

# ACF Official Rules for Gameplay, Tournament Execution, and Player Eligibility

*The Academic Competition Federation*

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## A. Tournament Participants and Roles

1. Every room will have a moderator who presents the packet of questions to the teams. The scorekeeper records the activity of the game on an official scoresheet. The tournament director may appoint additional officials to help manage the competition. A moderator may act as his own scorekeeper, or, if both teams consent, may ask a player or spectator to keep the official score.
2. A team member is an eligible individual on the roster of a particular team. See section C for eligibility rules.
3. The team captain is a member of the team who is in the game and is responsible for giving answers when prompted on bonus questions, as described in rule F.1. The team captain is self-designated at the start of each game and may change this designation to another player in the game before the start of any tossup. If the team captain is substituted out, he must indicate, upon departing, who the new captain is. Especially at the high school level, some or all of the team captain's functions may actually be governed by the coach, as described in rule A.5.
4. The tournament director is the self-designated on-site organizer of a particular tournament and has final discretion in all decisions about protests and behavioral sanctions. For ACF Fall, ACF Regionals, and ACF Nationals, the "editors" of a tournament are the individuals assigned to coordinate the production of the packet set, which, for Fall and Regionals, is then distributed to the tournament directors at various sites to be played. For all other collegiate tournaments using these rules, and for all high school tournaments using these rules, the functions assigned to the "editors" are instead the responsibility of the tournament director.
5. On a team with more than four players on its roster, the team members are responsible for selecting their own lineup for each game and deciding on substitutions. Only players in the game may file protests. Players are free to follow the instruction of any outside coach or other person in making these decisions, and should be given reasonable accommodation by moderators to consult with their coaches over possible protests. When using these rules for high school tournaments, a large or complete degree of control by coaches over the team's decisions is expected in some areas. Local traditions about the role of the coach should be followed.

## B. General Rules of Conduct

1. All teams, staff, and spectators must adhere to the highest standard of ethics. Participants are expected to compete in a civil, sportsmanlike manner.
2. Cheating will not be tolerated. Any team member or spectator found to be party to cheating will be expelled from the competition immediately. At the discretion of the tournament director, the results of games in which cheating was found to occur may be changed to forfeits. All participants share a responsibility to report instances where cheating may have occurred and are expected to cooperate fully and honestly in investigations of potential cheating.
3. Any player, staffer, or spectator may be ejected from the tournament for one egregious behavioral offense, such as discriminatory language, cheating, fighting, or destruction of the host institution's property; or for a pattern of lesser offenses, as defined and warned by the tournament director, over the course of the day. The tournament director has sole and non-appealable discretion over ejections.

## C. Player and Team Eligibility

1. For high school tournaments, or high school teams competing in collegiate tournaments, eligibility may be governed by a state association of athletic directors, quizbowl coaches, or so forth. When applicable, eligibility rules put forth by those groups will take the place of rules C.2 through C.8.

2. The following is a comprehensive rule for establishing eligibility at either high school or college tournaments.
  1. For high school tournaments, players must be enrolled at the school for which they are playing, or have graduated in the same academic year that the tournament is being held.
  2. For collegiate tournaments, players may establish eligibility in one of three ways, labelled Rule A, Rule B, and Rule C below. For purposes of these rules, "class" means a college-level class taken, for credit, at the institution at which the player is attempting to establish eligibility. "Taking" a class below means that, on the date of the tournament, the player is currently enrolled in that class, or has completed that class for credit earlier in the academic year. Summer courses are considered part of the preceding academic year for this rule only, but not for any other rules. High schools are not eligible to enter teams in ACF collegiate events, but players in high school may be able to establish eligibility for a collegiate institution under Rule C below.
  3. Rule A. Any person who meets ACF's definition of an "undergraduate" under Rule C.11 on the date of the year's ACF Fall tournament, and has not been granted a BA or equivalent degree prior to the academic year for which eligibility is being sought, may establish eligibility at a postsecondary institution by:
    - a. taking any class for which credit at the institution is offered, explicitly including but not limited to traditional classroom instruction, distance learning, or dual-enrollment classes offered at and/or through high schools, or
    - b. doing any equivalent academic work for which credit or specific satisfaction of a degree requirement is actually earned, including but not limited to supervised independent study, work placement, or internship.
    - c. the class or equivalent academic work must be undertaken during or before the first tournament for which eligibility is sought.
  4. Rule B. A person who does not meet ACF's definition of "undergraduate" under Rule C.11 on or before the date of the year's ACF Fall tournament, or has been granted a BA or equivalent degree prior to the current academic year for which eligibility is being sought, or both, cannot claim eligibility under Rule A. Such a student is eligible to play for a postsecondary institution if he or she is in a specific degree program for a degree granted by that institution.
    - a. A "degree program" is defined for this purpose as the required course of study offered by a postsecondary institution for a specific bachelor's, master's, doctoral, or equivalent degree to any such as a B.S., J.D., or M.Div. A second bachelor's degree is acceptable as a "degree program" for this purpose. Professional certification programs, community college associate's degrees, and equivalent degrees do not qualify under this rule, and such students must meet the Rule C standard instead.
    - b. A student who is in good standing and making academic progress at any above-defined program during the academic year for which eligibility is being sought will be eligible without regard to any further considerations. The class or other component of the program being cited as "academic progress" must be undertaken during or before the first tournament for which eligibility is being sought.
    - c. Graduate students whose only remaining work is the completion of a thesis are explicitly eligible under Rule B, so long as the university still considers them to be a full-time graduate student in good standing making academic progress.
    - d. "ABD" students who are still permitted to submit a thesis in the future, but are not making academic progress at the time, are not eligible for ACF unless they meet one of the other routes to eligibility.
  5. Rule C. A person who does not meet the requirements for eligibility under Rule A or Rule B must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible:
    - a. The student must be taking a total of at least three full-credit courses during the year, all through the institution for which eligibility is being sought, and all at or before the first ACF

