



Carleton University

Competition
Package

Parliamentary
Debates


1. Introduction	3
2. Competition Schedule	4
2.1. Competition Day 1 (January 23, 2026)	4
2.2. Competition Day 2 (January 24, 2026)	5
3. Competition Guidelines	6
3.1. Allowed Resources	6
3.2 Question Period	6
3.3 Awards	6
4. Rules	7
4.1 Overview	7
4.2 Personnel Required	7
4.2.1 Competition Lead(s)	7
4.2.2 Debate Moderator	7
4.1.3. Timekeeper	8
4.3 Facilities and Equipment	8
4.4 Debating Rules and Elements	9
4.4.1 Teams	9
4.4.2 Resolutions	10
4.4.3 Time Allotted to Debaters	10
4.4.4 Types of Motions	11
4.4.5 Role of the Government	11
4.4.6 The First Speaker	13
4.4.7 The Second Speaker	13
4.4.8 Role of the Opposition	13
4.4.9 Rebuttals	13
4.4.10 Questions (Points of Information)	14
4.4.11 Heckling	14
4.4.12 Points of Procedure	15
4.5 Procedure / Timeline	16
4.5.1 Competition Format	16
4.6 Judging & Rubric	16
4.6.1 Judging	16
4.6.2 Additional Penalties	17
5.7. Plagiarism	18



1. Introduction

Hello and welcome to the 2026 Ontario Engineering Competition! Each year, OEC brings the best and brightest future engineers together to showcase their skills and talent in their respective disciplines. Through various competitions and challenges students have the chance to apply in class learnings to real world problems, and highlight their collaboration to demonstrate excellent engineering design and thinking. The top two teams from each competition will be invited to compete at the 2026 Canadian Engineering Competition (CEC), hosted by the University of Sherbrooke. We hope you enjoy OEC 2026!

The theme of OEC 2026 is “Reach Beyond Horizons”, and using this theme, debate competitors will be challenged to engage in dynamic situations, challenging them to think beyond their day-to-day challenges. In the parliamentary debate competition, competitors will be challenged to leverage their engineering knowledge to form and defend opinions on important world issues.



2. Competition Schedule

2.1. Competition Day 1 (January 23, 2026)

Time	Food/Events	Travel	Debates	Time	Food/Events	Travel	Debates
8:00 am				5:30 pm			Show
8:15 am				5:45 pm			
8:30 am				6:00 pm			
8:45 am				6:15 pm			
9:00 am				6:30 pm			
9:15 am				6:45 pm			
9:30 am				7:00 pm			
9:45 am				7:15 pm			
10:00 am	Breakfast	Bus Shuttle		7:30 pm			
10:15 am		Between Delta Hotel and Carleton University (P7 Parking Lot)		7:45 pm			
10:30 am	Richcraft Atrium			8:00 pm			
10:45 am				8:15 pm	Dinner		
11:00 am				8:30 pm			
11:15 am				8:45 pm			
11:30 am			Networking Fair	9:00 pm			
11:45 am			Richcraft Atrium	9:15 pm			
12:00 pm				9:30 pm			
12:15 pm				9:45 pm			
12:30 pm				10:00 pm			
12:45 pm				10:15 pm			
1:00 pm				10:30 pm			
1:15 pm				10:45 pm			
1:30 pm			Opening Ceremonies	11:00 pm		Bus Shuttle	
1:45 pm			Richcraft Atrium	11:15 pm		Between MacOdrum Library and Delta Hotel	
2:00 pm				11:30 pm			
2:15 pm				11:45 pm			
2:30 pm				12:00 am			
2:45 pm				12:15 am			
3:00 pm	Lunch			12:30 am			
3:15 pm				12:45 am			
3:30 pm	Richcraft Atrium			1:00 am			
3:45 pm				1:15 am			
4:00 pm				1:30 am			
4:15 pm				1:45 am			
4:30 pm			Briefing	2:00 am			
4:45 pm				2:15 am			
5:00 pm			Debates 101	2:30 am			
5:15 pm				2:45 am			
5:30 pm				3:00 am			

