Technical Report
COMP1100 Assignment 2

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1 Introduction

The program detailed in this report is an implementation of Erik Fransson's *QR World* cellular automata with a graphical representation in Haskell. The automata is contained within a module called `Automata` with user input handling in module `App` and graphical output handled in `GridRenderer`. Testing is handled by three modules with unit tests within `AutomataTest`.

2 Documentation

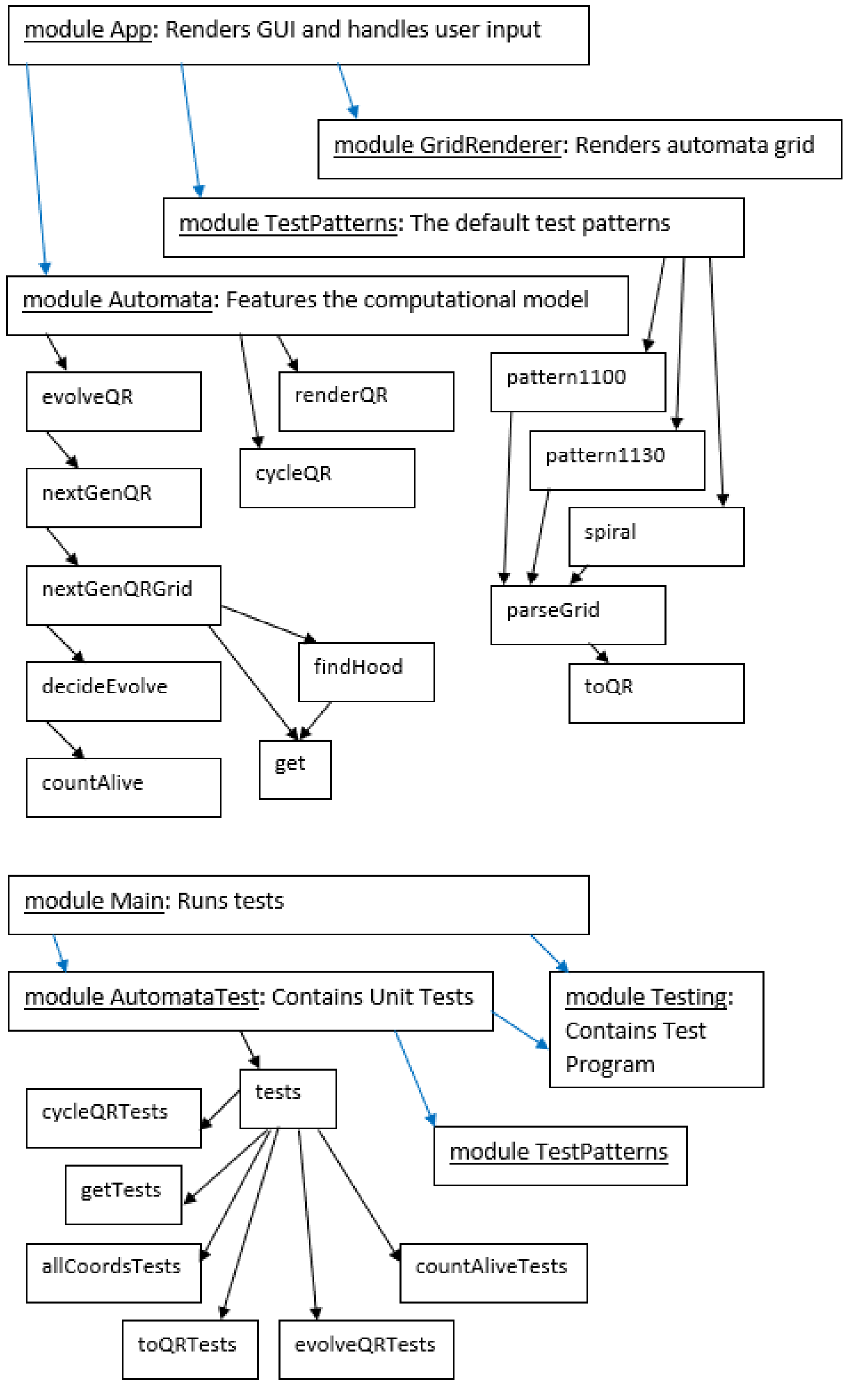
2.1 Design and Technical Decisions

Task 1 consists of 5 functions. Firstly it was chosen to define the type of `QRCell` as either `Dead` or `Alive` as these are more descriptive of the program's meaning than just boolean values. Function `toQR` uses an if then else (ITE) statement to convert values in the textual representation to useful values with `'A'` to `Alive::QRCell` and any other character as `Dead`. An ITE statement was chosen as computationally we only care about if the value is `'A'` or not. `cycleQR` swaps the value of a cell upon cursor clicks. A case statement was chosen due to having greater readability than ITE statement as there was only two cases. If `QRCell` was `Bool` then the function could just be `not`. `renderQR` used a piecewise case definition to render each cell as the specified codeWorld picture. A piecewise definition was used for improved style. `get` retrieves the value of the model at a given `GridCoord`. It is guarded to return `Nothing` for nonsensical arguments. Elsewhere it just retrieves the appropriate element of the model list. `allCoords` generates a row-major list of all grid coordinates in an $a \times b$ for $a, b > 0$ grid. It returns an empty list for nonsensical arguments of $a, b \not> 0$ for enhanced error tolerance. Otherwise it calls 3 helper functions. `nList` generates an ascending list from 0 to (a-1). `nPair` then pairs each value in the `nList` with some integer. `allPairs` then does this to create one list from (0,0) to (a-1,b-1). The problem was broken up this way out of ease of understanding.

Task 2 consists of two primary functions, `nextGenQR` which parses the automata through one iteration, and `evolveQR` which iterates the automata through n iterations. `nextGenQR` calls the helper functions `allCoords` and `nextGenQrGrid` which is the main function handling the evolution of the grid. `nextGenQrGrid` recurses through the `allCoords` list using `get` to retrieve the state at each position and the helper `findHood` to retrieve a list of the states of the four neighbors. The helper `decideEvolve` then chooses updates the state of the cell according to the QRWorld rules. This new state is then prepended to the recursive call on the rest of the list. `findHood` uses `get` to retrieve a four element list of `[Maybe QRCell]` to give the states of the neighboring cells. `decideEvolve` then