

### A. General Information

1. The official NAQT rules are maintained at <https://www.naqt.com/rules/>  
This version is current as of August 1, 2023.
2. These rules are intended (but not required) for use by tournaments using questions provided by NAQT.
3. Tournaments not using NAQT questions may use these rules at no charge provided that...
  - a. The rules are identified as NAQT rules.
  - b. Any variations from these rules are announced before the tournament begins.
  - c. The tournament is not advertised as using NAQT questions.
4. If you would like to use these rules under other circumstances, please write to [naqt@naqt.com](mailto:naqt@naqt.com).

### B. Tournament Officials

1. Each tournament will have a single **tournament director**, who may, at their discretion, designate agents or committees to make rulings. All decisions of the tournament director and their designees are final.
2. Each game will have a **moderator**. The moderator will read the questions, enforce time limits, supervise the clock, determine the correctness of responses, award and deduct points, and otherwise enforce the rules of competition.
3. Other officials may be provided to assist the moderator with their duties including, but not limited to, keeping a running score, recognizing players that signal, and supervising the clock.
4. The moderator may consult with other game officials or tournament officials at any time to determine the correctness of an answer or the proper application of these rules. If the moderator and other game officials disagree, the decision rests with the moderator. In some cases, a moderator's decision may be **protested**, leading to review by the tournament director.
5. The tournament director may consult with game officials, outside experts, governing bodies, NAQT itself, or other relevant authorities to ensure a properly run tournament and proper adjudication of protests and anomalous situations.
6. If unexpected circumstances make it impossible to follow these rules (e.g., computer failure makes it impossible to provide supplemental questions or a medical emergency requires a team to leave in the middle of a game), the tournament director may adopt an alternative course of action that best embodies the goals of these rules and the spirit of the competition.
7. While the clock is stopped (see Rule F.8) or at the end of a game, players and coaches may ask game officials to announce the score, verify the correctness of the score, verify that a buzzer system is working, clarify a rule, or otherwise answer questions pertinent to the competition. As an exception, a clock stoppage under Rule F.8.d or Rule F.12 is not an opportunity for such matters. Game officials will not announce the score aloud at other times, though it may be available by other means (e.g., through an electronic scoreboard).

### C. Equipment

1. Games should be played with a **buzzer system**, electronic equipment that determines which player signaled first. Each individual player should have an independent **signaling device**, such as a button, to activate the system. If no working buzzer system is available, tournament officials may require players to signal by other means (e.g., slapping the table).
2. In the absence of a fully functional buzzer system, teams may agree to use a partially working buzzer system. If either team objects, the game will be played or resumed without a buzzer system.

3. If a game is played without a fully functional buzzer system, a designated official (who might be the moderator) will be the final judge of which player signaled first. These determinations are not protestable.
4. If a player objects to using a buzzer system because of religious or other reasons, the tournament director may choose to allow an alternate method of signaling for that player. A designated official (who might be the moderator) will be the final judge of which player signaled first. These determinations are not protestable.
5. Each player is responsible for monitoring whether their own signaling device is operating properly throughout a game.
6. If a buzzer system malfunctions, only the current tossup or the just completed tossup can be replayed, subject to the moderator's determination that the malfunction affected play of that question. This determination is not protestable. This rule applies even if the buzzer system was not officially tested prior to the beginning of the game.
7. If, while a question is being read, a player believes a previously working buzzer system has malfunctioned, they may signal in an alternate way (e.g., loudly saying "buzz"). The moderator may accept such an alternate signal (and thus permit the player to give a response) if the moderator believes the system did malfunction and that the player was, in fact, the first (or only) player to signal. This determination is not protestable.
8. If a functioning buzzer system is available and no objection has been raised to its use, a player may only signal by using that buzzer system. That is, alternate methods of signaling may not be adopted on the fly out of convenience or confusion (except in the case of a malfunction of a previously working system as provided for in Rule C.7).
9. If a buzzer system is not properly reset ("cleared") prior to a tossup question, active players or coaches may try to quickly inform the moderator of the situation by saying "clear" or a similar phrase. Such utterances will not be considered illegal conferring (see Rule K.2), and they will not be considered an attempt to signal (see Rule C.7).
10. Games should use a clock clearly visible to both teams, preferably one with an alarm that will sound at the end of the half.

## D. Participants

1. All participants are presumed to be responsible individuals and will be treated as such. Players and schools are responsible for any liability arising from their conduct while at the tournament or while traveling to or from the tournament.
2. A team consists of any number of players who meet all eligibility rules. However, no more than four of a team's players may be actively competing at any one time. Teams may play short, with a minimum of one player.
3. No player may play for two different teams in the course of a single tournament.
4. Each team will designate a **captain** prior to the beginning of each game. The captain's only purpose as required by the rules is to choose the team's answer for a bonus question in the event of a tie in answering, in accordance with Rule H.2. Teams may choose to give additional responsibilities to the captain as long as the additional responsibilities do not contradict these rules. If no explicit designation is made, the moderator may infer the captaincy from team behavior on bonus questions or in other situations. A team may change its captain at any time substitutions are allowed (even if no substitutions are actually made).
5. A team may substitute one or more players at halftime, during a timeout by either team, or before the first overtime question. Players substituted for may re-enter the game at a later opportunity. If a team has fewer than four players, a player may enter the game without replacing another player at those times. In addition, a player may leave the game (without being replaced) at those times (so long as the team still has at least one active player).
6. A **coach** is a person who acts in a recognized advisory role to a particular team. A coach may not be a player for any team in the tournament. A team can have an unlimited number of coaches or no coach, but only one may be designated the official coach prior to each game. A team may change its official coach at halftime, during a timeout, or before the first overtime question. A person may act as a coach, official or otherwise, for any number of teams. If a team has only a single coach or only a single chaperone, that person will be assumed to be the official coach.