2.2. Competition Day 2 (January 24, 2026)

Time	Food/Events	Travel	Innovative	Time	Food/Events	Travel	Debates
7:30 am				5:00 pm			
7:45 am				5:15 pm			Judged Debates
8:00 am				5:30 pm			
8:15 am				5:45 pm			
8:30 am				6:00 pm			
8:45 am				6:15 pm			
9:00 am				6:30 pm			
9:15 am				6:45 pm			
9:30 am	Breakfast	Bus Shuttle		7:00 pm			
9:45 am	Minto 5050	Between Delta Hotel and Minto CASE		7:15 pm			
10:00 am				7:30 pm	Gala Doors Open		
10:15 am				7:45 pm			
10:30 am				8:00 pm			
10:45 am				8:15 pm			
11:00 am				8:30 pm			
11:15 am				8:45 pm			
11:30 am	Lunch			9:00 pm			
11:45 am	Carleton Cafeteria			9:15 pm	Gala		
12:00 pm				9:30 pm	Delta Hotel		
12:15 pm				9:45 pm			
12:30 pm	Coat/bag check Minto 5050			10:00 pm			
12:45 pm				10:15 pm			
1:00 pm			Judged Debates	10:30 pm			
1:15 pm	Hatch Info Presentation		Tory Building	10:45 pm			
1:30 pm				11:00 pm			
1:45 pm				11:15 pm			
2:00 pm	Lunch			11:30 pm			
2:15 pm	Carleton Cafeteria			11:45 pm			
2:30 pm				12:00 am			
2:45 pm				12:15 am			
3:00 pm				12:30 am			
3:15 pm		Bus Shuttle		12:45 am			
3:30 pm		Between Minto CASE and Delta Hotel		1:00 am			
3:45 pm				1:15 am			
4:00 pm				1:30 am			
4:15 pm				1:45 am			
4:30 pm				2:00 am			
4:45 pm				2:15 am			
5:00 pm				2:30 am			



3. Competition Guidelines

3.1. Allowed Resources

The competitors can bring the following equipment:


- Any electronic material stored on CDs, USB keys, disks, or other storage devices.
- Any textbooks, course notes, or other reference material.
- Stopwatch
- Writing pad
- Each team member is allowed one device and access to the internet.

3.2 Question Period

After the competition briefing is finished there will be a fifteen (15) minute period during which questions can be posed. All questions and answers will be recorded by the Competition Leads and the answers will be made available to the competitors at the end of the period. Once the question period is finished no more questions pertaining to the prompt and solutions will be answered. Only questions related to the deliverable content will be permitted. These questions will be recorded and posted to all competitors within fifteen (15) minutes of the questions being answered.

3.3 Awards

The top three placing teams will each receive a cash prize for their placement. The listed prize money will be awarded to each team member.

- 1st place: \$350/person
 - 2nd place: \$225/person
 - 3rd place: \$100/person
- 



4. Rules

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 Parliamentary Debate Competitors must use analytical techniques to present, with minimum preparation, a reasoned point of view of a resolution that has not been disclosed beforehand.

4.1.2 The goal is to assess the competitors' abilities to convey ideas and develop arguments. The purpose is not to assess competitor knowledge of parliamentary procedure and formal debating rules. Therefore, the rules normally used in debates have been modified and relaxed to enable students with no formal debate experience to take part.


4.1.3 There must be **two (2)** individuals per Parliamentary Debate team.

4.2 Personnel Required

4.2.1 Competition Lead(s)

- a. It is recommended that the Competition Lead(s) have previous experience in debates, preferably at the OEC or internal qualifier.

4.2.2 Debate Moderator

- a. The Debate Moderator, otherwise known as a Moderator, is the expert in debate procedure and interpretation. The Moderator acts as an impartial judge and ensures that the judges understand the rules of the debate.
 - b. The Moderator of the debate ensures the rules of the debate are upheld. They grant the right to speak (introduces the debater) and enforce the time limits. Most importantly, the Moderator makes rulings on the "points of procedure" put forward by the debaters. The decisions of the Moderator are final.
- 




