Getting started

Connecting to the Web site

To connect to the site, point your Web browser at *http://www.enigmania.co.uk/* - you should see the home page, which looks like this:

Logging in

To log in, or to register if you don't already have a user ID, click the *LOGIN* link in the left margin. You'll be taken to the login page:

If you've already registered, or you have been pre-registered by whoever is running a competition you're involved in, simply enter your email address and password. If you're not registered, click the sign-up link and you'll be presented with the sign-up page:

Make sure you fill in all the fields marked as compulsory, and then press *OK*. You should see a confirmation screen, and an email will be sent to you to tell you your password (they system auto-generates one for you).

The first time you log in, you should change your password – select *CHANGE PASSWORD* in the left-hand menu.

Choosing your competition and heat

Once you've logged in successfully, you'll be shown a screen that lets you choose which competition and heat you wish to use (below). The left-hand margin will also show the name of the user you're logged in as.

Each competition has one or more "heats", so you'll actually see a list of all the heats you're subscribed to. For the main screen for a heat, click *Go*.

You also have the option to subscribe to any of the "open access" competitions we run from time to time. The list of competitions is reached via the *OPEN ACCESS COMPETITIONS* link

in the left-hand menu, and beside each one will be a *Subscribe* link (if you've not already signed up for it) or a *Click for details* link (if not). Click on the appropriate link and you'll be signed up for the competition (if you weren't already) and taken to the main screen for that competition. Note that you can't subscribe to an open access competition unless you're logged in.
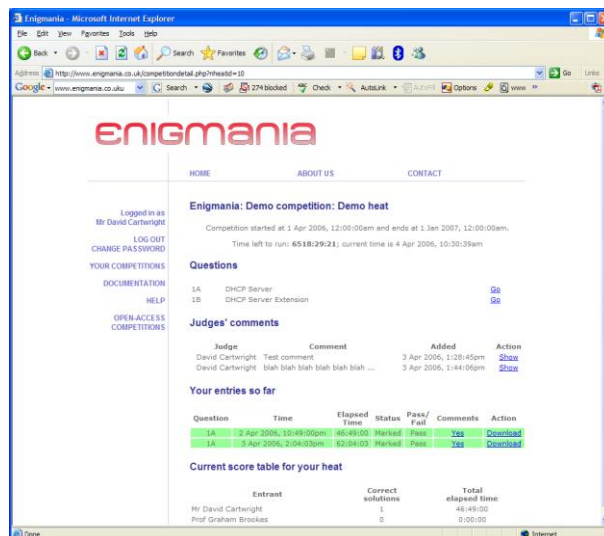
Competition screen

The competition screen has four sections:
- Questions
- Judges' comments
- Your entries so far
- Current score table for your heat

Questions

You will see a list of questions. Some are single-part questions, whose identifier is a number. Others are multi-part questions, whose identifiers will each be a number followed by a letter – e.g. 1A, 4B, 7C. Each question will have a link next to it labelled *Go* – click on this to see the question detail (see later). Please note, however, that where a question has more than one part, you aren't allowed to see a later part until you've had a submission for an earlier part marked as a "pass". So if, for instance, there is a question 1B, you won't be able to see the question until you've entered a correct submission for 1A. Where you're not yet permitted to see a question, it will be labelled *Not yet available to you*.

Judges' comments

From time to time, the judges may wish to make a comment that is relevant to all teams in the competition. If we have anything to communicate, we will enter it in this section. It's important that you check from time to time in case anything important appears.

Your entries so far

When you have submitted entries for the judges' consideration, they will be listed in this section. There will be one entry per line, and the lines will be colour-coded:
- Yellow if the entry has not yet been marked by the judges.
- Red if the entry has been marked and failed to process the judges' hidden test data correctly.
- Green if the entry has been marked and has passed.

Current score table for your heat

The scoring system for the competition has been explained elsewhere: in short, though, it works as follows:

- Each team scores a point for each question solved correctly (only one point per question – multiple submissions of the same question don't count).
- If a question is solved correctly at the first attempt, the elapsed time for that question is deemed to be the time from the start of the competition to the time at which the solution was submitted.
- If a question is solved correctly after one or more failed attempts at that question, the elapsed time for that question is deemed to be the time from the start of the competition to the time at which the correct solution was submitted, plus a penalty of 20 minutes x n, where n is the number of previous failed attempts at that question.

For each entrant in your heat, the score table shows their current placing in terms of the number of correct submissions and the total time elapsed for those submissions.

