School Connect Online

SCO INTERNATIONAL PHYSICS OLYMPIAD

RULES & REGULATIONS

SCO IPhO | Grade 8 to Grade 12

A global online Physics Olympiad rulebook for students, teachers, parents, and schools.

Designed for globally benchmarked Physics Olympiad participation with SCO's three-cycle exam model, online integrity rules

- Grade 8 to Grade 12 online Physics Olympiad pathway
- three exam cycles: Spring, Summer, and Winter across the year
- multiple official online date slots for global school calendars
- rules aligned to theory, experimental thinking, SI units, data interpretation, and ethical conduct

Physics	Global Rules	Online Exam	Integrity	SCO IPhO
Theory	Measurement	SI Units	Data Skills	Proctoring

SCO IPhO Rules & Regulations

This document defines the visitor-facing academic, administrative, online-exam, conduct and result rules for the SCO International Physics Olympiad (SCO IPhO), conducted for Grade 8 to Grade 12 students across global school systems.

Positioning and academic honesty note

SCO IPhO is a School Connect Olympiad online Physics Olympiad and preparation benchmark inspired by global Physics Olympiad standards. It is not the official International Physics Olympiad selection process unless a school, country or authority separately recognizes it for its own local pathway. SCO IPhO uses online assessment, analytics and student-friendly pedagogy to build IPhO-style physics readiness at scale.

1. Global Academic Alignment

The rules are designed around the global spirit of Physics Olympiad education: conceptual understanding, mathematical modeling, experimental reasoning, measurement discipline, problem-solving creativity and ethical competition.

Global IPhO-style principle	SCO IPhO online adaptation
Theory and problem-solving	Grade-wise questions test concepts, multi-step reasoning, numerical interpretation, diagrams, graphs and physical assumptions.
Experimental examination culture	Online tasks include measurement reading, data tables, uncertainty, graphs, virtual-lab scenarios and experiment-design reasoning.
SI-unit discipline	Students must use correct units, dimensions and significant figures wherever numerical or written answers require them.
Secondary-school physics scope	The syllabus progresses from foundational Grade 8 physics to senior mechanics, electromagnetism, optics, waves and modern physics.
Creativity over rote speed	Questions should reward understanding, method and reasoning rather than memorized formula substitution only.
Fair evaluation	Marking, ranking, certificates and awards are governed by published rules, result verification and SCO's official result system.

2. Eligibility and Participation

Rule Area	SCO IPhO Regulation
Eligible grades	Students enrolled in Grade 8, Grade 9, Grade 10, Grade 11 or Grade 12.
Eligible institutions	Schools, learning centres, registered institutions and recognized home-school pathways may participate according to SCO registration rules.
Identity verification	Students must use their registered name, grade, school/institution and official SCO account details. Mismatched or false identity information may lead to hold, correction, cancellation or disqualification.
One student account	Each student should use one authenticated SCO student profile for exam access, result mapping and certificate generation. Duplicate or shared accounts may be reviewed.
Grade correctness	The student must appear in the correct grade-level paper. Grade mismatch must be corrected before the official exam where possible.
Parent/school consent	For minors, registration implies parent/guardian/school permission to participate in the online exam environment.

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3. SCO Three-Cycle Exam System

SCO IPhO is conducted under three active cycles each year so that global schools can align participation with different academic calendars. All dates are shown in DD MMM YYYY format.

Cycle	Exam / Participation Window	Result Publish Date	Status
2026 SPRING	01 Jan 2026 to 31 Mar 2026	30 Apr 2026	Active
2026 SUMMER	01 Apr 2026 to 31 Jul 2026	31 Aug 2026	Active
2026-27 WINTER	01 Aug 2026 to 31 Dec 2026	28 Feb 2027	Active
2027 SPRING	01 Jan 2027 to 31 Mar 2027	30 Apr 2027	Active
2027 SUMMER	01 Apr 2027 to 31 Jul 2027	31 Aug 2027	Active
2027-28 WINTER	01 Aug 2027 to 31 Dec 2027	29 Feb 2028	Active

Date-format rule

All public documents should use the same readable date format: DD MMM YYYY, for example 03 Jan 2026. Raw database timestamps must not be used on visitor-facing pages.