## E. Questions

1. Each game uses **tossup** questions worth 10 points each (or 15 points if answered before the power mark), and multiple-answer **bonus** questions worth a total of 30 points each.

2. Whenever a player answers a tossup question correctly, their team earns the chance to immediately hear a bonus question (except in overtime).
3. A **tossup-bonus cycle** consists of the gameplay that begins with the start of a tossup and concludes when either...
  - a. Both teams fail to correctly answer the tossup (having been given the proper opportunity to do so), or
  - b. The bonus earned for answering the tossup is completed. (This does not apply during overtime.)
4. These rules may specify that a replacement question (tossup or bonus) be read to correct some mistake or in the course of resolving a protest.
  - a. If the result of a replacement question (including any points from a bonus question that might be earned) could not change the winner of the game, then the tournament director may (but need not) decide to omit the replacement question.
  - b. If a replacement question is to be read and no unused questions of the proper type remain in the packet or have been provided to the moderator, the moderator shall acquire supplemental question(s) from the tournament director.
  - c. All replacement questions are read off the clock.
  - d. If a bonus question is earned by answering a replacement tossup correctly, that bonus question is not itself considered a replacement question.
  - e. Replacement questions may have additional parameters specifying how many points may be scored or which players or teams may answer them, depending on the situation that led to the replacement question being needed. Such parameters are specified in the portions of these rules covering specific situations that lead to replacement questions being used.
  - f. Each replacement question must be played with the same players that were active for the question being replaced. If one or more of those players are unavailable, they may be omitted. The tournament director may approve replacement players at their discretion.

## F. Time

1. The tournament director may declare that a team has forfeited a game if it fails to appear on time, or if the team is otherwise unable or unwilling to compete in accordance with the tournament's rules.
2. A game consists of two halves. If the score is tied at the end of the game, an overtime period will be played.
  - a. Games at college tournaments, including community college tournaments, will have two 11-minute halves.
  - b. Games at four-year Sectional Championship Tournaments will have two 11-tossup-bonus-cycle halves. These are the only games run under these NAQT Rules, other than some tiebreaker games, that are officially untimed.
  - c. Games at middle school tournaments and tournaments for younger players will have two 9-minute halves.
  - d. All other games (including games at high school tournaments) will use 10-minute halves.
  - e. At the tournament director's discretion, a tournament may use longer halves than those specified in these rules.
3. If all of the tossup questions provided for a game have been read, the game is over, even if time remains on the clock. If a packet anomalously contains fewer questions than intended or if one or more questions were used as replacements for an error earlier in the game, and time remains on the clock after all other questions have been read, then the moderator will acquire additional questions equal to the number missing or replaced and will continue the game until time expires or the additional questions are exhausted. However, if the additional questions (to get to the same number of questions as was intended for a full packet) could not change the winner of the game, the tournament director may (but need not) decide to omit the additional question(s). For example, if the packet includes 24 tossups but only 23 are officially read because a moderator error required that one be replaced, then the 24th tossup may be omitted if the winning team has a lead of greater than 50 points.
4. If all of the bonus questions provided for a game have been exhausted, but a team earns a bonus, the moderator shall acquire a supplemental bonus.
5. The clock starts when the moderator begins reading the first tossup question, and play will be continuous until the end of the half (except in the case of clock stoppages; see Rule F.8).

