

CALIFORNIA ACADEMIC DECATHLON (CAD) ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

<http://www.academicdecathlon.org/round3teamreg/11eligibilityguidelines.pdf>

School Participation

Schools may participate in California Academic Decathlon's (CAD) program with as few as one (1) decathlete. Schools that do not have an official team may participate in Regional Academic Decathlon activities (ie., scrimmages, workshops and other special events open to participating schools).

Participating schools that do not have an eligible team will not be qualified to advance to the state championship. Team eligibility requirements assures consistency in competition.

Teams that advance to the state championship either by winning their regional competition or score high enough to receive an invitation by the CAD will not be disqualified if their number drops below the minimum required to compete as a team following the regional competition. This rule allows for unforeseen circumstances that may cause a decathlete to withdraw from competition following regional competition and before the commencement of the state championship. If this occurs, teams will not be eligible for team awards at state.

Team Participation

An official team consists of six to nine full-time decathletes from the same high school (9th – 12th grade). A full-time decathlete is defined as a decathlete who is enrolled in four or more class periods per day. Each team is made up of two to three decathletes in the each of the following categories: Honor, Scholastic and Varsity, in accordance with the following grade point average (GPA) definitions:

Honor: 3.750 – 4.00 GPA

Scholastic: 3.000 – 3.749 GPA

Varsity: 0.00 – 2.999 GPA

Contestants may compete in a higher division than their own grade point average category but not in a lower 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.

Home-schooled decathletes can participate in the Academic Decathlon if their school district allows home-schooled decathletes to participate in other extracurricular activities. Home-schooled decathletes can only participate in the Academic Decathlon program at the high school they would attend if they were not home-schooled. The GPA classification of home-schooled decathletes will be made in accordance with state law pertaining to home-schooled decathletes. The State Academic Decathlon Director will have final authority regarding the participation and classification of home-schooled decathletes.

The determination of the composition of each team is made by the State Academic Decathlon organization and is final. The state championship team that attends the National Finals, however, must be comprised according to the guidelines stated above. The decathletes who attend the National Finals must be the same decathletes who participated in and won the state competition. In the case of an "extreme medical emergency" occurring after the state competition, the State director may allow another decathlete to replace the absent team member.

The California Academic Decathlon has the authority to declare the first-place team ineligible to attend the National Finals in accordance with the rules and practices of its state organization and may send the second-place team to represent its state. In such cases, the decision of the State Academic Decathlon organization is final. However, CAD will promptly notify USAD of such an occurrence.

Computation of Grade Point Averages

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. Likewise, if the contestant is a tenth grader in the fall, the focus period for GPA computations includes the entire eighth grade, all of the ninth grade, and the summer sessions between eighth and ninth grades and between ninth and tenth grade. This same “two-year rule” applies to all decathletes. These criteria are to be followed to ensure uniformity and equity among all decathletes in the Academic Decathlon.

Grades for courses shall be used in GPA computations for Academic Decathlon competition purposes if the courses focus more than 50% of the time on understanding ideas, concepts, and theories of a specific discipline 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.

Grades for courses shall NOT be used in GPA computations for Academic Decathlon competition purposes if they are hands-on, performance-based, skills type, non-book, lab-based, or more than 50% of course time is spent in service learning or internship. The skills that are developed in these courses tend to be more technical/vocational, and the majority of a decathlete’s grade in these courses is subjective in nature. Please refer to CAD’s current “Acceptable Courses” document posted on the website (www.academicdecathlon.org).

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 throughout the state. The decision of the State director with regard to which course grades are applied to the Academic Decathlon GPA tabulation is final.

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.

The GPA for each decathlete shall be calculated by dividing total points by total credits hours for the focus semesters. The total points shall include the alpha grade points multiplied by the credit hours. Unless a school’s curriculum defines the specific credit hours earned by a course, credit hours should be determined as 1.00 credit hours for a full-year grade, 0.50 credit hours for a half-year grade, 1/3 credit hours for a trimester grade, and 0.25 credit hours for a quarter-year grade.

If a decathlete receives a Fail in any academic course, the F is counted in averaging the decathlete’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 are counted in the GPA.

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 three points. The letter grade shown on the transcript will be used in computing GPA regardless of any plus or minus. The state director may determine standards for eligibility for decathletes from schools with non-traditional grading systems. Such standards will be communicated to USAD for review and approval prior to the state competition.

Incomplete Grades

Incomplete grades are not included in computing the GPA unless the decathlete received an F that appears on the transcript. Once a grade is given to remove an incomplete, that grade must be used to determine the Decathlon GPA.