Notes about the Questions screen

The marking process is automated, with the judges able to monitor progress and change the result as they see fit (for example, if the auto-marker deems a program a fail but the judges decide for some reason to be more lenient than the automated system). This section should therefore be used as a guide – the official verdict will be given by the judges at the end of the event.

Questions
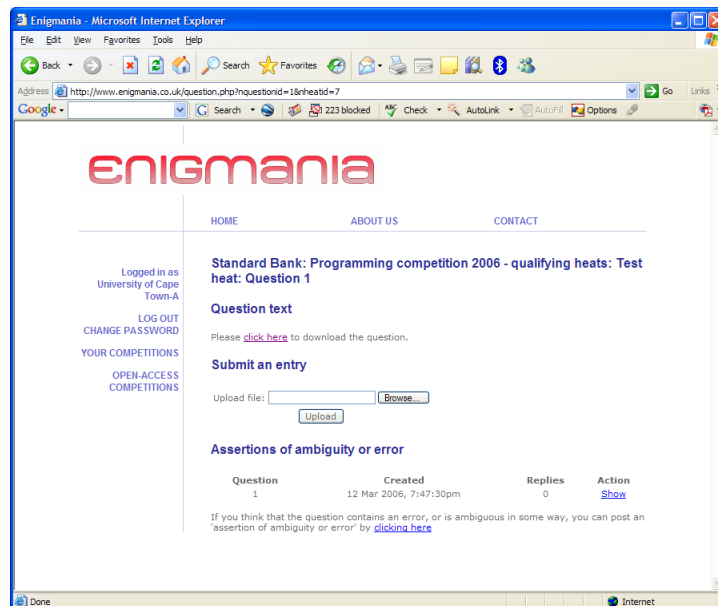
This screen (which you reach by clicking on the appropriate *Go* link on the main competition screen) is where you download the question text, submit your solutions for the judges' consideration, and let the judges know if you think a question contains an error or isn't clear enough.

Question text

Select the *click here* link to download a copy of the question text; you should see a standard browser download dialog box which prompts you to save the question to your hard disk. The questions may be single Word documents, or they may appear as a collection of HTML and graphics files in a Zip file.

Submit an entry

Solutions are submitted using the standard file upload features of your browser. You can submit solutions in two ways:
- A single text file containing the code of your solution.

- A Zip file (generated with WinZip or Windows XP's built in Zip function) containing a collection of one or more source code files.

To submit a solution, click the *Browse…* button and select the appropriate document on your hard disk. The filename should appear in the text box beside the *Browse…* button. Make sure you also select the language your submission is written in – if you don't pick the right language, it won't compile and so you will be awarded a "fail" for that attempt. To confirm your submission, click *Upload*; it may take a few seconds to upload the code if it's long. Once the code has been uploaded, you will be retuned to the main competition detail screen, where the newly-uploaded item should appear in your entry list.

Please note that regardless of how you submit your entry, the marking system will unzip it (if necessary), remove all items that are not source files (if necessary), and then attempt to compile it using the command-line version of the compiler/interpreter. The commands that will be used are:

Java	`javac –classpath . Prog1a.java`
VB.NET	`vbc Prog1a.vb`
C#.NET	`csc Prog1a.cs`
C/C++	`cl Prog1a.cpp`
Python	`python25 Prog1a.py`

Obviously the *1a* component will be replaced with the appropriate question ID. Please note that, as per our *Naming Conventions* document, the file name (and the class name for the main program) *must* have a capital *P* and the rest of the name in lower case. So *Prog1a* and *Prog1a.java* are correct; *Prog1A* and *Prog1A.java* are incorrect, and will fail to compile.

Although you are welcome to submit entries in multiple source files, and even with subdirectories containing files, you must check that your program can be compiled using the basic form of the compiler's command line – otherwise it will automatically be marked as a failed attempt.

Please note that your program should read its input from a file called *Prog<n>.dat* in the current working directory and output its results to *Prog<n>.out*. So question 1a should read its data from *Prog1a.dat* and output its results to *Prog1a.out*.

Assertions of ambiguity or error

Entrants are at liberty to suggest to the judges that there is an error in a question, or that the wording is not clear enough. You do this via the *Assertions of ambiguity or error* section.

Before you submit something here, make sure you have read the question, because your comment will be visible to every other team involved in the competition.

To add an assertion of ambiguity or error, click on the link, type your comment in the box on the next screen, and click *OK*. You should be specific in your comment – so if, for example, you think that there are two possible interpretations for something in the question, you must describe the two possible interpretations and invite the judges to state which one of those interpretations is correct. The judges may choose not to respond to vague assertions of ambiguity.

