

MIST 2026 RULEBOOK

CURRENTS OF CONSEQUENCE:

THE MIGHT OF
SMALL DEEDS



ASSALAMU ALAIKUM,

peace be upon you

Every project you craft this year begins with a single small step. A simple idea, a moment of inspiration, or a quiet intention can grow into something meaningful. In MIST, the most impactful creations often start with these small beginnings, shaped by your sincerity and effort.

As you prepare for your competitions, think about the small choices that influence your work: the extra revision you decide to make, the detail you refine, the concept you explore a little deeper. These seemingly minor decisions are what transform an ordinary submission into something thoughtful and powerful. Ask yourself: What values guide the things I create? How does intention elevate my work? How can small improvements done consistently bring out the best in my craft?

Remember that excellence is not about perfection, but about purposeful steps taken with sincerity. Every choice you make, from how you prepare to how you collaborate and how you present yourself, shapes not only your own growth but the overall spirit of this tournament. How will you use your small deeds to foster creativity, character, and community?

Bismillah (In the Name of Allah). We enter this tournament season striving for sincerity, consistency, and the awareness that even the smallest deeds can carry great value. May Allah accept our efforts and allow us to create with clarity and purpose. Ameen.

Sincerely,
Hira Khattak
National Competitions Director

Muaaz Ahmad and Maria Zulfikar
National Competitions Leadership Team

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CURRENTS OF CONSEQUENCE

The Might of Small Deeds

The butterfly effect reminds us that the smallest actions, good or bad, can set off vast chains of events. A single word, a habit, or a choice that seems insignificant in the moment can ripple outward, shaping people, communities, and even history. Those ripples may flow gently in streams, or surge forward as floods, their final impact unknown. Yet over time, streams cut valleys, rivers carve canyons, and tides reshape entire coastlines. Do our actions have the same effect?

The immense power of a seemingly small act is illustrated in the story of Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) in [Surah al-Qasas](#). His mother's decision to trust in God and cast her infant into the Nile became the tide that turned a tyrant. One small ripple set into motion Musa's upbringing in the Pharaoh's palace, preparing him to one day stand against oppression with truth and conviction.

Just as one decision can lead to unexpected good, the principle of action and consequence also means that negative acts can result in a cascade of devastating effects. Abu Huraira reported that the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Verily, when the servant commits a sin, a black mark appears upon his heart. If he abandons the sin, seeks forgiveness, and repents, then his heart will be polished. If he returns to the sin, the blackness will be increased until it overcomes his heart" ([Tirmidhi 3334](#)). Careless actions, hurtful words, wasted time, and neglected responsibilities can unearth dangerous sinkholes, but repentance offers a path to pull oneself out.

In today's world of instant gratification, small deeds may feel insignificant, and change may feel too slow. But Islam teaches that transformation is built on consistency, patience, and trust in Al Wakeel, the trustee and disposer of affairs. [Surah al-Hud](#) tells how Prophet Nuh (peace be upon him) built his ark while people mocked him. Although each plank hammered seemed meaningless to others, when devastating floods came, those small steps became salvation for humanity. Every prayer, every act of kindness, every contribution to justice is a drop in an ocean of barakah, blessings that endure and multiply over time.

The choices you make today may become the tide someone else rides tomorrow. Alternatively, you may be stationed at the center or end of a wave set off by others' actions. What ripple will you create? How do you ensure your actions contribute to positive growth? How do you take accountability for your role in a chain of events, when the outcome is positive, and when it is negative?

We encourage you to creatively explore these concepts and more in Regional and National competitions and workshops during MIST 2026. Remember that unique projects displaying creativity and insight will be judged most favorably.

MIST HONOR CODE

Standards

Students are expected to maintain the following standards:

1. All participants are required to follow the MIST dress code of professional and formal outfits.
 - a. This may include: religious clothing such as abayas and thobes.
2. Participants are expected to show utmost respect to the person(s) leading and taking part in workshops, competitions, and all other parts of MIST.
3. Any discrimination or acts that may infringe the rights of others in any part of MIST, including, but not limited to, competition submissions, will not be tolerated.
 - a. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination against individuals based on religion, race, color, gender, sex, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, ancestry, national origin, mental health, and socio-economic background.
4. Any unwanted physical contact is not permitted.
5. Any unwanted private one-on-one interactions are not permitted.
6. Anyone reserves the right to request a third person in any interaction.
7. All competitors, coaches, spectators, and guests are expected to be mature representatives of their high school and/or city.
8. Remember that teams are representatives of communities. Team behavior should reflect that image.