6. When the clock sounds the end of time, the half or game shall end with the conclusion of the current tossup-bonus cycle. In particular:
  - a. If the moderator has just finished a bonus question or an unanswered tossup question and has not yet begun the next tossup, then the half or game is over. A tossup is considered to have been begun when the first syllable of the actual question is read. Preliminary statements (e.g., "Here's the next tossup" or "Tossup 23") do not count as having started the tossup.
  - b. If the moderator is reading a tossup question, then they shall continue reading it, giving both teams a chance to answer, and their full time allotment to signal. If the tossup is answered correctly, that team will earn a bonus question. If the tossup goes unanswered, then the half or game is over.
  - c. If the moderator is reading a bonus question, then the half or game shall end when that bonus has been completed.
  - d. A team will be read its entire bonus question, even if time expires during the bonus or before the bonus is begun.
7. The team with more points at the end of the game wins. If the score is tied...
  - a. An off-the-clock overtime period consisting of three tossup questions will follow. These tossup questions are scored normally (including power points and interrupt penalties). Bonus questions are not used in overtime. These tossups will be read from the original set (if unread tossups remain) or may be obtained from the tournament director.
  - b. If the score is still tied after three tossups, the moderator will read tossup questions until the score changes. These tossups will be read from the original set (if unread tossups remain) or may be obtained from the tournament director. The game ends immediately if a team receives an interrupt penalty.
8. The clock shall not stop, except...
  - a. At the end of the half.
  - b. When a timeout is called (see Rule F.9).
  - c. When a game official needs to adjudicate a procedural protest or other serious problem; to discipline, warn, or eject a player; to replace a question; to acquire replacement or supplemental questions; to repair or replace malfunctioning game equipment; or to address an external issue interfering with gameplay (e.g., hallway noise or a fire alarm).
  - d. If the moderator needs more than 3 seconds to consult with other game officials or to determine the content or acceptability of a response.
  - e. When participant health or safety is threatened by an emergency situation.
9. Each team has one 30-second timeout per game. Timeouts do not carry over from game to game, nor are teams given additional timeouts in overtime periods.
  - a. Only an active player or official coach may call a timeout. A timeout is called by saying "timeout" or "time."
  - b. A timeout may be called only before the beginning of a tossup question. Once a tossup-bonus cycle has begun, a team cannot call a timeout for the duration of that cycle.
  - c. Game officials will ignore any attempt to call a timeout at any other time, unless they consider such an attempt unsporting behavior.
  - d. Game officials will also ignore any attempt to call a timeout by a team that has already called one. Repeated or disruptive attempts to call additional timeouts may be considered game-delaying tactics and result in warning or ejection.
  - e. If a team wants to stop the clock for any reason other than an emergency or to lodge a protest, it must use its timeout. This includes instances in which the team wants to verify the score or ask a question about the rules. The moderator should interpret requests along these lines as calling for a timeout.
10. The timepiece used by the game officials is the official time.
11. The timeliness with which the clock is started at the beginning of a half or with which it is started and/or stopped at other points in the game is not protestable unless a discrepancy exceeding 5 seconds is alleged.
12. If a player stutters while answering, time shall not be called as long as continuous effort to answer is maintained. If stuttering continues for more than 3 seconds, the moderator shall pause the clock until the player has completed

answering (and resume it to evaluate the answer.) Players who frequently stutter are encouraged to disclose their condition to the tournament director and moderator in advance.

13. Once a player has begun answering, any pause of 1 second ends the response.
14. If the moderator is unable to determine whether an event happened before or after the expiration of time (whether to signal, to begin answering, for a half, or otherwise), or determines that the event was simultaneous with the expiration of time, the issue shall be resolved in favor of the team(s) or player, or in favor of more questions being read. For example, if a moderator determines that a player gave an answer to a question at the same time as the moderator called time, the answer shall be evaluated as if it were given in time. Determinations regarding simultaneity are not protestable.

## G. Tossups

1. A player may signal to answer a tossup question at any point after the moderator has begun reading the question. Only one player per team may signal to answer each tossup question. A player who signals before the question has been read in its entirety is said to have **interrupted** the tossup.
2. When a player has signaled, a game official will **recognize** the player by name, by number, by pointing toward the player, or merely by looking at the player. There is no penalty if a player who has signaled answers before being recognized.
3. If a player signals before the moderator has finished reading the question, the moderator will stop at that point. If the response given is incorrect, the moderator will finish the question for the other team only (if the other team is still eligible to answer the question). The moderator should not reread the entire question, but should resume as close as possible to the point at which the signal occurred.
4. An answer to a tossup must begin within 3 seconds after the player has been recognized. An answer begun after the moderator has said "Time" will be treated as no answer.
5. Players have 3 seconds to signal after the moderator has finished reading the tossup. If the player answers incorrectly, the other team (if it is eligible to answer) will then have 3 more seconds to signal. Some questions may permit more time, which will be noted specifically by the question.
6. **Computation** tossups (marked by text that begins "Pencil and paper ready") have slightly different timing rules:
  - a. Teams have 10 seconds (not 3) to signal after the moderator finishes the question. If the first team signals before the end of the question, the second team will have the full 10 seconds to signal after the reading of the question is completed.
  - b. If the first team signals after the end of the question, the moderator will allow whatever time remained of the initial 10 seconds (or 3 seconds, whichever is greater) for the second team to signal.
  - c. Despite this additional time, players still have only 3 seconds to give their answer after signaling on a computation tossup.
  - d. If a computation tossup specifies a different time limit than 10 seconds, that time limit shall be used instead.
7. Decisions as to whether players have exceeded the allotted time to signal or to answer are made by the moderator and are not protestable.
8. Each tossup question is worth 10 points. In addition, tossups have **power marks** (denoted by an asterisk). A player earns 15 points for a correct answer to a tossup if the player signals before the moderator has completed the first syllable after the mark. The moment of judgment is when the player signals, not when the moderator stops reading. Ties between the player and the moderator are decided in favor of the player. The determination of whether a tie occurred is not protestable, and the effect on the game of a moderator failing to stop reading immediately is not protestable.
9. There is a 5-point **interrupt penalty** ("neg five" or "minus five") if the first team interrupts a tossup with an incorrect response. A subsequent incorrect interrupt by the second team does not result in another penalty. The second team may still earn 15 points with a sufficiently early signal. Players may earn 15 points on power tossups at any point in the game, including overtime.
10. If a player who has not signaled gives a response...

