



COMPETITION GUIDELINE

NATIONAL SCIENCE CHALLENGE (NSC) 2026

1.0 BACKGROUND

The National Science Challenge (NSC) competition is a national-level science competition specifically for secondary school students from Form 1 to Form 4 (13 to 16 years old). The main objective of this competition is to cultivate interest among students throughout Malaysia in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and subsequently encourage them to pursue studies and careers in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) at higher levels.

Since 1999, NSC has evolved from a national science quiz program into a premier science competition in Malaysia that provides high-level challenges to secondary school students. Additionally, NSC challenges students' minds in various STEM subjects and provides them with the opportunity to receive direct guidance from the Young Scientists Network-ASM (YSN-ASM).

2.0 OBJECTIVE

The main objectives of NSC are:

- To develop and nurture critical thinking, reasoning, research, collaboration, and creative skills among school students through engagement in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).
- To foster students' interest in pursuing careers in STEM fields to meet the nation's need for highly skilled talent.
- To provide students with the opportunity to showcase their scientific knowledge and skills.

3.0 NSC 2026 THEME

- English: **Strengthening Science Foundations for Resilient and Inclusive Future**
- Malay: **Memantapkan Asas Sains untuk Masa Depan yang Berdaya Tahan dan Inklusif**

4.0 COMPETITION FORMAT

Levels	Date	Details
Registration	12 February – 1 April 2026	Registration for the competition is conducted online through the website www.nsc.my . Each team must consist of three (3) students aged between 13 and 16 years old (Form 1 to Form 4) and one (1) mentor teacher .
Preliminary	27 April – 8 May 2026	The individual quiz will be conducted online at www.nsc.my according to zones that will be determined later. This quiz will be conducted bilingually (in English and Malay), and the questions will cover the syllabus for Science and Mathematics subjects from Form 1 to Form 4.
State	18 May – 24 July 2026	The top 80 teams , selected from 13 states and 3 Federal Territories [five (5) teams from each state or Federal Territory], will compete at the State Level. Each team will be tested through a Scientific Challenge, which assesses students' scientific knowledge, Science Process Skills and communication skills.
Semi Final	Online: 1 – 31 August 2026 Physical: 1 – 6 September 2026	The top 16 teams from the state level will participate in a hybrid programme comprising of science workshops and STEM talks. The participants will subsequently be brought together for a week-long, physical science camp at a selected university, featuring interactive and hands-on activities.
Grand Final	7 September 2026	The top five (5) teams will compete for the Prime Minister's Challenge Trophy and will be assessed through two (2) main components: Quiz and Presentation , aligned with the NSC 2026 theme.

Note: The programme dates and details are subject to change and will be duly communicated to the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE).

1) REGISTRATION

- a. Participation in NSC is open to students who meet the following criteria:
 - i. **Malaysian citizens** (MYKAD holders only);
 - ii. **Form 1 to Form 4** (aged between 13 and 16 years old in the year of participation);
and
 - iii. Attending **national, private, or international secondary schools**.
- b. Registration for NSC 2026 is open from **12 February to 1 April 2026**.
- c. Mentor Teachers must register their teams on the website www.nsc.my and may refer to the **registration guide (under the 'Tutorial' tab)**.
- d. Mentor Teachers are required to enter all participants and school details into the system.
 - i. If the school is not listed in the system, the mentor teacher must enter the **full name of the school**.
- e. **Each team** must consist of **three (3) students and one (1) Mentor teacher**.
 - i. 1 Mentor Teacher can register **more than one (1) team**, with no limit on the number of teams per Mentor Teacher.
 - ii. Mentor Teachers and Students must be from the **same school**. Registration through tuition teachers is **not allowed** unless the teacher and students are from the same school.
 - iii. There is **no limit on the number of teams per school**.
 - iv. **No registration fee** is charged.
- f. For each completed team registration, participants will be provided with an individual ID for the Preliminary Level.
- g. All information can be accessed by Mentor Teachers through their respective NSC accounts. Students should coordinate with their Mentor Teachers to obtain details such as individual IDs, group IDs, passwords, certificates, etc.

2) PRELIMINARY LEVEL

The Preliminary Level will be held online from **27 April until 8 May 2026**, with zones to be announced later. A trial session will be conducted a few days before the Preliminary Level to allow participants to familiarise themselves with the quiz platform. All participants will receive a participation certificate, which can be downloaded from www.nsc.my after the conclusion of the Preliminary level.