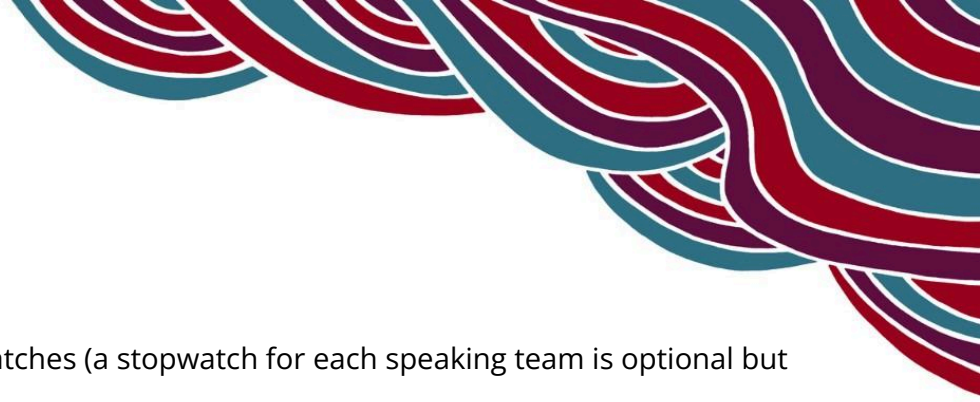
4.1.3. Timekeeper

- a. The Timekeeper is responsible for ensuring that competitors stay within their allotted time limits. The timekeeper will inform speakers of specific time intervals.
- b. The Timekeeper will use hand signals to indicate the number of minutes a speaker has left to conclude their argument.
 - i. The first and last thirty (30) seconds of a speech will be marked by the Timekeeper banging on the table, with the first bang indicating that Points of Information (POIs) are now permitted and the second bang indicating that POIs are no longer permitted.
 - ii. The Timekeeper will also give a ten (10) seconds nal countdown on their hands.
 - iii. If a question is asked in the first or last minute of the speech, the Timekeeper will indicate this to the Moderator so that it can be stopped.
 - iv. If a member of the debater team knocks on the table during the final ten (10) seconds, the Timekeeper will permit an extra and final fifteen (15) seconds of grace.

4.3 Facilities and Equipment

4.3.1 The following facilities and equipment shall be provided for the competition:

- a. Two (2) amphitheaters;
 - b. Two (2) rooms for judge's deliberation;
 - c. Rooms for debater's preparation;
 - d. Two (2) tables;
 - e. One (1) podium with microphone;
 - f. One (1) display board, projector, chalkboard or whiteboard is required to display the debate topic during the debate;
 - g. Paper and pencils/pens for writing (upon request;
- 

- 
- h. One (1) to three (3) stopwatches (a stopwatch for each speaking team is optional but encouraged); and
 - i. One (1) microphone for each team table and one (1) for judging table, for a total of three (3) microphones.

4.3.2 The layout of the room should place the tables and podium at the front of the room. The first row of the room will be reserved for the judges, Moderator, and Timekeeper.

- a. During preparation prior to each debate, the Government team will prepare in the room, while the Opposition team will prepare in the hallway located outside the room.

4.3.3 Competitors may bring their own stopwatches or writing pads.

4.3.4 Other external resources may be allowed at the discretion of the Competition Lead(s).

4.3.5 Props are prohibited.

4.4 Debating Rules and Elements

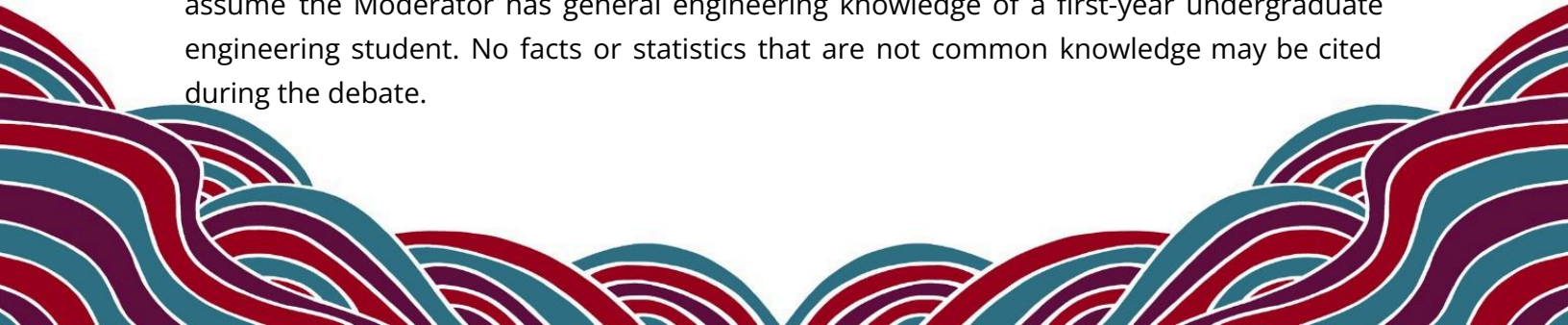
4.4.1 Teams

4.4.1.1 The debate is between two teams, each with two members. The government will be given the task of arguing for the motion. The opposition will then proceed to clash with the motion.

