

STATUTES International Geography Olympiad

The Statutes of the International Geography Olympiad (iGeo) were last amended by a vote of the International Board on 24 August 2024, to take effect after the International Geographical Union General Assembly has voted to approve the structural change from a Task Force to a Commission.

General characteristics

1. The Olympiad is held under the auspices of the International Geographical Union (IGU) and organized by the IGU Olympiad Commission.
2. The aims of the Olympiad are to:
 - a. stimulate active interest in geographical and environmental studies among young people;
 - b. contribute positively to debate about the importance of geography as a senior secondary school subject by drawing attention to the quality of geographical knowledge, skills and interests among young people;
 - c. facilitate social contacts between young people from different countries and in doing so, contribute to the understanding between nations;
 - d. recognize excellence in student geographers.
3. The Olympiad is a competition between individual students selected to represent their country through a national geography competition.
4. The Olympiad consists of a competition, social activities and excursions.
5. The Olympiad competition consists of three parts: a written response test (WRT), a multimedia test (MMT) and a fieldwork exercise (FWE).
6. The Olympiad is a face-to-face competition and only in extraordinary situations can it be held online, and only following a decision of the Steering Committee in consultation with the Local Organizing Committee.
7. The official language of the Olympiad is English.

Participating countries

8. A country may apply to send a team of up to four students and two team leaders.
9. A "country" is defined as a member of the IGU or a sovereign state recognised by the United Nations.

10. A country's application to participate shall not be accepted if it would be contradictory to an IGU ruling or if a 2/3 majority of the International Board decides that a country's participation would adversely affect the aims of the Olympiad.

The participants

11. Participants include students, team leaders and observers.

12. There shall be no discrimination as regards race, ethnic group, citizenship, religion, gender or political opinion.

Students

13. A team includes up to four students.

- a. They must be students of secondary schools (general or technical), or have finished school in the year of the Olympiad and not yet commenced regular education at the tertiary level on 30 June of the year that the Olympiad takes place.
- b. Their ages must be between 16 and 19 years old (inclusive) on 1 August of the year that the Olympiad takes place.
- c. Students must be able to answer test questions in the official language of the Olympiad (English).
- d. Students must be selected through a national geography competition of the country they represent. Students must be enrolled in the school system of that country. They do not necessarily have to be citizens of that country.
- e. A student may participate in an Olympiad no more than twice. Students who participate more than once must qualify for selection each time through their national competition.

Team Leaders

14. The students are accompanied by two adult team leaders. In some circumstances, students may be accompanied by only one leader, as approved by the Steering Committee.

- a. Team leaders must be involved in geographical education in their country.
- b. Each leader must be fluent in English, the language of the Olympiad, both orally and in writing.
- c. Leaders shall maintain absolute security about the content of any test until after that particular test has taken place.

- d. One leader has membership of the International Board and votes on matters before the International Board.
- e. The expectation is that one leader's primary responsibility is to serve on a test marking jury.
- f. The other leader's primary responsibility is for the supervision and care of the students. They also assist in invigilation of the tests and other activities related to the Olympiad. In some circumstances this leader also serves on a marking jury.
- g. Leaders with the requisite skills are encouraged to volunteer for the test writing committees.

Observers

- 15. The organisers of the next two Olympiads may each send observers as approved by the Steering Committee, in consultation with the Local Organizing Committee.
- 16. A country that has not participated in the Olympiad, but is intending to participate in the next Olympiad, may send one observer with the approval of the Steering Committee.
- 17. Any other observer must be approved by the Steering Committee and this would only be done in exceptional circumstances.
- 18. Observers may be present at meetings of the International Board, but may not vote.

Other participants

- 19. Members of the Local Organising Committee, local volunteers and local staff/contractors as approved by the Local Organising Committee may participate in Olympiad events as appropriate.
- 20. Other individuals, including visitors from participating countries, are not allowed to participate in Olympiad events or be present at Olympiad venues except for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, or other events as approved by the Steering Committee.

The Olympiad tests

- 21. The tests of the Olympiad are as follows:
 - a. The Olympiad tests and the marks assigned are: written response test (40% of total marks), fieldwork exercise (40%) and multimedia test (20%).
 - b. The tests are based on the guidelines drawn up by the Steering Committee. Olympiad assignments test knowledge, skills and understanding in geography.

