

NEWS FROM:



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7 000 high schoolers to converge on UCT for an evening of fun maths

Annual Mathematics Competition for Western Cape high schools: Thursday, 14 April 2011.

Registration starts at 17h30; event starts at 20h00. Command Centre: Rm 213, Maths Building, UCT Upper Campus

Question: Thabo looks after a flock of goats and sheep. The flock has 55 percent more sheep than goats. What is the ratio of goats to sheep in the flock?

Answers to problems like this will be supplied by 7 000 students, representing 130 Western Cape schools, on the evening of Thursday, 14 April 2011, when they converge on Upper Campus at the annual University of Cape Town Mathematics Competition for Western Cape high schools.

"Unlike the Senior Certificate examination, getting full marks in the UCT Mathematics Competition is a rare event," said Professor John Webb, a lecturer in mathematics and the organiser of the competition. Each grade will have its own paper, consisting of 30 problems. While the first 10 problems can be dashed off in a few minutes, the next 10 are a little tougher. "And the last 10 are real brainstrainers," Webb said.

Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price said: "UCT holds this annual competition to encourage both learners and teachers in a subject that is essential to so many industries and fields of business. The more literate South Africans are with maths, the more innovation we can bring to our work. And teachers leave the competition with creative maths materials they can use in the classroom."

Participants can choose to use two heads or one

While the top young mathematicians of each school will have the chance to pit their wits against their peers from other schools, others have the opportunity of teaming up with a friend to tackle the problems together.

At the prize-giving in June, Gold Awards and Casio calculators will be presented to the top individuals and top pairs in each grade. Book prizes will be awarded by Oxford University Press. Merit Awards presented for the next level of achievement, and every contestant wins a Certificate of Participation.

High achievement in the UCT Mathematics Competition leads to further opportunities to show excellence. The maths stars will be invited to take part in a follow-up event, the UCT Invitational Mathematics Challenge. The competition results will be used to select the Western Province teams for the South African Inter-Provincial Mathematics Olympiad in September.

The UCT Mathematics Competition is the University's biggest outreach project for schools. It is sponsored by Aurecon, Africa's largest consulting engineering company.

How do your maths skills add up?

Problems from last year's competition (and answers) are in the attached pdf files. You and your readers/listeners are welcome to try out these brainstrainers and find out just how hard Western Cape learners are working to get ahead in mathematics.

ENDS

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