tournament being played under the eligibility thus earned. For example, a student wishing to play ACF Fall must be taking three or more classes in the fall, but a student wishing to play ACF Regionals need only take a total of three classes between the fall and spring.

1. A "full-credit course" is a course offered for the ordinary amount of credit that a "normal" course, expected to be taken by undergraduates with junior or senior standing at the university, earns. For example, a university at which a semester-long upperclassman-level class ordinarily earns three credits, this means a three-credit or more course. Because universities often count credits differently or offer more credits than standard for certain types of classes, this is defined with reference to each specific university rather than as a set amount of "credits" globally. A standard course for credit at a graduate school, professional school, professional certificate program, high school dual-enrollment program, or other program for credit qualifies as a "full-credit course."
- b. The courses may be in classroom, online, etc., but to establish eligibility under Rule C, they must be courses only. They cannot be substituted for with independent study, internships, or other non-class academic work.
- c. The ACF eligibility committee may investigate students seeking eligibility under Rule C to determine whether they have a legitimate, non-quizbowl-based, academic-path reason for being enrolled in classes. If such students are found to be merely trying to gain technical eligibility, or to be "taking classes for its own sake," then they will be ruled ineligible. Students in this situation must have a specific academic goal in mind for taking their classes to be eligible for ACF.
6. The ACF eligibility committee consists of the head editors of ACF Fall, Regionals, and Nationals, or their designated proxies, who must be Full ACF members. This committee is the final authority on any question of eligibility. The following parties may petition the committee: any player regarding their own eligibility or the eligibility of any other player, any coach or other team adviser, or any director of an ACF tournament. The committee may be petitioned both before an ACF tournament and up to three weeks after the conclusion of the event. Players who question their own eligibility must petition the committee a reasonable amount of time before the tournament that they wish to play. If the committee retroactively declares a player ineligible, sanctions are available under Rule C.8. Once the committee rules a player eligible or ineligible, that decision will stand for the entire competition year unless the educational circumstances of the player in question change, in which case the committee may be asked to re-rule. Decisions of the committee require at least two of the three votes. The ACF Eligibility Committee reserves the right to investigate or remove someone's eligibility to play ACF tournaments or play for a particular school if the spirit of the rules, which is generally defined as "college quizbowl is for college students," is not met.
7. Holding any prior degree from any institution will not, in and of itself, render an otherwise eligible player ineligible. The taking of minimal course loads for the sole purpose of retaining eligibility at an institution that the player would not otherwise be attending is prohibited. Determining whether this is taking place is at the sole discretion of the eligibility committee; players who do not meet the letter of the eligibility rules laid out here but who believe that their circumstances merit consideration should apply to this committee before attempting to register for any ACF tournaments. Sanctions for players discovered to be ineligible are discussed in rule C.8.
3. Players may not participate in tournaments held earlier in the academic year than their classes begin.
4. Players may play for any institution for which they are eligible at any tournament. Players need not apply for special dispensation to play for a second school during a particular academic year if they are able to establish eligibility at the second institution. A player may represent only one institution at any given tournament.
5. Teams may consist of individuals from only one school and may not include individuals enrolled at other schools or nonstudents.
  1. Players at graduate institutions which are affiliated with a state's university system in general but with no particular undergraduate college may choose to form their own team or to play for any

school in the relevant university system, though they may not switch teams mid-year except as provided in rule C.4. The ACF eligibility committee must approve any instance in which such a student plays for another school in the relevant university system.

2. With the exception of the case in C.5.1, teams composed of players from multiple institutions within the same university system are not allowed.
6. At the high school level, teams including students from more than one school may sometimes be permitted on an exhibition basis, as determined by the tournament director. Nonstudents—individuals who are not, were not, and are not planning to be secondary school students in the academic year that the tournament takes place—are never permitted to play in high school tournaments.
7. Any accredited real-world educational institution that offers recognized post-secondary degrees may participate in any collegiate-level ACF tournament. This includes all sorts of post-secondary institutions, such as service academies and community colleges, and also applies to high schools. Institutions with the word “online” in their names are not eligible. At high school tournaments, only high schools and, if in accordance with local traditions and the policy of the tournament director, middle schools, may participate.
8. If a player is determined to be ineligible prior to an event, the sole penalty for that player will be disqualification from playing at that event on the team for which he is ineligible. He will still be allowed to play the event in question for any other team for which he meets the eligibility requirements of these rules, and his eligibility for future events will not be affected. A team which is discovered after an event to have used one or more ineligible players may be required to retroactively forfeit games involving that player and any titles dependent on the results of those particular games, but no other penalty will apply.
9. An individual may play for only one team during a tournament; e.g., there is no switching from an “A” to “B” team during the day. Players must register as being on one team’s roster or another at the start of the tournament—even if a player, on a team with more than four players on its roster, does not actually play for the “A” team in some round, he is still on the “A” team’s roster for the entire day and cannot play for the “B” team in a later round.
10. A team’s overall roster may consist of between one and six players, inclusive, over the course of the tournament. No more than four players may play at any one time. Substitutions during the game are governed by rule D.8.
11. For collegiate tournaments which recognize high-finishing teams and/or individuals of "undergraduate" status, an "undergraduate" player is a player who did not receive a BA or equivalent or higher degree prior to the academic year in which the tournament is taking place, and meets EITHER or BOTH of the following conditions:
  1. The player first enrolled in a collegiate program in an academic year five or fewer years prior to July 31 of the year in which the tournament is taking place. "Enrolled in a collegiate program" means enrollment at a college, university, community college, or equivalent for the purpose of taking classes toward a BA, AA, or equivalent degree, and does not include any enrollment occurring before the player has obtained a high school degree, such as post-secondary high school programs. For purposes of this rule, the date of enrollment is the school’s first day of classes in the first period in which the player has enrolled, excluding summer term classes. If a particular institution’s fall academic calendar begins before August 1, the player’s date of enrollment will be set as August 1. Leap days have no bearing on the five-year period; for example, July 31, 2015 to July 31, 2020 is considered five years and zero days.
12. For collegiate tournaments that recognize high-finishing teams and/or individuals of “Division II” status, a “Division II” player is:
  1. Any freshman or sophomore (i.e. first- or second-year) player (measured by time in school, not by credits)

13. The tournament editors will determine what constitutes a "collegiate" or "academic" quizbowl tournament whenever the eligibility rules require such a distinction.

## D. Questions and Match Execution

1. A tossup is a question for which competitors must signal in, using a lockout buzzer device, before answering. Conferring among team members on tossup questions, as defined in section E.5., is not allowed. A correct tossup answer is worth 10 points and, except in sudden-death tiebreaker situations, earns the reading of a bonus. An incorrect answer which is given before the reading of the question is complete and is the first buzz on the question loses 5 points. Incorrect answers after the other team has answered, or after the question is completely read, do not change the score.
2. A bonus question is a series of question parts given to an entire team to answer. Conferring is allowed and encouraged. Usually, the captain submits the team's answer for each part, though any player may give the team's official answer by clearly directing an answer at the moderator; there is no need for the captain to formally "defer." All bonuses are worth a total of 30 points and will consist of at least two parts with at least three total answers. Each bonus part must be answered after it is read.
3. A match consists of twenty tossups and any bonuses earned by correctly answering tossups. The next unread bonus in the packet is read after each correctly answered tossup; the bonus numbers do not correspond to the tossup numbers.
4. If a game is tied following the completion of the regular packet, the teams will play sudden-death tossups until a score change—a correct answer earning 10 points, or a -5 earned in the normal way—occurs to win or lose the game. Since incorrect answers on completed or already-negged tossups do not change the score, they do not, in and of themselves, lose the game.
5. There are no timeouts in collegiate games. A short break, of no more than one minute, will be taken before tossup eleven. Before tossup eleven in all games, and before tossup nineteen in close games, the scorekeeper is encouraged to announce the score and to reconcile any discrepancies with players or spectators keeping an unofficial score.
6. In collegiate tournaments, the game should not stop at periods other than halftime, except to accommodate emergencies or for other reasonable purposes that do not involve a team's attempt to gain a competitive advantage, at the moderator's discretion.
7. As mentioned in rule A.5, high school tournaments should allow team members in the game to consult with coaches over whether to file a protest. This consultation must take place between the end of one tossup/bonus cycle and the start of the next tossup, and be limited to a reasonable amount of time. Under the same conditions, high school coaches may take one "timeout" per game of up to ninety seconds to advise their team members. However, these periods are not substitution opportunities; substitutions are allowed only at the times outlined in rule D.8. Attempts by a team to take a second such "timeout" in a game will simply be ignored, not penalized.
8. Players on the team's roster who are not in the game may be substituted in for another player before tossup 11, or before the first tiebreaker tossup is read if a game is tied after twenty tossup/bonus cycles, as described in rule D.4. There are no other substitution opportunities. A player who is substituted out of the game at halftime may re-enter as a substitute before a tiebreaker.
  1. A team or player who arrives while a game is already in progress may begin playing as soon as the next tossup starts, assuming the team does not already have four players active. This is not considered a "substitution." If a team does start a game with four players, then a late-arriving player must wait for a designated substitution opportunity before he may replace another player. Unless otherwise stated by a tournament director, ACF's policy on one team being late for a game, past the announced time at which a round is to start, is to begin reading to the team who is present and allow the opponent to start playing when they arrive, rather than to forfeit the game outright.

## E. Tossup Execution

1. Players must buzz in before answering a tossup. Players are encouraged to answer as soon as the buzzer has locked out other players from ringing in. Thus, as soon as the buzzer systems sounds off and the moderator visually locates the participant who signals in first, that player should feel free to answer the tossup. There is no penalty for answering without being “recognized.”
2. A tossup remains alive for five seconds after it has been completed. Players who buzz as the moderator is calling time will be allowed to answer. If one team buzzes in incorrectly after the tossup has been completed, the five-second countdown begins again for the other team.
3. Upon buzzing, the competitor has five seconds to begin giving his/her answer. After five seconds, the moderator will call time. Any answer which is not begun before the moderator calls time will not be considered. There will not be a prompt for an answer given if the player remains silent on a tossup. Failing to answer before time is called will be treated as a wrong answer. To avoid giving the other team extra clues as to what the answer is, the moderator should not explain close timing calls until after the tossup has been completed for both teams.
4. After a player correctly answers a tossup, his team receives a bonus. The rules for bonus execution are in section F.
5. Substantive conferring between team members is not allowed during the reading of a tossup question that the team is still eligible to answer. Substantive conferring refers to verbal, written or analogous communication among team members that can convey information pertinent to what the possible answer to the question is. Any instance of illegal conferring will be treated as a wrong answer; it will disqualify the conferring team from that tossup, and it will earn a neg-five if the other team has not already buzzed incorrectly and the question was not complete. Conferring calls are at the moderator’s discretion. Even if the team says an answer during or after an instance of illegal conferring, the other team will be permitted to hear the remainder of the tossup and buzz in and answer as normal, taking the other team’s utterance into account. However, if the moderator inadvertently reveals whether the answer given by the conferring team was correct, the conferring team may request that the tossup be thrown out and replaced with a substitute question read as normal to the opposing team, who will have the only opportunity to buzz in and answer.
6. Nonsubstantive conferring, such as waving one’s hands or buzzer, issuing interjections of surprise, etc., will not be penalized, nor, generally, will it be acknowledged by the moderator at all.
7. Players are responsible for monitoring their own buzzers throughout the match. Only the tossup that was just completed is subject to replay upon discovery of a buzzer system failure. Players may request buzzer checks at any time that a question is not in progress, in order to make sure the buzzer system is working.
8. If a player believes his/her buzzer is not working during a tossup, a player may use physical or verbal cues directed at the game officials, such as shouting “buzz,” in order to buzz in on the tossup.
9. Any person in the game room has the right to indicate during a tossup that the buzzer system was not cleared after the last buzz, preferably by stating the word “clear” to the moderator, and this shall never be construed as conferring or inappropriate behavior.
10. If the moderator inadvertently reveals a tossup answer before either team has answered or after one team has given an incorrect answer, the question is thrown out. At the end of the game, if the missing points on the tossup plus the potential bonus potentially affect the outcome, appropriate replacement questions will be read, either to both teams if neither team had yet buzzed, or to one team if the other team had already answered incorrectly.
11. If the substantive portion of a tossup has not yet begun—for example, if the moderator has only said “Next tossup,” or “Next tossup. It was. . .” and not read anything that could possibly indicate what the answer is—and a player buzzes in and claims to have accidentally pressed the button, the moderator

will clear the system and proceed as if the buzz had not occurred. Any buzz after a substantive word has been read will be treated normally. Whether a substantive word has been read is a judgment call that is not protestable.

12. Claims that the system is malfunctioning and buzzing in without being activated by a player will be evaluated by the moderator; if such a situation is deemed to exist, the just-read tossup will be thrown out and replaced, but no previous questions are subject to replay or protest.
13. Answering when another player, whether on the same team or the opposing team, has buzzed in will be treated exactly like illegal conferring. This means that the nonbuzzing player who gives the answer earns a -5 for his team when applicable, and his team is locked out of answering that tossup. As in rule E.5, the moderator will call conferring only, without indicating whether the blurted answer is correct, and the other team's members may consider the blurted answer if they buzz in later.

## F. Bonus Execution

1. Teams have five seconds after each bonus part is read to give an answer, unless otherwise indicated by the question text. If no team member directs an answer towards the moderator within five seconds, or there are multiple conflicting answers being given, then the moderator will prompt the team captain for an official answer, which must be given immediately. If no answer is given at this time, the team receives no points on that bonus part.
2. The moderator will rule on the correctness of an answer, and tell what the correct answer was if the answer given was wrong, after each individual bonus part rather than at the end of the entire bonus. There is no opportunity for the team which did not answer the tossup correctly to answer or receive points on the bonus.
3. If the moderator inadvertently reveals the answer to a bonus part or parts, then all compromised bonus parts will be thrown out. If the points thus removed could affect the outcome of the game, then a replacement bonus will be read, as described in rule F.4.
4. For all situations in which a bonus is replaced, this procedure will apply: The team will play the entirety of the new bonus. The team will be able to earn a total number of bonus points up to the potential maximum if the error had not occurred, but not less than what they scored on the original bonus with the error included. For example, on a three-part, "for 10 points each" bonus, if a team misses part 1, gets part 2, and then is not able to answer part 3 due to moderator error, then that team can score no fewer than 10 points on their replacement bonus and no more than 20. Even if they actually get 0 parts right on the replacement, they receive 10 because they already got one part of the original bonus and should not be penalized out of those points on the replacement bonus. Even if they actually get all parts right on the replacement, they receive 20, because they already missed one properly read part of the original bonus and should not get a second chance at those points on the replacement bonus.
5. At the end of the bonus, the moderator should clearly state the total number of points earned by the team and immediately reconcile any discrepancies over the point total.

## G. Acceptable Answers

1. The first answer given by a player on a tossup is the only answer that will be considered by the moderator. In this case, "giving an answer" involves completing at least one word of a potential answer. "Mozart—no Beethoven's piano sonatas" is not acceptable for "Beethoven's piano sonatas," but "Mo—Beethoven's piano sonatas" is (as long as the first word of the actual answer was begun before time expired). However, if the moderator judges that an otherwise allowable correction is done in response to a spectator or teammate's reaction to the initial answer, then the answer will be ruled wrong as conferring. If the player "corrects" a missed pronunciation or gives a second answer, the moderator will



ignore the second answer and rule only that the first answer given was correct or incorrect. To avoid giving the other team extra clues as to what the answer is, the moderator should not explain that he ignored the second answer until after the tossup has been completed for both teams. On bonuses, this rule will directly apply only when a captain is answering a bonus after a five-second prompt; moderators may ask the captain to clarify what the team's answer is in other situations.

2. Two or more pieces of related information of different types, such as author/book, president/organization, or actor/role, but not two authors, three books, etc., may be given and treated as one answer. If any part contains the answer being sought, and the items are correctly related, the answer shall be ruled correct. If the parts are not related, or neither is the answer being sought, the answer shall be ruled incorrect. For examples, "Robert Jordan, For Whom the Bell Tolls" is correct if the answer being sought is Robert Jordan or For Whom the Bell Tolls but not if the answer is "Ernest Hemingway." "Frederic Henry, For Whom the Bell Tolls" is never acceptable regardless of what the answer being sought is, since Frederic Henry is not in For Whom the Bell Tolls.
3. When the title of a work not originally written in English is the answer, titles in the original language are generally provided in the packet. Those titles in the original language are acceptable, as are idiomatic or literal English translations and any titles under which a translation of the work has been published in English. Translations into languages that are neither the original language nor English are generally not acceptable. Thus, for Marcel Proust's series "À la recherche du temps perdu," that original French title is acceptable, the literal translation "In Search of Lost Time" is acceptable, and the title "Remembrance of Things Past" is acceptable because the series was published under that name in English; however, "En búsqueda del tiempo perdido" is not acceptable, since Spanish is not the original language of the series. Ambiguities across languages will normally be resolved in favor of the player; for example, "A Dog's Heart," "Heart of a Dog," "The Heart of a Dog," and "The Heart of the Dog" are all acceptable for Mikhail Bulgakov's *Sobach'ye serdtse*, as the player is not expected to figure out whether or how to supply articles that do not exist in Russian. However, players will not receive credit for a correct answer when making implausible translations: "The Heart Inside the Dog" is never acceptable, since there is no correct way to translate the Russian title in that way. Since moderators and tournament directors cannot be expected to be familiar with the intricacies of every foreign language, players are encouraged to give non-esoteric or traditional English translations, or the original-language title, in order to avoid complicated protests over translated answers.
4. For names from cultures in which the family name precedes the given name, such as Chinese or Japanese names, the family name is necessary to receive credit for a correct response. The player can give either the native order of naming, with family name first, or the Anglicized order, with family name last, as an acceptable answer. An answer of the given name only will not be accepted or prompted, unless the person is widely known by a pseudonym consisting of his given name, which is acceptable under rule G.16.
  1. Compound last names must be given in their entirety, and a partial last name will not be prompted. E.g., "García Márquez" and "van Buren" are the required parts of the answer for Gabriel García Márquez and Martin van Buren, and answers such as "Marquez" or "Buren" are outright incorrect. It is acceptable to give a partial last name for people with formally compound last names when those people are usually referred to by a part of their name—e.g., "Pablo Picasso" is acceptable for "Pablo Ruiz y Picasso."
5. In most contexts, the initial two digits of dates in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries may be omitted: "63" is acceptable for an answer of 1963, but not for 1763. Similarly, it is not usually necessary to identify dates as AD/CE versus BC/BCE. Exceptions to this rule will arise on a common-sense basis from the context of the question and will be reflected in the underlining and other moderator instructions in the packet. For example, in a question which first mentions that a painter finished a particular work in 1829 and then asks when he completed another work, it is understood by common sense that an answer of "38" can only refer to "1838," so that answer will be accepted if "1838" is correct.