- a. If no other player has signaled, the response shall be treated as illegal conferring (see Rule K.2) by the player who gave it.
  - b. If the player who responds is not on the same team as a player who did signal, the moderator will ignore the response (even if it is correct), and will recognize the player who actually signaled. Only that player will have a chance to respond, as the non-signaler has disqualified their team on that tossup question by illegal conferral (see Rule K.2).
  - c. If the player who responds is a teammate of the player who did signal, and the responses are given simultaneously, the moderator will ignore the player who did not signal and evaluate the response from the player who did. No illegal conferring is called in this case, and the determination of simultaneity is not protestable.
  - d. If a teammate of the player who signaled gives a response *before* the player who signaled gives a response, the moderator will treat that response as illegal conferring (see Rule K.2) by the player who had not signaled.
  - e. If a teammate of the player who signaled gives a response *after* the player who signaled gives a response, the moderator will ignore the player who didn't signal and evaluate the response from the player who did. No illegal conferring is called in this case.
  - f. If a player answers because an official incorrectly identified who signaled first, the tossup must be replaced. The determination of whether a moderator correctly or incorrectly identified a player is not protestable.
11. If the moderator inadvertently reveals the answer to a tossup question after one team has given an incorrect response, but before the other team has had a chance to answer, the moderator will read a replacement tossup for the second team only. If neither team has had a chance to answer, the moderator will read a replacement tossup to both teams. The conditions of Rule J.14.j shall apply in terms of when power points and interrupt penalties are available.
  12. Like interrupt penalties for incorrect answers, interrupt penalties assessed for illegal conferring also preclude subsequent interrupt penalties (assessed against the other team). The rule that no more than one 5-point penalty be assessed per tossup question is absolute.
  13. If players on both teams simultaneously confer illegally, the moderator shall not award an interrupt penalty, but shall instead simply treat the tossup question as unanswered. This determination of simultaneity is not protestable.
  14. A moderator may disregard a signal that they deem to be inadvertent (e.g., a signal when all that has been said is "This man" or a signal resulting from a dropped signaling device). The determination of whether a signal is inadvertent is not protestable.
  15. Tossups should be read in order, not skipped or read out of order. However, the effect of reading tossups in the wrong order is not protestable.

## H. Bonuses

1. Each tossup question is paired with a bonus question, which is skipped if the tossup question is not answered correctly. For example, if tossups 1 and 3 are answered correctly but tossup 2 is not, then bonuses 1 and 3 will be read, but bonus 2 will not be read. However, the effect of reading bonuses in the wrong order is not protestable. Unused bonus questions may be used for replacements when called for by the rules.
2. Teams may confer on bonus questions. The moderator will evaluate the first answer they deem clearly directed at them. If conflicting answers are directed at the moderator, the captain will be asked to choose the team's answer. The determination of whether an answer was directed at the moderator is not protestable.
3. A team has 5 seconds to answer each part of a bonus question, unless otherwise noted by the question. After reading each part, the moderator will ask the team for an answer 1 second before time for that part expires (e.g., for a standard 5-second part, the moderator will ask the team for an answer after 4 seconds). Once asked, someone on that team must start answering immediately, with the answer beginning within the allotted total time for the bonus part. If a player chooses to designate another player to answer, such designation does not allow the team any extra time.
4. A team may begin its answer before the end of a bonus question. In such cases, the moderator stops reading when the team begins its answer. If the bonus contains another part, the moderator then asks the next part. This happens even if the part asks for more than one piece of information and the team gives only one; a risk of answering the bonus while it is being read is that a team might miss the fact that it is asking for multiple pieces of information.

