SHARING EXPERIENCES OF COMPUTER AIDED ASSESSMENT UNDERPINNED BY COMPUTER ALGEBRA: WHO USES WHAT

Greg Gamble, Grant Keady

Presenting author: Grant Keady (Grant.Keady@curtin.edu.au)
Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Curtin University, Bentley WA 6102, Australia

KEYWORDS: assessment in mathematics

THE ISSUE
The conference theme of "motivating" students is relevant to Computer Aided Assessment, CAA. Well-timed, instructional questions, marked instantly with feedback on errors, and, after due dates, model solutions, really do help the students. Their motivation derives at least partly, and for some mostly, from the relatively small amount of "marks"/credit from submitting their answers on time.

THE APPROACH
Greg and Grant have a paper in UniServe 2006 describing various CAA systems. The approach now is steady development. Greg has 13 years running the maple-underpinned AiM system at Curtin. Guest logins are at http://aim01.curtin.edu.au/
Grant's first authoring for a CAA system was calmaeth at UWA in 1999, then AiM in 2001-02 at Birmingham, then various systems -- calmaeth, AiM, mapleTA and mathxl -- at UWA, before working with Greg at Curtin.
CAA is no longer "innovation". Competent management of systems that work is worthwhile too. Watching for what else is available is appropriate should technical developments make a change desirable.

Participants in the Ideas Exchange will report what is in use at their university, and we will all learn who is using what and where. mapleTA used to be inferior to AiM in not recognizing equivalent correct answers to some problems, and many will want to know/test that this aspect of mapleTA has improved.

Greater integration with MLEs, Managed Learning Environments, as in stack under moodle is also worthwhile.

Authoring in the different systems is a topic to be discussed. No system is going to last for ever.