer has been chosen are extremely valuable as they provide the opportunity for students to explain their understanding of why the answer is correct. This is particularly useful to instructors as it enables them at a glance to get a snapshot of the range of understanding of their students and together with the analysis of how many attempts were required to achieve the correct answer for each question identify common misconceptions and where students are having difficulties or are confused.

FLIPPED INSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENT

A typical use of this mode in a flipped instruction environment would be as follows:

- An instructor uses SPARK^{PLUS} to ask their students to evaluate their learning from an out of class learning activity by answering a series of a multiple-choice question. Students are also required to enter the reason for their answer choice in the text box provided.
- Students complete the task before the next scheduled class
- The instructor publishes the student results allowing students to compare their answers and reasoning to their peers.
- Students in small groups then attempt the same quiz but this time using multiple-choice multiple attempt collaboratively, taking the opportunity in their discussions to teach and learn from each other as they test and receive immediate feedback on their understanding.
- The instructor views the results to make instructional choices for an in-class discussion addressing areas or topics about which students had misconceptions or found difficulty understanding.

The use of formative activities allows instructors to be creative and produce quizzes with more than one correct, no correct answers or selecting an incorrect answer as correct. Used imaginatively variations such as these may be used to promote learning oriented discussions. The focus of these formative activities is to promote learning, provide an opportunity for students to compare and consider their

reasoning, judgement and understanding with their peers, promote discussion and provide a form of self-evaluation against activity learning outcomes.

SPARK^{PLUS} provides instructors with many choices in designing their quizzes including password protection, manual or predetermined start and stop times and to display both the questions and answers in random order. In addition, a questions format can be either multiple-choice, multiple-choice with comment box or free response.

COLLABORATION

SPARK^{PLUS} also allows advanced options such as online collaboration where groups of students undertake their collaborative quizzes online all viewing the same screen on their personal computers while talking via Skype or some other suitable communication software.

EXAMPLE ASSESSMENT SCREENS

Attempt feedback

- Green: correct answer chosen
- Orange correct answer not yet chosen

The screenshot shows a quiz interface with a teal header. At the top, it says "View Answer Summary" and "2 days 3 hours remaining". There are navigation buttons for "Prev" and "Next" with a progress indicator showing 6 questions, with the current one highlighted in orange. Below the header are "Submit" and "Logout" buttons. The main content area is titled "QUESTION 6" and contains a block diagram of a modulator. The diagram shows a "Message signal $m(t)$ " entering an "Integrator", which then feeds into a "Product modulator". A "90° phase shifter" also feeds into the "Product modulator". The output of the "Product modulator" goes to a summing junction Σ , which also receives input from the "90° phase shifter". The final output is $x(t)$. Below the diagram is the question text: "If $x(t)$ is the modulating signal, what type of modulation is produced by the modulator shown in the figure above:". The options are: A) Narrowband FM, B) Amplitude Modulation (AM), C) Single Sideband (SSB), D) Narrowband PM, E) none of the other 4 answers are correct. There is a text box for "Please explain why you believe this answer is correct (300 words left)". At the bottom right, it says "YOUR ANSWERS".

Example of a multiple-choice multiple attempt assessment screen.

Answer Summary							
Question	Weight	Attempt			Score		
Question 1	16.67%	A	B	C	D	E	0%
Question 2	16.67%	A	B	C	D	E	25%
Question 3	16.67%	A	B	C	D	E	0%
Question 4	16.67%	A	B	C	D	E	
Question 5	16.67%	A	B	C	D	E	
Question 6	16.67%	A	B	C	D	E	50%
Progressive Total					12.5%		
<small>Your Maximum Possible Total</small>					<small>29.17%</small>		
Close							

Example of a multiple-choice multiple attempt answer summary screen.

CREATING A NEW TASK

1. LOG IN

Log in to SPARKPLUS using your username and password. If you have forgotten your password see Forgotten Password in the Troubleshooting section.

2. CREATING A NEW TASK

Tasks can only be created inside of an existing subject.

2.1. For the purpose of this quick guide we are assuming that a subject already exists. If you need to first set up a subject, see 'Creating a Subject'.

3. To create a task you must first select an existing task by clicking any task name under your chosen subject heading and clicking the 'New Task' button.

4. On the next screen select 'Multiple Choice-Multiple Attempt', which is located under the 'Select a Mode' title and click 'Next'.

GENERAL TASK SETUP

(For pre-existing tasks the following options are accessed by selecting ‘ Modify Task’)

1. TASK NAME

Give the task a name

NOTE: the mode will automatically be set to ‘Multiple Choice - Multi Attempt’ as set in the previous step.

2. Collaborative Task – if is a collaborative task tick yes (note: this is an advanced feature that may not be available in your version)

2.1. A collaborative activity allows students to be allocated to groups and answer the questions together. Students will see an end shared the same screen on their own devices during the collaborative part of an exercise .

3. STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

3.1. Status

When you are developing a task, we recommend that you set the status to ‘Inactive’, disabling student access to the task.

NOTE: Don’t forget to change this to active when you’re ready for students to start using the task.

3.2. Require Password to Access This Task

Select this option and enter the passwords if you want students to be only able to view and attempt the quiz after entering a password.

This feature is designed for summative quizzes. For example, once a quiz has begun any student enrolled in the task may access the quiz and answer the questions. This means a student could skip class, sit at home with their textbooks or other form of assistance and complete the quiz.

For assurance purposes we usually only conduct summative activities in a classroom or other secure environment. In this case we only provide the password to those students who attend (phones and other communication devices are not allowed to be brought into the room). This password can only be used once, hence a student can not logout leave the classroom before the quiz has finished and then login in again and complete the quiz outside of the class. To login more than once students need to enter the secondary instructor password. We do not share this password but rather if a student accidentally logs out while in class, the instructor uses this password to log them back in again.

3.3. Show Questions before Assessment Period

If you select this option students will be able to see the questions before the quiz is open. You should not select this option for summative activities otherwise students could see the questions are prepared answers before commencing the quiz.

3.4. Show Questions after Assessment Period

If you select this option students will be able to see the questions after the quiz is closed. You should not select this option for Summative activities where you wish to reuse the questions otherwise students could copy and subsequently pass questions who may undertake the quiz at a future time.

4. TASK TIMELINES

4.1. Decide if the assessment period will be set manually or predetermined. Set when the date and time the task begins and ends or choose to override this to start and stop the test at any time manually.

