

Everything you needed to know about being a DECA Judge

Provincial Competition

You will be evaluating student competitors from over 300+ secondary schools across Ontario at the 45th annual Ontario DECA Provincial competition. We continue to experience membership growth this year. Over 6,500 students are here because they desire to challenge themselves to enhance their business skills through competition. Thank you for making this event possible for our kids!

What is judging?

Judging an event means you will be evaluating participants in a certain category (ex. Apparel and Accessories, Hospitality, Finance, etc.) based on how well they demonstrate their knowledge on the situation they are faced with.

What to expect from our students

Students will vary in performance ability. Many are participating in their first competitive experience and others have had years of experience. You will find some students to be very competent because they have competed before, are presently employed in the occupational field, or have spent a good deal of time preparing. Of course, even well prepared students can “freeze” under pressure. It is important that you put the student at ease at the event’s onset.

How to judge events

When you arrive, you will read through the event materials carefully to familiarize yourself with the event. These will include a Brief Description of the Event, Competencies to be Tested, Student Instructions, and the Evaluation Form. This is provided during the judge training session and CANNOT be provided in advance. You will then discuss as a group with the other judges in your category and your Series Director, the elements of the role-play. Once the briefing is done, you will then move to your judging area.

Each participant will then present their ideas to you. Each student may conduct a slightly different type of meeting and/or discussion with you each time. However, it is important that you maintain and demonstrate the **exact same behaviour** with each participant. You will then ask the provided questions. **Consistency is a very important element of judging.** You should not add any additional comments.

Timing and flow

The student has a definite period of time to prepare for the presentation or role-play, and another limited period of time with you. After the presentation, you will take a few minutes to complete the evaluation. After your first few role-plays, time is provided for all judges of the event to reconvene and discuss what they have experienced. This provides an opportunity to reach a general consensus on the scoring.

Tentative timing for February 9, 2024

8:00 am	Judge Arrival at the Toronto Sheraton Centre for all Judges; light continental breakfast
8:15 am	Judge Training begins
9:00 am	Move to judging areas to begin morning rounds
12:00 pm	Hot, buffet lunch provided for all Judges
12:45 pm	Briefing for all judges in second case study (for individual and principle events only)

Overall scoring process

Individual/Principle Competitive Series Events

The student will be participating in three events, two of which are role-play situations. The third is an exam of 100 multiple-choice questions. A student can win an award in each event or an overall award. The score you give each student is included in this overall ranking. The top seven students at this provincial competition qualify for team Ontario DECA, and will continue on to compete at the Internationals. This year they are being held in Anaheim, California. Therefore, the points you award a student are very important.

Team Decision Making Events

Two students will be participating in one role-play situation and each team member will complete their own written exam of one hundred questions. Student pairs may win an award in either event. The top awards are presented to the top teams of students who do well in both events. The top seven teams at this provincial competition qualify for team Ontario DECA, and will continue on to compete at the Internationals. This year they are being held in Anaheim, California. Therefore, the points you award a student are very important.

Written Business Plans

These students are responsible for completing a written business plan ranging from 5-20 pages depending on the event as well as a presentation. Some of these students also complete an exam of one hundred multiple-choice questions. A student can win an award in the exam and/or based on their overall ranking (from the presentation and paper). The top six teams who attain a mark of 70% or better will represent Ontario DECA at the International competition in Anaheim, California.

Specific scoring rubrics can be found on the sample case online and will be provided on the day of the event

Things to remember

Relax and have fun! The participants are excited and anxious to meet with you and present their role-play or project. Take pleasure in the interaction. Try and put the students at ease by smiling and being an active listener. Students are generally nervous and need the reassurance to perform. By making them as comfortable as possible, you are helping the students to do their best and achieve their full potential. Some students are very comfortable speaking in front of a judge, and are very creative and spontaneous. For others, the experience can be terrifying. Another aspect is to identify the students who have spent hours studying and researching the competencies of the event. As a judge, your challenge is to reward the students who can do well with both — performance and demonstration of knowledge with creative or problem-solving skills.

Thank you for volunteering your valuable time to be a DECA judge. You have entered into an important partnership that joins the business community, DECA Ontario, and the students interested in leadership, marketing entrepreneurship and management careers. Your participation is evidence of your interest in business education. DECA Ontario applauds your support.