

TCEA Computer Science Contest

RULES and PROCEDURES

CONTEST PARTICIPATION

- Teams are led by at least one (1) team sponsor and are composed of no more than three (3) students.
- Students are not allowed to participate on more than one team.
- Team members must all attend the same school.
- Teams are required to have a team name that meets common school standards.
- Teams must designate one (1) student member to be the team captain. The captain is the only person from a team who can initiate queries and appeals.
- At area contests, each school may enter no more than four (4) teams per campus, per division.
- A maximum of two (2) Novice and/or Advanced teams from each school per division may advance to the State Competition, provided the minimum score rule (four [4] points, see below) is satisfied.
- Teams must earn a minimum score of four (4) points at an area contest to be eligible for the state contest.
- Wildcard teams will be selected for all remaining available space at the state contest site. Wildcard positions are chosen by ranking all teams across the state and selecting the correct number of teams based on the participation percentage across the state within each division.
- If changes to the advancing team makeup need to be made due to conflicts with schedules or grades, the decision to fill the spot is up to the team sponsor and the school's principal.
- Students who are not team members cannot be in the contest area unless officially assisting with the contest.
- No registrations will be allowed past the deadline at either Area or State Contests.

SPONSOR REQUIREMENT

- Each team must be sponsored by a professional employee from the school district represented by the school.
- Sponsors must be members of TCEA. (www.tcea.org/membership)
- Sponsors are responsible for informing students of the rules and ensuring they are followed.
- It is the sponsor's responsibility to verify that there is no pre-generated code on their contestants' computer.
- Teams are to start the contest from scratch. If a team plans to use a shell to speed program development during the contest, the shell must be entered or created after the start of the contest. Teams are not allowed to load a pre-generated shell from any storage media.
- Sponsors are responsible for the conduct of their team and shall represent team interests in any interaction with contest officials.
- During the competition, students may not communicate with anyone except other registered students and competition staff; all other forms of communication are prohibited, including, but not limited to, live and electronic communication (talking, texting, videos, etc.). Students should request assistance from competition staff if any communication with parents or sponsors is necessary or in the event of an emergency.
- During the competition, sponsors may be asked to serve as judges and proctors.
- Violations of these rules may result in a team's disqualification and ejection from the competition. A point deduction may be taken in circumstances where the team is not eliminated for the violation.

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DIVISIONS

- Each team will compete in one of four (4) divisions.
 - Division I Novice
 - Division I Advanced
 - Division II Novice
 - Division II Advanced
- Division I will include teams from 6A and 5A schools.
- Division II will be comprised of teams from 4A, 3A, 2A, and 1A schools.
- Novice teams must consist of students who have not completed a full year of a programming course.
- Private schools may participate in the division that corresponds to their school size.
- A minimum of three (3) sets of trophies and medals would be awarded for each competing division.

COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

- State Contest and Super Area Contest Using Electronic Submission (P²).
- Each team must provide its own computer system, virus free.
- Only one (1) keyboard, one (1) monitor and one (1) CPU may be used per team. Laptops may be used with an external keyboard, provided the laptop keyboard remains in an inoperable state. An external monitor may be used with a laptop.
- Each team must provide its own software. This includes the operating system and programming compiler software.
- Teams are provided one (1) power outlet. Each team must provide its own power strip. Each team is responsible for setting up and checking their own computers.
- Printers are not required but are permissible for debugging purposes.
- It is strongly recommended that a backup system be brought and stored at the contest site. All spare equipment must be stored away from the contest area.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

- On-line documentation, including the Java API, that is an integrated part of the programming language software, is provided.
- Debugging tools, such as Help, Watch, Debug, or Breakpoints, may be used.
- Hard drives must not contain any pre-written programs.
- Toolboxes, non-standard libraries and pre-written code are not permissible.
- Calculators and other calculating devices are not permitted. Using the on-line calculator that is supplied with the operating system is permitted.
- A maximum of two copyrighted/published reference books (textbook, documentation, manual) per team may be brought for use during the contest. These books may not contain any past sets or solutions from any programming contest; or student generated code.

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CONSUMABLES

Teams are responsible for their own supplies, such as pens, pencils, or any other needed material.

LANGUAGES

- The only acceptable programming language for contests will be Java.
- Any version of JAVA SDK would be allowed; however, judges will use the latest available non-beta version of the SDK as of Sep. 1st of the current school year. Schools using earlier versions of the SDK should be aware of possible deprecated methods.
- All Java code must be in one .java file.

