EVENT SUPERVISORS GUIDE

GENERAL INFORMATION

Thank you for agreeing to be an Event Supervisor for the New Mexico Science Olympiad. This guide is designed to help you create an event that aligns with the rules and spirit of Science Olympiad. It is our goal to provide the highest quality competition we possibly can and to meet or exceed standards set forth by the National Science Olympiad, as such; event supervisors must prepare their events in accordance with event rules and provide outstanding, challenging, and FUN events for student participants.

As an Event Supervisor, you are solely responsible for your event. Read your rules carefully and understand them completely (the students and coaches will!). Be careful to follow the rules as closely as possible; and, most importantly, be consistent. Try to think of and prepare for every technicality that could be exploited, bent, interpreted, challenged, etc. The more familiar you are with the exact rules the easier it will be to make judgments on event day. Coaches and teams prepare all year to compete in Science Olympiad tournaments and they demand exceptional events that follow the current year event rules.

Be sure that you have a copy of the current year’s rules and follow them carefully. The rules for each event change from year to year. If you have run the same event before, DO NOT assume you can do the same things again. Students prepare all year based on the current year’s rules, it is very disappointing when event supervisors don’t prepare events based on these rules. You don’t have to include every topic or concept in the rules. However, please do not create an event that covers topics or concepts not specifically covered in the rules.

You may be running the same event for both Middle School (Division B) and High School (Division C) if the event is in both divisions. If this is the case, the rules for Division B and Division C are usually very similar. You might use the SAME event for both division, but make slight adjustments so that the event is appropriate for each level. In some cases, though the rules for the two divisions may be quite different. Please read the rules very carefully for each event that you will be supervising.

CATEGORIES, FORMATS, AND SCHEDULING

Science Olympiad events fall into three categories:

**Construction events** require devices are made before the competition and require special testing equipment, etc. (Helicopters, Mission Possible, Mousetrap Vehicle) Most construction events have their devices impounded the morning of the competition.

**Content-based and/or hands-on lab-type events** can be run as stations or individual test type events. (Road Scholar, Forestry, Chemistry Lab)

**Onsite events** where students build, test, or do something that is not prepared beforehand but is tested on site and may require special test equipment, usually less complex than the devices built ahead of time. (Battery Buggy, Write It Do It)
**Science Olympiad events are run in one of three ways.** If you’re not sure about your event, check the tournament schedule.

1. In a set time period (9:00-9:50; 10:00-10:50, etc)
2. In a drop-in style which means the participants have a period of time during which to come to do their event (9:00-1:00, 9:00-3:00, etc. Events include Battery Buggy, Egg Rotor Drop, Mission Possible, etc.
3. Finally, some events are run by appointments where teams can sign up for a specific time.

**In addition, several different formats can be used to run your event:**

**Station/Rotational Format**

This method is much easier in some ways since the teams involved would simply rotate through the event answering 1 to maybe 4 questions per station. This type of set up works really well with an answer sheet per team being all that is required for grading.

Try to design each station to require about the same amount of time. Usually 8-10 stations are quite sufficient which means about 2 to 3 minutes per station.

If more teams are present than stations, simply have some teams wait to enter the rotation.

Number your stations and arrange them so that the students can quickly and easily move from one location to the next one. Make sure that everyone has writing utensils, extra paper, and any other required materials before they enter the room.

Have all of the questions face down until you are ready to begin. It is important that no one has seen the questions before you begin.

Have teams take their answer sheet and writing materials with them as they move. Remind them to look only at their own answer sheet and to keep any conversations at a whisper so that they do not let others hear their answers.

It is advisable to tape down the question sheets at each location.

Choose the length of time between stations and make sure that it remains exactly the same throughout the entire contest. The number of teams present determines the length of time. New Mexico Science Olympiad invite 25 teams per division. We divide the number of teams per session to 12-13; this is the reason we schedule two sessions. This may limit the time per station. Try to choose a time limit that will give students the maximum time without causing you problems.

Events cannot run over the time set.

Remind student participants that anyone tampering with the materials in an effort to confuse or delay other teams will be disqualified from the event. It is very important that each team find the questions and materials in the same order as all other teams.

**Stationary Format**

This type of event is usually slower to grade and this must be considered when preparing the event.

This method is very similar to the more typical test that students are accustomed to BUT should include applications and hands on as much as possible. Science Olympiad discourages paper and pencil testing that resembles tests given in a classroom setting.

