

Global Academic Challenge

Spring 2023 Preparation Guide for Schools



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For support, please contact:

gachallenge@acer.org

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About the Challenge

Designed by the Australian Council for Educational Research, the Global Academic Challenge is an academic competition for high-achieving Australian students based on internationally endorsed reading, mathematical literacy and scientific literacy frameworks.

The Challenge will provide valuable insights into your students' performance as well as reliable international and national comparisons that will help you to see how your students' results compare to students around the world and across Australia.

Students will receive recognition of their achievement in the competition with certificates and, for those who achieve exceptional results, a personalised medallion.

Learning areas

The Global Academic Challenge is available for years 4, 6 and 8 across three different learning areas, Mathematics, Reading and Science.

Mathematics

The Mathematics challenge measures students' ability to reason mathematically and use mathematical concepts, procedures, facts and tools in describing, predicting and explaining phenomena. The questions ask students to actively engage with real-life contexts to solve mathematical problems that involve evaluating, selecting strategies, drawing logical conclusions and developing and recognising how solutions can be applied.

Reading

The Reading challenge measures students' ability to construct, extend, evaluate and reflect on the meaning of what they have read across a wide range of continuous and non-continuous texts. The questions require students to go beyond the notion of decoding and literal comprehension, demonstrating higher levels of reading skills and proficiencies, and recognising the full scope of contextualised situations.

Science

The Science challenge assesses the ability of students to use their knowledge of and about science to identify and solve problems, offer explanations of observations, and draw conclusions supported by evidence. The questions ask students to demonstrate their scientific ability in responding to questions within a range of real-world situations; personal, local and global contexts.

Note: The Global Academic Challenge is not intended to be a curriculum-driven assessment, however the competition assesses content from the Australian Curriculum covering a range of topics appropriate for each assessed year level. For more details, see www.acer.org/au/global-academic-challenge/the-challenge

Dates and times

Learning area	Format	Time (approx.)	Spring 2023 Competition dates	Cost per student (incl. GST)
Mathematics	Online & multiple-choice	60 minutes	Monday 28 August - Friday 8 September	\$15
Reading	Online & multiple-choice	60 minutes	Monday 28 August - Friday 8 September	\$15
Science	Online & multiple-choice	60 minutes	Monday 28 August - Friday 8 September	\$15

Each learning area takes one session of approximately 60 minutes to complete and can be completed on any day within the Spring competition dates, 28 August - 8 September. The competition will be available to administer between 8:00 AM and 2:00 PM.

How to register

In order to participate in the Challenge, you will first need to register your school for free here: www.acer.org/au/global-academic-challenge/schools. Once you have registered, you will receive relevant updates about each stage of the competition.

Our customer support team will then ensure you are set up within your existing Online Assessment and Reporting System (OARS) account or help you to create your account.

Ordering

You can place your order within your online school account through the *Store*. The Challenge costs \$15 per student, per learning area.

First orders will close on Monday, 21 August, 2023.

Supplementary orders are available throughout the competition.

Preparing for the Challenge

Enrolling students

The Global Academic Challenge is intended for high-achieving students and aims to stretch their skills and knowledge. As it is an academic competition, some of the questions within each challenge will be relatively difficult, so we advise teacher discretion in deciding which students to enrol. Please contact us at gachallenge@acer.org for further advice.

Advising parents

You may wish to advise parents of your school's decision to participate in this year's Challenge. You can download a template that can be edited to suit your school's needs here: www.acer.org/au/global-academic-challenge/schools

Technical requirements

The Challenge is administered through our Online Assessment and Reporting System (OARS). It is a web-based platform and does not require you to install any software.