Integrity

Students are expected to submit original work for MIST competitions each year. Actions that violate the standards of academic integrity include:

1. Reading, obtaining, or sharing a copy of any test materials before or after the competition without authorization.
2. Consulting or obtaining assistance - prior to or during competitions - from sources that have not been pre-approved.
 - a. This includes copying another person's answers or referring to any aids.
3. Submitting work prepared entirely or partially by another individual, or otherwise misappropriating works or intellectual property belonging to another individual and presenting it as one's own, without providing proper citation and acknowledgment. This includes:
 - a. Copying ideas from popular media (tv, books, etc).
 - b. Using AI as a basis/starting point for a submission or as a part of your submission.
4. Presenting audio or visual recordings of others without their consent or otherwise abusing confidentiality regarding the ideas or works of individuals discussed in confidence.
5. Submitting material used for MIST in previous years or otherwise used for the purposes of a class or project at any other institution.
6. Falsifying or misrepresenting your results or procedures.
7. Sabotaging the work of other competitors or otherwise infringing upon the ability of others to compete fairly.
8. Interfering with the judging or scoring of any competition by anyone other than the official judges and competition organizers.
9. Impersonating any other MIST competitor, judge, volunteer, or organizer for any purpose.
10. Being in the willful companionship of someone who violates any portion of the Honor Code or failing to report any direct knowledge (other than hearsay) of violations.
11. Misrepresenting your age or otherwise registering for a MIST team for which you are ineligible.
12. Participating in, or attempting to participate in, a competition for which you have not registered.
13. Attempting to enter regional or national competitions and tournaments without registration or prior approval.

Actions that do not violate the Code include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Serving as a proxy to present the work of another student on account of an excused absence (such as medical emergency, death in the family, etc.), which has been pre-approved by MIST.
 - a. In this situation, you must let your Regional Headquarters know.
2. Submitting the same or modified work between Regionals and Nationals of the same year.
3. Getting help from and collaborating with others, while crediting ideas or work that are not your own with proper citation.

Depending on the severity of the infraction, competitors and their teams found guilty of academic misconduct may lose points or be disqualified from a competition. Disciplinary misconduct warrants full disqualification from this year's tournament.

Students registering for any MIST competition automatically agree to abide by the principles of academic integrity as outlined in the MIST Honor Code.

TOURNAMENT GUIDELINES

1. Competitions will be run as school-based teams.
 - a. For questions regarding coalition teams, please contact your Regional Headquarters.
2. Only one (1) team will be allowed per school.
3. Competitors will compete with the school they have current and active enrollment.
4. Competitors may only sign up/compete in one competition per category.
5. Some competitions may be listed under a virtual format. However, Regional Headquarters may choose to run the competition in another format.
 - a. However, the format in which it is listed in the rulebook is how the competition will be run during Nationals.
6. Many competitions have changed in either how they are run, when they are submitted, or how many competitors may sign up per team.
 - a. Prepared Essay, Poetry, and Short Fiction will now be run as their own competitions. They will no longer run under Creative Writing.
 - b. Graphic Design has now been renamed to Digital Art.
 - c. All other changes are outlined on the main MIST website.
7. Students registered in a sport or e-sport MUST register for another non-sport competition.
8. Failure to attend a registered competition will result in disqualification from any and all sports/e-sports competitions and point deductions per team member.
 - a. Per team member, it will be a 5 point deduction from a school's overall score rankings.

AUDIENCE GUIDELINES

1. Arrive on time or a little early.
 - a. If you arrive late, you will not be allowed entry into the room.
 - b. Additionally, once inside the room, you will not be allowed to exit.
2. Sit quietly and attentively.
3. No audience members (whether coaches, parents, or others) are allowed to speak to the competitors during rounds.
 - a. Please hold your comments and questions until a judge announces the conclusion of a round.
4. No talking or loud whispering during the competition.
5. If organizers suspect an audience member is communicating answers or clues to competitors, they will be asked to leave the room.
 - a. This is also grounds for disqualification.
6. Remain seated during the competition (i.e. no walking about.)
7. No whistling, yelling, or other loud methods of congratulations should be done until after the question is answered or the round is completed.
 - a. If a competitor is focused and ready, but becomes distracted, it can really throw off his/her performance.
8. Turn off cell phones and other electronic devices.
 - a. No photography and/or filming.
9. Parents, coaches, and other supporters are more than welcome to attend MIST Quiz Bowl.
 - a. Please check with your Regional Headquarters to confirm.