5. If the bonus question contains multiple parts, a team may answer only the part that is being read. For this purpose, any “introduction” (e.g., “For 10 points each—given a vice president of the United States, name the president under whom he served.”) is considered to belong to the first part of the question.
6. A team may decline the chance to answer an entire bonus question, or the remaining parts of a bonus question, if any player clearly directs at the moderator the statement “We pass the rest of the bonus,” “No answer for the entire bonus,” or a similar declaration that explicitly refers to multiple parts. In such a case, the moderator should stop reading immediately, award any points earned on parts that were heard, and begin the next tossup question. In this case the moderator should not read the correct answers to the skipped parts.
7. If a bonus question calls for multiple answers, the response must be given as a continuous list. Any pause of 1 second ends the response. The moderator will not prompt a team to complete a partial response.
8. The following remedy is available for several situations in which a bonus is to be replaced: A new bonus will be played. However, if at least one part of the original bonus had been answered and evaluated without problems (or declined under Rule H.6), the team may not earn more or fewer points on the replacement bonus than would have been possible with the completion of the original bonus. For example, if a team earns 10 points total on the first two parts of a bonus before the moderator botches the third part, then the team will play a replacement bonus but will receive at least 10 points (even if it actually scores 0 points on the replacement bonus) and no more than 20 points (even if it answers every part of the replacement bonus correctly).
9. If a moderator inadvertently reveals the answer to a part of a bonus before the team has answered, the remedy of Rule H.8 will be applied.
10. If a team receives an anomalous bonus valued at fewer than 30 points, it may request a replacement. If it chooses to keep the lesser valued bonus at the time of play, it will stand. A request for a replacement must be made as soon as it becomes apparent that the bonus is not worth 30 points. The replacement bonus does **not** have minimum or maximum scores, regardless of the team’s performance on the original, anomalous bonus.
11. If a team receives an anomalous bonus valued at more than 30 points, it must be replaced as soon as it becomes apparent that the bonus is not worth 30 points. The replacement bonus does **not** have minimum or maximum scores, regardless of the team’s performance on the original, anomalous bonus.
12. Bonuses are ordinarily paired with tossups, but if the paired bonus is not usable for any reason (e.g., it was already used as a replacement due to protest or error, or bonuses were accidentally read out of order), the moderator will find a bonus to use according to this procedure:
  - a. Use the *first* bonus from *earlier* in the question packet that has not already been used.
  - b. If no such bonus is available, use the *last* bonus from *later* in the question packet that has not already been used.
  - c. If no such bonus is available, acquire supplemental questions from the tournament director.

The moderator may pause the clock to identify the proper bonus to use.

## I. Correct Answers

1. To receive credit, a response must indicate **accurate** (correct) and **precise** (unambiguous) knowledge of the answer. The moderator’s question packet will list acceptable alternate answers. The minimal information for a correct answer is underlined (e.g., **Abraham Lincoln** or **An Inquiry Into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations**).
2. To be considered accurate, a response must generally be compatible with every clue in the question. Some questions may allow alternative answers that are to be considered accurate at various points in the question (e.g., **accept Arthur Wellesley before “Wellesley”**).
3. A moderator may prompt for a clarified response in three cases:
  - a. If a player gives an answer that could be interpreted as compatible with the clues that have been read (in the case of a tossup) or with the entire part (in the case of a bonus), but which is ambiguous, the moderator will prompt by saying something like “more information, please” (e.g., a player says **Roosevelt**, and the answer sought is **Eleanor Roosevelt**).
  - b. If a player gives an answer that is compatible with the clues that have been read (in the case of a tossup) or with the entire part (in the case of a bonus), but which is too general or too specific to be considered precise, the moderator may also prompt. For example, a question beginning “During World War II, the primary target of the

Blitz was..." may have the moderator prompt on responses of **United Kingdom** or **England** if it is looking for **London**. Some responses may be too general to warrant prompting (e.g., a response of **Northern Hemisphere** for a question beginning "This region is home to the Yenets people, and it...").

- c. If a player interrupts a bonus part and gives a response that is equivalent to the answer but which appears in the unheard portion of the clue, they will be prompted. For example, if a bonus part read, "Name this author of *Tom Sawyer* who was born Samuel Clemens" and the player interrupted after "Sawyer" to say **Clemens**, the moderator would prompt.
4. Prompting for a clarified response is governed by these rules:
  - a. The moderator's question packet will list promptable responses. It may also list responses that should not be prompted.
  - b. Unless otherwise noted by the question, the moderator will not state what type of information is sought by the prompt (e.g., it would be inappropriate for the moderator to say "I need a first name.") On a question that seeks multiple answers, however, the moderator should indicate which part of the response is ambiguous (e.g., "I need more on Roosevelt.").
  - c. A moderator may prompt more than once so long as each further response by the player demonstrates additional knowledge that is correct, but still imprecise.
  - d. A player who has been prompted on a tossup question has an additional 3 seconds to provide a revised response.
  - e. A team that has been prompted on a bonus has an additional 3 seconds to provide a revised response. This revised response follows the usual rules for answering a bonus (the moderator will evaluate the first answer they deem clearly directed at them, etc.) except that the moderator will not ask for an answer at the end of the 3-second period; instead, time will be called and the original response counted as incorrect.
5. The moderator will evaluate only the first answer given by a player, except for multiple-answer questions and situations enumerated below.
  - a. Anything a player says following the first response will be ignored unless it is acting to make the first answer more specific. For example, if a player says **Nixon, Watergate**, the moderator will consider only **Nixon**. If a player says **Nixon, Fred**, then the moderator will consider **Fred Nixon**. Similarly, **matter, cold dark**, is treated the same as **cold dark matter**.
  - b. Modifying words before the first noun of a response are considered as one answer with the noun.
  - c. Extraneous information preceding a response is disregarded (e.g., **What is a wombat?** or **They're all Californians**), unless the moderator determines that the extraneous information was given in an unsporting attempt to delay the game, in which case the response is treated as incorrect (in addition to any other penalty for misconduct). Harmless or inadvertent embellishment of responses will not be penalized, so long as the embellishment does not make the response wrong.
6. If a tossup or bonus part has multiple answers, a player may give multiple responses so long as there is at most a 1-second pause in between. Some questions with multiple answers will require all of the responses to be correct for any points to be awarded, others will award points for each correct response. The text of the question will explain how points are to be awarded.
7. In rare cases, an otherwise acceptable answer may be ruled incorrect when it creates ambiguity with another plausible answer (e.g., even though first and last names are almost always sufficient, **John Adams** would not be acceptable—or promptable—for **John Quincy Adams**, as it creates confusion with the full name of his presidential father.)
8. If a player has begun a response but wishes to change it, they may do so if they have not completed any incorrect substantive word. The determination of whether a word is a substantive part of the response and/or has been completed is not protestable. For example, a player may say **Jeffer—Washington** or **This is Jeffer—Washington** or **George Jeffer—Washington** with the result that the moderator disregards **Jeffer** and evaluates **Washington** (for the first two examples) or **George Washington** (for the third example). As a final example, if a player says **Declaration of Inter—Independence**, the moderator would evaluate **Declaration of Independence**.
9. At the end of each tossup question or bonus part, the moderator will read the correct answer if no one correctly answered. The moderator may wait until the end of the half if the answer is long or complicated. If both teams agree, the moderator may be directed to refrain from reading the correct answers. This decision must be made at the

