

# Australian Mathematics Competition for the Westpac Awards

## 2006 Fact Sheet

- The Australian Mathematics Competition for the Westpac Awards (AMC) is the original and one of the largest competitions of its kind in the world per capita. The competition will be held for the 29th time this year.
  - Westpac Banking Corporation, the University of Canberra and the Canberra Mathematical Association have sponsored the AMC since its inception in 1978.
  - The objective of the AMC is to create, encourage and sustain interest in the study of mathematics. There is also some emphasis on problem solving, a valuable life skill.
  - The Competition aims to be accessible to all students from school years 3 to 12, not just the mathematically gifted. Experts in each region moderate the paper for syllabus suitability.
  - The AMC consists of five separate papers, each of 30 questions at the Middle Primary (school years 3 and 4), Upper Primary (5, 6 and 7), Junior (7 and 8), Intermediate (9 and 10) and Senior (11 and 12) levels. The first 25 questions are multiple-choice. The last 5 questions require an integer answer.
  - The earliest questions are very easy and the problems become progressively more difficult until the final questions that will challenge the most gifted student.
  - Time allowed is 60 minutes for the primary papers and 75 minutes for the secondary papers. Calculators are not allowed for the secondary papers but all normal classroom aids such as MAB blocks, play money and calculators are allowed for the primary papers.
  - The first AMC in 1978 attracted 60,000 participants. Since then, there have been almost 11 million entries in the Competition.
  - The AMC is the biggest educational event on the Australian school calendar. In 2005 hundreds of thousands of students sat the competition from a record number of schools in 38 countries.
  - The number of boys and girls who enter the AMC is approximately the same.
  - Around 90% of Australian secondary schools take part in the AMC and in 2004 primary schools participated for the first time.
  - The AMC papers are set by Problems Committees comprising mathematicians and educators from primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in Australia and overseas.
  - The papers are available in large print and Braille. They are also translated into French and Chinese for overseas schools.
  - Medals are awarded to entrants in the secondary level who perform exceptionally well within their own region and the Competition overall.
  - Entrants who obtain a perfect score are eligible for the prestigious BH Neumann Award for Excellence.
  - All entrants receive some form of recognition ranging from prizes totalling \$80,000 to certificates of high distinction, distinction, credit and participation. All certificates are printed in Canberra with the student's name and school details. Students also receive individual performance reports.
  - The cost of organising the AMC is more than \$2 million. This does not include the contributions of voluntary personnel. The entry fee covers most of the costs. The majority of Westpac's sponsorship funding goes towards the cash prizes.
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