6. Leading articles in titles may be omitted in most cases; e.g., “Scarlet Letter” is acceptable for The Scarlet Letter. Incorrect leading articles, including any leading articles supplied when the title actually has no leading article, will result in the answer being ruled wrong; e.g., “A Scarlet Letter” and “The Great Expectations” are unacceptable. Full titles with leading articles are required when omitting the article may cause confusion with another work that might reasonably be expected to be an answer; e.g., “Invisible Man” is never acceptable for H.G. Wells’s The Invisible Man since Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison is a plausible answer. This rule may not always apply to translated titles; see rule G.3 for details. The definite article “the” may be added before musical works, religious texts, and other types of titles often referred to in such a manner, without rendering the answer wrong.
7. Very commonly used short forms of lengthy titles may be given instead of the complete title, e.g. The Wealth of Nations is acceptable for An Inquiry Into The Nature And Causes Of The Wealth Of Nations. Subtitles are never required; e.g., Pericles is always acceptable for Pericles, Prince of Tyre. In other cases, partial titles will not be accepted or prompted.
8. Commonly used abbreviations such as “J.F.K.” may be given as answers. When the abbreviation is used as a tossup clue, it will be acceptable as an answer until it is read as part of the text of the question. Similarly, chemical formulae, the postal abbreviations for states, and so forth will be accepted unless they have already been mentioned in the question at the point of answering. In some cases, the question text may specifically call for the expanded answer.
9. The moderator may ask for any answer to be repeated if he/she did not hear it clearly. Additionally, the moderator will prompt for a more specific answer when instructed by the packet. On a tossup, the answer must be immediate; on a bonus, the team may take two seconds to confer again. If the player or team responds with a more specific answer that is still not as specific as required, the moderator may prompt again and continue to do so as long as the team continues to move toward the answer required.
10. Embellishment of answers will be disregarded unless it renders the answer incorrect. Hesitation markers around answers (“uh...uh... G. Stanley Hall?”), the couching of answers in sentences or commentary of any kind (“Could this possibly be The Abduction from the Seraglio, which I think is awesome?”) or the player forgetting what game he is playing (“Who is Vita Sackille-West?”) will never render an answer incorrect. However, the player must give the first word of the actual content of the answer before the time limit expires, and cannot use filler words to try to gain extra time.
11. If a moderator asks for spelling to distinguish between multiple answers, only letters which are essential to making the distinction need be correct. E.g, a player who spells out “M-O-N-A-Y” for Claude Monet will be ruled correct, since the moderator only wishes to distinguish between Claude Monet and Edouard Manet, rather than test the player’s spelling skill. In all cases, diacritical marks may be ignored.
12. Players are not expected to know the exact pronunciation of every answer. Therefore, any reasonable attempt at pronouncing an answer will either be ruled correct or result in a prompt for spelling (to be evaluated under rule G.11), and any answer with the correct consonant sounds in the correct order will be accepted. For example, “Stend-HALE” or “STOON-dahl” are correct for Stendhal; “STED-nahl” or “STINK-dahl” are not. Within reasonable accommodations for those with speech impediments or heavy accents, which preferably are disclosed before the start of the game, moderators have complete discretion to judge or further prompt the pronunciation of a response, and such rulings are not protestable.
13. Acceptable answers for fictional characters include the personal or first name, family name, nickname appearing in the work, or whole name, as long as such information is sufficient to uniquely identify the character within the fictional universe and the space of reasonable answers. Questions may sometimes ask for specific forms of character names.
14. For American appellate court cases, either party name is acceptable unless one party is “the United States” or a particular state, in which case the other party name must be given. E.g., either “Gibbons” or “Ogden” is sufficient for Gibbons v. Ogden, but “Miranda” is required for Miranda v. Arizona, and an answer of “Arizona” will not be accepted or prompted. When giving the full name of the case, any

order of party names is acceptable; e.g., Gibbons v. Ogden is interchangeable with Ogden v. Gibbons. Cases in which both the party names are names of states or “the United States” will require both party names, in either order, as the answer. Widely known informal nicknames, such as “The Sick Chicken Case,” are acceptable unless otherwise indicated in the question. Players are discouraged from using less common nicknames. Docket numbers or other methods of referring to court cases are generally not acceptable. The method of identifying a non-American court case will be given in the question and/or will normally reflect the common informal ways of referring to cases in the relevant jurisdiction.

