

**IJSO GUIDE CHALLENGE
RULE BOOK
2026**

1. Introduction

1.1. Organizers

The IJSO Guide Challenge (which will from now on be referred to as *the competition*) is organized by the IJSO Guide team and is not in any way affiliated with the International Junior Science Olympiad Committee. The papers will be created and graded by students, former IJSO participants.

1.2. Purpose

The competition was created with the intention of promoting science learning through a competition, popularizing the IJSO, while also creating an IJSO-style competition, both for people who are not participating in the IJSO and for those who are participating and want to test themselves.

1.3. Participation

The contest is open and free of charge for all students throughout the world who meet IJSO age standards (born in 2011 or after).

2. The contest

2.1. Date of the competition

The competition will take place in two rounds: first round taking place from 12:00 UTC, 12th September to 12:00 UTC, 13th September (24 hours) and the second round taking place from 00:00 UTC, 19th September to 00:00 UTC, 21st September (48 hours)

2.2. Exam format

The first round will consist of an MCQ examination, with 5 questions from each subject (15 questions total), each worth 10 points, so 150 points. Wrong answers will lead to a 3 point deduction.

The second round will be an experimental (data analysis problem) worth 150 points and a theoretical problem worth 200 points.

The maximum total grade is 500 points.

All papers have to be solved individually, without collaborating with other participants.

All three subjects (physics, chemistry and biology) will weigh approximately the same amounts, not creating an unfair advantage to those better at one of the subjects.

For the transparency of evaluation, detailed official solutions and marking schemes will be released after the examination.

2.3. Sending answers

For the MCQ exam, answers will be sent in a Google Forms, while solutions to the theory and experimental exams will be sent in PDF format, uploaded to a dedicated Google Forms. To aid with writing solutions, we'll provide both printable answer sheets and editable Microsoft Word answer sheets and solutions can also be written on blank paper sheets and then scanned (using an app such as CamScanner) into a PDF file.

The answers to the theory exam will be sent only as PDFs, named using the format **name_theory.pdf**, while the experimental ones will be sent as PDFs, using the naming format **name_exp.pdf**.

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Answers should be submitted in English as they will be graded by an international team. The papers will not require long complex written explanations for the answers, to avoid any problem with translations.

More details about answer submission will be found on the papers.

2.4. Syllabus

The syllabus is the same as in the IJSO, while the exams are also made to mimic the difficulty of the IJSO.

2.5. Forbidden actions

Collaborating with other participants, teachers or using AI models is strictly prohibited and will result in disqualification.

3. Results and awards

3.1. Grading

The grading of the MCQ exam will be done automatically, while the theory and experimental exams will be graded by a team of past IJSO participants. All results are double-checked to make them as accurate as possible and they are final and non-appealable.

In case of a tie, the tie breaker will be the theory exam, followed by the experimental exam. If there still is a tie, both (or all) participants will receive the same award.

3.2. Awards

After the releasing of the results, the top scorers will receive the following titles:

- Gold Medals to the top 10% of participants
- Silver Medals to the next 20% of participants
- Bronze Medals to the next 30% of participants

Other awards may be given following a decision of the IJSO Guide Challenge organizing team.

4. Other mentions

4.1. Answering questions

For any questions regarding the competition, you can use the “Contact Us” form on the ijsoguide.com website, or text us on our official Instagram account [@ijsoguide](https://www.instagram.com/ijsoguide).

During the competition, a Google Forms will be available to anyone who is asking for a clarification regarding a question from the papers. If our team finds the clarification request reasonable, we will answer it in a google docs which can be read by anyone, to ensure transparency.

4.2. Changes

We reserve the right to make small changes to the set of rules for the competition, and all eventual changes will be published.

4.3. Preparation

The ijsoguide.com website, along with past IJSO papers, are the most useful preparation resources for the competition, because they are in the same style and level of difficulty.