4. Official Online Date Slots

The SCO IPhO plan data supports multiple date slots for the same grade and subject. Students and schools should select an available slot in the portal and follow the final admit-card/login instructions. The portal confirmation always prevails over any static document if operational updates are made.

Public Schedule Cycle	Applicable Grades	Online Date Slots
2026 SPRING	Grade 8 to Grade 12	03 Jan 2026, 11 Jan 2026, 24 Jan 2026, 07 Feb 2026, 08 Feb 2026, 28 Feb 2026, 07 Mar 2026, 08 Mar 2026, 28 Mar 2026
2026 SUMMER	Grade 8 to Grade 12	04 Apr 2026, 12 Apr 2026, 25 Apr 2026, 02 May 2026, 10 May 2026, 23 May 2026, 06 Jun 2026, 14 Jun 2026, 27 Jun 2026, 04 Jul 2026, 12 Jul 2026, 25 Jul 2026
2026-27 WINTER	Grade 8 to Grade 12	04 Sep 2026, 12 Sep 2026, 20 Sep 2026, 02 Oct 2026, 10 Oct 2026, 18 Oct 2026, 06 Nov 2026, 14 Nov 2026, 15 Nov 2026, 04 Dec 2026, 12 Dec 2026, 20 Dec 2026
2027 SPRING	Grade 8 to Grade 12	Cycle window active: 01 Jan 2027 to 31 Mar 2027. Detailed slots to be confirmed in the SCO portal.
2027 SUMMER	Grade 8 to Grade 12	Cycle window active: 01 Apr 2027 to 31 Jul 2027. Detailed slots to be confirmed in the SCO portal.
2027-28 WINTER	Grade 8 to Grade 12	Cycle window active: 01 Aug 2027 to 31 Dec 2027. Detailed slots to be confirmed in the SCO portal.

5. Registration, Exam Slot and Admit Card Rules

1. Registration must be completed through the official SCO school/student process before the declared deadline for the selected cycle or date slot.
2. Students must check the selected Olympiad, subject, grade, exam date and student details before the exam day.
3. Exam date changes are allowed only if the SCO portal, school coordinator or support process permits rescheduling before the lock date.
4. A student must not transfer an exam slot, credential, login link or account to another person.
5. Admit card, login credentials, date, time, duration and proctoring requirements must be checked before the exam.
6. Schools should upload/verify student data early so that students receive preparation access, mock/practice access where applicable, and exam-day instructions.

6. Exam Format and Academic Scope

Area	SCO IPhO Rule / Guidance
Mode	Online exam through the SCO platform. Schools may run supervised lab/computer sessions where suitable.
Question style	Grade-wise objective, numerical, assertion-reasoning, diagram, graph, data interpretation, case-study and experimental-thinking questions.
Coverage	Grade 8 to 12 syllabus aligned with school progression and global Physics Olympiad readiness.
Higher-order skills	For senior grades, questions may combine mechanics, waves, thermodynamics, electricity, magnetism, optics and modern physics.
Language	Visitor-facing and global rules are in English. Translations may be provided only when officially supported.
Rough work	Students should solve using diagrams, assumptions, equations and unit checks even where only an answer is submitted online.
Submission	Answers must be submitted within the portal before the timer ends. Auto-submit rules may apply at exam end.

7. IPhO-Style Experimental Thinking Rules

Because SCO IPhO is an online global Olympiad, experimental readiness is assessed through safe, school-friendly and online-compatible formats. Students should be comfortable with measurement instruments, data representation and uncertainty even when no physical apparatus is used during the online test.

Skill	Expected Student Behaviour
Measurement reading	Read scales, vernier/caliper-style visuals, multimeter-style displays, timers, thermometers, lenses and circuit diagrams when shown.
Data tables	Identify quantities, units, independent/dependent variables and missing or inconsistent data.
Graphs	Interpret slope, intercept, trend, anomaly, area under curve and proportional relationships.
Uncertainty	Recognize uncertainty, error sources, significant figures and whether a result is physically reasonable.
Experimental design	Choose relevant variables, controls and apparatus logic from a given scenario.
Safety	Follow general laboratory safety rules; unsafe experiments or risky behaviour are not part of the online examination.

