



**IMAGINE CUP 2012
IT CHALLENGE
RULES & REGULATIONS**

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OVERVIEW

Technology is everywhere. The IT Challenge sets out to connect with students around the world who have the brainpower, interest, and the technical knowledge to design, run, and support enterprise infrastructures while managing diverse customer needs and scenarios. The IT Challenge puts the world's brightest IT minds to the test!

In the IT Challenge, students are tasked to develop, deploy, and maintain IT systems that are efficient, functional, robust, and secure. Each competitor needs to demonstrate proficiency in the science of networks, databases, and servers and an intimate understanding of how it must all fit together, both on-premise and in the cloud.

If you choose to compete in this Competition, then you agree that your participation is subject to the following:

- [The Imagine Cup Official Rules](#)
- The Imagine Cup IT Challenge Rules and Regulations described below.

If there are any inconsistencies between the Imagine Cup Official Rules, the [Imagine Cup Terms of Use](#), the [Imagine Cup Code of Conduct](#) and/or these Competition Details, the [Imagine Cup Official Rules](#) will govern.

WHAT ARE THE START AND END DATES?

This Competition starts at 00:01 Greenwich Mean Time ("GMT") on 17 October 2011 and ends at 23:59 GMT 9 May 2012 ("entry period"). Each Round has unique entry requirements.

The overall Competition Period consists of three (3) separate Rounds as described below. Each Round has unique entry requirements. All required entry deliverables must be received within the designated Round

in order for your entry to be eligible for judging. All Competitors must successfully complete Round 1 before continuing in the Competition.

ROUND	START DATE (all times 00:01 GMT)	END DATE (all times 23:59 GMT)
Round 1 – Qualifying Quiz	17 October 2011	26 January 2012
Round 2 – Case Study	14 February 2012	27 March 2012
Round 3 – Final Challenge – Virtual Hands-On Lab	9 May 2012	9 May 2012

The Challenge sign-up period begins 17 October 2011 at 00:01 GMT, and ends 26 January 2012 at 23:59 GMT.

CAN I ENTER?

You are eligible to enter this Challenge if you meet the Eligibility Requirements set forth in the “Eligibility Criteria” section of the [Imagine Cup Official Rules](#).

HOW DO I ENTER THE CHALLENGE?

If you wish to participate in this Challenge, you must sign up as instructed during the Challenge sign up period. To sign up, visit [Imagine Cup](#).

IT Challenge is an **individual** competition. To compete in IT Challenge, you must be a legal resident of the country/region you are representing.

For additional important details on signing up for a Challenge, please see the requirements set forth in the “Team and Individual Competitions” section of the [Imagine Cup Official Rules](#).

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Each Round has unique entry requirements, described below. All required entry deliverables must be received within the designated round in order for your entry to be eligible for judging.

Round 1 – Qualifying Quiz

During Round 1, competitors will need to complete and pass at least one (1) quiz during one of the six (6) quiz periods. The specific quiz times will be announced on the IT Challenge Competition page. The quiz dates are as follows:

Quiz	Date and Time (all times 00:01 GMT)
Quiz 1	20 October 2011
Quiz 2	15 November 2011
Quiz 3	1 December 2011
Quiz 4	14 December 2011
Quiz 5	9 January 2012
Quiz 6	26 January 2012

Quizzes will be offered at eight (8) different set times during the quiz dates listed above. Competitors will be able to register and take the online quiz at any of the set eight (8) quiz times on the quiz date. Competitors will be able to take a 30 question quiz within a pre-announced 60-minute quiz period. Competitors will have up to 60 minutes to complete the quiz. For example, if a quiz is scheduled from 06:00 GMT – 07:00 GMT, and if you begin the quiz at 6:15am GMT, you will only have 45 minutes to complete the quiz. Your highest score will be the score recorded, so whatever your highest score will be the score you will finish in Round 1. One (1) of your scores must be 15 or higher (or 50% correctly answered questions) in order to advance to Round 2. Once advanced to Round 2, there is no need to take additional quizzes, but you are welcome to do so if you would like to attempt to improve your score.

The questions will test your knowledge around both, **on-premise Microsoft technologies** such as Windows 2008 R2, Hyper-V Virtualization, Exchange 2010, SharePoint 2010, Windows 7, System Center Operations Manager 2012, System Center Configuration Manager 2012, TMG 2010, UAG 2010, SQL 2008 R2, Office 2010, Lync 2012 as well as **cloud-based Microsoft services** such as Office 365, Windows Azure, and SQL Azure. Each quiz will have a unique blend of questions on each topic.

Additionally, in Round 1, the [IT Challenge Forum](#) will be dedicated to the IT Challenge and maintained with technical tips, Challenge updates, preparation hints, and more information will be made available as the Challenge progresses. The IT Challenge captains will actively post, monitor and share information via the IT Challenge forum, and competitors will be encouraged to interact with one another on the forum, as well.

Round 2 – Case Study

If you successfully advance to compete in Round 2 of the IT Challenge, you will compete against other Round 2 competitors in a single case study submission. The specific deliverables and questions for the IT Challenge Round 2 Case Study will be emailed to the Round 2 competitors at the beginning of Round 2.

This portion of your entry will be submitted via an essay-based submission and will test your ability to think through and describe an architecture and method of implementation of a Microsoft on-premise and cloud-based environment. The goal of this round is to make sure you have a real world view of the technologies, and are not just "book smart" but also some practical understanding of the technologies. The scenario will include the Microsoft technologies covered in Round 1, and key hints, tips, and content will draw on information shared on the Imagine Cup IT Challenge forum. Competitors who actively participate in the Imagine Cup IT Challenge forum will be provided clues and hints into the information needed to submit a "complete" Round 2 case study. IT Challenge captains will be monitoring the information shared on the Imagine Cup IT Challenge forum page.

