

Frequently Asked Questions about RMO OTP

What is RMO?

Answer: Regional Mathematics Olympiad is one of the most challenging Math exams meant for students of 8th to 12th grade in India. It is the second stage in the Olympiad Program (first stage is pre-RMO) undertaken by the National Board for Higher Mathematics (NBHM) organised by Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education (HBCSE).

My child is already doing Olympiad exams in school. Is this the same?

Answer: There are similar too many (*so-called*) Olympiads that are conducted in India under the name of International Olympiads. If you are aiming for those kind exams, then RMO OTP might not be the right program that you may want to consider.

What are the different stages in the Olympiad program by HBCSE?

Answer: First stage is **Pre-RMO** which is a test with 30 questions where answers have to be worked out and marked in an OMR sheet within a time frame of 2½ hours. Students who pass this stage qualify for the second stage, **RMO**, where there are 6 descriptive questions to be solved in a span of 3 hours. Students who clear RMO get selected for Indian National Mathematics Olympiad (**INMO**) which has 6 questions to be solved in 4 hours. Students who successfully pass INMO automatically qualify for an interview to be selected in one of the best bachelor's programs in *Indian Statistical Institute* and *Chennai Mathematical Institute* (This means, if they are clear in doing Computer Science, Statistics, Mathematics or Theoretical Physics, they don't have to go through rigorous training programs like JEE coaching and focus on doing other courses upto their 12th grade).

About 35 best students from INMO are selected for a residential training program in April and May called **IMO TC** at HBCSE. Towards the end of this camp, 6 students are selected who get a chance to represent India at the International Mathematics Olympiad (**IMO**).

Will there be special coaching for students selected for INMO?

Answer: Yes, there is a plan to do the same next year.

What is unique about the RAM's RMO program?

Answer: The unique feature about the RMO program that RAM does is the distinguished experienced faculties under whose guidance many students have excelled in Olympiads and many others have been in successful careers in pure and applied Mathematics. Another key aspect of the program is the dedicated band of teaching assistants who are working on a pro bono basis purely for the love for mathematics and nurturing talents. Their contribution is invaluable as there's nothing like peer-group learning and mentoring from those who have walked the path recently.

What is the targeted skill level of the students?

Answer: This is a difficult question to answer. That is why there will be a qualifying test (as mentioned in the brochure). Based on how the students perform in the test, they will be selected for the program. Generally, students of 8th grade (and exceptional students of 7th grade) who are able to solve Math problems of the level of 8th and 9th grade can benefit from the course.

What exactly does the program hope to achieve?

Answer: The goal of the program is to build a strong foundation of areas of mathematics like Number Theory, Combinatorics, Geometry and Algebra in students who are bright and would like to go outside the school curriculum to explore and learn more in mathematics.

Will the school math curriculum be covered?

Answer: Some of the basic theorems discussed in high school would be discussed in the sessions but most of the content of high school will be expected to be known by the student.

What is the need of doing Mathematics outside the school curriculum? Aren't areas like algebra and geometry covered in school syllabus?

Answer: The school curriculum aims to achieve Mathematics skills that everyone should have. RMO aims to achieve Mathematical skills for those who find curriculum a cake-walk and have an appetite to do more challenging problems in Math.

How much work is expected of the student?

Answer: The students will be given assignments after every session. They would be expected to give their best on the assignments. Some of the problems might take days, weeks or even more than a month to arrive at the answer. Some, even beyond that. That is not because the student is weak but rather the problems are quite challenging. Solutions may not be presented easily because the aim is not to look at a solution but to struggle to find a solution. Through the process, students will learn to deal with frustration and develop patience and perseverance to deal with problems.

What are the advantages of preparing for the RMO?

Answer: Students who are passionate about Mathematics get an early exposure to various topics in Mathematics that can help them understand what lies in store if they wish to pursue a course in Mathematics.

Do colleges in India and abroad give preference to students who have participated in the Olympiads?

Answer: Institutes like CMI and ISI in India do give a preference for students who do well in INMO. While applying to colleges outside India, the ranks in RMO or INMO are good ways to signal one's ability in Mathematics.

What days/time is the class?

Answer: Wednesdays 8:00 to 9:30 pm and Saturdays 5:00 to 6:30 pm. The timings may be extended as the course progresses and the days of the week can change if there are some constraints (but that is very unlikely). There may be extra sessions that happen after some months over and above the regular ones of twice a week.

How will the live sessions be conducted?

Answer: The sessions will be conducted on the online platform - Zoom.

Can classes be rescheduled in case of an emergency at the students' end?

Answer: This won't be possible because it won't be a one-on-one session. All sessions will be recorded and uploaded in the Google Classroom so that students can go through the recording if they miss any session.

Will all the interactive sessions be recorded?

Answer: Yes and the recordings will be available for 2 months.

If my child misses a class, how can he/she catch up?

Answer: They can catch up with the recordings and ask questions in the discussion forum (like Google Classroom).

Will there be doubt clarifying sessions?

Answer: The doubts clearing sessions will be held by teaching assistants who are mostly senior students who have gone through the process of RMO earlier and are quite promising for their age. They are students who have been selected after a qualifying test conducted to test their Mathematics and teaching skills. They are essentially people who have felt the need to nurture younger students and would like to give back to the society by doing these sessions. All teaching assistants are volunteers who signed up for the program on a pro bono basis just because of their passion towards Mathematics.

Will there be regular assignments and/or mock exams? If so, what are the logistics?

Answer: There will be regular assignments which are in some sense mock tests. There will also be mock tests after the students have gotten a good base in the subject.

Can I contact the faculty outside of class hours?

Answer: We will be arranging occasional interactive sessions with the faculty so that students can have some more interactions. The faculties are extremely busy otherwise because of which it won't be possible to allow students to interact with the faculties via phone or email.

Will my child get personal attention?

Answer: No. Being an online session with a group of students, it won't be possible to give personalised attention. However, their queries will be resolved by the teaching assistants.

Will the students be given regular homework and will feedback on homework be provided?

Answer: Yes

Can my child do a trial class as he/she is not very sure if the class is a good fit?

Answer: The faculties are quite experienced and hence we don't think that a trial class might be necessary to check the teaching methodology. More so, it may take a few sessions for a student to get a hang on the topic. Hence, we find doing a trial session does not help in any way and for the same reason, we do not offer any trial classes.

What will be the qualification of the faculties?

Answer: More than qualification, what matters more in Olympiad coaching is how experienced the faculty is in Olympiad training. We have three main faculties whose profile is shared at the bottom of this document.

What is the mode of payment?

Answer: Online. You need to make the payment through the payment gateway that will be provided to you over email or make a bank transfer. Payments will be non-refundable.

If I don't attend a lecture or a few lectures, do I have to pay for it?

Answer: Yes.

Is there any provision to withdraw in between? Will I get a refund if I do?

Answer: You may choose to discontinue in between but no refund will be possible for any drop outs.

What is the course fee?

Answer: INR 15,000 per year. Need-based scholarships are available.

Is there a monthly installment plan?

Answer: No. The entire fee has to be upfront before joining for the program. Those who may have any financial constraints in doing so may write to us.

Should my child apply for the exams through school or can they represent the institute?

Answer: You can apply directly and don't have to do it through your school or our institute.

For more details, visit <https://www.mta.org.in/activities/exams/prmo/>

What are the application deadlines for 2020?

Answer: The dates are not yet announced for 2020. Keep checking for the updates

<https://www.mta.org.in/activities/exams/prmo/>