4.2. The Start and Stop buttons are ideal for a quiz designed to be carried out in a classroom environment when you want to have the flexibility to start and stop the quiz to suit your activity needs.

5. MULTI-CHOICE ANSWER OPTIONS

5.1. Multiple Choice Question and Answer Display Order

Choose if you would like to display the multiple choice questions and answers in the order you enter them or in a random order. Depending on the objective of your activity you may wish to choose a random order to discourage individuals or groups sourcing their answers from each other rather than thinking for themselves (more typically a problem in summative activities).

Important note about random answers:

If you decide to have questions such as a, b c or all of the above and have chosen a random order for the answers, there is no guarantee that the 'all of the above' answer will display as the last option – you can get around this by rewriting your answers to read, ' none of the other answers are correct', or similar.

5.2. Number of attempts per question

Check this option and enter the number of attempts per question you want to allow. This is typically set to the number of answer choices. For example, when you have five answer choices you may choose the number of attempts to be between one and five.

5.3. Marking Scheme for Multiple Attempts

Enter the percentage of the allocated mark to be awarded for the correct answer on that attempt. Enter 100,50,25,0,0 for example if you want to award 100% for the first attempt, 50% for the second attempt, 25% for the third attempt and 0% for any subsequent attempts.

5.4. Show Results As Percentage or Mark

Choose percentage or mark. If you choose mark you will need to enter the total mark for the quiz eg 10. Unless the questions are weighted (see next section) the marks will be divided equally between each question. For

example, if there are five equally weighted questions worth 10 marks each question is allocated two marks.

5.5. Rating Scale & Labels

This is where you set your task's answer options (the actual answers are entered later in the process - *see Questions under TASK OVERVIEW section*). You can choose between Multiple Choice (5 choices or fewer) or True or False.

Please note when entering your questions and answers you can enter more or less choices than the amount selected in this step. This just determines the default amount of choices.

5.6. Students can enter feedback?

Set to yes or no to display a comment box one after the correct answer is chosen. Even if you want to only display a comment box for one question you need to select yes. Individual questions can then be allocated a comment box in the question upload file or using the modified questions option.

5.7. Comments Compulsory?

You see this option if you chose to allow comments.

If you wish comments to be compulsory enter a tick in the box and set the minimum word count by entering a number in the box provided. When comments are compulsory, a student is only deemed to have completed their submission when they have both answered the question and comments that meet or exceed the designated minimum word count .

5.8. Maximum Word Count

Enter a number to set the maximum allowable length of comments in words

6. STUDENTS FEEDBACK OPTIONS

6.1. Publish result

If checked the overall results will be viewable by the students who have completed the test.

6.2. Publish written feedback

If checked written student feedback will be viewable by the students who have completed the test.

6.3. Publish Instructor Answers

If checked the Instructor Answers will be viewable - you can then set the days or hours after the publish date for them to be viewable.

6.4. Publish Instructor Comments

If checked the Instructor Comments will be viewable

You can then set the days or hours after the publish date for them to be viewable.

6.5. Publish to students with incomplete submission?

If checked students who haven't completed the tests will see the results. Recommend 'view students results only' for students with incomplete submission

7. Click Submit to save your task setup and progress to the Task Overview Screen.

If you have missed something you will not be able to progress, a screen alert will guide you through anything you have missed or entered incorrectly.

TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN

On this screen you can amend information you have entered and enter additional information such as students and groups, questions and answers.

STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

As covered earlier, this should be set to Inactive during setup – you can change it to Active once you're ready for students to start completing the task.

TIMELINES

Here you can see the Rating period.

If you have opted to over-ride the start and stop time you can click 'Start / stop or clear' here at any point (following the questions being setup, of course).

If you have NOT opted to over-ride the start and stop time you can edit the rating period or give rating period extensions.

Edit Rating Period

To edit the rating period you must select the 'Modify Task' button to return to the 'Task Setup Screen'.

Grant Rating Period Extensions

You can give extensions to individual students or give an extension to a group. The extension has a start and an end.

1. To give an extension click either the 'Student Rating Period Extensions' or the 'Group Rating Period Extensions' button. This loads the Alter Rating Period window.
2. Click the checkboxes for the people or groups that you wish to extend then click the 'Alter Rating Period' at screen bottom left.
Note to change the list from students to groups click the appropriate radio button at screen top right.
3. The screen now has fields to enter a start date and an end date. Enter the desired dates and times and click submit. The selected students or groups are listed and if the list is incorrect click the back button to change the selection of students or groups.
4. Click Submit to save the new dates for the selected students or groups.

Remove Rating Period Extensions

1. To remove rating period extensions click either the 'Student Rating Period Extensions' or the 'Group Rating Period Extensions' button.
2. Click the checkboxes for the students whose rating period you wish to remove.
3. Click the 'Remove Extension' extension button at screen bottom left. You'll be asked to confirm and the rating periods will be removed.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

This is where you can enter or upload your questions.

There are two ways to set up your questions:

- entering questions manually or
- uploading a pre-prepared text file.

Entering Questions Manually

Click 'Enter' to open the question entry screen.

1. DISPLAY

Choose an option from the pulldown menu (the second and third choices are only displayed if you've enabled comments – see: "Students can enter feedback?" in the General Task Setup Section)

Choose from:

- 1.1. Multiple-choice answer with comment box
- 1.2. Comment box only
- 1.3. Multiple-choice answer only

2. QUESTIONS and ANSWER CHOICES

2.1. Next enter the question. This can be accompanied by an image (see CORRESPONDING IMAGE below).

2.2. Enter answer choices

2.3. Add Answer Choices

Use the "Add Answer" button to add more answer choices.

2.4. Reordering Answer Choices

Drag the answer letter up or down to change the order of the answer choices.

2.5. Set the Correct Answer

Click the radio button next to the answer that is correct.

3. CORRESPONDING IMAGE

3.1. One corresponding image for each question can be uploaded by clicking 'Browse' to navigate to the image on your computer. Images will be resized to the option selected (default is 650w x 500h). Please note if your image contains text and is considerably larger than the image sizes available the text may be difficult to read once uploaded - bear this in mind when selecting images.

4. COMMENT BOX PROMPT

4.1. (only displayed if you've enabled comments – see "Students can enter feedback?" in the General Task Setup Section plus the display setting has

to show the comment box - see Display above).

Enter a prompt to be displayed above the comments box - If you leave this blank the default text will be used, which is 'Enter your Feedback'.

5. ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

5.1. You can add as many questions as you need – to add more questions, click 'Add Question' at screen bottom left.

5.2. To reorder the questions drag the question numbers in the question number panel at the top of the screen. Move the question by dragging the drag symbol in the top left of the question number box.

6. SAVING YOUR QUESTIONS

6.1. Click 'Save' when you've finished.

7. RETURN TO OVERVIEW SCREEN

7.1. When you have finished entering all the questions click 'Close' to exit this screen and return to the overview screen.

Uploading Questions using a pre-prepared text file

1. OPENING THE UPLOAD WINDOW

Click 'Upload' to open the upload window.

2. DOWNLOAD THE TEMPLATE

On this screen there will be a button labelled "Question Template". Click this to download a sample text file.

3. FORMATTING YOUR DATA

Please note the formatting required. Asterisks are used to denote differences between upload data, such as: questions, answers, images, etc.

3.1. No asterisk

A line with no asterisk is a possible answer. Each answer needs to be on a new line. To have a line break in an answer insert a pilcrow ¶.

3.2. One asterisk:

You can specify the correct answer by placing a single asterisk (*) before the correct answer. This is optional - you can specify the correct answers later. Each answer needs to be on a new line. To enter a line break enter a pilcrow ¶.

3.3. Two Asterisks:

Your uploaded file needs to have double asterisks (**) to denote the start of each new question. The question must be on one line. To enter a line break enter a pilcrow ¶.

3.4. Three Asterisks:

You can also prompt for written responses to each question by entering triple asterisk (***) then the prompt on a new line after the answers.

3.5. Four Asterisks:

Images (not applicable when creating an upload file)

3.6. Five Asterisks:

This is where you can write your reasoning for the correct answer – this will only be revealed to the students when results are published and “Publish Instructor Comments” is enabled.

PLEASE NOTE: To enter a ¶ on Windows hold Alt and enter 20 on the number pad. To enter ¶ on a Mac hold Option and press 7.

4. A typical upload text file will look something like this (note in this example the first question has only 3 answer choices with no comment box, the second question has 2 with a comment box and an instructor written answer while the third question has 5 answer choices with a comment box):

Questions

**What is the colour of the sky?

*blue

pink

red

**Is grass green?

*True

False

***Please explain your chosen answer

*****Most species of grass produce a bright pigment called chlorophyll.

Chlorophyll absorbs blue and red light, but mostly reflects green light, this accounts for grass being green.

**What is your favourite ice cream flavour?

Chocolate

Vanilla

Hokey Pokey

Boysenberry

None of the other provided answers

***If you chose None of the other answers provided, please enter your favourite flavour in the text box below

5. When your file is complete upload the file by clicking ‘Choose File’ and navigating to the file saved on your local computer.

6. UPLOADING YOUR QUESTIONS

You can upload your file, once complete, by clicking ‘Choose File’ and navigating to the file saved on your local computer. You will be able to modify this data or add supporting images manually, if you choose, by clicking ‘modify’.

View Sample Student Rating Screen with Your Questions

Select this button to see how students will view the questions

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

You can see how many students are enrolled in the task - you can add all students in the subject to a task by clicking 'Add all students' and following the prompts. This places the students into the "Ungrouped Students" list.

Alternatively if you require students to be placed into groups you must first set up those groups.

There are three ways of setting up groups.

- Either by entering the group names (with aliases if appropriate) manually, or
- By uploading a pre-prepared text file

Setting up student groups manually

1. Click the 'Manage Groups/ Aliases' to open the Groups screen. See 'Group Management screen' for more information.
2. Click 'New' to create a new group.
Continue until you have set up all the groups you require.
3. If you have many groups you can use the 'Create Multiple' feature. This creates the number of groups required with a number as the suffix. You're prompted for the number of groups and the group name prefix. For example you may want 10 groups and need the called "Group xx". You would enter "Group " as the prefix and 10 when prompted for the number of groups.
4. When you have setup your groups you are now ready to add students.
5. Select the first group from the drop down at the top of the left-hand panel.
6. The right hand panel will display all the students enrolled in the subject. To add students to a specific group click a name and click the '<- Add' button to add the selected student to the selected group. You can allocate alias names to each student if you choose.
7. Once you have created your group close the Manage Groups / Aliases window and refresh the main overview screen to update the student counts.

Setting up student groups by uploading a pre-prepared text file

1. Click 'Upload' to upload a pre-prepared file

Note: If you don't have a student list, click the 'Enrolled Students' button (from the main screen) to download one.

2. On the upload window there will be a button labelled “Template for students in groups with aliases” and a button labeled “Template for students in groups”. Click the appropriate button to download a sample text file.

3. The template file (with Aliases) will look something like this:

AccountID	GroupName	Alias
12345678	Blah	Assessor 1
12345679	Blah	Assessor 2

4. If you have many groups that you want to set up, but want to add students later you can upload the group names by selecting ‘Upload Group Names’. Follow the template that you can download from the upload window and upload the file.

5. Files are uploaded by clicking ‘choose File’ and navigating to the file saved on your local computer.

MULTI-CHOICE ANSWER OPTIONS

You will see a summary of your survey answer options and see a sample slider. To modify these click ‘modify task’.

STUDENT FEEDBACK OPTIONS

You will see a summary of your student feedback options. To modify these click ‘modify task’.

COMPLETING YOUR TASK SETUP

When you’re ready you can change the status to ‘Active’ to make your task live.

MONITORING

To access the monitoring tab click the Monitoring Icon at the top of the screen. This screen has a multi-purpose.

TIMELINE

This section enables you to both view student progress (percentage completed) during the assessment period and to e-mail students who have not yet submitted.

RESULTS

To access the Results tab click the Results Icon at the top of the screen.

TIMELINE

This section enables you to view student progress while they are using the task and enables you to communicate with participants who have not yet completed their quiz.

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

You can view student results as the student will see them.

You can also delete ratings and group ratings if you've set up some test data for demo purposes – please note be 100% certain that you wish to do this as there is no undo option.

RESULTS SUMMARY

Select 'View Multi Choice Summary' or 'View Comments' (if comments are enabled) to review the comments or answer choices of students via a histogram. The results can be viewed by individual groups or the entire cohort for the selected attempt (first, second, third etc) by selecting the appropriate tab from the pulldown menus. Comments associated with a particular answer choices can be viewed by clicking on the slider.

RESULT DETAILS AND MODERATION

Enables you to review various aspects of the task results.

