

The QDL Workspace

Introduction

The QDL interpreter may be run from the command line but there is also another supplied tool called the **workspace**. This runs a QDL interpreter and lets you run commands interactively as well as stores state (so you can create a bunch of variables and save them for future use). Sessions may be saved and loaded.

Getting and starting the workspace

The current release of QDL is on git hub at <https://github.com/ncsa/security-lib/releases> and will be in qdl.jar. Download that and you should be set.

To start QDL, invoke it using java

```
java -jar qdl.jar
```

And you should get the splash screen:

```
*****
Welcome to the QDL Workspace
Version 1.0
Type )help for help.
*****
```

The prompt is simply an indent of 4 spaces. So try it out by typing the famous program

```
    say('Hello world');
Hello world
```

Congrats, you have just run your first complete QDL program. Since this is an interpreter, you issue commands in the QDL language. There is a whole other reference manual/tutorial for that. This blurb is about how to interact with the workspace.

Since it says to type)help, do it and you will see

```
    )help
This is the QDL (pronounced 'quiddle') workspace.
You may enter commands and execute them much like any other interpreter.
There are several commands available to help you manage this workspace.
Generally these start with a right parenthesis, e.g., ')off' (no quotes) exits this
program.
Here is a quick summary of what they are and do.
    )buffer -- commands relating to using buffers.
    )clear -- clear the state of the workspace. All variables, functions etc. will be
lost.
    )edit -- commands relating to running the line editor.
    )env -- commands relating to environment variables in this workspace.
    )      -- short hand to execute whatever is in the current buffer.
```

```
)funcs -- list all of the imported and user defined functions this workspace knows about.
)help -- this message.
)modules -- lists all the imported modules this workspace knows about.
)off -- exit the workspace.
)load file -- Load a file of QDL commands and execute it immediately in the current workspace.
)vars -- lists all of the variables this workspace knows about.
)ws -- commands relating to this workspace.
```

If you type)off, you will exit the workspace.

```
)off y
exiting...
```

Commands generally

Since the workspace is charged with managing the QDL environment for us, its commands are not QDL commands. All of the start with a right parenthesis, e.g.)help.

The basic structure of a command is

command_type action arguments

So this is the command to save the current workspace to the file my_space.ws

```
)ws save my_space.ws
workspace saved at Thu Jan 30 16:32:28 CST 2020
```

In the command reference that follows, the heading of the section is the command and the subsections are the actions. An argument of – means that this may be omitted and is the default.

Templates and script preprocessing

You may set values directly in the interpreter environment and access them via the *templating syntax* of \${...}.

Note: This is a feature of the workspace and is *not* part of QDL! It is to help harried coders reduce their typing workload and keep useful snippets of text at hand. If you develop code using templates, they should be removed if you are, e.g. going to save your code in a file and run it as a script later.

An example of how to use this: Let's set two environment variables:

```
)env set vo voPersonExternalID
)env set a @accounts.google.com
```

The template are done **before** any parsing or other processing. In computer languages a lot of use can be made of pre-processing or doing things to the code before actual evaluation, for instance, look up the Obfuscated C competition which is a humorous jab at abuses of the C pre-processor. This is a very useful facility to have and can make your work vastly easier at times, but it should be an aid, not a lifestyle choice.

So you could use this to, for instance, keep typos to a minimum but issuing statements like (assuming `claims.oidc` has the value 349765)

```
    ${vo} := claims.oidc + '${a}';  
    say(${vo});  
349765@accounts.google.com  
    say(voPersonExternalID);  
349765@accounts.google.com
```

What is the advantage of this? You can embed things like code snippets (especially the one you keep mistyping) or use it to prevent spelling issues or to future proof. In this case, if there were several references to `voPersonExternalID`, then the template allows you to set this one place in your script. Note that this lets you template for things like control structures, names of functions or really anything – it is wholly outside the language. If the name of ever changes (to say `voPersonExternalID_v2` then you would need to only change where it is set in the environment and the changes would take place automatically. While fairly trivial to use, it can make a lot of coding/testing considerably easier.

Repeating the last command

If you enter a single `%` then the very last command you entered is repeated.

```
    date_iso()  
2020-03-16T22:01:29.258Z  
    %  
2020-03-16T22:07:31.626Z
```

In this case, the current date and time are created and then repeated.

Command reference

)buffer

A *buffer* is just a bunch of text. Every file can be referred to as a buffer. In an interpreted language, you may want to have several statements that can be executed together. You may buffer them, then have them execute at once. There is also an editor supplied (see the **)edit** section below), though that is wholly optional.

There are two types of buffers, *local* which is kept inside the workspace and *external* which is just a fancy name for any file.

local

These actions relate to the management of the local buffer. You may set what the active buffer is using **on** and **off** here. This effects the **)edit** and quick run **)** commands.

append file_name

append the given file to the end of the current buffer. See *prepend* in this section for inserting a file at the beginning.

clear

clear the local buffer. All contents will be lost.

load file_name

load the given file into the local buffer, replacing its contents. This implicitly sets the focus to the local buffer

off

turn local buffering off

on

turn local buffering on

Example of how to use local buffering to put in a longer statement

```
)buffer local on
)edit
CLI editor.
Empty buffer. Type ? to see help.
edit >i
define[
    sum(a, b)
]body[
    >> add a pair of integers and return the sum.
    c:= a+b;
    return(c); // this terminates execution and returns the value.
];

say('the sum of 3 and 4 is ' + sum(3,4));
.
edit >q
done!
)
the sum of 3 and 4 is 7
)funcs help sum 2
add a pair of integers and return the sum.
```

So what does this do?

- Creates a local buffer to store commands
- edits it (i means to input, the single period at the start of a line means exit input mode)
- *q* quits the editor so you can now run the buffer rather than edit it.

- **)** – a single left parenthesis – means to run whatever is in the buffer. The buffer has a function defined and runs it.
- Checks that the comment in the function is reasonable by showing it with the **)help** command.

prepend file_name

insert the file at the beginning of the current buffer.

save file_name

saves the current buffer to the given file.

show

prints the contents to the console.

So for example to load the sample hello world file and print it to the console:

```
)buffer local load /home/jeff/dev/qdl/examples/hello_world.qdl
Buffer updated.
)buffer local show
/*
The expected Hello World program.
Jeff Gaynor
1/26/2020
*/
say('Hello world!');
// for fun, let's clear the buffer and show the results
)buffer local clear
Local buffer cleared
)buffer local show
```

A blank line is returned since the buffer is empty.

file

These relate to using an external file as the buffer. This has the great advantage that you can edit it in your favorite editor and have the system run it as you develop by using the quick run command, **)**.

file file_name

use this file as the currently active buffer.

If the current active buffer is set to **local** you must also change that.

)clear

See **)ws clear**. A typical invocation looks like

```
)clear
workspace cleared
```

This is identical to issuing

```
)ws clear
```

) (aka *quick run*)

This is the run buffer command. It is very useful shorthand. One nice application is to use this on whatever you are editing externally. So set your buffer to a file and make sure that local mode is off:

```
)buffer file file_path  
)buffer local off
```

and your favorite external editor on the file. Edit for a bit, then when you are ready to test something, simply enter this command and the file will be read and executed immediately.

If you have opted for a local buffer, then that will be executed instead. This is a great convenience when writing code. Here is an example where we load the hello world sample and run it

```
)buffer local load /home/jeff/dev/qdl/examples/hello_world.qdl  
Buffer updated.  
)buffer local show  
/*  
  The expected Hello World program.  
  Jeff Gaynor  
  1/26/2020  
*/  
say('Hello world!');  
  
  )buffer local on  
Local buffer enabled.  
)  
Hello world!
```

Note that all that was needed to run this was the single character, `)`. You can do this with an external file too.

```
)env set q /home/jeff/dev/qdl/example  
)buffer file ${q}/hello_world.qdl  
Buffer set to "/home/jeff/dev/qdl/examples/hello_world.qdl."  
)  
Hello world!
```

Note that I set the path as an environment variable, `q`, because its long.

)edit

– (no argument)

edit whatever the current buffer is

local

Edit the local buffer, regardless of whether it is active or not.

file [filename]

Edit the file. If none is given, edit the current active external file

A note about the editor

The editor supplied with QDL is a very basic, no bones about it *line editor* meaning that you issue commands *about* the lines. You will not see what you are editing unless you tell it to show you the **p** command). If you invoke the editor, you may see help by issuing the **?** At the **edit>** prompt. Here is an example of starting the editor and getting the help to print out.

```
)edit
CLI editor.
edit >?
This is the line editor. It operates per line. Each command is of the form
command [start,stop,target] arg0 arg1 arg2...
where
command is a command for the editor (list below). There are long and short forms
[start,stop,target] are line numbers hence integers.
    start = the starting index, always 0 or greater
    stop = the ending index. All operations are inclusive of this line number
    target = where to apply the [start,stop] interval. E.g. the insertion point for
copying text.
arg0, arg1,... = list of strings, possibly in quotes if needed, that are arguments
to the command.

To see help on a specific command, type ? after the command, e.g. to get help on
the insert command type
i ?
List of commands
a (append) append text either before a given line or to the end of the buffer.
b (view) view the contents of the clipboard. Contents not editable.
c (copy) copies a range of lines to the clipboard.
d (delete) deletes a range of lines
e (edit) edit a range of lines. Note this will effectively replace those lines.
f (find) search lines that match a given regular expression, printing each line
found.
i (insert) insert lines starting at a give index or append lines to the end of the
buffer.
l (clear) clear the buffer (but not the clipboard)
m (move) move a block of text using the clipboard
p (print) print the buffer or a subset of it
q (quit) quit the editor
r (read) read a file into the buffer
s (replace) substitute over a range of lines using a regex
t (paste) paste the contents of the clipboard into the buffer
u (cut) cut a range of lines from the buffer and leave in the clipboard
v (verbose) turn on verbosity, i.e. print more about the functioning of the editor
w (write) write the buffer to a file
z (size) query the buffer for its current size
? print this help, or in context, print the help for a command.
edit >
```

Note that the end of this you are returned to the prompt. **p** prints the buffer, **i** lets you insert text until you enter a single period. **q** quits. It is actually quite nice – it has a clipboard, supports regexs for certain operations and the list goes on.

Why have such an editor in this great day and age? Because not all keyboards are created equal (*e.g.*, does your cellphone let you hit the escape key? Can't use the estimable old unix editor *vi* without that.) Also, it seems that invariably if I need to log in to a server (which never have GUIs, since they are servers) remotely during an emergency, the terminal type gets screwed up and it all defaults back to 7 bit ASCII – pretty much the exact character set QDL recognizes. This editor is *not* intended to be the go to. The intent is that you set an external file, use whatever you like and when you need to run your code, just hit **)** in the workspace. The editor, however, is pretty darned useful if you need it and since I had it lying around, why not?

One last little quirk is that the editor is indeed a completely stand alone program invoked by the workspace, so you can save your work in it to a file. If you are using it to edit the local buffer, all you need to do is exit (enter **q** at the prompt) and don't choose save (unless you want another copy of the buffer in an external file), the workspace knows how to get the resulting changes back all on its own.

)env

The workspace allows for environmental variables The environment

drop variable

remove the named variable from the environmental

get variable

display the current value of the variable.

list, –

show all currently defined variables.

load filename

load the given variables file, adding it to the current environment. Note that this may overwrite currently defined values. The format of this file is a standard java properties file. This file becomes the active one and save will go to it unless a different file is specified.

save [filename]

save the current environment to the file

set variable value

Set the *variable* to have the given *value*. Note that everything to the right of the variable is considered the value, so embedded spaces are possible. If you need to, you may surround the value in double quotes to ensure that all spaces are faithfully preserved.

Examples

Set a variable

```
)env set www "once upon a midnight"
)env get www
once upon a midnight
```

Show all the defined variables. We could supply the value of *list* but don't since it is optional.

```
)env
Current environment variables:
{
  qdl_root=/home/bob/apps/qdl
  arf=abc d goldfish
  a=armstrong(600);
  d=load_module('/tmp/boot.qdl');
  foo=12345
}
```

)funcs

list, – [regex]

list all of the current functions in your workspace

Note that if you want to list functions, you *must* use the list command plus a regex. So let us say you had

```
define[f(x)]body[return(x+1)];
define[f(x,y)]body[return(x+y)];
define[foo(x)]body[return(x-2)];
```

To to list any functions named exactly *g* you would issue

```
)funcs list g
```

(No such functions exist.) So now let us list the ones called *f*:

```
)funcs list f
f(1), f(2)
```

To list every function that starts with *f* we use the regex *f.** the *'.'* means to take any character (the period) and match any. So can be read as *f* + anything:

```
)funcs list f.*  
f(1), f(2), foo(1)
```

By the same token, to just get the functions that start with *fo* you would use *fo.** like so

```
)funcs list fo.*  
foo(1)
```

drop function

remove a function. Note that this only applies to functions that have been defined (but not imported) in the workspace.

help [name arg_count]

If no arguments, print out every function and its simple description.

```
)funcs  
a#f(1), armstrong(1), b#f(1), check_parser(1), f(1), f2(1), f3(1), fac(1)
```

Note that they are qualified as needed and have their argument counts included. To list a specific function, you would issue something like this:

```
)funcs help armstrong 1  
An Armstrong number is a 3 digit number that is equal to the sum of its cubed  
digits. This computes them for  $100 < n < 1000$ .  
So for example 407 is an Armstrong number since  $407 = 4^3 + 0^3 + 7^3$ 
```

In this case, the request was for anything about armstrong functions the workspace knows so the complete description from the function definition is returned.

system [width display_width]

