

## **TEAM ELIGIBILITY**

### **The Team**

#### **Team Composition**

A team consists of 9 full-time students from the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and/or 12<sup>th</sup> grades of the same high school. A team may be comprised of any combination of 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students and any combination of boys and/or girls. A full-time student is defined as a student who is enrolled in 4 or more class periods per day. Each team is made up of 3 Varsity, 3 Scholastic and 3 Honors students as indicated by the following grade point average definitions:

Honors 3.75-4.00 A

Scholastic 3.00-3.74 B

Varsity 0.00-2.99 C

Contestants may compete in a higher category than their own grade point average category, but **NOT** in a lower category, i.e., a Scholastic student can compete as an Honor student, but **NOT** as a Varsity student. The minimum number of members a team must have in order to participate in the state competition is two per category (honors, scholastic, and varsity) for a total of six team members. A team can participate in state competition with six, seven, eight or nine team members as long as there are at least two persons in each division.

Each team member competes in all ten events of the Decathlon and is eligible for individual medals in all ten events. Only six scores count for the final team standing in the competition-the top two Honor scores, the top two Scholastic scores, and the top two Varsity scores. Therefore, schools may enter with fewer than nine members and still be eligible for team awards as long as there are at least two Honor, two Scholastic, and two Varsity members.

#### **Home-schooled Students**

“If a school district permits home-schooled students to participate in other extracurricular activities, and a team’s State Director is amenable to allowing home-schooled students to participate, then the State Director can permit them to do so. However, home-schooled students can only be allowed to participate if their school/district allows home-schooled students to participate in other extracurricular activities. Moreover, home-schooled students can only participate in the AD program at the high school they would attend if they were not home-schooled. The GPA classification of home-schooled students will be made in accordance with state law pertaining to home-schooled students. The State Academic Decathlon organization and/or the State Director have final authority regarding the participation and classification of home-schooled students, and the decision of the State Academic Decathlon association and/or the State Director will be final.” (Source: USAD Charter)

**TEAM ELIGIBILITY** *(continued)*

**REPLACEMENT OF A TEAM MEMBER OR TEAM for STATE COMPETITION**

**The nine students who participate in the state competition must be the same 9 students who participated in and won the local/district competition.**

The state director will only approve substitution of a team member on a team that has qualified for the state competition in extreme emergency situations such as death of an immediate family member, accident that incapacitates a team member, personal illness, etc. Each substitution must be submitted to and approved individually by the state director prior to the competition. These requests must be submitted to the state director at least 24 hours prior to competition date, and the substitute may not compete without written approval of the State Director. The registration papers for the replacement decathlete must be brought to the state competition registration desk with all of the required signatures along with an official transcript (*See Substitution Request Form included in this tabbed section*).

Each State Academic Decathlon organization or state director can determine the composition of the team for the state competition. **The state championship team that will attend the USAD national finals, however, must be the same 9 students who participated in and won their state competition.** In case of “extreme medical emergency” occurring after the state competition, the state director and the USAD Executive Administrator shall determine the eligibility of another student to replace the absent team member.

The PAGE—Georgia Academic Decathlon organization has the full authority to declare the firstplace team ineligible to attend the National Finals in accordance with the rules and practices of its own state-organization and may send the second-place team to represent its state. In such cases, the decision of the State Academic Decathlon organization and/or the State Director is final. However, USAD will be notified promptly of such an occurrence.

**OFFICIAL COACHES**

A team may have only 2 official coaches. These coaches are considered members of each school’s official delegation with all of the rights and privileges thereof. Should any team elect to have more than 2 coaches, the 2 official coaches should be designated. All other coaches will not be listed in programs or receive tickets for events. Their attendance at the PAGE--Georgia Academic Decathlon events is the expense of the individual school.

**COMPUTATION OF GRADE POINT AVERAGES**

**Following are the guidelines established by USAD**

The “focus semesters” for GPA computation go back two years prior to the present grade level of the contestant. If the contestant is a twelfth grader in September of the competition year, then the semesters that are used for GPA computation are all of the tenth grade, all of the eleventh grade, and the summer sessions between tenth and eleventh grades and between eleventh and twelfth grades. Regardless of the system used to determine a GPA locally, these criteria must be followed to ensure uniformity and equity among all participants in the United States Academic Decathlon.

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Likewise, if the contestant is a tenth grader in the fall, the focus period for GPA computation includes all of the eighth grade, all of the ninth grade, and the summer sessions between eighth and ninth grades and between ninth and tenth grades. This same “two year rule” applies to all students.