Pass/No Pass Grades

Pass/No Pass grades are included in computing the GPA. Once a grade is given in place of a Pass/No Pass, that grade must be used to determine the Decathlon GPA. If only pass/fail grades are assigned, then a Pass will be an "A" and a No Pass will be an "F".

California schools must include all Pass/No Pass (P/NP) Grades from school transcripts to the CAD GPA Calculation Worksheet. There will be (2) options: **Option 1:** Pass = A and No Pass = F. **Option 2:** In order to change a P/NP to a grade you feel is more appropriate, a coach "must" obtain proper verification and present findings to the regional coordinator for review. Proper verification must include approval from school site administration and school district(s). The Regional Coordinator may assist the coach in obtaining the proper verification. The Regional Coordinator will present findings to the state director for final review and approval.

Foreign Decathletes

Foreign decathletes are eligible to participate in the Academic Decathlon. A foreign decathlete who does not possess a valid transcript may participate in the Honor category. If a coach wishes to qualify a foreign decathlete for the Scholastic or Varsity categories, the coach must provide adequate evidence that the decathlete performed at a relative B or C status within the foreign system during the two years prior to participation in the Decathlon. The state director have final authority regarding the participation and classification of foreign decathletes.

College Courses

College courses are included in the GPA only if high school credit is given and the course is listed on the official high school transcript.

Decathlete Assistance (supplemental information, 9/4/12, USAD)

Without a copy of a decathlete's IEP and history of how the decathlete has been accommodated in previous competitions, decathletes are not allowed to bring any other materials or aides into the testing room other than a calculator for math. "Decathletes are NOT permitted to bring books, notes, purses, backpacks, coats, hats, mascots, electronic devices, cell phones, or any other items, except for approved calculators and wrist watches (timers) that produce no noise, into the testing room."

If a decathlete wishes to use words or phrases from a foreign language in his/her speech or interview, then he/she is responsible for translating those words and/or phrases into English, and this must be done within the given time limit. Foreign language interpreters are prohibited.

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 will be the final indication of a decathlete'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. In California, GPAs are calculated using CAD's GPA Calculation Excel Worksheet which can automatically calculate a decathlete's GPA and identify the lowest division in which a decathlete may compete.

Eligibility for State and National Competitions

In order for a decathlete to be eligible to advance to the state competition, the decathlete must participate in all 10 individual subjects (Art, Economics, Essay, Interview, Literature, Mathematics, Music, Science, Social Science and Speech.) in Round 2 (regional competition) unless a valid, written statement is provided by the county coordinator and approved by the State Association and Director.

Decathletes must be a fulltime students for the high school they represent at the time of competition and must compete in the appropriate category (Honor, Scholastic or Varsity) of Academic Decathlon at the time of competition.

Transcripts and GPA Computation Worksheets

For Regional Competitions, Regional Coordinators may set a local deadline for schools to submit official transcripts or copies of official transcripts with their team registration for regional competitions. At the least, participating schools (coaches) must provide Regional Coordinators a GPA Computation Worksheet and transcript for each participant. The transcript must highlight all acceptable classes reported on the GPA Computation Worksheet.

Teams attending the CAD Championship must submit official transcripts (stamped by the school, signed by the registrar and sealed) with a date that is NO earlier than January 1, 2017.

The coach must verify with the Regional Coordinator that all students remain eligible in their categories before the Regional Coordinator submit the team's highlighted transcripts, GPA Computation Worksheets and a certification guaranteeing that all team members are eligible for the categories as indicated in their GPA Computation Worksheet.

If a student is ineligible, and the Regional Coordinator is notified before February 24, only the student would be disqualified and the team could still advance to the state competition. The Review Team will review the transcripts of Varsity and Scholastic participants and confirm that all Honor students are enrolled as full-time students during the time of competition. If the Review Team finds an ineligible student that was not reported by the Regional Coordinator or coach – the team will be disqualified for not reporting the ineligibility in a timely manner.

Teams attending the USAD Nationals must submit official transcripts (stamped by the school, signed by the registrar and sealed) with a date that is NO earlier than January 1, 2017.

The Regional Coordinator must verify with the State Director that all students advancing to the national competition remain eligible. The State Director will 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. The State Director will submit all GPA Computation Worksheets as well as copies of the transcripts (highlighted acceptable classes on the transcript) that were used to calculate the participant's category for their state competition.

Eligibility for National Finals (including large, medium and small school online teams).

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.

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

Questions regarding computing the Decathlon GPA or eligibility of decathletes should be addressed to CAD at ken@academicdecathlon.org or 707-646-7603.