- View Written Feedback
 1. Note this is only visible if you have chosen to allow students to enter comments when you set up the task.
- How to withhold or not publish all comments
 2. To publish no comments, click on Modify Task from underneath the Active Subjects list and deselect Publish Feedback from the Feedback Options section towards the bottom of the page.
- How to withhold individual comments
 3. You can withhold publishing comments from individuals, for example because they are inappropriate.
- Click the 'View Written Feedback' button
 4. A screen pops up with a group selector. You can select either a group or all students. Depending on your selection the window will reload showing feedback comments with checkboxes that if checked will withhold the associated comment from being published to students. Notice that the withheld comments are displayed in pink. As these

are students assessment withholding comments does not delete them, it just stops them from being published. This means that an academic can still access the comment if for example any misconduct action needs to be taken for an inappropriate comment.

OVERALL SCORES

- This tab allows you to see the overall scores for each student
- Questions and Overall Scores
 5. This tab allows you to see the score for each question and the overall scores for each student
- Student Answers
 6. This tab allows you to view the final answer submitted by students for each question on either a group by group basis or for the entire cohort. Note if you have allowed students to have the same amount of attempts as there are answer choices all the entries will be the same. This screen is more useful when you have allowed less attempts than there are answer choices.
- Custom View
 7. This tab allows any combination of student activity including answers and comments to be selected viewed and downloaded

PUBLISH RESULTS

Click the 'Publish Results' button to publish results to students.

**SURVEY /
FEEDBACK /
FORMATIVE
REVIEW**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SURVEY / FEEDBACK / FORMATIVE REVIEW	127
INTRODUCTION	129
CREATING A NEW TASK	130
GENERAL TASK SETUP.....	131
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN	133
MONITORING.....	136
RESULTS	137

INTRODUCTION

This mode allows SPARK^{PLUS} to be used to administer surveys. Surveys are useful for obtaining information and feedback about your teaching methods, learning activities and what students do and don't yet understand.

We regularly use surveys SPARK^{PLUS} for:

- At the end of a class particularly if we have introduced a new type of learning activity we may ask students to complete a short three question survey with the option of providing free response feedback. We have found that students are keen to contribute in these surveys, particularly when they can see that their feedback makes a difference. Students also appreciate being able to look at the published results as it enables them to benchmark their own understanding and engagement with their class peers.

We have also found it useful to have a short survey about the learning outcomes associated with a difficult topic. We might for example ask students how confident they are that they could address particular learning outcomes, or alternatively ask them for feedback on what they still don't understand. This information is used to make instructional choices and influence the design of additional in-class and out of class learning activities.

- We use this mode to conduct surveys before and after workshops / forums and for student satisfaction surveys.
- The tool allows the instructor/researcher to enter a consent form that participants must agree to before being given access to the survey. This tool is extremely useful for conducting surveys for research where ethical consideration means consent must be obtained.

In the cases of research surveys, forums and workshops it is likely you may not have prior knowledge of survey participants. In this case SPARK^{PLUS} allows anonymous self-enrolment. (Note: this feature may not be enabled in your version of SPARK^{PLUS}).

Note: this feature is currently disabled in the primary UTS version. However, it is available to staff on request through an alternative installation.

CREATING A NEW TASK

1. LOG IN

Log in to SPARKPLUS using your username and password. If you have forgotten your password see Forgotten Password in the Troubleshooting section.

2. CREATING A NEW TASK

Tasks can only be created inside of an existing subject.

2.1. For the purpose of this quick guide we are assuming that a subject already exists. If you need to first set up a subject, see 'Creating a Subject'.

3. To create a task you must first select an existing task by clicking any task name under your chosen subject heading and clicking the 'New Task' button.

4. On the next screen select 'Survey / Formative Review', which is located under the 'Select a Mode' title and click 'Next'.

GENERAL TASK SETUP

1. TASK NAME

Give the task a name

NOTE: the mode will automatically be set to 'Survey / Formative Review' as set in the previous step.

2. STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

When you first set up the task, we recommend that you set the status to 'Inactive', this disables student access to the task.

NOTE: Remember to change this to active when you're ready for students to start using the task.

- 2.1. Tick the box if you required participants to give consent prior to being given access to the survey.
- 2.2. If you check the box you will see an exemplar consent form with four possible placeholders [firstName], [surname], [task name] and [subject name]. These placeholders will be replaced with the appropriate text from enrolled participants when they view the survey.
Alternately you can produce/enter your own consent form.
- 2.3. Note: If you are using the self enrolment mode (if available in your installation of Spark plus these placeholders won't work

3. TASK TIMELINES

Decide how the assessment period will be set.

- 3.1. Set the date and time when the survey begins and ends or choose to start and stop it manually.
- 3.2. Start and Stop buttons are ideal for a survey designed to be carried out in a workshop/classroom environment when you want to have the flexibility to begin and end the survey at the appropriate time.

4. SURVEY ANSWER OPTIONS

4.1. Rating Scale

This is where you set your task's answer options (the actual answers are entered later in the process - see the TASK OVERVIEW section. You can choose between seven predefined scales available on the pulldown menu or choose 'Custom' and set up your own. The predefined options include Multiple Choice (5 choices or fewer) , True or False and Likert scales.

Please note: if a Multiple Choice scale is chosen, SPARKPLUS will operate like a multiple choice survey tool. However, if you choose another scale, e.g. Likert scale, SPARKPLUS will operate like a normal survey, with questions and responses.

4.2. Rating Labels

- 4.2.1. If you have chosen the custom rating scale enter your choice indicators and descriptions here
- 4.2.2. For example Indicator A Description Answer A . You can use the up-and-down orange triangles on the left-hand side to rearrange your answer options.
- 4.3. Students can enter feedback?
Set to yes or no to add a comment box to any question. Even if you want to only use a comment box for one question you need to select yes. Individual questions can then be allocated a comment box or set to be a free response question only (no answer choices provided) in the question upload file or using the modified questions option.
- 4.4. Comments Compulsory?
If you wish comments to be compulsory enter a tick in the box.

If you have selected to make comments compulsory enter a number in the box to indicate a minimum word count.
Please note: When comments are compulsory, a participant is only deemed to have completed their submission when they have both answered the question and comments that meet or exceed the designated minimum word count.
- 4.5. Maximum Word Count
Set a maximum word count for comments.

5. STUDENTS FEEDBACK OPTIONS

- 5.1. Publish written feedback.
This gives you the option to display written feedback from each student. If you use this option, it's advisable to use the feedback moderation available from the results screen.
- 5.2. Publish to students with incomplete submissions
If checked students who haven't completed the tests will see the results.
- 5.3. Show result summary (histograms of student responses)
If checked students will see the summary results presented on a histogram.