8. Permitted and Prohibited Materials

Category	Allowed / Not Allowed
Calculator	Only calculators or on-screen tools specifically permitted by SCO instructions may be used. If the portal disallows external calculators, students must follow that instruction.
Reference materials	No textbooks, notes, formula sheets, search engines, AI tools, messaging apps, solution websites or external help unless explicitly provided inside the exam interface.
Devices	Use the registered exam device. Secondary phones, tablets, smart watches, earphones or extra screens are not allowed unless approved for accessibility or school supervision.
Rough paper	Allowed only if exam instructions permit it. It should be blank before the exam and may be checked in supervised settings.
Communication	No communication with parents, teachers, peers or online communities during the exam window.
Screenshots / recording	Copying, photographing, recording, downloading or sharing questions is prohibited.

9. Online Exam Environment Rules

- Use a stable internet connection, charged device and supported browser before the exam starts.
- Join the exam from a quiet, well-lit location with no unauthorized help or materials nearby.
- Do not open other tabs, applications, communication tools or external websites during the exam.
- Do not refresh, close, switch devices or change browser settings unless instructed by SCO support.
- Read all exam instructions, timer rules, section rules and submit rules before starting.
- Technical issues should be reported through official SCO support or the school coordinator, with evidence where required.

10. Academic Integrity and Proctoring Rules

Integrity Area	Rule
Independent work	Every answer must be the student's own work. Collaboration, impersonation, copied answers or external assistance are violations.
Proctoring signals	The system may monitor behaviour such as login session, tab switching, inactivity, repeated exits, device/session anomalies or other integrity indicators depending on the configured policy.
Identity concerns	Mismatched identity, suspicious login, shared credentials or duplicate sessions may result in verification hold or review.
Question security	Questions, images, cases, diagrams and answer choices are confidential and must not be copied or redistributed.
Violation response	SCO may issue warning, score hold, partial penalty, full disqualification, account review or school notification based on severity and evidence.
Evidence standard	Final action should be based on recorded exam/proctor evidence, system logs, review notes and fair opportunity for clarification where required.

Student-facing integrity display

Raw technical logs should not be shown to students. If an integrity review affects the result, the student-facing report should explain the category, timing evidence, risk band and penalty calculation in simple language.

11. Scoring, Results, Ranking and Certificates

Area	Rule / Governance
Scoring	Marks are awarded according to the official question paper, answer key and marking scheme. Negative marking, partial marking or section weighting applies only if declared for that paper.
Result finalization	Scores may remain provisional until integrity checks, technical reviews and result processing are complete.
Ranking	Rankings may be class-wise, subject-wise, country-wise, national, international, school-wise or cycle-wise depending on the result report policy.
Tie handling	Tie rules may consider marks, accuracy, time, section performance or published SCO award policy. The declared policy for the result cycle prevails.
Certificates	Participation, merit, medal or achievement certificates may be issued based on official result status, award thresholds and eligibility rules.
Result publish date	Cycle-wise publish dates are shown in the official calendar. Operational updates may be announced through SCO portal or school communication.
Correction requests	Name, school, grade or result-data correction requests must be raised within the announced correction window with supporting evidence.

12. Appeals, Technical Review and Rescheduling

1. A technical issue must be reported as soon as possible with student details, date, device/browser information and screenshots if available.
2. A completed and submitted paper generally cannot be repeated unless SCO confirms a platform-side issue or approved exceptional case.
3. A missed exam may be rescheduled only if another official date slot is available and the student/school is eligible under SCO rules.
4. Answer-key or scoring review requests must be submitted within the official review window; frivolous or repeated claims may be rejected.
5. Integrity review appeals must be made through the official process and should include a clear explanation from the student/school.
6. The final decision after review rests with SCO Olympiad academic and operations authority.

13. Accessibility and Global Inclusion

SCO IPhO is designed for global participation. The system should support fair access for schools across regions while preserving exam integrity.

- Schools should inform SCO early about students who need reasonable accommodations.
- Approved accommodations may include timing support, accessibility-friendly instructions or supervised special arrangements, subject to policy and feasibility.
- Students should not use unauthorized assistance under the name of accommodation; support must be officially approved.
- SCO should communicate exam instructions clearly for international schools, different academic calendars and varying technology environments.
- The rules encourage gender diversity, inclusive participation and transparent academic recognition.