SCORING

- The problem set for each contest shall consist of problems divided into three groups according to difficulty: Group One will consist of two- (2) point problems, Group Two will consist of five- (5) point problems, and Group Three will consist of nine-point problems.
- Each problem set will contain at least six (6) problems in each Group, and each problem specification will include test data (if required) to be used in sample runs.
- Teams will be given two (2) hours to program. Solutions must be coded completely during the competition.
- No pre-generated code will be allowed.
- Output for judging requires the program to generate a solution that is displayed to the console window. Output directed to a data file that in turn must be accessed to verify a solution is not a permissible means of output.
- Programs will be judged with test data different from the sample data.
- Solutions will not be graded on output format, unless the solution to the problem is to "properly format," or formatting is specifically stated in the problem.
- Solutions will not be graded on case sensitivity (upper- and lowercase), unless the solution to the problem specifically states that case sensitivity is required.
- Any method or function that is part of the standard language a team uses is allowed.
- The team with the highest total score wins.
- In the case of a tie, the first tiebreaker is the team that solved more of the highest-valued problems. The next benchmark is the team with the earliest recorded time for their final correct solution.
- Teams must verify their score through the verification process before leaving the contest area.
- A team forfeits all appeals and protests the moment they begin to dismantle their computer system. Teams may dismantle when they believe their score has been accurately recorded.

EXPENSES

- The entry fee for the Area Contest is set at \$50 per team with no on-site registration.
- The entry fee for the State Contest is set at \$70 per team with no on-site registration.

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- Team sponsors must be members in good standing of TCEA. (\$49 - www.tcea.org/membership)

SYSTEM FAILURES

- Failure of individual systems, which are clearly the responsibility of the team, shall not be enough cause for modifying the planned format. The contest site director shall permit substitution of a backup system, if available. There will be no contest schedule adjustment in this situation.
- Failure of facilities or systems which fall under the responsibilities of the contest site director, which result in unequal conditions for teams, are enough cause for contest modifications which return equity. Ruling on failures is the responsibility of the contest site director.

THE CONTESTS PROCEDURES

The TCEA Super Area Contest Director is permitted to modify a contest provided that:

- Modifications do not give teams at one site an advantage over teams at any other site concerning opportunity to qualify for the State Contest;
- Adequate publicity is given to modifications so that all potential participants understand what the procedure is, and that the State Contest will be different;
- The intent of the programming contest can better be served in the situation as a result of the modification; and
- All the modifications are submitted and approved by the State Programming Contest Chair (in order to maintain continuity statewide).

REGISTRATION

- All teams must verify their intent to attend the contest by registering online by the deadline and paying the appropriate fee by the date of the event with a PO or payment.
- Cancellations must be made in writing via email to treat@tcea.org no later than five days before the contest. Cancellations received by the deadline will receive a full refund. Cancellations received after the deadline, but before the contest, will receive a refund, less a \$25 cancellation fee per team. After the event has taken place, no refunds will be given.
- Upon arrival, teams must sign in at the registration desk and receive a team number and table assignment.

SUBMITTING SOLUTIONS

State Contest and Super Area Contest Using Electronic Submission (P^2)

- All solutions are to be submitted electronically on PC^2 with problem number and language at the top of the file.
- Source files are required for solution verification. Style is not judged.
- Program solutions must read input data from data files.
- Data file access must not include a path.
- Teams can check judge's response electronically.
- There is no penalty, other than time, for resubmitting a problem. There is no limit to the

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number of times a problem can be submitted.

- All solutions that are submitted during the competition time frame will be judged.
- Only solutions submitted before the contest ends will be judged.

PROCTORING

- Some team sponsors will be randomly selected to act as contest proctors.
- Contest proctors will ensure the integrity of the contest and the adherence of all contestants to the contest rules.
- Proctors will monitor the contest area by roaming among the teams.
- Proctors will report any improprieties by any team to the Super Area Contest Director.
- All observations by the proctors are confidential. Any action taken in response to violations of the rules is the responsibility of the Super Area Contest Director.
- Proctors are not permitted to roam in the vicinity of the teams they have sponsored.

APPEALS AND QUERIES

- A team may initiate a query to request clarification or additional information concerning a contest problem at any time during the contest.
- The query is to be submitted on PC² for those contests using electronic submission.
- A team may also initiate a written appeal of a rejected solution to a judge.
- The Head Contest Judge will act on all appeals and queries.
- No appeals are considered beyond 15 minutes of the close of the competition period. Once an appeal is denied, the team may not re-appeal the same problem.
- Team sponsors may not appeal to any judge; the appeal must be submitted by the Team Captain.
- All decisions of the Head Contest Judge are final.

AWARDS

Awards and trophies will be given to the participants following the posting of the final results.

DISQUALIFICATION

The Super Area Contest Director may disqualify a team for, but is not limited to, the following:

- Violating any contest rules
- Disconnecting another team's power supply
- Trading information between teams
- Using unapproved reference material
- Using pre-written code
- Defacing the contest site

THE FINAL WORD

The Contest Site Director is responsible for interpreting the rules and for ruling on any unforeseen circumstances. All rulings by the Contest Site Director are final.