

Guidelines

Guidelines for observers of incoming countries

Some introductory explanations

The regulations cover nearly everything concerning the IChO. You can download them from the website of the current or the previous organizer or from the website of the IChO International Information Center (www.icho.sk). You should read them in advance.

The International Jury (in short Jury) consists of the mentors of all participating delegations. Besides many other roles, the Jury is in charge of the actual competition. (See Regulations §§ 6 and 7). A meeting of the Jury is called a Jury session.

The Steering Committee is a group of 10 experienced persons who have been head mentors for a long time or were appointed chairs of the previous, the current and future Olympiads. The Steering Committee coordinates the long term work involved in the organisation of the IChO. (See Regulations, § 8) During the Olympiad the Steering Committee will invite you to report about the situation in your country relating to your own National Chemistry Olympiad.

The Scientific Board is the group of professors and scientists who created the problems for the current IChO. It is set up by the host and is also responsible for the marking of the student's examinations. The members are called "authors".

(See Regulations, §§ 10 to 14))

It is up to you to get a visa and a health insurance for the host country.

Day 1

Arrival and Registration

At the registration you get a name tag and a bag with informational material including the timetable of the IChO where all events are scheduled.

Day 2

Opening ceremony, laboratory inspection and practical problems

After the opening ceremony mentors and observers are separated from the students. Mentors and observers inspect the laboratories and check that their students have all the equipment and chemicals they are supposed to have. The mentors then get the draft version of the practical problems (problems + the expected solutions + marking scheme).

The mentors check the problems and have the opportunity to talk to the authors individually. You should visit this meeting to appreciate how misunderstanding can be cleared, how mistakes are corrected and how the problems are improved. This procedure saves a lot of time in the following session.

1st Jury session, which can last until deep in the night. The practical problems (problems + the expected solutions + marking scheme) are discussed in detail and perhaps improved until the final version is agreed by voting.

Day 3

This is the day set aside for translation. It is a very busy day for mentors who have to translate the English version of the practical problems into the language of their students. You should visit the venue of translation and observe the translation work. The English speaking countries are the first to finish their laying-out of the problems, take the opportunity to talk to them.

This is a day with a great amount of time for your private use.

Day 4

This is a morning of excursion for the mentors and observers while the students perform the practical test. At noon the mentors receive the copies of the theoretical problems (problems + the expected solutions + marking scheme). Now the same procedure as on day 2 happens, the mentors study the exams, meet the authors and discuss the problems (problems + the expected solutions + marking scheme) in the 2nd Jury session until an agreement is reached.

You are expected to visit not only the 2nd Jury Session but also the meeting with the authors.

Day 5

Translation of the theoretical problems in the same way as on day 3.

There is again a lot of time for your private use.

Day 6

The students take the theoretical test. Mentors and observers are really free to do what they want. The organizer offers sightseeing tours.

In the evening there is a reunion event, where the students meet their mentors with whom they have had no contact since day 2.

Day 7

In the morning the mentors get the copies of the students' exams. They mark them following the marking schemes which the Jury approved in the 1st and 2nd Jury sessions.

As this process does not last the whole day the host may offer an excursion.

In the evening: the 3rd Jury session (so called business meeting): Discussion about any general problems of the IChO and decisions if necessary. Election of members of the Steering Committee. The host announces how the arbitration is organized.

Day 8

Arbitration between the marking of the authors and that of the mentors. The marks of the authors are handed out to the head mentors before arbitration. The mentors are able to detect differences in the grading. Then each delegation has about

one hour time to talk to the authors and agree the marking. (They will not intervene if the authors give more points than expected!)

(See Regulations § 14))

Having more than 60 participating countries this procedure lasts the whole day. In the past observers of incoming countries often joined one author and followed the procedure for a long time.

Before the 4th Jury session the head mentors receive the final marking of their students to check whether the carryover of the points to the computer files is correct.

In the evening: 4th Jury Session: Decision about the allocation of the medals and other general topics (continuation of the business meeting).

Day 9

Closing ceremony followed by a farewell party.

Day 10

Departure

This guidelines were prepared by Wolfgang Hampe (Germany) in 2009.

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