

Using Notional Machines to Automatically Assess Students' Comprehension of Their Own Code

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Do your students <u>understand</u> their own code?

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1. Students solve a programming assignment

Either writing code by themselves... or with the help of a Large Language Model.

```
class LinAlgebra {
   double[] scale(double a, double[] x) {
    ...
   }
   double scaledAt(double a, double[] x, int oneBasedPos) {
    return scale(a, x)[oneBasedPos - 1];
   }
}
```

3. Activities based on the notional machine are generated

The system automatically generates all the nodes, including distractors.



2. Our system selects interesting expressions

Our system selects an expression from the code submitted by each student based on the criteria set by the instructor.



4. Students solve the activities

This requires demonstrating an understanding of the structure and the type of all subexpressions.



5. Our system gives feedback to each student

Incorrect nodes are highlighted, without revealing the full correct solution.





6. The instructor has an overview of the entire class

The system aggregates the data and provides a dashboard to the instructor.



