In many cases, the validity of the results of a program (or part of a program) will depend on the values taken by the variables before that program is initiated. These initial preconditions of successful use can be specified by the same type of general assertion as is used to describe the results obtained on termination. To state the required connection between a precondition ***(P),*** a program ***(Q)*** and a description of the result of its execution ***(I?),*** we introduce a new notation: