

SA Mathematics Olympiad open for entries

As schools prepare to commence the 2021 academic year later this month, mathematics teachers will have an opportunity to register their learners for the annual Old Mutual South African Mathematics Olympiad (SAMO).



2020 SAMO winner, Andi Qu

Last year's overall winner was Andi Qu, a Grade 12 learner in the Class of 2020 at St. John's College in Johannesburg, and he says that "I hope winning the SAMO will make university applications easier for me in the future."

Qu encourages high school learners who enjoy problem-solving to participate in the SAMO. "It's good practice, and it exposes you to many cool ideas that you can apply elsewhere," he says. "Geometry was the most challenging in most mathematics competitions because it is hard and unforgiving."

Prof Kerstin Jordaan, the executive director at the South African Mathematics Foundation (SAMF) - the non-profit that organises the SAMO in partnership with Old Mutual and the South African Institute for Chartered Accountants (SAICA) - said that the organisation hopes to receive a record number of entries for 2021. "Last year we received nearly 90,000 entries for the first round," she says. "The first round for 2021 will be taking place on 11 March, and the closing date for online entries is 5 March. Learners who perform well in the first round will advance to the second round on 18 May, and finally, the top few hundred learners will compete in the third and final round on 22 July. The winners top 10, and the overall winner will be announced at the annual awards ceremony on 16 October."

Schools can enter their learners online on www.samf.ac.za/en/online-entry-2021. Schools without internet access can still complete the entry form manually. The closing date for manual entries is on 12 February.