This will list the built in system functions in tabular format. Note that none of these has argument counts listed, because most of these have variable length arguments. This is intended to let you look up a name. There is also no help (at this point) for each of these available in the workspace – mostly because keeping it in sync with the reference manual would be a huge ongoing task. Consult the reference manual for all the details. If you need to have it display for a certain width, pass that in. The default is 120 characters.

```
)funcs system width 80  
abs()          for_keys()      is_function()   random_string()  to_json()  
box()          for_next()      is_list()       read_file()      to_list()  
break()        from_hex()      list_append()   remove()         to_lower()  
check_after()  from_json()     list_copy()     rename_keys()    to_upper()  
common_keys()  get_keys()      list_insert_at() replace()         tokenize()  
contains()     has_keys()      list_subset()   return()         trim()  
continue()     hash()          load_module()   run_script()     unbox()  
date_iso()     import()        load_script()   say()            union()  
date_ms()      include_keys()  mask()          scan()           vdecode()  
decode_b64()   index_of()      mod()           set_default()    vencode()  
dir()          indices()       print()         size()           vfs_mount()
```

```
encode_b64()    insert()    raise_error()  substring()    vfs_unmount()
exclude_keys()  is_defined()  random()       to_hex()       write_file()
```

)help

This takes no action and, as you saw above, just prints out a summary.

)modules

list, –

list the modules that are known to the workspace. This does not mean they have been imported.

imports

list the imports (URN and current alias) that are active.

```
)modules
a:a = a, b:b = b, qdl:/java = java
```

This lists that there are three modules. The aliases are the default if the workspace is imported without setting a new one.

```
)modules imports
a:a = a
b:b = b
```

These are the modules that have been explicitly imported. In this case, there is one, *qdl:/java* which has not.

)off [y]

This causes the system to exit. If you supply the argument *y* then the system will exit without saving. Otherwise, you will be prompted, but if you agree to exit, it will be immediate and with no save.

)vars

drop

list –

List all of the variables (but not their content) in the current workspace.

size

List the total number of symbols in use in the workspace. This does not tell you how much memory is in use. See the workspace memory command for that.

)ws

echo [on | off]

Turns *echo mode* on or off. If no argument, the current mode is displayed.

Echo mode is the default on workspace start up. It will take any expression (so not control statements, like if, switch, etc.) and wrap it in a *say()* call. It will also add any implied but missing final “;”.

```
)ws echo
echo mode currently on
2 + 2
4
)ws echo off
echo mode off
// Without echo mode on, you would have to fully write out every expressions
// So this will fail:
2 + 2
syntax error:

// now turn echo back on so it works
)ws echo on
echo mode on

mod(3*4*5*6,11)
8
// same as
// print(mod(360, 11));

a. := indices(6)+10
a.
{0=10, 1=11, 2=12, 3=13, 4=14, 5=15}
```

Echo mode lets you use QDL like a big calculator.

load file

Load a saved workspace from the given file. Relative references are resolved against the qdl root directory (which you can see since it is saved in the environment).

memory

Reports the amount of used memory, remaining memory and number of processors.

```
)ws memory
memory used = 479MB, free = 461MB, processors = 8
a. := indices(1000000);
)ws memory
memory used = 479MB, free = 441MB, processors = 8
size(a.);
1000000
```

It should be noted that the amount of memory is not fixed: if you decide to write

```
a. := random(1000000)^5
```

You may get something like this

```
)ws memory
memory used = 761MB, free = 408MB, processors = 8
```

Which simply means that the system allocated more memory. The standard limit is 2 GB on 32 bit systems and unlimited on 64 bit system. You can change the initial amount at startup by configuring the Java virtual machine at system startup.

vfs

Reports on any installed virtual file systems

```
)ws vfs
Installed virtual file systems
type:pass_through access:rw scheme: qdl-vfs mount point:/pt/ current dir:(none)
type:zip           access:r  scheme: qdl-vfs mount point:/zip/  current dir:(none)
type:mysql         access:rw scheme: qdl-vfs mount point:/mysql/ current dir:(none)
type:memory        access:rw scheme: qdl-vfs mount point:/ramdisk/ current dir:(none)
```

(Font size adjusted to show the formatting.) In this case there are four and e.g. the zip VFS it is mounted with read only (**r**) access. See the reference manual on how to mount them and unmount them and use them generally.

save file

Save the current workspace to the given file. Relative references are resolved against the qdl root directory (which you can see since it is saved in the environment).

clear

This command will remove all state and return it to the exact condition of starting a clean workspace, except that environment variables are not affected. All variables, functions, imports and any other state will be lost. This is useful if, for instance, you need to start a different project or if, e.g. something went wrong and you really need to just get rid of everything. A typical invocation looks like

```
)ws clear
workspace cleared
```