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# Mathematics Portal Project

<http://www.mathgate.ac.uk/portal>

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The Mathematics Portal Project is led by the University of Birmingham in partnership with the LTSN Maths Stats & OR Network and the Midland Maths Group. It is envisaged that in addition to the ability to search multiple information sources, new useful website features will be developed for the mathematics community. The portal will form part of EEVL – The Internet guide to engineering, mathematics and computing.

## **Background**

Work has continued on the review and classification process of new mathematics resources in MathGate, and to date over 1100 records have been added. These records are regularly reviewed to ensure the content is correct and up to date ensuring only top quality resources are included.

## **Benefits of a portal**

A portal is a website that offers a range of services in addition to the traditional searchable subject directory. One of the first websites to develop portal features was Yahoo, which offers things such as email accounts, auctions and other community building features. Portals have many specific advantages to learning, teaching and research. Learning and teaching can benefit from the subject specific targeted information in a web interface along with the ease of access, which can bring a resource directly into the classroom. Researchers can use a portal to highlight current areas of research, develop links with different institutions and build a sense of community.

## **Portal Development Process**

The portal project is due to run until 2003 and during early 2002 user feedback is being collected. This has taken the form of various online surveys, which will be used to find out what the mathematics community would like to see as part of their portal. In addition to this, small-targeted focus group sessions will be held to generate more user feedback. The information gathered will allow us to introduce features that are considered useful and worthwhile.

## **More information**

To find out more about the project you can visit the project page at <http://www.mathgate.ac.uk/portal>. If you would like to take part in any expenses paid focus group sessions or have any general enquiries you can contact me via email on [R.Young@bham.ac.uk](mailto:R.Young@bham.ac.uk)

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