14. Responsibilities of Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Responsibilities
Students	Prepare honestly, verify exam details, follow timer/proctoring rules, avoid unauthorized help and submit answers on time.
Parents / Guardians	Support readiness, ensure a fair environment, avoid helping during the exam and guide students toward ethical participation.
Teachers	Guide syllabus preparation, emphasize reasoning and measurement skills, and help students understand exam-day instructions.
Schools	Verify registrations, coordinate exam slots, communicate instructions, support supervised arrangements and maintain fairness.
SCO Olympiad	Provide rules, platform access, exam schedule, result governance, certificate processing, support and integrity review.

15. Disqualification and Serious Misconduct

SCO may disqualify or hold a result when there is clear evidence of serious rule violation. The action should be proportionate to the severity, evidence and student history.

- Impersonation, account sharing or using another person to attempt the exam.
- Using phones, messaging apps, AI tools, search engines, textbooks or unauthorized notes during the exam.
- Coordinated cheating between students, parents, schools, teachers or external helpers.

- Tampering with the exam system, proctoring controls, browser restrictions or network logs.
- Repeated technical misuse, false claims or fraudulent documentation.

16. Grade-wise Academic Rule: Syllabus Boundaries

SCO IPhO uses a grade-wise syllabus so that students are assessed fairly at their learning stage while being gradually introduced to global Physics Olympiad reasoning. Questions may connect multiple concepts inside the relevant grade band.

Grade 8 Syllabus Boundary

Grade 8: Force and Pressure; Friction; Sound; Chemical Effects of Electric Current; Some Natural Phenomena; Light; Stars and the Solar System.

Grade 9 Syllabus Boundary

Grade 9: Motion; Force and Laws of Motion; Gravitation; Work, Energy and Power; Sound.

Grade 10 Syllabus Boundary

Grade 10: Reflection of Light; The Human Eye and the Colourful World; Electricity; Magnetic Effects of Electric Current; Sources of Energy; Refraction of Light.

Grade 11 Syllabus Boundary

Grade 11: Mathematics in Physics; Physical World and Measurement; Motion in a Straight Line; Motion in a Plane; Laws of Motion; Work, Energy and Power; System of Particles and Rotational Motion; Gravitation; Mechanical Properties of Solids; Mechanical Properties of Fluids; Thermal Properties of Matter; Thermodynamics; Kinetic Theory of Gases; Oscillations; Waves.

Grade 12 Syllabus Boundary

Grade 12: Electrostatics; Current Electricity; Moving Charges and Magnetism; Magnetism and Matter; Electromagnetic Induction; Alternating Current; Electromagnetic Waves; Ray Optics and Optical Instruments; Wave Optics; Dual Nature of Radiation and Matter; Atoms; Nuclei; Semiconductor Electronics; Communication Systems.

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17. Detailed Syllabus Appendix

The following class-wise syllabus should be used by schools and students to plan preparation. It also helps ensure transparent question-setting boundaries for the SCO IPhO online exam.

Grade 8 Physics Syllabus

Chapter No.	Chapter Title	Key Learning Outcomes
1	Force and Pressure	Definitions, SI units, pressure in fluids, applications.
2	Friction	Types, laws of friction, effects on motion, reduction methods.
3	Sound	Wave properties, pitch, loudness, reverberation, uses.
4	Chemical Effects of Electric Current	Electroplating, electrolysis, applications in daily life.
5	Some Natural Phenomena	Earthquakes, lightning, auroras — causes and safety.
6	Light	Rectilinear propagation, shadows, applications in optics.
7	Stars and the Solar System	Constellations, planetary motions, basic astrophysical facts.

Grade 9 Physics Syllabus

Chapter No.	Chapter Title	Key Learning Outcomes
1	Motion	Distance vs. displacement, speed, velocity, acceleration.
2	Force and Laws of Motion	Newton's laws, inertia, applications in everyday contexts.
3	Gravitation	Universal law, acceleration due to gravity, orbital motion.
4	Work, Energy and Power	Work done, kinetic and potential energy, power calculations.
5	Sound	Wave properties revisited, Doppler effect, applications.

Grade 10 Physics Syllabus

Chapter No.	Chapter Title	Key Learning Outcomes
1	Reflection of Light	Laws of reflection, plane and spherical mirrors, image formation.
2	The Human Eye and the Colourful World	Eye structure, defects, corrective lenses, dispersion of light.
3	Electricity	Ohm's law, series and parallel circuits, heating effects.
4	Magnetic Effects of Electric Current	Magnetic fields, electromagnetic induction, applications.
5	Sources of Energy	Conventional vs. renewable sources, basic power generation.
6	Refraction of Light	Snell's law, prisms, lenses, total internal reflection.

