



**PHYSICS.
OLYMPIAD.CH**
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English

Regulations

Physics Olympiad

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General remarks

By participating in the Physics Olympiad, you agree to our rules of participation and our privacy policy.

In case of ambiguity between the translations, the English version applies.

Section 1

Rules of participation

1.1 Rules of Participation

You may participate in the Physics Olympiad if you:

- are less than 21 years old the 30 June of the year of the final round. (Example: To participate in the Physics Olympiad 2019/20 you have to be less than 21 years old the 30 June 2020.)
- are 21 years old or more the 30 June of the year of the final round. In this case you may participate in the first round and the preparation camp. Participation in further rounds and training is only possible by arrangement and in exceptional cases.
- attend a school in Switzerland or Liechtenstein (secondary school, vocational school, international school, etc.), are Swiss or Liechtenstein citizen or have your official residence in Switzerland or Liechtenstein (for later rounds, you must participate in Switzerland).
- haven't begun university by July of the year of the final round.
- have registered on the website or by form with truthful details.

An additional age limit applies to the participation in the International Physics Olympiad. You must be less than 20 years old the 30 June of the year of the International Physics Olympiad.

1.2 Costs

Participation in any event in connection with the Physics Olympiad is free. This also includes the International and the European Physics Olympiad. Travel expenses for public transportation within Switzerland and Liechtenstein in 2nd class are reimbursed as well.

1.3 Disclaimer

The Physics Olympiad accepts no liability for damages of any kind arising in connection with participation in the competition. Insurance is the responsibility of the participants or their legal representatives. Legal recourse is excluded.

1.4 Disqualification

In exceptional cases the board may exclude participants. Reasons are for example cheating during exams or disobeying camp rules.

Section 2

Privacy policy

These guidelines regulate what we – the Physics Olympiad and the Science Olympiad – do with your submissions and contact data and what data we publish and pass on to third parties. If you have any questions or uncertainties, please do not hesitate to contact us at info@swisspho.ch.

2.1 Registration details

When you register, we will ask you for your name, date of birth, gender, address, city, e-mail, telephone number, language skills, school, physics teacher and your T-shirt size. We use this information for the following purposes:

- **Contact.** Before, during and after our verification procedures, you will receive information about our events and other scientific competitions by e-mail or by post from us. For instance, we will send an e-mail newsletter. If you do not wish to receive any mails from us later, just let us know.
- **Schools.** We ask you about your school and about your teacher, so we can send them our informational materials in the following years. We inform them about your participation only if you have put in an excellent performance (qualified for the final, medal, etc.) .
- **Media.** We only provide your contact information (residential address, telephone number and e-mail) to the media with your explicit permission.
- **Third parties.** Together with our hosting providers, we strive to keep your data safe and to protect our website and databases as well as possible from access by third parties and misuse. Your data will only be passed on to trustworthy third parties who help us to fulfill our tasks directly (e.g. our newsletter partner or our printing company for mail order). Otherwise, we will not share your contact information with third parties such as our support partners without your consent..

2.2 Particularly sensitive personal data

For participation in our camps and for travelling to international competitions, we will ask you about your dietary habits and health information, for ID numbers, passport photos, passport copies and visa details, as well as contact details for emergencies. We treat this information as strictly confidential and only pass it on to third parties where necessary, for example to airlines, to embassies for visa applications, or to local organisers for menu planning.

2.3 Photos and videos

At our workshops and examinations as well as on excursions, we take photographs and film material to capture impressions of the Olympiad. We put collections of photos and videos online and may label them with your name. We use them for our printed material and display them at our events. We reserve the right to allow third parties (such as the media and support partners) to use our pictures and film recordings, and/or use photos and videos made by us. If you do not wish to have any photographs taken or films recorded at our events, please let us know in advance in writing at info@swisspho.ch.

2.4 Competition data

We store the results of all written exams in our internal archive. We will return the exams from the second and the final round by post. We do not publish your exam submissions, but we reserve the right to use them for internal training purposes.

2.5 Rankings

For each of our competition rounds, we create a ranking list with your name and region, as well as your score, award and ranking. We make these ranking lists publicly accessible on our website for an unlimited period. It is our opinion that a position at the lower end of the ranking is also an excellent achievement. The Olympic idea "the important thing is taking part" is what counts.

2.6 Media releases and reports

During and after examinations, excursions and camps, we prepare media reports and reports consisting of the results, photographs and quotes from the participants. We publish these online and send them to the media, schools and our support partners.

2.7 Website usage

On the Physics Olympiad website, we use cookies to analyze visitor behaviour. These are independent of your user profile and are not linked by us. The data protection following link: <https://science.olympiad.ch/footer/navigation/disclaimer/>.

2.8 Changes

We reserve the right to revise these guidelines twice a year. However, we will never extend the scope of use of recorded data beyond that previously agreed.

