

Mathcamp 2019: Academic Recommendations

Name of student: _____

Name of recommender: _____

Deadline: March 15

To the recommender:

The above-named student is applying to Canada/USA Mathcamp (<http://www.mathcamp.org>), an intensive summer program that introduces mathematically talented high-school students to the beauty and variety of advanced mathematics. Mathcamp receives applications from hundreds of students, all over the world, and our admission process is extremely selective. We appreciate your help in evaluating this student's application.

In their application, the student is making the argument that they are both qualified for and a good fit for this program. We think of your role, as their recommender, as both vouching for the student (i.e., verifying the applicant's credentials) and providing a wide-angle lens so that we can picture their application in context. Your input gives us a window into what it's like to work with the student, mathematically and otherwise. You can help us understand:

1. Is this student mathematically qualified for a program like Mathcamp?
2. What makes them rise to the top of the pile?
3. Is Mathcamp in particular a suitable program for them?

Here are some points to address in your letter:

- What is the context of your relationship with the applicant? (If you do not know the applicant well and are only able to write a brief summary, it's fine to say so.)
- Describe the applicant's mathematical maturity.
- How does the applicant interact with peers who are weaker than they are mathematically? Or who are stronger?
- How does the applicant compare with other outstanding students you've taught?
- What will you remember most about this person?
- If you are familiar with Mathcamp, do you feel it is suitable for this student? How might they fit into the Mathcamp community and benefit from the Mathcamp experience?
- Are there any unusual circumstances in the student's background of which we should be aware?

As you are writing, please keep in mind that evaluations are most valuable to us when they include specific anecdotes or stories. For instance, instead of saying a student “thinks outside the box,” cite an example that highlights the student’s intuition and creativity. Since it’s a self-selecting group of applicants, we tend to see students who are getting excellent grades and diligently completing assignments, so you can abbreviate that portion of their resume to a short nod unless there is something unusual to mention.

We appreciate your candid and comprehensive evaluation.

A special note to math summer program and math circle instructors:

If you know the applicant through a math enrichment program: hello, colleague! You can very directly address what it might be like for us to work with this student, so we have some more specific questions for you. We are particularly interested to know: can this student write proofs on their own? Which classes did they take at your program? How did they compare with their classmates? What do you think of as their main strengths and weaknesses? Do you feel that they are ready for Mathcamp’s curriculum?

How To Submit Your Letter:

We prefer that you submit your letter online if possible. (We are not fussy about official letterhead or handwritten signatures; we’re much more interested in getting your letter directly into the applicant’s file, ideally in a text format that we can search.) In order to submit your letter online, please provide your **email address** to the applicant, and they will send you a recommendation request in the Mathcamp application system.

Please feel free to email us at techsupport@mathcamp.org if you have any trouble with the process. (If you do not have access to email, you may call us at (888) 371-4159.)

In order for the student’s application to be given full consideration, your recommendation must be received by the March 15 deadline.

Thank you, once again, for your help in this process and for supporting talented students in mathematics!

The Mathcamp 2019 Admissions Committee