Round 3 – Final Challenge – Virtual Hands-On Lab

If you are invited to compete in the Final Challenge, you will compete in a “Hands-on Virtual Lab” Round which will test the top 6 (six) competitors (limit one competitor per country) and their practical hands-on knowledge of IT solutions.

The Final Challenge will be held in a virtual environment in May 2012 and each finalist competitor will compete from their remote location (e.g. home, school, etc.). Competitors will be given 24 hours to complete the hands-on lab test. More information will be provided to the top six (6) competitors prior to the Round 3 Final Challenge start date about how best to connect to the internet and compete successfully in Round 3.

This lab will challenge the finalist competitors to build servers, server images, and configurations on a Hyper-V host server and in the Cloud to prove their practical knowledge and experience with the technologies. Competitors will be asked to set up, install, and demonstrate knowledge and expertise of Windows 2008 R2, Exchange 2010, Windows 7, Office 2010, System Center Configuration Manager 2012, System Center Operations Manager 2012, System Center Virtual Machine Manager 2012, TMG 2010, SQL 2008 R2, Lync 2010, Office 365, Windows Azure, SQL Azure, etc.

HOW DO I SUBMIT MY ENTRY?

Round 1 – Qualifying Quiz

Sign in to imaginecup.com and navigate to the IT Challenge page and complete any of the available quizzes before the close of Round 1.

Round 2 – Case Study

If you advance to compete in Round 2, submit your entry for Round 2 via the entry panel of the IT Challenge page at imaginecup.com no later than the closing date of Round 2. The submission form on this page will include the following fields below. These fields are independent of your submission components and may be used by Microsoft to show your entry to the public if you advance to Round 3. All fields below are required.

- 1. Entry File:** To upload your entry collect all your entry materials and load into a .ZIP file. If the Round for which you are submitting requires only one (1) file, please use a .ZIP file to upload regardless.
- 2. Thumbnail:** This is an image which is a small representation of your entry. There are no size requirements for your Thumbnail.
- 3. Entry Title:** This title will represent the name of your entry and must be submitted in the English language and is limited to 500 characters including spaces.
- 4. Entry Description:** This is a statement describing your Case Study. It must be submitted in the English language and is recommended to be 600 characters including spaces.
- 5. Technologies Used:** Please list the technologies you have utilized in your submission. This must be submitted in the English language.

Round 3 – Final Challenge – Virtual Hands-On Lab

The top six (6) competitors advanced to compete in the Final Challenge will receive an e-mail with specific instructions regarding the Final Challenge competition process and requirements.

HOW WILL ENTRIES BE JUDGED?

Round 1 – Qualifying Quiz

At the conclusion of the Round 1 Entry Period, every eligible competitor who achieved a valid score of 15 or higher (or 50% correctly answered questions) on any single Round 1 quiz will advance to compete in Round 2 of the Challenge.

Round 2 – Case Study

At the conclusion of the Round 2 Entry Period, all eligible entries received will be reviewed by a panel (or panels) of international judges based on the unique criteria listed below to determine up to six (6) or more of the top competitors, one (1) per country/region, (each, a “Finalist”) that will advance to compete in the Final Challenge.

Round 2 – Case Study Judging Criteria

- 30% - **Satisfaction of Proposal Requirements:** Does your proposal address all technical and customer issues as outlined in the case study? Have you demonstrated that you thoroughly understood and addressed the customer needs?
- 30% - **Technical Feasibility and Accuracy:** Does your proposal make correct use of appropriate technology? Have you applied the correct technology to address the customer needs? Is what you are proposing technically possible? Have you made the most cost-effective decisions based on the customer needs?
- 30% - **Justification for Recommendations:** Are you able to demonstrate that your solution is the most appropriate response to the customer’s needs? Have you addressed each portion of the customer requirements?
- 10% - **Quality:** Is the case study well-written and comprised of all of the correct elements?

Round 3 – Final Challenge – Virtual Hands-On Lab Judging Criteria

Each finalist competitor will be asked to complete a series of twenty (20) Challenge Tasks to demonstrate to the judges that their solution is functional and technically sound. A panel of judges will observe, ask questions, and score each competitor in areas covering the services and the solution. Each task will be scored on a scale of 1 to 10. There are two sets of Challenge Tasks: Milestone Tasks and Demonstration Tasks.

- **Milestone Tasks:** There will be five (5) milestone tasks. These tasks will be completed during the challenge. All competitors will complete the milestone tasks at the same time. The competitors will be given these tasks one hour before they are required to complete them at evenly spaced intervals during the challenge. These five (5) milestone tasks will collectively be worth 25% of the final score.
- **Demonstration Tasks:** At the end of the challenge, competitors will be judged on their ability to demonstrate a final set of tasks within each service. There will be fifteen (15) demonstration tasks that test the functionality of the solution. These fifteen (15) demonstration tasks will count for 75% of the final score.

The table below summarizes the Round 3 scoring:

Tasks	Quantity	Percent of Score
Milestone Tasks	5	25%
Demonstration Tasks	15	75%
Total	20	100%

The scores for each task will be averaged, and then task scores will be added together to determine the competitor's final score. The finalist competitor with the highest total score will be the winner, with second and third place being awarded to the second and third highest scores.

PRIZES

Final Challenge – Virtual Hands-On Lab: The top three (3) finalists will receive a trip to the Imagine Cup 2012 Worldwide Finals in Sydney, Australia. Trip includes round trip coach airfare from a major airport closest to each competitor's home, standard hotel accommodations, and select meals and activities.

- **First Place:** \$8,000 USD
- **Second Place:** \$4,000 USD
- **Third Place:** \$3,000 USD