

What's New in PeerAssessment.Com Version 4.0

Version 4.0 was released with the start of the new year, 2022. While this was a major overhaul of the application, most of the change took place below the surface. There were three main goals for this release.

The primary goal was to enhance data privacy and security to comply with the stricter European Union GDPR standards (General Data Protection Regulation). These standards entered into effect in 2018 in the EU and UK. Their influence continues to grow for critical systems in the rest of the world, including those containing personal student and faculty data. It is hard to argue with strengthening provisions to allow individuals to exert more control over their personal data, require greater transparency over what data is collected/stored/analyzed, and to protect personal data from those who would exploit it.

Our second goal for Version 4.0 was to make a number of capability and usability enhancements. While we regularly add small improvements and fixes, this new version allowed us to make a large number of more interconnected changes.

Thirdly, Version 4.0 added the ability to support site-licensed operations in addition to our traditional individual instructor and shared program support. This coincided with a university in the UK requesting to become the first university with a site license to run PeerAssessment.Com. The site license required development of Single Sign On authentication, retention period definition, and usage tracking on an institutional basis.

DATA SECURITY AND PRIVACY ENHANCEMENTS

- Added a major security service to secure data in transit and storage, protect against common types of hacking attacks, add firewalls.
- Added auto-archive features to remove personal identifying data after the expiration of institutionally-defined retention periods.
- Added immediate archival capabilities to remove personal identifying data upon demand (subject to academic restrictions)
- Added Opt-In user agreements for students and instructors.
- Added password aging to require periodic changes to passwords.

CAPABILITY AND USABILITY ENHANCEMENTS

- Added quick-load capabilities for the Aula learning management system to import student information with or without team information.
- Added quick-load capabilities for the Moodle learning management system to import student information with or without team information.

- Improved usability of the Manage Teams function.
- Improved usability of student add/drop features.
- Added default import source type by institution for improved loading usability
- Changed dates to international format (yyyy-mm-dd)
- Added capability to override email domain restrictions in defined circumstances.
- Streamlined report generation
- Added ability to delete a class prior to running the first assessment and reclaim the class unit expended to create the class.
- Added rule-based class locking to prevent accidental removal once initial assessment begins.
- Added view all terms option to dashboard
- Added instruction mode options
- Fixed occasional page caching issue.
- Fixed problem calculating class units available in purchase classes email.

SITE LICENSE CAPABILITIES

- Added capability to define site licensing capability for an entire institution.
- Added default name to class creation within site licensed institutions.
- Added SAML-based SSO capability for site licensed institutions.