4.4.1.2 Before the resolution is revealed, a coin toss is held. The team that wins the toss is the government.

4.4.1.3 Teams are always expected to act responsibly. Inappropriate language or offensiveness towards the other team, the officials, or the audience is not acceptable.

4.4.1.4 Teams are expected to direct all their speeches towards the Moderator. Teams may assume the Moderator has general engineering knowledge of a first-year undergraduate engineering student. No facts or statistics that are not common knowledge may be cited during the debate.





4.4.2 Resolutions

4.4.2.1 The resolutions will be developed by the Competition Lead(s). They will be related to an issue that the average engineering student should have a defensible opinion on without any preparation.

- a. The resolutions will not be truisms. Absolute words such as "all," "everyone," and "always" will also be avoided (e.g. "Be it resolved that all engineers are good at math" is not a good resolution, since there are always exceptions).

4.4.2.2 Once both teams are informed of the resolution, they are given ten (10) minutes to prepare for the debate.


4.4.3 Time Allotted to Debaters

4.4.3.1 The speaking order and times will be as follows:

- a. First speaker of the government: five (5) minutes;
- b. First speaker of the opposition: five (5) minutes;
- c. Second speaker of the government: five (5) minutes;
- d. Second speaker of the opposition: five (5) minutes;
- e. Rebuttal by the first speaker of the government: two (2) minutes; and
- f. Rebuttal by the first speaker of the opposition: two (2) minutes.

4.4.3.2 If a debater is over the time limit, the Moderator will allow a fifteen (15) second grace period. Upon the exhaustion of speaking time, loud pounding on tables will be deemed appropriate.

4.4.3.3 If there is a discrepancy between the Timekeeper's stopwatch and any competitor's stopwatch, the Timekeeper's stopwatch will take precedence.



4.4.4 Types of Motions

4.4.4.1 The motions that competitors may encounter will be of the following types:

Abbreviation	Meaning
THW	This House Would
THBT	This House Believes That
THS	This House Supports
THO	This House Opposes
THP	This House Prefers
THR	This House Regrets

4.4.5 Role of the Government

4.4.5.1 The government must argue for the resolution presented in the motion. The resolutions must not be squirreled or converted into truisms.

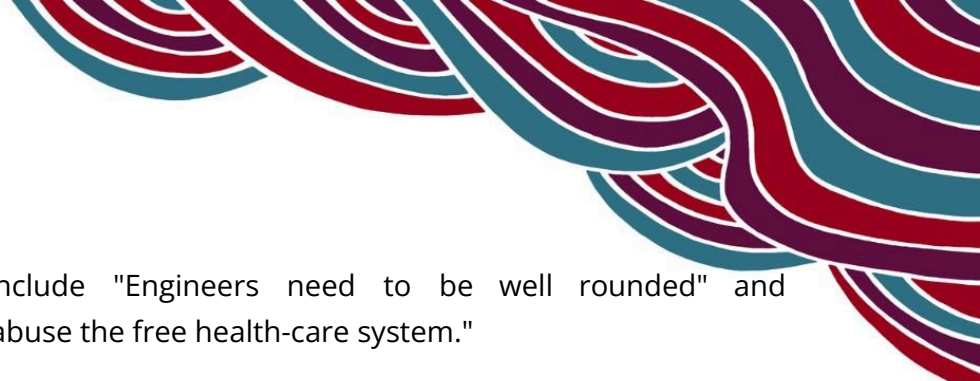
- a. Squirreling is the act of redefining the resolution so that it has a meaning different than the one intended by the resolution.

4.4.5.2 The government, if desired, may narrow the scope of the motion and define terms and who the House is, if not already defined in the motion.


4.4.5.3 The government must also avoid specific knowledge debates where the average engineer has no familiarity with the topic. Two examples of different strategies that could be followed in the debate are:

1. The Principle Case (This House Believes That)

- a. In a principle case, the government presents a principle and a contention. The principle is a general statement that is debatable based on facts, experience, or morals.

- 
- i. Examples include "Engineers need to be well rounded" and "Canadians abuse the free health-care system."
 - b. The contention is the application of the principle to a situation relating to the resolution. The contention must be about one major topic and may be a restatement of the resolution.
 - i. Example contentions for the above principles would be "Engineering students should be required to take more complementary studies classes" and "People should be discouraged from going to a doctor unless necessary."

