

SCIENCE OLYMPIAD SCORING GUIDELINES

We are providing this information so that Event Supervisors, Participants, Coaches and Teams understand how the scoring process will work for Science Olympiad tournaments. Unless explicitly revised by local Tournament Directors, these National guidelines apply to all officially sanctioned Tournaments. With the sole exception of the Science Olympiad National Tournament, all Science Olympiad Tournament results are determined by local Tournament Officials and their designated Event Supervisors.

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

1. **Raw Scores and Ranks:** All teams who participate in an event must be scored and ranked as specified in the event rules. Follow the tournament director's instructions for recording and reporting this data (e.g. via a website, paper form, etc).
2. **Tie Breakers:** All ties must be broken for the ranks to be awarded medals. If a tie for non-medal ranks can't be broken, award points according to the place tied and then skip the next place (e.g. 3 teams tied for 10th place, the next team would be 13th).
3. **Sort Orders:** Since different events are scored differently, be sure to note whether high scores or low scores are better in term of rank assignment, both for the raw score as well as for the tie breakers.
4. **Penalties:** Follow the guidelines in the event rules with regard to penalties. When there is ambiguity or uncertainty, note that General Rule # 5 says "Officials are encouraged to apply the least restrictive penalty for rules infractions". See examples below.
5. **Tiers:** Teams/devices that do not meet the requirements in the event rules must be allowed to compete if possible and are to be notified, scored, and ranked below those who met all of the specifications if specified as so in the rules ("tiered").
6. **Participation Points:** Teams making an honest attempt to participate that cannot be assigned a raw score (e.g. safety hazard, mechanical failure, wrong dimensions, etc.) must be listed as a "P" for Participation as the raw score and rank.
7. **No Shows:** Teams that do not show up or make an honest attempt to participate must be listed as a "NS" for No Show as the raw score and rank. This includes teams who may be present but display no preparation for the competition
8. **Disqualifications:** It is extremely rare for a DQ to be implemented. Teams that egregiously misbehave/cheat (e.g. excessive vulgar language, Code of Ethics issues, extreme safety violation, etc.), must be listed as a "DQ" for Disqualified as the raw score and rank. This action will disqualify the affected participant/team from participation and scoring in that event only.
9. **Team Notification:** Any team that is **DQed, Tiered, or issued a significant penalty must be** informed as soon as possible (e.g. tell the participant/team if still present in the competition area, notify the coach if the competitor is no longer in the vicinity, etc.).
10. **Event Documentation:** Event Supervisors are expected to provide raw scores and any documentation (answer sheets, answer key, etc.) to the Tournament Scoring team as soon as possible after the event is done. Help is available at the tournament HQ to grade or tally results.
11. **Score Counseling:** Supervisors should plan on spending at least 20 minutes after you and any assistants complete scoring all team materials following a process of turning in all materials that contribute to scoring (e.g. tests, answer keys, device checklists, etc.), checking scores, and documenting penalties, tiers, etc. to ensure no mistakes are present in the results tabulation.

OVERALL TOURNAMENT

The following guideline and procedures will be applied by Event Supervisors and Tournament Officials with regard to determining the overall outcome for teams at a given tournament.

1. **Team Points:** For each event at the tournament, team points corresponding to the event rank are assigned to that team (e.g. 5th place = 5 points). The sum of the points equals the team score, which determines the overall team rank (lower is better).
2. **Points for Participation, No Shows, and Disqualification:** Participation (P) ranks are assigned points equal to the number of teams that competed in the tournament in each division. No Show (NS) ranks are assigned one more point than Participation points. Disqualification (DQ) ranks are assigned one more than No Show. (e.g. at Nationals, P=60 points, NS=61 points, DQ=62 points)
3. **Team Tie Breakers:** All ties must be broken for the team ranks to be awarded trophies. Ties are broken based upon the number of 1st places, then 2nd places, etc. (e.g. Team A with two 1st and five 3rd places loses to Team B with two 1st and one 2nd place).
4. **Scoring Errors:** Unless otherwise specified by the tournament director, results announced at the Awards Ceremony are tentative and may change if scoring errors are brought to the attention of the arbitrators within one hour after the results are announced. If changes occur, appropriate medals and trophies will be awarded. Teams will not be asked to return awards given at the ceremony.
5. **Publication of Final Results:** Tournament directors may make final results available via hard copy, email, or website postings.

EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE PENALTIES

While it is the expectation of Science Olympiad that all participants, coaches, and teams will exceed all expectations regarding following the Rules for each event as well as overall conduct and behavior at a tournament as spelled out in the Code of Ethics, applicable Pledges and other relevant communications we do recognize that mistakes and errors can occur. In such situations, Event Supervisors and Tournament officials will refer to the Event and General Rules to determine the appropriate response. The following example penalties are provided to give guidance to Event Supervisors and Tournament Officials where Event and General Rules

allow them discretion in their actions. These examples are provided to be illustrative and informative and in no way should they constrain Event Supervisors or Tournament Officials in their decision making. Event Supervisors or Tournament Officials are fully empowered to use their judgement and knowledge of the situation to determine the best course of action in compliance with the Event and General Rules, the Code of Ethics and applicable Pledges.

Infraction	Penalty / Reaction
Device presented for impounding does not meet event rules and specs	If impound time remains, competitors may modify device to bring into compliance without any penalty. Otherwise, penalty points or tiering issued per the event rules.
Team caught practicing in prohibited competition facility prior to tournament	A few (5-10) points added to the overall team points total for violating the spirit of the competition.
A competitor's cell phone starts ringing during the competition	Competitor asked to bring the phone to the front of the room and turn it off without any other penalty.
A team brings 2 sheets of notes into an event with a 1 page of notes limit	If discovered near the beginning of the event, confiscation of the extra page without any other penalty. If near the end of the event, tiering below other teams.
A parent observing a team in an open event shouts advice to the team	Verbal warning to the parent after the initial incident without any other penalty. Subsequent incidents result in tiering below other teams.
A competitor becomes verbally abusive and threatens physical violence	Verbal warning to the competitor to calm down and be respectful. If the behavior continues, competitor DQed and coach notified of the situation.