Roving mathematics assistance

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In recent years, universities have experienced an influx of students enrolling in courses that require a level of mathematical competency which many students lack. Hence these institutions have been under increasing pressure to provide a variety of support mechanisms to assist students, not only with the content of the mathematical units undertaken, but also to bridge any gaps in the assumed mathematical knowledge of students. Students’ interaction with many of these services occurs at times and places dictated by the providers, with the result that many students who require assistance, do not avail themselves of it. With the changing role of the library to a “library commons” and in an attempt to reverse this trend, it was decided to trial a service whereby “we come to the students”, by way of Library Roving. This presentation will outline the results of the piloting of this type of assistance in a university setting, with preliminary results indicating that students view such support very favourably and that students in all years, from a variety of courses, receive assistance when and where they decide. The staff involved have also been very receptive despite at times, being challenged by the diversity of the questions asked.