If you have missed something you will not be able to progress, a screen alert will guide you through anything you have missed or entered incorrectly.

TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN

On this screen you can amend any information you have entered and enter additional information such as students and groups.

STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

As covered earlier, we recommend that this should be set to inactive during setup – you can change it to active when you're ready for the students to see the task in their task list. When the assessment period is set to start at a future time it enables the students to know what tasks are coming up.

TIMELINES

Here you can see when the survey is open. To edit these times and dates you must select the 'Modify Task' button to return to the 'Task Setup Screen'.

If you have opted to manually start and stop the survey you can click 'Start / stop or clear' here at any time to control access to the survey (once the survey questions have been setup, of course).

If you have NOT opted to over-ride the start and stop time you can edit the rating period or give rating period extensions.

Edit Rating Period

To edit the rating period you must select the 'Modify Task' button to return to the 'Task Setup Screen'.

Grant Rating Period Extensions

You can give extensions to individual students or give an extension to a group. The extension has a start and an end.

1. To give an extension click either the 'Student Rating Period Extensions' or the 'Group Rating Period Extensions' button. This loads the Alter Rating Period window.
2. Click the checkboxes for the people or groups that you wish to extend then click the 'Alter Rating Period' at screen bottom left.
Note to change the list from students to groups click the appropriate radio button at screen top right.
3. The screen now has fields to enter a start date and an end date. Enter the desired dates and times and click submit. The selected students or groups are listed and if the list is incorrect click the back button to change the selection of students or groups.
4. Click Submit to save the new dates for the selected students or groups.

Remove Rating Period Extensions

1. To remove rating period extensions click either the 'Student Rating Period Extensions' or the 'Group Rating Period Extensions' button.

2. Click the checkboxes for the students whose rating period you wish to remove.
3. Click the 'Remove Extension' extension button at screen bottom left. You'll be asked to confirm and the rating periods will be removed.

SURVEY QUESTIONS

This is where you can enter or upload your questions.

If a Multiple Choice scale has been chosen for the survey, then the questions are entered in the same way as in the Multiple Choice mode.

If a scale other than Multiple Choice has been selected then the questions are entered in the same way as Multiple Assessor mode.

Refer to either of those modes based on your scale selection.

VIEW SAMPLE STUDENT RATING SCREEN WITH YOUR QUESTIONS

Select this tab to see how students will view the questions

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

You can see how many students are enrolled in the task - you can add all students in the subject to a task by clicking 'Add all students' and following the prompts. This places the students into the "Ungrouped Students" list.

Alternatively if you require students to be placed into groups you must first set up those groups.

There are two ways of setting up groups.

- Either by entering the group names (with aliases if appropriate) manually, or
- By uploading a pre-prepared text file, or

Setting up student groups manually

1. Click the 'Manage Groups/ Aliases' to open the Groups screen. See 'Group Management screen' for more information.
2. Click 'New' to create a new group.
Continue until you have set up all the groups you require.
3. If you have many groups you can use the 'Create Multiple' feature. This creates the number of groups required with a number as the suffix. You're prompted for the number of groups and the group name prefix. For example you may want 10 groups and need the called "Group xx". You would enter "Group " as the prefix and 10 when prompted for the number of groups.
4. When you have setup your groups you are now ready to add students.
5. Select the first group from the drop down at the top of the left-hand panel.

6. The right hand panel will display all the students enrolled in the subject. To add students to a specific group click a name and click the '<- Add' button to add the selected student to the selected group. You can allocate alias names to each student if you choose.
7. Once you have created your group close the Manage Groups / Aliases window and refresh the main overview screen to update the student counts.

Setting up student groups by uploading a pre-prepared text file

1. Click 'Upload' to upload a pre-prepared file

Note: If you don't have a student list, click the 'Enrolled Students' button (from the main screen) to download one.

2. On the upload window there will be a button labelled "Template for students in groups with aliases" and a button labeled "Template for students in groups". Click the appropriate button to download a sample text file.

3. The template file (with Aliases) will look something like this:

AccountID	GroupName	Alias
12345678	Blah	Assessor 1
12345679	Blah	Assessor 2

4. If you have many groups that you want to set up, but want to add students later you can upload the group names by selecting 'Upload Group Names'. Follow the template that you can download from the upload window and upload the file.
5. Files are uploaded by clicking 'choose File' and navigating to the file saved on your local computer.

SURVEY AND ANSWER OPTIONS

You will see a summary of your survey answer options and see a sample slider. To modify these click 'modify task'.

STUDENT FEEDBACK OPTIONS

You will see a summary of your student feedback options.

To modify these click 'modify task'.

COMPLETING YOUR TASK SETUP

When you're ready you can change the status to 'Active' to make your task live.

MONITORING

To access the monitoring tab click the Monitoring Icon at the top of the screen.

TIMELINE

This section enables you to both view student completion progress while the task is open and send an email to task participants who are yet to complete their submission.

RESULTS

To access the Results tab click the Results Icon at the top of the screen.

TIMELINE

This section enables you to both view student completion progress while the task is open and send an e-mail to task participants who are yet to complete their submission.

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

You can view student results as the student will see them.

You can also delete ratings and group ratings if you've set up some test data for demo purposes – please note be 100% certain participants you wish to do this as there is no undo option.

RESULTS SUMMARY

Select 'View Survey Summary' or 'View Comments' (if comments are enabled) to review the comments or answer choices of participants via a histogram. The results can be viewed by individual groups (if group were entered) or the entire cohort by selecting the appropriate tab from the pulldown menus. Comments associated with a particular answer choices can be viewed by clicking on the slider.

RESULT DETAILS AND MODERATION

Enables you to review various aspects of the survey results.

1. View Written Feedback

Note this is only visible if you have chosen to allow students to enter comments when you set up the task.

2. Student Answers

This button allows you to view the responses submitted by participants for each question on either a group by group basis (if groups were entered) or for the entire cohort.

3. Custom View

This button allows any combination of student activity including answers and comments to be selected viewed and downloaded.

PUBLISH RESULTS

Click the 'Publish Results' button to publish the survey results to participants.