A. QUESTION FORMAT

- i. The quiz consists of randomly arranged questions and will cover the topics of Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics.
- ii. All participants are only given **one (1) hour** to answer all questions.
- iii. The questions will be displayed in English and Malay.
- iv. The breakdown of the questions is as follows:

Question Type	Syllabus Coverage
Easy	KSSM Forms 1-4
Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)	KSSM Forms 2-4

Application	KSSM Forms 3 & 4 (May also include reference from the ASM Estidotmy platform, https://esti.my/)
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B. COMPETITION PROCEDURE

i. Before the competition:

- a. Mentor Teachers must provide an **individual ID** and **password** to each participant (provided in the Manage Teams section of the Mentor Teacher portal). This information is advised to be **shared privately** to prevent participants from logging into other accounts.

ii. During the competition:

- a. All participants must log in to the NSC website (www.nsc.my) using their **individual ID** and **password** to answer the quiz.
- b. Participants are required to answer the quiz **individually**.
- c. The online quiz can be taken from any suitable location with Internet access during the designated time, from **7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.**, based on the allocated zone schedule.
- d. Participants are advised to complete the quiz before the deadline to avoid potential system errors or last-minute technical issues.

C. SELECTION CRITERIA

- i. Each participant's score is calculated cumulatively within their team.
- ii. In the event of a tie, the time taken to complete the quiz will be used as a tiebreaker.
- iii. The **top five (5) teams** with the highest overall scores from **each state** will advance to the State Level, comprising a total of 80 teams.
- iv. The states and Federal Territories include **Johor, Kedah, Kelantan, Melaka, Negeri Sembilan, Pahang, Perak, Perlis, Pulau Pinang, Sabah, Sarawak, Selangor, Terengganu, WP Kuala Lumpur, WP Labuan, and WP Putrajaya**.

D. CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

- i. All participants who complete the quiz will receive a certificate of participation, which can be downloaded from www.nsc.my.
- ii. Mentor Teachers and students are advised to verify the names and identification numbers listed on the certificate.
- iii. Only students who completed the quiz will receive a certificate of participation. Students who do not answer the quiz are counted as not participating in the competition and will not receive a certificate.

3) STATE LEVEL

- a. The State Level of NSC 2026 will be held on **18 May until 24 July 2026**. Each team will participate in the **Scientific Challenge**, which evaluates students' scientific knowledge, Science Process Skills and communication skills.

- b. This stage will be conducted fully online. Each group will be provided with a problem statement and is required to design a science experiment to test the scientific concepts involved.
- c. Each team shall be evaluated based on their understanding and explanation of the science experiment in the submitted practical report.
- d. Each team shall prepare video presentation explaining the preparation and implementation of their science experiment, as a complement to the submitted practical report.
- e. The judges will select **top 16 teams** (one from each state) to advance to the Semi-Final Level.
- f. A detailed briefing on the guidelines for this level will be conducted for all participants. Further details will be provided via email to the respective Mentor Teachers. As such, Mentor Teachers are advised to regularly monitor their email communications.
- g. All participants will receive a certificate of participation after the session ends. The certificates can be downloaded from www.nsc.my.

4) SEMI-FINAL LEVEL

- a. The Semi-Final Level of NSC 2026 will be held from **1 August to 6 September 2026**.
- b. At this stage, students will participate in online lectures and workshop sessions, followed by a one-week, physical Science Camp comprising science workshops, practical activities, and hands-on sessions aligned with the NSC theme for the year.
- c. The judges will select the **top five (5) teams** with the highest scores to advance to the Grand Final Level.
- d. A detailed briefing on the guidelines for this level will be conducted for all participants. Further details will be provided via email to the respective Mentor Teachers. As such, Mentor Teachers are advised to regularly monitor their email communications.
- e. All participants will receive a certificate of participation after the session ends. The certificates can be downloaded from www.nsc.my.

5) GRAND FINAL LEVEL

- a. The **top five (5) teams** will compete in the Grand Final Level for the Prime Minister's Round Trophy. The Grand Final Level will be held **physically** on **7 September 2026** (date subject to change).
- b. The Grand Final Level consists of:
 - i. **Quiz:** The quiz includes multiple categories, with questions to be answered both individually and in group.
 - ii. **Presentation:** Each team is required to present the experiment conducted during the Science Camp to the panel of judges, followed by a question-and-answer session.
- c. All participants will receive certificates of achievement based on their rankings. These certificates will be sent to the participants competing at this level.

5.0 DATA REPORTING

Your participation in NSC 2026 will also involve taking part in impact tracking assessment. This may include responding to questionnaires, surveys or interviews designed to evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of NSC 2026. All data collected will be used for research and assessment purposes while ensuring confidentiality and adherence to ethical research practices. The findings and reports generated from this data will be shared with the Ministry of Education to support the ongoing enhancement of the programme.

Note: The instructions and guidelines for each level are subject to change. Any changes will be communicated to all participants and mentor teachers via email, Telegram channels, and NSC social media. Please visit the website <http://www.nsc.my/> for further information.

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