This type of event preparation should also include graphs, diagrams to interpret, observations to make about a set up of some type, interpret information presented in a video, questions about a
demonstration that might be performed for the entire group, etc. This requires more preparation as far as copies of the event, etc.

A student or team of students will sit in one location for the duration of the contest. All of the questions and materials that they will use are at that location. They may be provided with an answer sheet so that they do not mark on the questions or other materials.

The event supervisor should design enough questions for the event period, an answer sheet and key. In advance, prepare for 25 teams (12-13 teams per sessions) so there will be enough copies and locations for the teams to sit.

Each team must have all of the questions, pictures, specimens, etc at their disposal.

When these events are completed it is important to get a team of assistants to help you score the answer sheets as quickly as possible. We are requesting that all Event Supervisors recruit their own volunteers. If you need help finding volunteers, please contact us immediately.

Lab Practical Set Up Format

This method is something of a combination of the first two methods where the team has its own set of materials or equipment with which to perform an experiment or whatever is required. While the team does NOT rotate through stations, this method requires that each team have a set of materials. Obviously this requires more set up on the part of the event leader and should be a factor that is strongly considered in terms of the room in which the event is held, number of teams competing, etc. The event leader could have 3 sets of 6 or 8 identical stations, and the teams know they must complete one station in each set. If more than one lab station will be completed by students during the contest, it is important to have multiples of each station so that every team has the same amount of time at each station and no one has to wait on another team. Prepare for 25 teams (12-13 per session).

Materials, tools, and supplies (such as water, pH paper, reagents, etc.) are placed at marked locations for their use during the labs.

Safety is a critical issue and student must wear the designated safety equipment at all times in the lab.

It is important that the event supervisor have everything ready-to-go.

After the initial instructions, circulate throughout the lab to observe students, answer questions, and provide for their safety. It is a good idea to have an extra set for each station in the event of an accident.

Be sure to warn students about safety and tell them that anyone tampering with the supplies to hinder the work of other teams will be disqualified immediately.

Most lab events are usually scheduled earlier in the day to give you sufficient time to score the results, but it is still important to get the results to the scorers as soon as possible.

Construction/Performance Format

Some events require students to construct a device prior to the tournament and others have students build a device during the competition.

It is very important for the event supervisor to be very familiar with the specifications for the device. Think about exceptions and challenges to these rules. Make special note of the events that require impounding.
Typically devices can fall apart or get slightly damaged while traveling on busses. If a team shows up with a device that does not meet all specs, generally event supervisors allow them to make minor corrections on the spot (if this does not give them an unfair advantage). Usually this is as simple as something sticking out of the device that can be tucked in or removed. If you can allow students to make simple corrections (quickly) please do so.

If a device is unsafe but could be made safe by the removal of some part or object, it is up to the event supervisor whether to allow the student/team to do this and continue. This must be done prior to operation. Whatever the call, please be consistent. Do not compromise safety.

If the team cannot get their device to meet all specifications, then most events have a provision for them to continue to compete if the device will work. However, none of the devices that fail to meet specs are allowed to rank higher that any device that did meet the specs. Make sure that you are clear on this point for your event. If a device will not operate at all it is still important to record that the team did show up with their device and they should receive a participation point.

**OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR EVENT SUPERVISORS**

**Develop event management plan**—how you will handle the logistics of the entries, impound, competition, scoring, etc.

**Check out** the National Science Olympiad website for helpful information organizing and scoring your event as well as clarifications to your event – [www.soinc.org](http://www.soinc.org)

**Use handouts**, if possible, with instructions to explain to the contestants how the event will be run, rules for check-in, impound (if applicable), etc. This helps clear up any uncertainties and eases the burden of constant inquiries during the event.

You must bring all required items to be provided to the students as per the rules, you must monitor that they have any required safety or other items, and that they do not have any prohibited items.

**If you need any supplies**, copying, etc., please let us know as soon as possible. Bring your copying to the Science Olympiad office, Brown Hall, Room 20 no later than three days before the event. To expedite the copying, email your file to sciencefair@admin.nmt.edu.

We are requesting that all Event Supervisors recruit their own volunteers. If you need help finding volunteers, please contact us immediately.

**Events that require pre-built items** such as electric vehicles, robots, etc. Impounded items are not to be left unattended. (In the past, others have handled items another team has built. This compromises the items’ integrity.) It is your responsibility as an Event Supervisor to maintain control of impounded items. Also, inspect impounded items closely and notify students immediately if they are disqualified. Write down and submit to the Scoring Room details for all disqualifications.