beginning of a half or during a timeout, and may be revoked at the request of either team at halftime or during a timeout.

10. If the moderator determines that a response was given in an unsporting manner (e.g., to delay the game or insult an opponent), the moderator shall issue a warning or ejection to the player and shall also rule the response incorrect.
11. Though not part of the official rules *per se*, NAQT maintains, as a separate document, Correctness Guidelines that define “accurate and precise answers” in several specific contexts (e.g., real people, fictional characters, chemical elements). NAQT questions will be written in accordance with these guidelines, and protests should be resolved using them as guidance.

## J. Protests

1. A **protest** is a request for clarification and (if necessary) correction of an error. The following are appropriate subject matter for protests:
  - a. The proper evaluation of a response (e.g., “The response ‘**CSS Virginia**’ should have been accepted.”)
  - b. The correctness of the clues in a question (e.g., “There was no correct answer to that question because the clues were contradictory.”)
  - c. The proper application of game rules (e.g., “The moderator accepted an answer from player 4, but player 3 was the one who buzzed.”)
2. **Factual protests** are those in the first two categories. **Procedural protests** are those in the third.
3. Protests may not be lodged over other topics (e.g., “The desks in this game room are poorly arranged for playing quiz bowl” or “The subject matter of that question is inappropriate for this tournament.”)
4. These rules specify that moderators’ judgment calls in several areas are not protestable. However, if a moderator blatantly ignores or misinterprets a rule, a team may bring this to the attention of the tournament director, who may make any remedies necessary to correct a blatantly unfair situation.
5. If a team has an issue with an aspect of the game that is not appropriate grounds for a protest, the team should communicate this to the moderator (if it pertains to a specific game) or the tournament director (if more general). If the moderator cannot resolve a game-specific issue to the teams’ satisfaction, it may be referred to the tournament director. Moderators and tournament directors may take any actions they deem necessary to ensure games occur in a fair, safe, and enjoyable manner compatible with the spirit of these rules. Such issues should be raised when the clock is stopped (see Rule F.8).
6. Protests may only be lodged by the official coach or by a player who was active when the alleged error occurred.
7. Protests may only be lodged after a tossup has been completed but before the bonus or next tossup (if any) has been started, or after a tossup-bonus cycle has been completed but before the next cycle (if any) starts. This includes the end of a half, at the end of overtime, or during a timeout, but not during a tossup or during a bonus. All protests must be lodged within 5 minutes of the end of the game and before the protesting team leaves the game room. The moderator and possibly tournament director will determine the appropriate time for adjudication of the protest, which may (but need not) be at the time it is lodged.
8. When lodging a protest, the protesting party should briefly explain the nature of the protest to the moderator, other game officials, and a representative of the other team.
9. Factual protests are governed by these rules:
  - a. Factual protests will usually be adjudicated at the end of the game (even if lodged earlier), but the moderator and possibly tournament director may choose to adjudicate such protests earlier, e.g., if both teams immediately agree upon the proper resolution.
  - b. Factual protests are only adjudicated if they affect which team wins the game. For example, if one team loses by 50 points and protests a 10-point bonus answer, the protest will not be adjudicated (even if that protest might affect statistics, such as a team’s points per tossup heard or points per bonus, that determine playoff seeding or other future aspects of the tournament).
  - c. Active players and official coaches may indicate their *intention* to lodge a factual protest during a game by quickly saying “protest.” As long as this does not disrupt or delay the game, the moderator should acknowledge the

intent (by saying “noted”) and continue with the game. The protest should actually be lodged at an appropriate time as per Rule J.7.

10. Procedural protests are governed by these rules:
  - a. The action underlying a procedural protest must have a concrete and quantifiable effect on the game (e.g., “The score is incorrect.”) Unquantifiable factors (e.g., “The buzzer system malfunction destroyed my team’s momentum”) are not protestable.
  - b. Procedural protests will usually be adjudicated immediately, with the clock stopped, but the moderator and possibly tournament director may choose to adjudicate such protests later.
  - c. The moderator has the sole responsibility for determining what players said (or did not say) and ruling thereon. Such determinations are not protestable. The moderator may seek opinions from other game officials (if a possible issue is raised informally), but the final decision lies with the moderator.
11. Although protesting causes a game stoppage without costing a timeout, frivolous or disruptive attempts to protest may be considered game-delaying tactics and result in warning or ejection.
12. If the moderator is unable to adjudicate a protest to both teams’ satisfaction, the protest may be appealed to the tournament director.
13. If a protest is upheld, the remedy is to...
  - a. Award any points (to either team) that would have been awarded if no error had occurred. For example, if a response to a bonus question was rejected when it should have been accepted, the team will be credited with the appropriate number of points.
  - b. Remove any points (from either team) that would not have been awarded if no error had occurred. For example, if a response to a tossup was incorrectly accepted when it should have been rejected, that team will lose the points earned on the tossup question and any points earned on the bonus earned by answering the tossup.
  - c. Provide opportunities for teams to score points if those opportunities would have existed had no mistake been made. For example, if a moderator did not allow the second team a chance to respond to a tossup question after an incorrect answer by the first team, it will have a chance to answer a replacement tossup (and thus potentially earn a bonus question).
  - d. Take any other actions consistent with correcting a mistake in enforcing the rules (e.g., adding or removing time from the game clock, declaring an interrupt penalty in sudden-death overtime to have ended the game, replacing a buzzer system).
14. When considering factual protests, the tournament director should apply these remedies:
  - a. If the clues of a tossup question contain a verifiable factual error which misled a player into giving a response, the response given will be accepted as correct only if the information available when the player signaled uniquely identified the given response. If no answer is consistent with all available information, the tossup question will be replaced as if the moderator had prematurely revealed the answer when neither team had responded (see Rule G.11).
  - b. If the clues of a tossup question contain a verifiable factual error which misled a player into giving no response (leading either to an unanswered question or a question answered by the opposing team), the tossup question will be replaced as if the moderator had prematurely revealed the answer when neither team had responded (see Rule G.11).
  - c. If the clues of a tossup question (at the point at which a player signaled) or bonus part (in its entirety, regardless of when the answer was given) uniquely specify an answer, but the packet lists a different (incorrect) answer, a player who responded with the uniquely specified (correct) answer shall have that response accepted.
  - d. If the clues of a tossup question (at the point at which a player signaled) do not uniquely specify an answer, then the tournament director should consider when the signaling occurred:
    - i. If the player signaled prior to the end of the first sentence of the question, the response shall be evaluated as if the signal had occurred at the end of the first sentence. That is, a protest that an answer during the first sentence was “correct when the player buzzed” will be unsuccessful if the rest of the first sentence would have ruled out that answer, but will be successful if the rest of the first sentence failed to rule out that answer.

- ii. If the player signaled after the end of the first sentence, the response shall be accepted if it is correct (for all the clues that had been read) and precise. If the response was correct but imprecise (and thus should have been prompted), the remedy of Rule J.14.h will be applied.
  - e. If there are multiple correct answers based on the clues of a bonus part and the part's instructions do not specify how to handle the multiple answers (e.g., by stating that only one answer is required or all the correct answers are required), then any response that is correct and precise shall be accepted, and responses that are correct but ambiguous shall be handled via the remedy of Rule H.8.
  - f. If it is determined that an accepted response (to either a tossup question or a bonus question) should merely have been prompted, the acceptance of the answer shall stand. If both this rule and Rule J.14.e apply to the same situation, then this rule takes precedence: the answer shall be accepted rather than applying the remedy of Rule H.8.
  - g. If there is no answer that is consistent with all information in a bonus part, the remedy of Rule H.8 will be applied.
  - h. If it is determined that a rejected response to a tossup question should actually have been prompted, the moderator will read a replacement tossup to the affected team. Any player on the affected team may answer the replacement tossup.
    - i. If the replacement tossup is answered correctly, the player who answered the original tossup (whose answer should have been prompted) shall be considered to have answered the original tossup correctly, in the place they answered the original tossup. (This might mean that the player is credited with answering the original tossup for power even if the replacement tossup was not answered early enough to earn power. It also might mean the player is credited with answering the original tossup correctly even if the replacement tossup was answered by someone else.)
    - ii. If the replacement tossup is answered incorrectly or no answer is attempted for the replacement tossup, the player who answered the original tossup shall be considered to have answered the original tossup incorrectly, in the place they answered the original tossup. (This might result in the assessment of an interrupt penalty, and it might result in points earned by the other team standing.)