15. On questions which require multiple answers, the answers must be given in one sequence without any unnatural pause. Answers given after such a pause will be disregarded.
16. The maiden names of women better known by their married names and the real names of people better known by their pseudonyms are always acceptable, and vice versa.
17. For individuals who share a last name with another person who may be reasonably expected to be an answer in the same general category, some further form of identification may be required, at the discretion of the packet editors. In such cases, usually the first initial of the person’s first name will be underlined. Unlike in the situation of people with identical first and last names, the person’s actual first initial or name will usually be required. For example, answering "Shelley" will always result in a prompt for either Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley or Percy Bysshe Shelley, since both are figures from the same period of English literature and are thus considered part of the same general category. Giving either "M. Shelley" or "P. Shelley" is all that is needed to earn credit for a correct response. However, saying "Shelley the male" or "Shelley the wife" is not an acceptable answer to that prompt. As in all situations, commonly used pseudonyms and nicknames are acceptable in this situation.
18. For individuals who share both a first and last name with another person who may be reasonably expected to be an answer in the same general category, some further form of identification may be required, at the discretion of the packet editors. In such cases, this identification need only be enough to distinguish the correct answer from the plausible incorrect answer, and need not be formal or complete. For example, “Richard H. Lee” or “Richard Lee from the eighteenth century” is enough to distinguish the Continental Congress member Richard Henry Lee from the Richard Lee who founded the Lee family in Virginia; answering “Richard Lee” for either will earn a prompt. On a question looking for the 43rd U.S. President, “George Bush” will earn a prompt in order to distinguish from the 41st president. At that point, “George W. Bush,” “the second George Bush,” “George Bush the younger” or similar such answers are all acceptable, since the player needs only distinguish the correct answer from the incorrect one, and does not need to demonstrate knowledge of George Walker Bush’s full name.
19. Analogous figures from other myth systems will not normally be accepted when the question has given a proper name from a particular myth system; equivalent Babylonian names cannot be given for a question with only Sumerian names as clues, equivalent Roman names cannot be given for a question with only Greek names as clues, etc. No prompt will be given in such situations. However, when a mix of traditions is reflected in the names used as clues, or when no proper name has been given at the point of answering, any equivalent name for a mythological figure is acceptable.

## H. Protests

1. A protest may be made by any team member who is in the game at the time of the issue in question.
2. The procedure for making a protest is simply to indicate verbally to the moderator that one wishes to protest a ruling; saying the word “protest” will suffice. Protests on a tossup or bonus must be made sometime before the next tossup is read, or immediately after the game is complete if there is a protest on tossup 20, the associated bonus, or a tiebreaker tossup. Any discussion that needs to occur within the game room should happen after the end of the tossup/bonus cycle, rather than while a question is still live.

3. The other team may concede the protest, in which case the protest is considered resolved in favor of the protesting team. If the other team does not concede, the moderator may consult with any other tournament staff in the room and make a ruling. If the moderator does not feel competent to rule on the issue at hand or if the protesting team is not satisfied with the moderator's ruling, then the protest becomes at issue for tournament staff, and will be resolved under the procedure described in rules H.6 through H.11.
4. The following potential errors, and only the following, are protestable:
  1. The answer in the packet is wrong for the question and the protesting player/team gave the correct answer.
  2. The question or answer was ambiguous, so the answer given by the player should be accepted since it fits all the clues given in the entire question text, or all the clues up to a significantly deep point in the question.
  3. The player gave a correct alternate name for the answer that was not included in the list of acceptable answers to the question.
  4. More information was required than was reasonable to identify the answer, and the protesting player gave sufficient information to identify the answer but not as much as the packet required and was ruled incorrect.
  5. Two or more clues within the question uniquely describe different answers, or one clue definitely does not refer to the same answer as the other clues—hence, there is no correct answer to the question. This protest may be lodged by either team at the end of a question converted by neither team or by the team that did not get the question after a question is converted by one team. However, if this situation arises on a tossup that the other team converted before the first clue creating a contradiction was read, there may be no protest because the team that missed the question was not misled.
  6. The protesting team's opponent received credit for an incorrect answer through either packet or moderator error.
5. Nothing else is protestable, including but not limited to: judgment calls of any kind such as calling time, whether a tossup had begun before an accidental buzz as described in E.11, whether verbal conferring occurred, or the failure of the question to require a prompt on an opposing team's answer.
  1. Formal protests relying solely on a player's dispute with a moderator over what the moderator heard are also prohibited. However, if and only if the opposing team concedes the moderator's error in discerning the given answer, the moderator will re-evaluate the actually given answer.
6. The tournament director has ultimate authority to rule on all live protests but may delegate this authority to another individual or committee for the duration of the tournament or on a case-by-case basis.
7. A live protest whose upholding could change the outcome of the game will always be ruled upon. In the event that such a protest is upheld, the following procedures will be followed depending on the circumstances that produced the protest:
  1. For a team claiming that the answer they gave to a tossup was correct but ruled incorrect by the packet or moderator under appropriate sections in rule H.4: If the other team subsequently converted the tossup, their tossup points, and their bonus points earned pursuant to that tossup, will be removed. The tossup points will be given to the team whose protest was upheld and their neg removed. The protesting team will be reseated and play a bonus, if necessary.
  2. For a team claiming that the answer they gave to a bonus was correct but ruled wrong by the packet or moderator under appropriate sections in rule H.4: they will receive the points for the bonus answer.

