

Schools Geology Challenge 2020

Rules for participating schools

1. The Competition

The Schools Geology Challenge is a competition for students of Geology and Geography aged 16-18, organised by the Geological Society of London (GSL). Schools are invited to enter a team of up to 6 students, who compete to win a geological specimen trophy and a year's Fellowship to the Society.

The competition is held in two stages, both of which are assessed by a panel of judges from Geoscience professions. Students first enter a Regional Heat, organised by one of GSL's Regional Groups. Heats are usually hosted by a participating school, though this will be arranged between the Regional Group and local schools. Winners of the Heats progress to the Final, which is held at GSL's headquarters in Burlington House, Piccadilly, on **Thursday 19th March 2020**. Travel expenses are offered for journeys to the final (see section 4).

Regional Heats

For the Heats, students must produce an A1 size poster, on a geological theme, give a presentation on the same topic, and participate in a geology-themed quiz round set by the Society in collaboration with A-Level geology examiners. If for any reason a school is unable to compete in a Regional Heat, but would still like to take part in the Challenge, please contact the Geological Society at rose.want@geolsoc.org.uk and an alternative option will be arranged. Marks for each section are weighted as follows;

- Poster – 25%
- Presentation - 50%
- Quiz – 25%

Final at Burlington House

The Final will be held at Burlington House, Piccadilly, as a full day event on 19th March 2020. In a change for 2020, for the final teams will take part in a geological problem solving activity as well as a quiz. They **do not** deliver their presentation from the Regional Heat. Teams progressing to the Final will receive further information about the problem solving activity once their attendance at the Final is confirmed.

Marks from the judges are weighted as follows:

- Poster – 30%
- Problem solving exercise – 40%
- Quiz – 30%

2. Rules and Guidelines

Poster Rules

1. The topic for the poster must be the same as the presentation. The School chooses the theme, which can be anything related to geology. Previous themes have included: *Yellowstone; The Geology of an iPad; The Titanoboa's Tale*

2. All posters should be A1 size (594 x 841mm) and can be landscape or portrait. Since printing A1 sheets can be expensive, we accept posters put together from 4xA3 sheets or as sections glued onto an A1-sized sheet.
3. Posters should include images or figures with figure captions.
4. Please include your school name on the poster
5. Text should be broken up into segments with clear titles. These may include an abstract, intro, current research of the topic, importance of topics, conclusion/implications, or any others you feel are appropriate.
6. Key references (maximum 5) should be included on the poster. These should be written in a banner or in a dedicated text box at the bottom of the poster.

7. Posters will be marked based on the following criteria:

Level of technical content
Understanding of technical content
Use of graphics/images
Layout of information
Memorability

Presentation Rules

1. Presentations must be no longer than 6 minutes; marks will be deducted if a presentation exceeds 6 minutes. During a presentation, teams will be told when they have 1 minute remaining.
2. Judges will ask questions after the presentation.
3. Not all members of a group have to present the talk, but at least 2 must do so.
4. A final slide with key references (maximum 5) is required
5. Presentations will be marked based on the following criteria:

Level of technical content
Understanding of technical content
Structure/clarity
Delivery by the speakers
Handling of Judge's questions

Problem Solving activity and Quiz

Both the activity and the quiz will have a geoscience focus, and all students in a team are required to take part.

Hints and tips!

Poster

- Use lots of colour and images

- Text should be brief but informative. Try to avoid long paragraphs and consider using tools like bullet points to break up the text.
- Make sure the text isn't too small to read easily; we would recommend using size 14 as a minimum (except for image captions).
- Pictures or figures can give a lot of information in place of text, so use them to break up paragraphs. Ensure they have a purpose – they could give the reader new information or highlight a point made in the text.
- Make sure you define the size of the poster page prior to working on it.

Presentations

- Make your presentation attractive! Ensure it uses lots of colour and contains many clear images.
- The text in the slides only serves as a guide to the audience; you should expand on the text and try not to read directly from the slides - bullet points may be useful for this.
- You can use any slideshow software to make the presentation, but please test it on a Windows computer before the event.
- Use arrows or circles to highlight areas of an image or diagram that you want your audience to focus on.
- The time limit of 6 minutes is strict! It is highly recommended that you practice the presentation and time it to ensure it falls safely within the 6 minutes.
- Try not to have too many slides; the audience should have at least 20 seconds to view each slide.

3. Prizes

The winners of the Final will all receive a year of Fellowship to the society and a trophy for their school; the Fellowship will be as Junior Candidate Fellows or Candidate Fellows, depending on the students' year group. All finalists will receive a certificate.

4. Expenses

For teams that progress to the Final, travel expenses will be provided for **6 students and 1 teacher**, up to the value of **£700 per team**. Extra students and teachers are welcome to join the team heading to the final, however their travel must be at the school's expense.

Please book train tickets as far in advance as possible to minimise the cost of your claim and retain all receipts, as proof of purchase will be required. Please try to keep all travel costs to a minimum as we are a non-profit organisation.