

IQBL Code Of Ethics - General Statement

The Iowa Quiz Bowl League expects all members and tournament participants to adhere to the Code Of Ethics regardless of membership status or who is sponsoring the tournament. Coaches, players, and tournament directors/hosts are expected to provide the best possible experience for students participating in IQBL events.

If there is a perceived willful breach of the Code Of Ethics, with malicious intent, contact the IQBL Ombudsperson with the facts only (do not allow emotions to get in the way of the Ombudsperson's duties).

Remember, as IQBL members we involve ourselves in Quiz Bowl for the benefit of the players (our students). When you keep their best interest at heart, that will guide your decision making process for handling tricky situations that may arise.

In this document, on the following pages, you will find the Code Of Ethics for quiz bowl coaches, players, and tournament hosts/directors.

The IQBL welcomes and encourages parents/guardians to take an active interest in their students' participation in Quiz Bowl. We also encourage our parents/guardians to use good judgment and sportsmanship when observing matches. Thank you for your support, love, and care of your student!

IQBL Code of Ethics - Coaches

Adapted with permission from the Illinois High School Scholastic Bowl Coaches Association

The role of coach is an extension of that of being a professional educator, regardless of whether the coach is employed as a teacher. It is expected that all of the norms of acting in a professional capacity in the classroom extend to coaching. The competition we participate in is an extension of the classroom – it is first and foremost a learning experience for the players, who are learning to compete in a healthy and ethical manner.

- A. For the purpose of this document, “tournament” includes matches in conferences or leagues, and in general, any scholastic bowl or quiz bowl match that is not a practice.
- B. Being “caught up in the moment” is no excuse for unsportsmanlike or inappropriate conduct.
- C. Coaches are expected to speak up when they know that a player on the opposing team has given a correct answer and is not receiving credit for it from the moderator.
- D. Coaches who register for tournaments are expected to be there with the number of teams they registered and anything else (e.g. buzzer systems) they agreed to bring. Coaches who fail to do this and fail to notify the host in a timely fashion are creating an inconvenience to the host. The key is communication; when a team realizes that it is not going to be able to attend a tournament or that its status is in serious doubt, the coach should contact the host immediately.
- E. Coaches must not falsify a team record or individual statistics for any purpose. Coaches should be careful to avoid making errors when revealing team records for the purposes of informing tournament directors who are deciding pool placement.
- F. Coaches should accurately inform tournament hosts of expected rosters for the purposes of seeding.
- G. At all times, coaches should consider and encourage their players to consider the feelings of their opponent. Beating a team is not inherently unethical; being rude while doing so is.
- H. While coaches are not ultimately responsible for the actions of nonplayer spectators, they are obliged to help tournament officials deal with any inappropriate behavior by nonplayers who are there watching their team.
- K. Coaches who are not moderating should not address members of the other team during a match except for praise (which, if given, should not interrupt the flow of the game). If a coach has a problem with the actions of his/her opponent, the coach should ask the moderator to intervene. Coaches who are moderating should be sure when they do address members of another team that they do so respectfully.

L. There are special ethical considerations that must be addressed in regard to using B teams and other teams beyond the first in a tournament:

1. Each school's A team is to be the strongest team from that school at the tournament. This does not mean that all of the team's highest scoring players must play on the A team, but coaches should expect that their A team is stronger than their B team, that their B team is stronger than their C team, etc.
2. Higher placement by a B team than the same school's A team does not, on its own, imply that an ethical violation has occurred.
3. Unless other rules have been announced, players may not move from team to team after a tournament has started.
4. If a coach expects his/her A and B teams (or similarly, B and C teams, etc.) to be of approximately equal strength, designators other than letters may be used, such as "Central Green" and "Central Blue".

N. Because coaches who moderate are performing two functions at once, one of which has a bias and the other of which must not, they must be especially committed to the fairness of the competition.

1. In the absence of a qualified neutral moderator, coaches or their adult designee are to split the duties of reading. If one coach chooses to give up that right and permit the other coach (or designee) to read for the entire match, that is his/her right. Tournament directors are allowed to choose moderators, and should make an effort to provide as many qualified neutral moderators as possible.
2. Coaches who are moderating must treat both teams equally fairly, neither being harder on nor more generous to either team. When moderating, coaches should consult with a neutral party (e.g. the tournament director, if he/she is indeed neutral) on any controversial decisions.

IQBL Code of Ethics - Players

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The players are the sole purpose for the existence of Scholastic Bowl competitions. These competitions are both an opportunity to learn and an opportunity to demonstrate learning. Players must be keenly aware that they are representing not only themselves, but also their coaches, their teammates, and their schools.

A. Players are to play honestly and according to the rules at all times. Players have a responsibility to know the rules under which they compete, to follow them, and to insist that their teammates follow them.

B. Players are to treat the opposing players, coaches, and all staff with respect. Players (and coaches) need to be aware at all times that actions and words uttered with no intent to show disrespect may be interpreted as disrespectful by others.

C. Players are expected to use a calm and respectful tone when addressing all other participants.

D. Players have an obligation to immediately inform their coach and/or the moderator in the event that they have been exposed to a set of competition questions previously (in an earlier round that day, at another competition, while practicing, online, or under any other circumstances).

E. Players have an obligation to respect the question authors' wishes and hosts' instructions regarding question security, due to possible use of the same question sets at a later time, such as a mirror event. If so directed, they should not discuss the questions and/or answers with other players who did not hear them, be it in person or in a forum such as an online message board/social networking site, until the designated release date.

F. Players are expected to treat equipment with care and respect. This includes, among other things, not slamming buzzers down, not twisting the cords, and not drawing on or otherwise defacing the equipment.

G. Players should not touch anything in the classrooms that is not germane to the competition, such as personal effects left on or under desks. Players should not open cabinets, use the computers, draw on desks, or draw on boards except for keeping score.

H. Players should follow the rules and requests of hosts, such as "no hats inside the building" and "no food or drink in certain areas".

IQBL Code of Ethics - Tournament Hosts/Directors

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Tournament hosts have great latitude in how they organize their events. What they use as their question source and how they decide to place teams within pools can strongly impact the outcome of the event and the quality of each team's experience.

A. Tournament hosts should include information regarding the source of questions, the basic format of each round, their method of seeding pools/brackets, and rules about A/B teams in the initial contact letter to potential participants.

B. Tournament hosts have an obligation to try to keep the tournament running on time. In order to do this, they may request that a coach waive the right to read if (s)he has a history of being a slow reader, and thus may place the tournament behind schedule.

C. Tournament hosts have the right to moderate matches, with the following caveats:

1. If the host team is playing, the host must split moderating time with the opposing coach or designee, unless the opposing coach allows the host to read the whole match. To do otherwise may give the host school an advantage.
2. If the host school is involved, and a moderator of equal or better ability is available, the neutral moderator should read the entire match.

D. In designing tournament competition structures, it is incumbent upon the tournament host/director to ensure that teams are fairly placed in such a way that each team is guaranteed a minimum number of matches given the constraints of the number of packets. If afternoon/late rounds determine the final ranking of teams for the tournament, hosts/directors should follow good competitive practices established by such organizations such as IQBL, NAQT, and PACE for deciding championships. Hosts/directors who are not encumbered by a parent organization's tournament structure must have the best interest of all teams and students at heart when designing structures, and should seek counsel from experienced tournament directors/hosts as necessary.