**Please run your event within the allotted time period.** Students participate in many events and have a very rigid schedule. Try to be flexible with students that arrive late. If possible, allow them to compete with the understanding that they must end at the designated time and penalties may be applied (as determined by you, the event supervisor).

**Team members must sign in** at each event for verification they are on the team. Use the back of your score sheet if there is not enough room on the front. Students will be wearing wristbands identifying them as team members. Team members should collaborate on event tests (including written exams) so only one exam per team is required.
SCORING ROOM IS ON THE FIDEL CENTER SECOND FLOOR NEXT TO THE CASHIER’S WINDOW.  
As soon your event has concluded, bring your score sheets to the Fidel Center. If you have problems completing the score sheet within 30 minutes of completion of your event, you can bring everything over to the Scoring Room and we can help you.

Resolve all ties! Supervisors must have tie-breaker questions or activities identified prior to the event. Team members and coaches do not need to know what the tie-breakers are. Essay questions are not recommended to break ties.

Bring all test papers, score sheets, sign-in sheets and other paperwork to the Scoring Room. Paperwork should clearly show how the event was judged and scored in case of questions.

Please remain in the area for 30 minutes after your event scores have been turned in. This is necessary for any questions that arise regarding the event administration and scoring. Also, we would like for all Event Supervisors to be available for 2-3 hours following your event (cell phone, home phone, etc.) in case of questions.

Lunches will be available on the Fidel Center Second Floor next to the Cashier’s window from 11:00 to 1:00 p.m. Please send a runner to pick up lunches for your group unless you make arrangements by the Wednesday before the event to have them delivered to your group.

Rule Clarifications - Event supervisors need to submit rules as soon as possible as we post your comments on our website at infohost.nmt.edu/~science/olympiad/eventsupervisors.htm. It is important to make sure that you do not change the rules of the event with “rule clarifications”. The purpose of clarifications is to explain rules in greater detail so to avoid problems on the day of the Olympiad.

Arbitration - Appeals regarding administration of an event submitted to the Arbitration Committee in FIDEL CENTER, ROOM 248. Teams have 30 minutes following the completion of an event to submit an appeal.

HOW TO ASSIGN POINTS:

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1 point for participation, 0 points for no-show or disqualifications

Include all details for disqualifications on the back of the score sheet or attach to your score sheet.

On your score sheet, please score all the way to 19th place because a couple of points may make a difference in overall team standings.
INFORMATION ON PENALTY POINTS

WRITTEN POLICY ON PENALTY POINTS

- Event Supervisors, Science Olympiad Director or Coordinator may assess penalty points.
- **Any penalty points assessed will be taken from the OVERALL TEAM SCORE.**
- Penalty points may be assessed for any of the following reasons.

  **Interference**

  Only students actually competing in an event (those who have signed in on the sign-in sheet provided to Event Supervisors) may enter areas where events are being held. **Spectator events are at the discretion of the Event Supervisor.**

  Observers, coaches, etc. should in no way interfere with or give assistance to team members during the competition for events. There will be a written Interference Policy in which penalty points may be assessed. We also have written policies on vandalism, cheating, and the use of cell phones and other electronic devices.

  - For any student, coach, teacher, parent, or chaperone interfering with, or disrupting the administration of an event, up to 5 penalty points may be assessed.
  - For any student, coach, teacher, parent, or chaperone entering an event without proper authorization to do so, up to 5 penalty points may be assessed

**Electronic Communications**

- Students with cell phones, iPads, two-way radios, (ANY DEVICE USED FOR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION) must have them in the OFF (not vibrate) position during any event in which they are competing. Students who violate this policy will be penalized up to 10 penalty points.

- Electronic communications usage will be allowed in buildings as long as it does not disrupt any event taking place in that area. Event Supervisors, Science Olympiad Director or Coordinator may assess penalty points for violation of this policy at their discretion.

WRITTEN POLICY ON CHEATING

1. Any individual who cheats during any event will be penalized by disqualification of the team from that event.

2. If a team, team member, or anyone associated with that team (coach, teacher, parent or chaperone, etc. deliberately takes an action that impairs the ability of other teams to fairly compete in an event, that team will be disqualified from that event.

3. If cheating occurs by a team in more than one event, or in successive years, the team may be disqualified that year, or the following year, from the entire competition.

4. Disqualification results in 0 points.

Submit to Scoring Room personnel all details for ANY disqualification OR PENALTY POINTS.