CLICKER

Table of Contents

CLICKER	138
INTRODUCTION	140
CREATING A NEW TASK	141
GENERAL TASK SETUP.....	142
TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN	143
RUNNING A CLICKER ACTIVITY.....	148
MONITORING.....	149
RESULTS	150

INTRODUCTION

Clickers are the colloquial name for a participant response system often used by academics to increase in class student engagement and participation. They may also be used in seminars and conferences to solicit information and opinions from delegates. SPARK^{PLUS} removes the need for participants to be given a handheld transmitter or clicker by allowing participants to use their phone, tablet, PC or other Internet capable device to respond to questions posed by the instructor/presenter.

A typical use of this mode would be as follows:

- An instructor uses SPARK^{PLUS} to ask their students a multiple-choice question.
- Students submit their answer in SPARK^{PLUS} via their Internet capable device
- The instructor can start, end or extend the time for an activity with a simple click
- SPARK^{PLUS} collects the student answers and produces a histogram showing how many students chose each answer choice.
- The instructor can also choose to show the categorised (choice A , Choice B etc) reasons students provided for their choice (if published students can also view the results in this way)
- The instructor uses the results to make dynamic instructional choices on how to proceed, for example discussing the merits of each answer and the reasons provided, asking students to discuss the submitted answers and reasons in small groups or after some discussion varying the question and have students respond to evaluate their understanding.

SPARK^{PLUS} allows many variations in the way a task is set up and hence conducted, including the following:

- The questions are displayed on each student's individual device. This allows the clicker mode to be used during a webinar or audio conference when participants may be in different locations or not have the capacity to view a common screen.
- The results may be published allowing students to view the answers and responses at a later date or alternatively to reflect on the results before class to facilitate informed in class discussion.
- Students can be put into groups. This allows the results from each group to be compared or the combined results to be viewed. For example experts, postgraduate and undergraduates could be placed in different groups.
- Questions can either be multiple-choice, multiple-choice with comment box or free response.

CREATING A NEW TASK

LOG IN

Log in to SPARK^{PLUS} using your username and password. If you have forgotten your password see Forgotten Password in the Troubleshooting section.

CREATING A NEW TASK

Tasks can only be created inside of an existing subject.

For the purpose of this quick start guide we are assuming that a subject already exists inside which you wish to setup your task. If you need to first set up a subject, see the 'Setting up a Subject'.guide

- To create a task you must first select an existing task by clicking any task name under your chosen subject heading and clicking the 'New Task' button.
- On the next screen select 'Clicker', which is located under the 'Select a Mode' title and click 'Next'.

GENERAL TASK SETUP

1. TASK NAME

Give the task a name

NOTE: the mode will automatically be set to 'Clicker' as set in the previous step.

2. STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

When you first set up the task, we recommend that you set the status to 'Inactive', this disables student access to the task.

NOTE: Remember to change this to active when you're ready for students to start using the task.

3. TIMELINES

The assessment period is set by using the Clicker Manager after you have set up the task.

4. QUESTION AND ANSWER OPTIONS

4.1. Rating Scale

This is where you set your task's answer options. You can choose from the various options:

Multiple Choice (5, 4, 3, or 2 answer choices)

True or False

Likert Scale 5 Point

Likert Scale 7 Point

Custom

4.2. Rating Labels

4.2.1. This area displays the ratings labels and values for your chosen Rating Scale.

4.2.2. If you have selected 'Custom' above you can add / delete and edit labels here.

5. STUDENTS FEEDBACK OPTIONS

6. Publish to students with incomplete submission?

If checked students who haven't completed or only partially completed the task will see the results.

7. Publish written feedback

This gives you the option to display written feedback from each student. If you use this option, it's advisable before publishing to use the feedback moderation available from the results screen to withhold any inappropriate comments.

8. Click Submit to save your task setup and progress to the Task Overview Screen.

If you have missed something you will not be able to progress, a screen alert will guide you through anything you have missed or entered incorrectly.

TASK OVERVIEW SCREEN

On this screen you view the task setup and can enter additional information such as questions and students and groups.

STUDENT ACCESS TO TASK

We recommend that this should be set to inactive during setup – you can change it to active when you’re ready for the students to see the task in their task list.

CLICKER MANAGEMENT

This is where you can control the clicker activity via the Clicker Management screen and enter or upload your questions. This window is only available once you have entered questions.

This is where you can enter or upload your questions.

There are two ways to set up your questions:

- entering questions manually or
- uploading a pre-prepared text file.

Entering Questions Manually

Click ‘Enter’ to open the question entry screen.

1. DISPLAY

Choose an option from the pulldown menu (the second and third choices are only displayed if you’ve enabled comments – see: “Students can enter feedback?” in the General Task Setup Section)

Choose from:

- 1.1. Multiple-choice answer with comment box
- 1.2. Comment box only
- 1.3. Multiple-choice answer only

2. QUESTIONS and ANSWER CHOICES

2.1. Next enter the question. This can be accompanied by an image (see CORRESPONDING IMAGE below).

2.2. Enter answer choices

2.3. Add Answer Choices

Use the “Add Answer” button to add more answer choices.

2.4. Reordering Answer Choices

Drag the answer letter up or down to change the order of the answer choices.

2.5. Set the Correct Answer

Click the radio button next to the answer that is correct.

3. CORRESPONDING IMAGE

3.1. One corresponding image for each question can be uploaded by clicking 'Browse' to navigate to the image on your computer. Images will be resized to the option selected (default is 650w x 500h). Please note if your image contains text and is considerably larger than the image sizes available the text may be difficult to read once uploaded - bear this in mind when selecting images.

4. COMMENT BOX PROMPT

4.1. (only displayed if you've enabled comments - see "Students can enter feedback?" in the General Task Setup Section plus the display setting has to show the comment box - see Display above).

Enter a prompt to be displayed above the comments box - If you leave this blank the default text will be used, which is 'Enter your Feedback'.

5. ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

5.1. You can add as many questions as you need - to add more questions, click 'Add Question' at screen bottom left.

5.2. To reorder the questions drag the question numbers in the question number panel at the top of the screen. Move the question by dragging the drag symbol in the top left of the question number box.

6. SAVING YOUR QUESTIONS

6.1. Click 'Save' when you've finished.

7. RETURN TO OVERVIEW SCREEN

7.1. When you have finished entering all the questions click 'Close' to exit this screen and return to the overview screen.

Uploading Questions using a pre-prepared text file

1. OPENING THE UPLOAD WINDOW

Click 'Upload' to open the upload window.

2. DOWNLOAD THE TEMPLATE

On this screen there will be a button labelled "Question Template". Click this to download a sample text file.