The minimum technical requirements to access and effectively utilise OARS are listed in the table below:

Screen resolution	Minimum screen resolution of 1024 x 768
Bandwidth	DSL or cable internet connection minimum 56 kbps
Compatible computers and devices	Desktop PC/Laptop PC, Apple Mac, iPad (but not iPad Minis), Google Chromebook, Other tablet devices
Compatible browsers (latest versions)	Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Safari, Microsoft Edge
Domains to be whitelisted/permitted by the network firewall or security settings	acer.org/ acer.edu.au/ delivery.acer.edu.au delivery2.acer.edu.au/

To avoid or minimise problems, please ensure that your technical infrastructure (including network, devices and browsers) meets or exceeds these requirements.

Account management

Step-by-step instructions on how to set up the account for online testing can be found in the *Help* page of your school's account. In summary, you will need to:

- Add new student records to your account.
- Edit existing student records, for example, update class details for the current school year.
- Provide relevant staff access to the account, either to update student records or to assist with administering the Challenge.
- Purchase the required number of testing credits from the *Store* of your school's online account.
- Assign the specific learning area to the participating students.
- Download lists of students' user names and passwords.
- Adjust your school's testing days and hours within the *Account* tab.
- Make note of your school's online login page, or make sure that the URL is saved on student devices, or available to your students as a link. The address will be similar to <https://oars.acer.edu.au/your-school-name>

Accessibility requests

Please advise us of any special considerations that your students may require and we will work with you to provide appropriate accommodations. Accommodations must be approved by ACER prior to students commencing the challenge.

To lodge a request, please contact us through our website (www.acer.org/au/global-academic-challenge) or at gachallenge@acer.org.

On the day of the Challenge

Schedule

All learning areas of the Challenge will only be available for administration between 8:00 AM and 2:00 PM on the specified competition dates:

Monday, 28 August to Friday, 8 September 2023

Consistent administration of the Global Academic Challenge is important for the validity and comparability of the results. Where possible the Challenge should be administered at the same time to all students within the same year level within your school. For example, all students sitting Mathematics Year 4 should sit their Challenge at the same time.

We also recommend that students sit the Challenge in the morning, if possible, while students are fresh.

Administration

Materials

To sit the Challenge, students should be provided with your school's online assessment login page (<https://oars.acer.edu.au/your-school-name>) and their unique usernames and passwords.

Students are permitted to use pens/pencils and paper for working out during the Challenge. Calculators are also permitted for the Mathematics challenge.

Students should not have access to support resources such as a dictionary, thesaurus, a list of multiplication tables or a word list for any part of the competition.

Security

The Challenge must be administered under standard testing conditions with invigilation. Students must not open different tabs or browsers during testing. Teachers should strictly supervise students to ensure compliance.

If a student navigates away from a test, they will see a warning box appear saying: 'Please do not leave the test'. The online interface monitors student behavior during the test (e.g., when they navigate away from the test) and records this detail. Students are also unable to copy and paste from or into the test screen.

Remote testing is not permitted without prior written agreement from ACER.

Scripts

Scripts and detailed administration instructions will be provided ahead of the competition to help guide your students through sitting the Challenge.

These scripts should be provided to the teachers supervising the Challenge and will be available to download in the *Help* section of your school account.

Reports and results

The Global Academic Challenge provides a range of informative and interactive online reports for educators through your online school account.

Reports include:

- Benchmark Report
- Group Report
- Bands Report
- Strand Report
- Individual Report

Instant international comparisons

Immediately after the competition you will have instant access to international comparison data to see how your students compare to an international cohort.

Competition results release

A second release of results including national comparison data will be made **available from 9 October**.

This release will include announcements about your students' certificate results and how they placed compared to other students sitting the competition around Australia.

All interactive reports will be updated to include this data.

Printed reports and certificates

Every student that sits the Global Academic Challenge will receive a personalised printed report and a certificate of achievement from ACER. Medals will be awarded to students that demonstrate exceptional achievement.

Student reports will be posted to your school at the conclusion of the competition and can be distributed to parents/carers and presented at school assemblies.

Note: Please ensure you review your students' details within your school's online account by 25 September 2023.