calls `countAlive` to then make a decision about what each cell state should evolve to depending on how many alive neighbors it has. To do this it cases on the state of the cell and is then guarded by the number of alives to evolve the state properly. `countAlive` just uses a case and nested guard recursion to sort through the list of neighboring states and returns the number that are alive. `evolveQR` recurses down to a base of 1 from a natural n applying `nextGenQR` to itself n times.

2.2 Structure

The program and the test program have module and function dependencies according to the following graph:



2.3 Assumptions

Whilst writing `get` it was assumed that attempts to retrieve a point outside the grid should return `Nothing :: Maybe QRCell` as doing so eased implementation of `findHood` and `countAlive` far more than returning an error would. It was initially assumed that nonsensical inputs to `allCoords` should return an empty list but this was revised to return an error as specified.

3 Testing

Unit tests were divided into 6 groups: cycleQRTests, getTests, allCoordsTest, toQRTests, evolveQRTests and countAliveTests. Each test group tests a particular function or group of functions. `cycleQRTests` is a fully comprehensive test group for `cycleQR` indicating its correctness. `toQR` is tested against tests two typical cases and an edge case. The tests for `get` cover most possible edge cases and also some typical cases as documented in the `automataTest` file. The tests for `allCoords` covers some expected inputs to both the main function and helpers. There were no edge case tests written as such cases are written to return an error and there was no provision to test if an error is returned. `evolveQR` was tested with three unit tests which in turn test `nextGenQR` due to their dependencies. The first two tests tested if the 1100 pattern would get to an alternating steady state after 12 evolutions and the third if th 1130 pattern reached steady state eventually as specified. All tests passed idicating program correctness.

GUI tests focussed on the behaviour of functions that the user directly interacts with. `get` and `cycleQR` were tested by clicking cells with various states and checking if the appropriate cell switched state. `decideEvolve` was tested by observing the evolution of a single cell in various neighborhoods compared against the rules of QRWorld. All tests passed idicating program correctness.

4 Reflection

Development of the program followed a linear process parallel to order of assignment specifications. Design decisions were made with both functionality and style in focus to make proper use of haskell's recursive propensity. Consequently the program is quite readable especially when supplemented with effective commenting. The program was within the authors technical abilities and so they did not collaborate with others in any significant way.