3. FORMATTING YOUR DATA

Please note the formatting required. Asterisks are used to denote differences between upload data, such as: questions, answers, images, etc.

3.1. No asterisk

A line with no asterisk is a possible answer. Each answer needs to be on a new line. To have a line break in an answer insert a pilcrow ¶.

3.2. One asterisk:

You can specify the correct answer by placing a single asterisk (*) before the correct answer. This is optional - you can specify the correct answers later. Each answer needs to be on a new line. To enter a line break enter a pilcrow ¶.

3.3. Two Asterisks:

Your uploaded file needs to have double asterisks (**) to denote the start of each new question. The question must be on one line. To enter a line break enter a pilcrow ¶.

3.4. Three Asterisks:

You can also prompt for written responses to each question by entering triple asterisk (***) then the prompt on a new line after the answers.

3.5. Four Asterisks:

Images (not applicable when creating an upload file)

3.6. Five Asterisks:

This is where you can write your reasoning for the correct answer – this will only be revealed to the students when results are published and “Publish Instructor Comments” is enabled.

PLEASE NOTE: To enter a ¶ on Windows hold Alt and enter 20 on the number pad. To enter ¶ on a Mac hold Option and press 7.

4. A typical upload text file will look something like this (note in this example the first question has only 3 answer choices with no comment box, the second question has 2 with a comment box and an instructor written answer while the third question has 5 answer choices with a comment box):

Questions

**What is the colour of the sky?

*blue

pink

red

**Is grass green?

*True

False

***Please explain your chosen answer

*****Most species of grass produce a bright pigment called chlorophyll.

Chlorophyll absorbs blue and red light, but mostly reflects green light, this accounts for grass being green.

**What is your favourite ice cream flavour?

Chocolate

Vanilla

Hokey Pokey

Boysenberry

None of the other provided answers

***If you chose None of the other answers provided, please enter your favourite flavour in the text box below

5. UPLOADING YOUR QUESTIONS

You can upload your file, once complete, by clicking 'Choose File' and navigating to the file saved on your local computer. You will be able to modify this data or add supporting images manually, if you choose, by clicking 'modify'.

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

You can see how many students are enrolled in the task - you can add all students in the subject to a task by clicking 'Add all students' and following the prompts. This places the students into the "Ungrouped Students" list.

Alternatively if you require students to be placed into groups you must first set up those groups.

There are two ways of setting up groups.

- Either by entering the group names manually, or
- By uploading a pre-prepared text file, or

Setting up student groups manually

1. Click the 'Manage Groups' to open the Groups screen. See 'Group Management screen' for more information.
2. Click 'New' to create a new group.
Continue until you have set up all the groups you require.
3. If you have many groups you can use the 'Create Multiple' feature. This creates the number of groups required with a number as the suffix. You're prompted for the number of groups and the group name prefix. For example you may want 10 groups and need the called "Group xx". You would enter "Group " as the prefix and 10 when prompted for the number of groups.
4. When you have setup your groups you are now ready to add students.
5. Select the first group from the drop down at the top of the left-hand panel.
6. The right hand panel will display all the students enrolled in the subject. To add students to a specific group click a name and click the '<- Add' button to add the selected student to the selected group. You can allocate alias names to each student if you choose.
7. Once you have created your group close the Manage Groups window and refresh the main overview screen to update the student counts.

Setting up student groups by uploading a pre-prepared text file

1. Click 'Upload' to upload a pre-prepared file

Note: If you don't have a student list, click the 'Enrolled Students' button (from the task setup overview screen) to download one.

2. On the upload window there will be a button labelled "Template for students in groups with aliases" and a button labeled "Template for students in groups". Click the appropriate button to download a sample text file.
3. The template file (with Aliases) will look something like this:

AccountID	GroupName	Alias
12345678	Blah	Assessor 1
12345679	Blah	Assessor 2

4. If you have many groups that you want to set up, but want to add students later you can upload the group names by selecting 'Upload Group Names'. Follow the template that you can download from the upload window and upload the file.
5. Files are uploaded by clicking 'choose File' and navigating to the file saved on your local computer.

QUESTION AND ANSWER OPTIONS

You will see a sample slider. To modify this click 'modify task'.

STUDENTS FEEDBACK OPTIONS

You will see a summary of your student feedback options. To modify these click 'modify task'.

COMPLETING YOUR TASK SETUP

When you're ready you can change the status to 'Active' and enabling participants to see the task.

RUNNING A CLICKER ACTIVITY

OVERVIEW

You run a Clicker Activity by using the “Clicker Manager”. It works by having the students answer one question at a time. The students have a set amount of time to answer the question and then you can either review the student answers or move to a new question.

STARTING A CLICKER ACTIVITY

1. To start a clicker activity click ‘Open Clicker Manager’
2. Select the question you want the students to answer by clicking one of the question numbers at the top of the Clicker Manager window.
3. Click ‘View Question’.
4. Enter the duration in minutes (0.5 is equivalent to 30 seconds) then click ‘Start’
5. Select ‘Stop’ if you want the task to finish before the entered time.
6. The time for the question can be extended after it is completed by entering the extension duration and then selecting ‘Extend’

VIEWING THE RESULTS

1. Select ‘Rating Summary’
2. Use the pulldown menu to view the results for individual groups or the entire cohort (‘All groups’ option)
3. Expand or reduce the size of the histogram using the ‘Expand All’ or ‘Minimise All’ options
4. Click on a slider division (eg: A , B ,C etc) to display the student comments associated with the selected answer choice

EDIT QUESTIONS

1. This tab allows you to edit questions and answers on the fly if you find any mistakes.

PUBLISH RESULTS

1. This button will publish the results (allows students to see them) according to the choices you made in the task set up. This publishes results from all questions and is the same as clicking publish results from the results section.

MONITORING

To access the monitoring tab click the Monitoring Icon at the top of the screen.
This screen has a multi-purpose.

TIMELINE

This section enables you to view student progress while they are using the task and enables you to email participants/students who are not contributing.

RESULTS

To access the Results tab click the Results Icon at the top of the screen.

TIMELINE

This section enables you to view student progress while they are using the task and enables you to communicate with group members who are not contributing.

STUDENTS AND GROUPS

You can view student results as the student will see them.

You can also delete individual ratings and group ratings, for example if you've set up some test data for demo purposes – please note be 100% certain that you wish to do this as there is no undo option.

RESULT SUMMARY

Enables an instructor to review the comments or answer choices of students by selecting the 'View Comments' or 'View Question Summary' that will provide a histogram of the results. The results can be viewed by individual groups or the entire cohort by selecting the appropriate option from the pulldown menu.