3. For a team seeking the replacement of a tossup under rule H.4: If the other team subsequently converted the tossup, their tossup points, and their bonus points earned pursuant to that tossup, will be removed. The teams will be reseated and a new tossup will be read. If the other team gets the tossup right, they will get the tossup points as well as the points earned on the original bonus. If the protesting team gets the tossup right, they will get the tossup points and be read a new bonus.
4. For a team seeking replacement of a bonus part under rule H.4: The protesting team will be reseated and a new bonus will be read as described in rule F.4.
5. For a team protesting an improperly accepted tossup answer under rule H.4.6: The opponent's tossup points and any points on the associated bonus will be removed. If the protesting team had already answered the tossup incorrectly and has no other protest, then this ends the resolution of the protest. If they had not yet buzzed in, the protesting team will be reseated and read a replacement tossup, for their team only, which they may buzz on and answer normally. If they convert the tossup, a bonus will be read.
6. For a team protesting an improperly accepted bonus answer under rule H.4.6: The opponent's points will be removed.
8. If the resolution of any protest as above creates a tie, then the teams will play a tiebreaker under the normal procedure as described in rule D.4. The tiebreaker will only be played if and after the protest creating the tie is upheld, and should not be played beforehand on any contingency basis.
9. Before making a final ruling on a protest, the tournament director or his/her designated officer or committee will make every reasonable effort to consult reliable academic resources in order to help determine the factual accuracy of the complaint. Teams involved in the protest may offer suggestions as to where to find relevant information if this is done in a polite and quick manner.
10. If the tournament director determines that a team is lodging frivolous or abusive protests, he will warn the team for inappropriate conduct under rule B.3 and may take further action if the behavior continues.
11. The general principle at work in ruling on protests and in enforcing all rules, and especially to be kept in mind in deciding how to proceed in areas where the rules are unclear, is to reward knowledge and to uphold common practice of past independent quizbowl tournaments. Moderators and tournament directors should not go out of their way to find a reason to rule an answer wrong, and the relationship among teams and between teams and the staff should be cordial and in the spirit of academic pursuit.
12. The improper application of rules by the moderator, to the degree that it affects the competitive play of the game, is outside the realm of "protests." Only in this situation do teams have the right to leave the game room and ask the tournament director to intervene immediately, rather than waiting until the game is finished. Tournament directors should handle such a situation with the goal of restoring the game to the point where it would be had the rules been applied properly; in extreme cases, this may mean throwing out and replacing all affected questions, or restarting the entire game. Tournament directors are encouraged to be sure their moderators are familiar with the rules in order to avoid such situations.

## **I. Tournament formats and tiebreakers for standings**

1. When two or more teams have the same record and are competing for fewer spots available in the next phase of the tournament than there are teams involved in the tie, the tournament director should break ties based on play-in games on full or half packets when time constraints and available packets permit, using rules I.1.1 and I.1.2 to determine how to seed the play-in games. When this is not feasible, the tournament director should use either PPG or bonus conversion to break the tie directly, as determined by rules I.1.1 and I.1.2. The head-to-head results of previous matches should not be used to break ties at any time.

1. If the teams have played the same set of opponents throughout the day, as in a round-robin format, points per game should be used to break ties or to seed for play-in games.
  2. If the teams have not played the same set of opponents throughout the day, such as when comparing teams from different preliminary pools in a high school tournament for “wild-card” spots in a single-elimination playoff, bonus conversion should be used to break ties or to seed for play-in games, in order to isolate the teams’ performances from the different sets of opponents played.
2. High school tournaments should use whatever format is appropriate for the field size, staff availability, and local traditions. It is suggested that all teams be offered the opportunity to play at least seven meaningful games, with “meaningful games” being defined as games that may impact a team’s final placement in the tournament. Formats which produce a top-to-bottom ranking of all teams are encouraged.
  3. For ACF Fall and ACF Regionals, the editors may choose to issue mandatory formats for each potential field size, and exceptions should be negotiated directly with the editors. In the absence of such guidelines, and for all other collegiate tournaments, the only absolute requirements for collegiate formats are as follows:
    1. The tiebreaker procedures described in rule I.1 should be followed, and the finals format described in rule I.5 should be used.
    2. Single-elimination playoffs, double-elimination playoffs, and playoff formats fundamentally identical to either should not be used.
    3. When using a full round-robin format followed by a split into playoff brackets for rematches, preliminary records should carry over for the calculation of the final standings. When using a multi-bracket preliminary format followed by rebracketing into new divisions for round-robin playoffs, preliminary records should not carry over. When using a multi-bracket preliminary format followed by rebracketing into new divisions for crossover playoffs, only the results of games against other teams in the same playoff division should carry over.
  4. In the absence of mandated formats from editors, tournament directors should endeavor to offer teams as many meaningful games as possible given packet, staff, and time constraints. A minimum number of ten meaningful games is usually considered acceptable. Formats which produce a top-to-bottom ranking of all teams are encouraged.
  5. The ACF-format finals procedure for collegiate tournaments requires that a team which has cleared the field or playoff bracket by two or more games in the standings wins the tournament outright. When two teams are tied, they play a one-game final. When a team is exactly one game ahead of the second-place team, a weighted best-of-three final occurs, with the team that has the better record needing to win only one game to take the championship, but the trailing team needing to win two games in a row. If there are ties for the second-place spot in such a situation, or ties of three or more teams for first place, the tournament director should consult rule I.1 to set up the appropriate tiebreakers and eliminate all but two teams, then play those two teams in the appropriate finals format.