2. The Plan Case (This House Would)

- a. In a plan case, the government still identifies a principle and a contention. Once this is done, they present a plan for implementing the contention and changing the status quo. They must identify the need for change and how the plan will induce this change.
 - i. Example plans for the above contentions would be "Students should be required to take two years of general studies before entering an engineering program" and "Individuals should be charged a fee every time they visit a doctor."
 - b. The plan case is the most effective when the principle and contention are almost non-debatable.
 - i. For example, if the resolution is "Be it resolved that waste management should become more stringent," the contention is almost unquestionable. However, the proposition can intensify the debate by adding, "Thus, we propose that any household that produces more than a certain quota of waste be severely fined."
 - c. In a plan case, it is important that the plan does not become too specific since preparation time is limited and the technical knowledge necessary to develop the plan is non-existent.
- 



4.4.6 The First Speaker

4.4.6.1 The first speaker of the government must explain the interpretation of the resolution, clearly state the principle and contention, and clarify any definitions. If a plan case is introduced, the entire plan must be outlined in the first speaker's speech. Finally, the first speaker must initiate the argumentation for the contention and plan.

4.4.7 The Second Speaker

4.4.7.1 The second speaker of the government continues the argumentation of the first speaker and rearms concepts that have been attacked by the opposition. New parts of a plan may not be introduced and terms in the resolution may not be defined. New lines of argumentation and new evidence, however, may be introduced.

4.4.8 Role of the Opposition

4.4.8.1 The opposition's task is to convince the judges that the government's views are fallacious. If the case presented by the government is a truism or requires specific knowledge to debate, the opposition can point this out in their first speech and will be rewarded accordingly by the judges. If the point is well taken, then the opposition must redefine the resolution in a debatable manner.


4.4.8.2 If the government presents a plan case, the opposition can attack the principle, the contention or the arguments for the plan. The opposition can also show how the plan will not work or identify the undesirable side effects that it will create.

4.4.8.3 Finally, the opposition may propose a counter plan that is more effective than the original plan. The first speaker of the opposition must introduce counter plans and the second speaker of the opposition may not add on to the counterplan.

4.4.9 Rebuttals

4.4.9.1 In the rebuttals, the most prevalent elements of the debate must be summarized in a concise and convincing manner.

4.4.9.2 Excluding the first rebuttal of the opposition, no new arguments or facts may be presented unless they directly refute what has already been discussed.





4.4.10 Questions (Points of Information)

4.4.10.1 Questions, also known as Points of Information or POIs, are a secondary means of refuting arguments. They can promptly point out deficiencies in ideas, put speakers on the spot and hog time.

4.4.10.2 The debater who currently holds the floor has the authority to take or ignore questions. The opponent who wishes to ask a question indicates their desire by simply standing up and extending an arm forward.

- a. If the debater does not wish to take the question, he or she can indicate by a wave of the hand or a simple "no, thank you". If this occurs, the inquiring party must sit down.
- b. If the current debater wishes to entertain the question, it must be stated by the opponent in less than fifteen (15) seconds during which the speaker must yield the floor.

4.4.10.3 The debater who holds the floor, or their team member, may take part in answering the question. The time used to ask and answer the question comes out of the current debater's allotted time.

4.4.10.4 Each debater must accept one question during their speech, if the opponent is making an honest attempt to ask questions.


- a. Three attempts at asking a question in one speech constitutes an honest attempt.

4.4.10.5 Questions will not be allowed in the first or last thirty seconds of a speech, or during rebuttal speeches.

4.4.11 Heckling

4.4.11.1 Often, the speaker can contradict himself/herself or make an absurd assumption. Heckling at this time will point out the error and add to the debate.

4.4.11.2 Heckling is acceptable if it is short, to the point and preferably witty. If excess heckling becomes disturbing, the Moderator may intervene.





4.4.12 Points of Procedure

4.4.12.1 If a team believes that one of the rules of the debate have been broken, they must immediately alert the Moderator of the violation by standing and saying, "Point of Procedure."

4.4.12.2 The Moderator will then respond with, "Make your point."

4.4.12.3 The team will then proceed to explain how the debate rules have not been followed.

4.4.12.4 Finally, the Moderator will rule on the point by saying, "Point well taken" or "Point not taken."


4.4.12.5 The time it takes to rise and rule on a point is not included in the speaking time of the team currently debating.

4.4.12.6 The following are violations that warrant a point of procedure:

- a. Unprofessional behavior;
- b. Offensive behavior;
- c. Misquotations;
- d. Speaking to the opposition instead of the audience;
- e. Presenting new arguments in the rebuttal; and
- f. Introduction of parts of a plan by the second speaker.