Grade 11 Physics Syllabus

Chapter No.	Chapter Title	Key Learning Outcomes
1	Mathematics in Physics	Vector algebra, calculus basics for physics applications.
2	Physical World and Measurement	Units, dimensions, error analysis, significant figures.
3	Motion in a Straight Line	Kinematics equations, graphical analysis.
4	Motion in a Plane	Projectile motion, vector components.

Chapter No.	Chapter Title	Key Learning Outcomes
5	Laws of Motion	In-depth study of Newton's laws, dynamics of systems.
6	Work, Energy and Power	Work-energy theorem, power in mechanical systems.
7	System of Particles and Rotational Motion	Centre of mass, torque, moment of inertia, angular momentum.
8	Gravitation	Gravitational potential, field, motion of planets.
9	Mechanical Properties of Solids	Stress-strain, elastic constants, applications.
10	Mechanical Properties of Fluids	Pressure in fluids, viscosity, Bernoulli's theorem.
11	Thermal Properties of Matter	Heat, temperature, thermal expansion, calorimetry.
12	Thermodynamics	Laws of thermodynamics, heat engines, entropy.
13	Kinetic Theory of Gases	Molecular interpretation, Maxwell-Boltzmann distribution.
14	Oscillations	Simple harmonic motion, pendulum, energy in oscillations.
15	Waves	Types, superposition, standing waves, sound applications.

Grade 12 Physics Syllabus

Chapter No.	Chapter Title	Key Learning Outcomes
1	Electrostatics	Coulomb's law, electric field and potential, Gauss's law.
2	Current Electricity	Drift velocity, resistance, Kirchhoff's laws, meters.
3	Moving Charges and Magnetism	Motion in magnetic fields, cyclotron, magnetic force.
4	Magnetism and Matter	Magnetic properties, earth's magnetism, hysteresis, applications.
5	Electromagnetic Induction	Faraday's and Lenz's laws, eddy currents, transformers.
6	Alternating Current	AC generation, RMS values, power factor, LC circuits.
7	Electromagnetic Waves	Spectrum, properties, uses in communication.
8	Ray Optics and Optical Instruments	Lens formula, magnification, microscopes, telescopes.
9	Wave Optics	Interference, diffraction, polarization.
10	Dual Nature of Radiation and Matter	Photoelectric effect, de Broglie hypothesis.
11	Atoms	Atomic models, energy levels, spectra.
12	Nuclei	Radioactivity, nuclear reactions, binding energy.
13	Semiconductor Electronics	PN junctions, diodes, transistors, logic gates.
14	Communication Systems	Modulation, bandwidth, digital vs. analog signals, satellite communication.

18. Exam-Day Checklist

Checklist Item	Required Action
Before exam day	Confirm grade, date, time, login credentials, device, browser, internet and exam instructions.
30 minutes before	Charge device, close other apps, keep only permitted materials, sit in a quiet place and log in early if allowed.
During exam	Read questions carefully, manage time, do rough work, use SI units, avoid tab switching and submit within time.

Checklist Item	Required Action
After exam	Wait for submission confirmation, do not discuss or share questions, and check result publication timeline.
If technical issue occurs	Record evidence and contact official SCO/school support immediately.

19. Publication and Update Rules

- The SCO portal and official communication are the final authority for operational date/time changes.
- This rules document may be updated for future cycles, security requirements, result policies or academic improvements.
- Schools should use the latest version of the document from the official SCO website or portal.
- Any local school instructions must remain consistent with SCO integrity, fairness and data privacy rules.
- If any rule conflicts with the portal admit card or official cycle notice, the latest official SCO notice should be followed.

20. Global Benchmark References Used

Reference	How it is reflected in SCO IPhO Rules
Official IPhO Statutes & Syllabus	Used for global benchmark principles: theory, experimental skills, SI units, graph/data skills, measurement uncertainty, fairness and academic integrity.
SCO IPhO Cycle and Plan Data	Used for three-cycle governance, multiple online date slots and visitor-facing date format.
SCO Grade 8-12 Physics Syllabus Input	Used for class-wise academic boundaries and learning progression.