To view the detail of an entry in this section (which will include any responses the judges have given) click the *Show* link in the *Action* column. You should check the ambiguity screen for each question from time to time, to see whether the judges have posted a comment (or whether they have elaborated on a previous comment – there may be more than one response for each ambiguity).
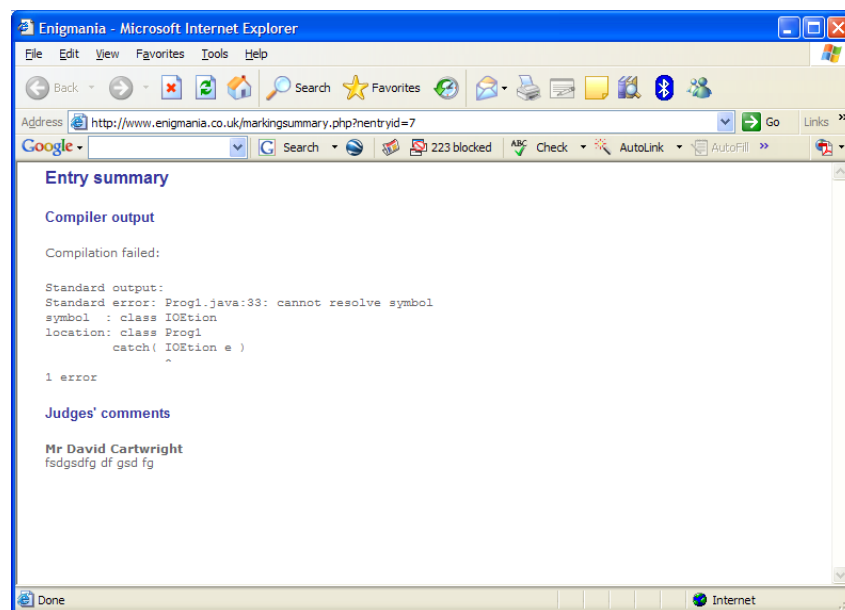
Judges' comments

To view one of the comments the judges have made about the competition in general, click *Show* in the *Action* column. The *Comment* column simply shows the first few words of each comment, to give an idea of what it is about – the full text is only available by clicking *Show*.

Your entries so far

The table of entries, as previously discussed, lists your various submissions during the competition. You should, of course, keep copies of your previous entries in case you want to go back to them, but you can download a version from the Web server by clicking the *Download* link.

Where an entry has passed, the line will be shown in green. Where it has failed, the Fail entry in the *Pass/fail* column will be a link, which you can click to get details of the failure.

The entry summary screen (which opens in a new browser window when you click *Fail*) gives you as much relevant information about your program's failure as the judges are willing to give. There are two sections:
- Compiler output
- Judges' comments

Compiler output

If your program failed to compile, the system will give you the output that the compiler produced, so that you can try to fix the problem. If your program compiled OK, this section will empty.

Judges' comments

The judges may, at their discretion, choose to comment on failed runs. This generally happens in only two cases:
- Where a team's solution processes some, but not all test cases correctly, the judges may give a clue as to what percentage of the test items were successfully processed.
- Where a team has submitted a number of failed runs but, despite making significant changes to their program code, is clearly floundering. There is no fixed algorithm for judges making comments (so you cannot get us to make a comment simply by submitting lots of failed runs!) and we will not comment unless we think from our observations of your code and your programs' test runs that you are trying hard yourselves to solve the bug!

Judges' comments are private to the team whose entry they concern – no other team will see comments we have made about a team's entry. Note that it will be quite rare for judges to comment during open access competitions. Each comment will have a note to show which of your attempts it relates to.

Problems

If you are part of a commercial competition, the organisers will have arranged for judges to be on hand to answer questions and deal with problems. You should, therefore, refer in the first instance to the contact your event organiser has (hopefully) provided you with.

For open access competitions, support is available via email. Please click the *HELP* link and use the email link in that section to submit your problem. Please give as much detail as you can.

The last word

While entrants are at liberty to assert ambiguities or claim that there is an error in a question, please note that the judges' decision is final in all cases. The judges have the ability, and the right, to overrule any decision of the automated marking system, for any reason (though in reality, any such intervention is normally to switch a "fail" to a "pass").

Please note also that any attempt to circumvent the operation or security of the auto-marker or the Web site, or to obtain the judges' "hidden" test data, will result in instant disqualification.