- c. Each participating country is responsible for submitting question proposals for the written response test and the multimedia test by the deadline set by the Steering Committee.
- d. The Olympiad tests are prepared by committees under the supervision of the Steering Committee.
- e. Students complete test assignments individually, unless a test explicitly states that group work is allowed. Violation of this provision shall result in disqualification of the student from the Olympiad and from any future Olympiad. The costs incurred by disqualified competitors shall be covered by their country.
- f. Students must produce their answers in the official language of the Olympiad (English).
- g. Students who are non-native English speakers and/or not educated in English may use an approved text-only bilingual dictionary during the tests. They are given extra time for written tests, as approved by the Steering Committee.
- h. Students who do not commence a test for whatever reason will be awarded no marks for that test. Students who commence but do not complete a test due to circumstances beyond their control, will have their mark for that test determined by the Steering Committee, after consultation with that test's marking jury.
- i. The relevant marking jury, in consultation with the Steering Committee, makes the final determination on students' marks for individual questions.
- j. All students receive a certificate. Approximately 50% of the participating students receive a medal. Medals are awarded in the approximate ratio of gold 1: silver 2: bronze 3.
- k. In calculating the cut-offs between the medals, the Steering Committee considers the mark differential on either side of a potential cut-off, while staying reasonably close to the ratio above.
- l. The Steering Committee determines team rankings based on the sum of the student scores.
- m. The results are announced and the medals and certificates presented to the winners at an official ceremony during the Olympiad. When the Olympiad is held in conjunction with an IGU Congress or Conference, the gold medals should be presented as part of that programme.

The International Board

22. The International Board (IB) consists of one adult, usually a team leader, from each country participating in the present or last Olympiad. International Board members

represent their country's interests and uphold the goals and values of the International Geography Olympiad. International Board members must be identified to the Steering Committee prior to an Olympiad and prior to any requirement for a vote.

23. Decisions of the International Board are passed by a simple majority vote unless otherwise stated in these Statutes. The International Board may conduct votes in person, by email, or using an online voting tool. The chair has a casting vote. If there are two co-chairs, then between them they have the one casting vote. Members of the Steering Committee have the right to attend meetings of the International Board but, apart from the chair's casting vote, have a vote only if they are a country's representative. The decisions of the International Board are final.

24. The International Board has the following responsibilities:

- a. assist the Steering Committee and Local Organizing Committee to conduct the Olympiad according to the Statutes;
- b. define the areas, themes and geographical skills to be included in the Olympiad, working through a committee;
- c. endorse the Steering Committee's recommendation of the country to organise the next Olympiad.

The Steering Committee

25. The long-term work involved in organising the Olympiad is coordinated by the Steering Committee. Members of the Steering Committee are the chair and up to eight ordinary members. The organisers of the immediate past, the present and the next two Olympiads are co-opted members of the Steering Committee.

26. The chair of the Steering Committee is appointed by the International Geographical Union General Assembly on the advice of the IGU Executive Committee. This advice takes into consideration the recommendation of the incumbent Steering Committee chair, following a vote by the International Board. The chair of the Steering Committee is appointed for a 4-year term. An incumbent chair may be re-appointed no more than once, but may not serve on the Steering Committee in any capacity for more than 12 years. Note that two people may assume the role of chair as co-chairs, with their rights and responsibilities defined as if they were a single chair.

27. The ordinary members of the Steering Committee are approved by the IGU Executive Committee on the recommendation of the incumbent Steering Committee chair following a vote of the International Board. Ordinary members are eligible for re-appointment to a second four-year term.

28. The incumbent Steering Committee proposes a list of potential ordinary members for a vote of the International Board. Leaders may express their interest in serving as an ordinary member of the Steering Committee directly to the chair.
29. The Steering Committee has the following responsibilities:
- a. take the lead in organising an efficient and high-quality Olympiad;
 - b. promote the Olympiad worldwide;
 - c. select the country to organise future Olympiads when the Olympiad is not linked to an IGU Congress or IGU Regional Conference;
 - d. accept new participating countries after validating whether the condition of selecting a team from a national competition is met;
 - e. make the final decision on disqualification and penalties of competitors;
 - f. oversee the development, invigilation and marking of the tests;
 - g. ensure correct and just classification of the prize winners;
 - h. form ad hoc committees and co-opt individuals, as necessary, to complete specific tasks;
 - i. maintain an up-to-date Olympiad website;
 - j. work in consultation with the International Geographical Union and its Commissions and Task Forces;
 - k. seek funds to support the business and activities of the IGU Olympiad Commission.