4.4.12.7 If the government has presented a truism or specific knowledge case, the opposition must wait until the end of the first debater's speech to point this out. Moreover, if the officials have failed to follow the rules of debate (incorrect speaking order, too much speaking time allowed, etc.), it may be politely pointed out to them with a Point of Procedure.

4.4.12.8 Points of Procedures are commonly seen to detract from a debate when offered incorrectly. Points of Procedure which take away from the flow of a debate unnecessarily will be penalized by the judges.





4.5 Procedure / Timeline

4.5.1 Competition Format

4.5.1.1 The structure of Parliamentary Debate will depend on the number of teams. The format is at the discretion of the Competition Lead(s) and will be included in the Pre-Competition Booklet.

4.5.1.2 Teams may have to debate two (2) or more times in a row, due to the dynamic nature of the format, however the Competition Lead(s) should do their best to ensure teams are given reasonable breaks between debates.

4.5.1.3 Possible formats could include:

1. Round Robin

- a. The debate competition could follow a round robin style, followed by a knockout bracket.
- b. This will allow all teams to participate in more debates, and to develop a ranking prior to the knockout stage.


2. Double Elimination

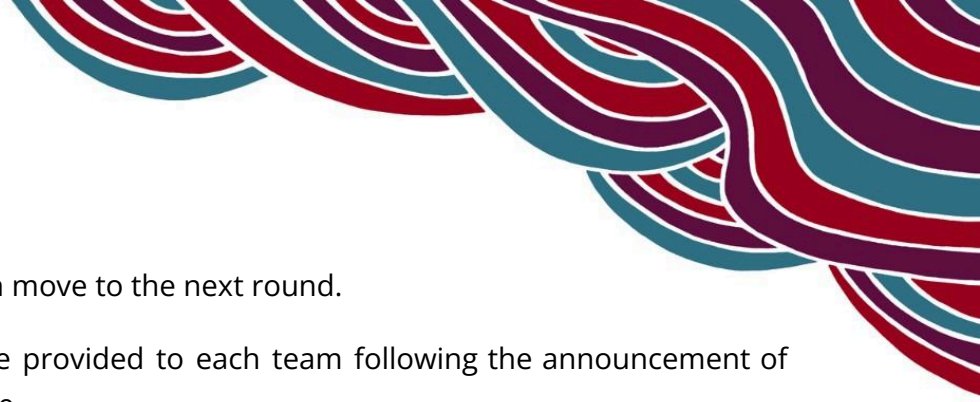
- a. The debate competition could follow a double elimination format which ensures all teams will get to participate in at least two (2) debates.
- b. If a team proceeds unbeaten until the final round, only to lose to another team, there will not be an additional final debate.

4.6 Judging & Rubric

4.6.1 Judging

4.6.1.1 The debate is judged based upon the most convincing argument, communication skills, and ability to follow outlined procedures. Each judge will decide individually, and the Moderator will tally the decisions and announce the winner.





4.6.1.2 The winning team will then move to the next round.

4.6.1.3 Judging feedback shall be provided to each team following the announcement of the winner of that round of debate


4.6.2 Additional Penalties

4.6.3.1 Exceeding time limit, five (5) point deduction for every 30 seconds.

4.6.3.2 Offensive/unprofessional towards the other team, officials or audience, twenty-five (25) point deduction.

4.6.3.3 Misquotations, five (5) point deduction per occurrence.

4.6.3.4 Not following tournament format, fifteen (15) point deduction.





5.7. Plagiarism

The use of the Internet and other external resources is permitted in this competition, but work presented by the teams must be their own work. The teams may use and cite previously published work with proper IEEE referencing. All non-proprietary information must be clearly cited. If there is any evidence that competitors are submitting plagiarized work, violations will be ruled on by the Rule Violation Committee (RVC) and may be grounds for disqualification. If a team has been found guilty of plagiarism, the team shall be disqualified from the competition, and their home school shall be notified within one (1) hour as per rule 1.9.7.

The use of AI is allowed under three specific conditions in this competition:

- Any AI used must be a free version of a publicly available software,
- the AI can only be used for research purposes exclusively,
- the use of generative AI for text, image, slides, code and any other deliverables is prohibited,

All discovered infractions will be treated as plagiarism and Rule 1.9.7 will be enacted: If a team has been found guilty of plagiarism, the team shall be disqualified from the competition, and their home school shall be notified within one (1) hour.