Section 3

Competition procedure

3.1 First round

All individuals, who fulfill the rules of participation (section 1), may participate in the first round of the Physics Olympiad. The exam can be taken online on our website or on paper at school. The exam can be taken in German, French, Italian or English.

3.1.1 Online

The link to the online exam is provided on our website during the examination period. All further instructions are given there.

3.1.2 On paper

A version of the first-round exam on paper is sent to all high-school teachers by post. The teachers carry out the exam during the classes and send it to the Physics Olympiad. The students are supervised by the teachers.

3.1.3 Allowed aids

- All aids are allowed (i.e. Physics book, calculator, Internet, etc.)
- The exam has to be solved alone, **without** any help of other people!

3.1.4 Duration and content

The exam lasts 40 minutes, online as well as on paper. It consists of 20-30 questions (multiple-choice, multiple-true-false and numerical). The areas covered are defined in the syllabus.

3.2 Second round

3.2.1 Qualification criteria

The selection for the second round is based on the rank achieved in the first round. Up to roughly 120 participants are selected in total, the exact number is fixed by the board of the Swiss Physics Olympiad.

3.2.1.1 Wild-cards

Additionally the board may grant wild-cards for the second round to participants, that are close to but do not fulfill the standard qualification criteria. Not more than approximately 20%, of the participants in the second, round should qualify with a wild-card. Wild-cards may be granted to participants that fulfill one of the following (not exclusively):

- is from Liechtenstein
- may participate in the following year
- helps to balance the gender ratio
- attends a school that is generally underrepresented
- did perform considerably worse than in previous years

3.2.2 Allowed aids

- pen and paper, ruler, triangle ruler and compass
- a simple calculator. (A calculator is allowed if it is not a graphical calculator, its display has no more than three lines, and if its user memory is completely cleared immediately prior to each exam.)
- formularies (books containing formulas) are **not** allowed

3.2.3 Duration and content

The exam has two parts:

- **Multiple-choice:** 60 minutes - around 22 short multiple-choice questions
- **Word-problems:** 120 minutes - three longer word-problems

The areas covered are defined in the syllabus.

3.3 Final round

3.3.1 Qualification criteria

The selection for the final round is based entirely on the rank achieved in the second round. At most 28 participants are selected, the exact number is fixed by the board of the Swiss Physics Olympiad.

3.3.1.1 Wild-cards

The board may grant few wild-cards for the final round to participants from Liechtenstein, that do not fulfill the standard selection criteria.

3.3.2 Allowed aids

- pen and paper, ruler, triangle ruler and compass
- a simple calculator. (A calculator is allowed if it is not a graphical calculator, its display has no more than three lines, and if its user memory is completely cleared immediately prior to each exam.)
- formularies (books containing formulas) are **not** allowed

3.3.3 Duration and content

The exam has three parts:

- **Experiments:** 150 minutes - generally two experimental problems
- **Short word-problems:** 60 minutes - six short word-problems
- **Long word-problems:** 150 minutes - three long word-problems

The areas covered are defined in the syllabus.

3.4 Selection of international teams

The teams sent to the International Physics Olympiad (IPhO) and the European Physics Olympiad (EuPhO) consist each of a maximum of five members. They are selected based on the results in the final round as follows:

- The IPhO-team consists of the best five participants that are willing to go to the IPhO and fulfill its participation criteria (i.e. are less than 20 years old the 30 June of the year of the IPhO).
- The five members of the EuPhO-team are selected in the following order among the students fulfilling the EuPhO participation criteria:
 - Gold-medalists (up to rank 5), who are not able to go to IPhO.
 - the next best medalists (up to rank 15), who are not going to IPhO and that fulfill the participation criteria of IPhO the following year.
 - the next best medalists (up to rank 15), who are not going to IPhO.
 - if the team is not compete with these criteria, the board may nominate additional participants.
- Participants from Liechtenstein are selected by a representative from Liechtenstein and form a separate team.

Section 4

Preparation camps

4.1 Preparation camp

The preparation camp takes place between the first and the second round and lasts one week.

4.1.1 Participants

Participants qualified for the second round can register for the camp on a first-come first-served basis. There are about 70 places available. If there are free places left other participants of the first round may be allowed to participate.

4.1.2 Content

- Lectures, with focus on theory
- Time to solve exercises
- Excursion

4.2 EPFL training camp

The EPFL training camp takes place between the second and the final round and lasts for 3-4 days.

4.2.1 Participants

All participants qualified for the final round can attend the EPFL training camp. If there are free places left other participants of the second round may be allowed to participate.

4.2.2 Content

- Lectures, with focus on experiments and advanced topics which were not covered in the preparation camp
- Electronics laboratory
- Laboratory for training on former Olympiad experiments

4.3 Team training

After the final round there are theoretical and experimental trainings offered for the IPhO and EuPhO teams.