Local Organising Committee

30. The Olympiad is organised by the Ministry of Education or one or more other appropriate institutions of the country in whose territory the Olympiad is to be conducted. The appropriate institution generally assigns the organisation, preparation and execution of the Olympiad to a geographical society or another institution in the organising country. That institution establishes a Local Organising Committee.
31. The responsibilities of the Local Organising Committee (LOC) are to:
- a. ensure the equal participation of all participants;
 - b. invite the participants of the last three Olympiads and other countries as appropriate;

- c. forward to these countries not less than eight months before the date of the Olympiad information which gives details of the Olympiad not covered in the Statutes, and gives the names and addresses of the institutions and the persons responsible for the Olympiad;
- d. determine the maximum number of participating countries in their Olympiad, which must be at least equal to the previous year. An LOC may not increase the number of participating countries without the approval of the hosts of the next two Olympiads and the Steering Committee;
- e. accept applications from those countries that participated in the preceding Olympiad, provided their applications are received at least six months prior to the start of the Olympiad;
- f. six months before the start of the Olympiad, any remaining places will be allocated based on the order in which applications are received. The eligibility of countries that have not previously competed must first be checked by the Steering Committee in accordance with 29d;
- g. draft the Fieldwork Exercise in consultation with the Fieldwork Exercise Committee;
- h. establish a detailed programme for the Olympiad including the tests (preferably on three separate days), a programme of excursions, a poster session, and a cultural function. This is to be sent to the participating countries not less than three months in advance;
- i. check student information as it is received to determine whether competitors meet the age conditions of the Olympiad and if not, notify the Steering Committee;
- j. conduct the Olympiad in accordance with the Statutes;
- k. organise an optional post-iGeo field trip at additional cost for participants;
- l. be responsible for the financial aspects of the Olympiad and announce eight months before the date of the Olympiad the fee to be paid by each student, adult and observer. The amount of such fee is to take into consideration enabling as many countries as possible to participate.

Test writing committees

- 32. There are three test writing committees, one for each of the Olympiad tests.
- 33. These committees are responsible for preparing the tests, in consultation with the Steering Committee member designated as Director of Tests.

34. The committees for the Written Response Test and the Multimedia Test are usually chaired by a member of the Steering Committee, with a committee membership appointed by the Steering Committee and composed of International Board members and other geography educators with the requisite skills.
35. The Fieldwork Exercise committee usually has two convenors: a geography educator nominated by the Local Organising Committee and a member of the Steering Committee. The committee membership is predominantly geography educators familiar with the fieldwork site but may also include other Olympiad leaders appointed by the Steering Committee.

Marking juries

36. There are three or four marking juries, one for each of the Written Response Test, Fieldwork Exercise Part 1, Fieldwork Exercise Part 2, and the Multimedia Test, if it is unable to be automatically marked.
37. These juries are responsible for marking the tests and for bringing any irregularities to the notice of the Steering Committee.
38. The juries are usually chaired by the relevant test writing committee convenor. Jury members are appointed by the Steering Committee and are usually International Board members but may include other members.

The financial principles

39. The country participating in the Olympiad pays:
- a. the return travel, insurance and, if applicable, visa costs of the students, leaders and approved observers to the place at which the Olympiad is held;
 - b. a fee to the local organiser for each student, leader and approved observer as a contribution to other costs.
40. The local organiser covers all other expenses incurred in holding the Olympiad.
41. Use of the iGeo logo for fund-raising activities at the Olympiad requires permission from the Steering Committee.

Final regulations

42. Changes to these Statutes can only be made by the International Board and require a 2/3 majority vote. No changes may be made to these Statutes unless the International Board member of each country participating in the current or last Olympiad is sent the proposed revision by email at least two months in advance.

43. Participation in an International Geography Olympiad signifies acceptance of the present Statutes by the institution responsible for sending the country's team.
44. The original and definitive version of these Statutes is written in English.
45. The Statutes of the International Geography Olympiad should be reviewed by a committee every 4 years.