1. Grades for courses shall be used in GPA computations for Academic Decathlon competition purposes if the nature of the course is based on theoretical skills and the assessments are objective in nature. Grades for courses that directly deal with the theoretical content covered in the Academic Decathlon curriculum and competitive events should be included in GPA computations. However, a grade for a course focused specifically on the Academic Decathlon should NOT be included in GPA computations.
2. Grades for courses shall NOT be used in GPA computations for Academic Decathlon competition purposes if the nature of the course is performance-based. The skills that are developed in these courses tend to be more technical/vocational or hands-on, and the majority of a student’s grade in these courses is performance-based and/or is subjective in nature.
3. Inquiries regarding borderline courses should be referred to the State Director, who will make the determination based on the academic nature of the course and who will then implement the decision uniformly through the state. The decision of the State Academic Decathlon organization and/or the State Director with regard to which course grades are applied to the Academic Decathlon GPA tabulation is final.
4. For all alpha grades, all A’s will count as 4.0, all B’s will count as 3.0, all C’s will count as 2.0, and all D’s will count as 1.0. Anything below D will count as 0 points. When numerical grades appear on the transcript in place of alpha grades, they shall be converted to alpha grades according to the official conversion scale that appears on the school’s official transcript or in the school’s official profile.
5. If a student receives a Fail in any academic course, the F is counted in averaging the student’s grades even though no credit is given. When a course has been failed prior to the focus period for which the GPA is being computed but repeated during that period, only the repeat grade is counted. When a course is failed and repeated during the focus semesters, both grades will be counted in the GPA.
6. Incomplete or pass/fail grades are not included in computing the GPA unless the student received an F which appears on the transcript. Once a grade is given to remove an incomplete, that grade must be used to determine the Decathlon GPA. If only pass/fail grades are assigned, the State Director will determine an evaluation scale in concert with the USAD Competition Coordinator.
7. Community or college courses are included in the GPA only if high school credit is given and the course is listed on the official school transcript.

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8. A grade, regardless of whether it is advanced placement, honors, regular, or remedial classification, will count the face value of the final grade as reflected on the official transcript. No weighting of grades for honors classes will be included, even if this is the local district policy. An “A” grade, therefore, will count 4 points for Decathlon computation even if it counts 5 points within the local system. Under no circumstances may an “A” grade count if three points. The letter grade shown on the transcript will be used in computing GPA regardless of any plus or minus. State Directors may determine standards for eligibility for students from schools with non-traditional grading systems. Such standards should be communicated to USAD for approval prior to the state competition.
  
9. If a school or a teacher has a policy of changing grades subsequent to receipt of advanced placement test scores, the new grade must be used for the computation of the Decathlon GPA.

**VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY**

Each high school will submit official transcripts to verify eligibility of team members to the manager of the competition the team is entering. The school certification of transcripts shall be considered the final indication of a student’s eligibility and GPA category. The competition manager shall check the GPA computation in accordance with the above guidelines and verify eligibility of each team member. The team coach shall be notified of any discrepancies.

Foreign students are eligible to participate in the Academic Decathlon. A foreign student who does not possess a valid transcript may participate in the Honors category. If a coach wishes to qualify a foreign student for the Scholastic or Varsity categories, the coach must provide adequate evidence that the student performed at a relative B or C status within the foreign system during the two years prior to participation in the Decathlon. The State Academic Decathlon organization and/or the State Director have final authority regarding the participation and classification of foreign students, and the decision of the State Academic Decathlon association and/or the State Director will be final.

For the National Finals, each State Director must file a team certification guaranteeing that this is the same team that won the State Championship and that all team members are eligible for the categories as indicated. Official transcripts must accompany this form. In addition, USAD may request transcripts directly from the high school in order to verify eligibility. The decision of the State Academic Decathlon organization and/or the State Director shall be considered final.

Participation in the United States Academic Decathlon is voluntary and is open to all students regardless of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability or handicap.

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### TEAM ELIGIBILITY *(continued)*

#### Teams and Conditions

- Each high school will submit official transcripts to verify eligibility of team members. All transcripts will be verified and schools notified of any discrepancies.
- The members of the team participating in state competition must be the same individuals who participated at the local competition. If for any reason a member is unable to participate, the state director should be contacted for a ruling. (*See “Request for Student Replacement” form on following page.*)
- The state director and competition coordinator will determine the deadline for transmittal of the documents.
- Only students whose transcripts have been received by the deadline will be eligible for participating in the competition.
- Any exceptions to these eligibility requirements must be approved in writing by the state director in advance of the submission date for entries.
- Registration for participation in PAGE/GAD is \$200.00 (per school district). This fee may be refunded if notified in writing by October 30<sup>th</sup> of the competition year. This fee covers expenses for medals, trophies, medals, test duplication, mailings, national registration, physical facilities, and the awards banquet.

#### TEAMS and COACHES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Expenses for USAD curriculum materials and related study materials
- Expenses for transportation to and from district and/or state competition, lodging and meals for teams and coaches
- If your team wins the state championship, expenses related to representing the State of Georgia at the USAD national competition.

**Participation in the United States Academic Decathlon is open to all students regardless of race, creed, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability or handicap.**

Questions regarding computing the Academic Decathlon GPA or eligibility of students should be addressed to:  
Dr. Ruth S. Cowan, State Director, PAGE/GAD, P.O. Box 942270, Atlanta, GA 31141-2270, Email [rscowan@aol.com](mailto:rscowan@aol.com),  
phone: 770.216.8555, 1.800.33.6861, or FAX 770.216.8589.