Using Blackboard for Feedback

Version 7 of Blackboard has improved two areas which can help staff to give feedback to students either automatically or individually.

The Assignments function lets staff use a screen to set students an assignment with some resources such as an essay template file, or background files (data files etc.) they need to complete it. This appears to the student as a web link which the instructor can insert at any point in the course content.

The member of staff sees a column in the course gradebook so that they can see when a student has sent their submission. This can be a one-line reply or a series of attached files for a project or anything in between. By clicking in the gradebook, the instructor can review the student's reply and give a mark and, if applicable, type in individual feedback comments, and optionally keep in another window, their own notes (marking scheme or whatever) which the student does not see.

Automatic feedback messages as part of an online test. These can include images and you can now set up individual (remedial) feedback or help responses, for each individual incorrect choice in a multiple choice question.

By combining these two improvements, you could turn one complex assignment into four sub-assignment and these could be set up in a folder as four links, in the correct order in which they should be undertaken. These assignment links might be interleaved with links to an online test to get students to enter results, so they can be marked automatically, or to let students check their understanding before proceeding to the next stage of the assignment. You could at the appropriate time add document links to display generalised class feedback for an assignment, meaning that you only need to cover special points in the individual feedback to a student.