The same applies if a moderator should have prompted by asking a specific question (Rule I.4.b) but instead gave a non-specific prompt that led the player to not give an acceptable answer.
  - i. If it is determined that a rejected response to a bonus question should actually have been prompted, the remedy of Rule H.8 will be applied. The same applies if a moderator should have prompted by asking a specific question (Rule I.4.b) but instead gave a non-specific prompt that led the team to not give an acceptable answer.
  - j. If protest resolution involves replacing a tossup question, power points may only be earned (or an interrupt penalty assessed) if they would have been possible had no mistake been made. For example, if a moderator reads a tossup question all the way to the end, rejects the first team's response, and then inadvertently reveals the answer before the second team has a chance to respond, then power points cannot be earned by the second team on its replacement question (because the original question was read past its power mark). (In addition, in this hypothetical case, an interrupt penalty could not be earned on the replacement question because the first team had already given a response to the original question.)
15. In the anomalous event that a tossup question is missing a power mark, its absence (or its argued effect on the game) is not protestable.
16. If the tournament schedule and format allow, the tournament director may delay protest adjudication to have more time to research the issue. This may result in the teams playing subsequent games (as per the schedule) and then being brought together to hear the final adjudication (and possibly engage in further play if the adjudication requires it).
17. A tournament director may, but is not required to, make use of **provisional gameplay** ("hypothetical gameplay") to determine whether a protest needs to be adjudicated. Provisional gameplay is gameplay performed on the assumption that a protest is upheld to see whether adjudication would affect the winner of the game.

## K. Ethics and Conduct

1. All players, coaches, institutional representatives, and other persons associated with a team are bound by an honor code to behave responsibly and ethically. This includes, but is not limited to, treating all other participants and staff with courtesy, neither giving nor receiving impermissible assistance, not creating the temptation for another to cheat,

abiding by all decisions of the tournament staff, not colluding with another person to “fix” a game result, not intentionally “throwing” a game, honestly reporting details of game situations to tournament officials, and promptly reporting violations of this honor code to a tournament staff member.

2. All people present for a game (players, coaches, spectators, and others) are forbidden to engage in illegal conferral.
  - a. The following shall be considered illegal conferral:
    - i. At any time during gameplay, any communication (verbal, written, or otherwise) that conveys any information about an answer to a question that has not been completed (including what a person believes the answer to be, what a person believes the answer not to be, or anything else pertaining to the answer), other than the moderator reading the question. As an important exception, active players on a team that has earned a bonus question may communicate freely with each other during that bonus question.
    - ii. At any time during gameplay, the use of reference material or electronic devices by any active player, regardless of the purpose of such use. Dedicated electronic medical devices, and assistive technology approved by the tournament director, are permitted.
    - iii. During a tossup, any communication involving an active player, unless it is nonverbal, nonwritten, and does not convey any information about the answer. (In other words, players may hold their signaling devices forward, gesticulate, or otherwise indicate that they know the answer, but cannot indicate in any manner what they believe the answer to be, and verbal or written conferral is prohibited even if it does not convey any information about the answer.)
  - b. Halftime, timeouts, and any post-game period during which protests are discussed and adjudicated are not considered “during gameplay.”
  - c. The moderator may disregard conferring that they deem inconsequential to the game (e.g., minor verbal conferring that does not convey any information about the substance of the answer, committed during a tossup by a player on a team whose opponent had already answered the tossup incorrectly). This determination is at the moderator’s discretion and is not protestable. The purpose of the conferral rules is to ensure the integrity of the game, not to punish insignificant behavioral issues.
  - d. The determination of whether illegal conferral has occurred is at the moderator’s discretion and is not protestable. Moderators may issue warnings in cases of possible conferral for which the evidence is unclear.
  - e. The penalties for illegal conferral are as follows:
    - i. If committed during a tossup by a person associated with a specific team (active player, inactive player, coach, chaperone, or clearly associated spectator), and that team could have answered the tossup at that time, this shall be treated as an incorrect answer, including the assessment of an interrupt penalty if available. If the conferring was committed by an active player, the wrong answer (and possible interrupt penalty) shall be credited to that player. If the conferring was committed by someone other than an active player, the wrong answer (and possible interrupt penalty) shall be credited to the captain of the team with whom the conferring person is associated.
    - ii. If committed during a bonus by an inactive player, coach, spectator, or other person associated with the team controlling the bonus, this shall be treated as an incorrect answer by that team to the current part of the bonus (or, if during the bonus introduction, to the first part).
    - iii. If committed in any other case, the moderator will warn the conferring person(s) for a minor first occurrence. For subsequent occurrences, or first-time severe occurrences (such as a coach or spectator giving an answer, whether correct or incorrect), the conferring person(s) shall be ejected. The determination of whether conferral is “minor” or “severe” is at the moderator’s discretion and is not protestable.
3. Any tournament official may find that a player, coach, institutional representative, or other person associated with a team during the tournament has committed misconduct. Misconduct includes disruptive behavior, unethical behavior, any violation of the honor code, or other unsporting conduct. Officials may interpret these categories broadly. Teams are responsible for the conduct of all persons associated with that team.

4. All instances of misconduct must be reported to the tournament director at the conclusion of the game, or as soon as practical.
5. Instances of misconduct may result in sanctions to be determined by the tournament director. These sanctions include, but are not limited to, suspension of a participant from one or more games, loss of game(s) for a team, score or clock adjustment, or expulsion of an entire team from the tournament.
6. Unless the tournament director decides otherwise, other staff may not impose sanctions, except that a moderator must eject from a game any person found to have committed misconduct a second time during that game (i.e., a tournament director may give the staff greater powers to sanction than this minimum.) A player ejected from a game may not be replaced during that game.
7. Sanctions are not appealable.