COMPETITOR GUIDELINES

1. Competitors are responsible for being prompt at registration and their competition times. Failure to be on time may result in losing the chance to compete.
2. MIST name badges and/or identification bands must be worn at all times. If a replacement is needed, see a MIST Representative immediately.
3. Be prompt in attending all workshops. Competitors and their teams receive spirit points for attending the workshops they've chosen.
 - a. Failure to appear at these workshops will cause the team to lose spirit points.
 - b. Students must stay until the end of each workshop in order to be counted present.
4. Each team **MUST** be accompanied by at least one coach.
 - a. A coach can be a parent, a teacher, an administrator, or a sibling, or any trusted adult older than 21 years of age.
 - b. At least one coach **MUST** be at the tournament with their team at all times and never leave the campus.
 - c. If a coach has to leave, they must have a replacement.
 - d. Please plan ahead and make sure the coach who will be accompanying your team is registered through MyMIST
5. MIST participants may not leave the tournament venue without a registered coach from their own team or without the MIST Board's permission.
6. No student is allowed to leave the tournament early on any day. All teams/students must arrive on time and leave only when the tournament is over.
 - a. If there is an important reason for a student to leave early, they must let MIST know no less than seven (7) days in advance.
 - b. To obtain permission to leave early, contact your Regional Registration Headquarters.
 - c. We reserve the right to allow/refuse a student from leaving early.
 - d. Once MIST gives the student permission to leave early, they **MUST** let the team coach know that they are leaving and when they will return.
7. Your region will use a variety of methods to connect with and contact you. These include, but are not limited to: Email, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, the GetMistified app, Slack and/or Discord.
 - a. Failure to read updates being sent will be on the competitor, not on the region.
8. Students who spectate must abide by gender segregation guidelines that have been set.
 - a. Ex. Brothers are not permitted to spectate Sisters Improv, Nasheed and Qur'an. The same rules apply for Sister spectators.
9. Read the program and competition rules carefully. Participants are required to follow the rules published in the Annual Competitions Rulebook published at www.getmistified.com. If you don't know, ASK!
10. Share ideas with others, help each other solve problems, make connections, and HAVE FUN!

EARLY COMPETITION DETAILS

All early submissions or competitions with a submission component are to be made via the MyMIST Portal. The MyMIST portal only accepts one (1) submission file. For uploading multiple files, all files must be put together into a zip file, and the zip file can be uploaded into the portal. If you do not know how to upload a zip file, click here for a [Windows tutorial](#) and here for a [MacOS tutorial](#).

Two Weeks Prior to Tournament:

- Prepared Essay
- Short Fiction
- Poetry
- Short Film
- Business Venture Proposal
- Science Fair Abstract
- Social Media
- Humanitarian Service
- Digital Art

General Guideline for Written Submission Documents:

- Typed and double-spaced
- Size 12 font, Times New Roman
- All submissions must be in PDF format. Failure to do so will risk the submission not being scored.
- A written statement is required for all early submission competitions unless stated otherwise, which should be included on a separate page at the end of your document, or submission.
- Have a cover page with the title, MIST ID and name of competition.
- Competitor name or other identifying markers should not be anywhere on the piece.
- Label the document in the following format: "MISTID_COMPETITIONNAME"
 - Example "A1B2C-3D4E5_CreativeWriting"

Late Submissions:

- Written submissions not submitted on time will be subject to score reduction.
- Submissions submitted within 24 hours of the regional deadline will be subject to a 5-point overall deduction
- Every incremental day the submission passes the deadline, another 10 points will be deducted.
- Submissions beyond three (3) days of the original deadline will not be accepted and will be disqualified.

Notes:

- All competitors must bring 3 hard copies of your early submission competitions, with the exception of Poetry, Prepared Essay, and Short Fiction submissions.
- Each region has the right to deduct points from the competitor's score if the above submission format is not followed.
- Make sure to check the specific rules pertaining to each competition for Written Statement as not all competitions have the same requirements.