RESULT DETAILS AND MODERATION

Enables you to review various aspects of the clicker activity.

1. View Written Feedback

Note this is only visible if you have chosen to allow students to enter comments when you set up the task.

2. Student Answers

This button allows you to view the responses submitted by participants for each question on either a group by group basis (if groups were entered) or for the entire cohort.

3. Custom View

This button allows any combination of student activity including answers and comments to be selected viewed and downloaded.

PUBLISH RESULTS

Click the 'Publish Results' button to publish results from all questions to students.

Troubleshooting

FORGOTTEN PASSWORD

If you have forgotten your password, click the 'Forgotten Your Password?' link and type your Account ID or registered email address into the box provided and click submit. You will receive an email with a link to reset your password.

If an incorrect or non-valid Account ID or email is entered, no error is displayed. This is a security measure to not reveal whether an Account ID or email is registered in the system which could then be targeted by other attacks.

An example Forgotten Password email is below:

Hi John,

Someone recently requested a password change for your Institution Name SPARKPLUS account. If this was you, follow the steps below to reset your password.

If you don't want to change your password or didn't request this, just ignore and delete this message.

To reset your password and access your account, follow these steps:

1. Click on the link below. If nothing happens when you click on the link, copy and paste the link into the address bar of your web browser.

[http://institution.sparkplus.address/reset_password.php?
a=reset_password&h=jNJmmeLLRdRsHnxXJMmpdGMVzpMp8sAHz5qxUs2pxuD
2Y9FqDBxUrbmHsnHbgqK3Byy8GeHF6sgMeZfn4MVGSDjzxehVy3ZYgQ7H](http://institution.sparkplus.address/reset_password.php?a=reset_password&h=jNJmmeLLRdRsHnxXJMmpdGMVzpMp8sAHz5qxUs2pxuD2Y9FqDBxUrbmHsnHbgqK3Byy8GeHF6sgMeZfn4MVGSDjzxehVy3ZYgQ7H)

The link takes you to the reset password page. It is valid for 30 minutes.

2. Enter your new password and click Submit. You will then be able to log in to your Institution Name SPARKPLUS account.

To keep your account secure, please don't forward this email to anyone.

Please note: Do not reply to this email, it will go nowhere. This is a system generated email.

UPLOADING STUDENTS INTO SUBJECTS

Some of the most common upload issues are listed below:

EMAIL ADDRESS USED BY SOMEONE ELSE

SPARKPLUS will only allow an email to be used once. This scenario happens when the upload file has an email address that is already in the database but stored with a different account ID.

Sometimes this can happen because when the account was first uploaded the account ID was not using the standard account ID for your institution. In this case, contact support@sparkplus.com.au and they can fix the problem. Please send a list of old account IDs and the corresponding new ones.

The problem may be that your upload file does not have the standard account IDs in it. If this is the case, you can delete any new accounts generated and fix your upload file and re-upload.

Another issue could be that the email and account IDs have become misaligned before uploading.

ACCOUNT ID NOT VALID

Generally the account ID must only contain alphanumeric characters and be between 5 and 20 characters long.

However, further constraints can be applied to make account ID handling easier. If, for example, your institution has account IDs that are digits only, this constraint can be applied. With extra constraints it is harder to make mistakes. If extra constraints are desired, please contact support@sparkplus.com.au. Please note that it is hard to put constraints on after non-conforming account IDs are already in the system.

GETTING STUDENTS INTO TASKS

In Group Contribution mode you need to get students into groups but in the other modes you can add the students into “Ungrouped Students”.

ISSUES WITH GROUPS IN GROUP CONTRIBUTION MODE

The best way to avoid issues in Group Contribution mode is to put the students into the groups well before the assessment period starts. Then instruct the students to log in and check their group. It is much easier to manipulate the groups before the assessment period starts.

Can't Move Students because they have entered ratings

Assessments in Group Contribution mode are using a norm-based scale. This means that when a single student is entering the assessment for a criteria, the average of all assessments against that criteria for every member of the group should be average. Since it is a measure of performance relative to the group everyone cannot be above average.

If you need to remove a student that has entered ratings or has been rated by someone else that will upset the balance of averages in the group. To move a student you need to delete the all the ratings in the group and then move the student. This means that the group will have to do their ratings again.

Changes to SPARK^{PLUS}

Below are the major changes that have been made to SPARK^{PLUS} over the later versions:

3.12

Modernised the logo

Can override the from address in the send email screen

3.11

Added ability to override the RPF

Added group list filters in monitoring screen - group contribution mode

Added graph presets in monitoring screen - group contribution mode

Recalculate button removed from results list - factors are recalculated instantly now
- group contribution mode

Placeholders added to send email screen

Fixed problem when calculated result is zero it used to display a dash - group contribution mode

3.10

Students can upload work for peer review - not publicly available

Preferred email field available for students when needing to share info via SPARK^{PLUS}

Fixed date being shown as GMT in alter rating period

Multi choice has eliminate question from result calculation

Non-contributors are shown in the monitoring screen - group contribution mode

Added colour scheme selector for multi choice

Student uploaded work status shown in monitoring

Monitoring screen state is remembered - group contribution mode

Fixed searching log where searching for two words would search for the phrase rather than the two words individually

Fixed bug where utf16 encoded files were causing control characters to be inserted

3.09

Additional id field for accounts - for institutions that use two id fields

Labels of account id and the above extra id able to be changed in config

Password is not mandatory when creating new accounts

First name is not mandatory for accounts

When uploading list of enrolments new option to remove existing enrolments not found in the uploaded list

3.08

New "Eliminate Incorrect Answers" mode - not publicly available

Changed password storage to be more secure

3.07

Search for student in results list and group contribution mode monitoring screen

Aliases default to anonymous aliases eg Assessor 1, Assessor 2 etc.

Multi-assessor peer review has output results against a student id

Question based modes has a "Who's logged in" list on the monitoring screen

Fixed problem when cloning subjects - multi-choice tasks, instructor feedback is not being cloned

3.06

Options to publish to groups with less than minimum submissions - group contribution mode

Option to publish group radar diagrams - group contribution mode

Can alter rating periods for groups

Monitoring screen has a No SA/PA area on the graph - group contribution mode

Group size for multi-assessor has "Unlimited" option

Results list can view the factors that the students see via a "View as Student" button

Fixed white screen of death when deleting ratings when comments per category is on but no categories have comments enabled