

COBIS Research Skills Competition, in partnership with GEC Academy

Terms and Conditions

The COBIS Research Skills Competition will take place from 11 January 2027. The competition will be delivered in partnership with GEC Academy.

Eligibility

- The COBIS Research Skills Competition is open to COBIS member schools including applicant schools. Each school with a registered COBIS account should participate as an individual school.
- Those who register from non-member schools will be denied access to the competition.
- This competition is open to students KS4 & KS5, aged 14-18.
- Schools may only submit competition entries from bona fide students at their school.

Registration

- Schools must register for the event via the online form on the COBIS website.
- All bookings must be made by school staff.
- **The deadline to register for this competition is midday GMT on 19 November 2026.**

Competition Submissions

- Submissions will be accepted from 11 January 2027 until midday GMT on 22 February 2027.

Entries

- The COBIS Research Skills Competition places no restrictions on subject areas; students are free to choose any subject & topic they are interested in for their final research report. All entries must be appropriate, ethical, and suitable for a school-based academic environment. COBIS and GEC Academy reserve the right to exclude entries that do not adhere to these standards.
- Entries must be the students' own work (research report).
- Students must successfully complete the required programme learning activities, including submission of any mandatory module notes or learning records specified by GEC Academy, before their research report can proceed to the competition review stage.
- The student and school name should appear on the student's submitted work.
- Any foul play, AI cheating, plagiarism or attempted manipulation of the results will result in a permanent exclusion of the offending school from the COBIS Research Skills Competition. The judgement of GEC Academy and COBIS on this point will be final
- COBIS reserves the right to cancel or amend the Competition and these terms and conditions without notice.

Judging and Prizes

- The judges' decision regarding the winners of the COBIS Research Skills Competition will be final and binding. No correspondence will be entered into after results are published.
- The winning students will be announced by 19/04/2027. The winners will be notified by email.
- No responsibility can be accepted for entries not received for whatever reason. Any entries received after the closing date will not be considered.
- The top 3 winners will receive:
 - A £50 Amazon Gift Card;

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- Feature coverage on COBIS & GEC platforms;
 - 20% Scholarship for future GEC Pathway research projects;
 - Ofqual-regulated Level 3 Research Skills Certificate (8 UCAS points). With extra four hours of learning
- All participating schools will be recognised as GEC Academy Research Schools. The top 3 school winners will receive exclusive GEC benefits, including bursaries and scholarships for GEC professor-led research programmes.
 - All Participants will receive:
 - A certificate of completion/participation;
 - priority access (with discount) to GEC Academy accredited courses;
 - appointment as a GEC Academy Research Skills Ambassador;
 - free access to the LUMINAI Lecture Series featuring global university leaders and Nobel Laureates;
 - an option to further study Level 3 UCAS 8 points research skills qualification (extra 4 hours / online record learning with a fee).

Finance

- The cost per student is £70
- Invoices will be raised by GEC Academy. Schools must pay the participation fee in a timely manner, in accordance with the timeline specified on the invoice.
- If a school does not pay their fee by the date shown on the invoice, their place may be revoked.
- If a student withdraws after **19 November 2026**, the fee will still be payable, and any payments received will be retained.
- Students who are not one of the 3 winners and who wish to complete the Level 3 Research Skills in Academic Studies are able to do so upon payment of a £285 fee per student (special discounted rate).
- Schools must confirm how many students will be participating on the registration form to allow GEC Academy to raise invoices. If these numbers change, please contact students@cobis.org.uk by **19 November 2026**.

Amendments and Cancellation

- COBIS and GEC Academy reserve the right to update these Terms and Conditions, change competition details, or cancel the competition in response to unforeseen circumstances. Registered schools will be notified of any significant changes as early as possible.

Supervision and Safeguarding

- The school retains full safeguarding responsibility throughout the course of this competition.

COBIS Student Code of Conduct

By participating in a COBIS Student Event, individuals agree to abide by the Code of Conduct. Participants who exhibit any behaviour that contravenes this may be immediately removed from the event in question and may be suspended from future COBIS events. Please review the [COBIS Student Events Code of Conduct](#), relating to students and staff, in full.

Students:

- Demonstrate empathy, tolerance, respect, and kindness towards others.
- Be respectful of differing opinions, viewpoints, experiences, and cultural sensitivities.
- Be considerate and respectful to all participants, attendees, hosts, officials and COBIS staff.

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- Do not engage in unacceptable behaviour, including but not limited to demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behaviour, materials, or speech, whether in-person or online.
- Adhere to digital etiquette during online events including appropriate use of chat, breakout rooms, and screen sharing. The expectation will be for cameras to be turned on when requested (where this impacts bandwidth or connectivity, participants can ask permission to turn cameras back off once the event has begun).
- Take part for enjoyment and strive for personal excellence.
- Graciously accept constructive feedback
- Compete by the competition conditions and rules.
- Accept responsibility and apologising to those affected by our mistakes, and learning from the experience
- Learn to value honest effort, skilled performance and improvement.
- Cooperate with the officials, teachers, and teammates (if applicable).
- Do not argue with the officials' decisions.

Data Processing

- In order to administer this event, COBIS will collect the following information:
 - **School:** Name; address, and country
 - **Teacher:** Headteacher name; Lead teacher name, email and job title; Finance contact name and email
 - **Student:** Name; age; email addresses (this should be a school email address).
- Information will be collected by COBIS via an online form created in COBIS's website (Finalsite). This data will be shared with GEC Academy for the administration and delivery of the event. GEC Academy will act as the primary data processor for the purposes of programme delivery. Personal Data will be used by GEC solely to:
 - Administer student participation in the competition;
 - Provide access to and operate the online learning platform, including assignment submission, feedback, messaging, and announcements;
 - Communicate directly with students regarding competition-related matters (including deadlines, assignments, and programme updates);
 - Issue certificates directly to students via email following completion of the competition;
 - Prepare and share school-level performance reports with participating schools.

GEC shall ensure that:

- Only the minimum necessary Personal Data is processed;
- All data is processed securely and in accordance with applicable data protection laws, including GDPR;
- The online platform is appropriately moderated and secured;
- Personal Data is not used for marketing or promotion of unrelated programmes, except where explicitly permitted or where separate consent has been obtained.

COBIS will act as a facilitator and data controller for its role in coordinating participation. COBIS will use Personal Data solely to:

- Liaise with participating schools and designated lead teachers;
- Support programme coordination and oversight;
- Share relevant programme information with schools.

COBIS will not contact students directly and will not share Personal Data beyond what is necessary to facilitate participation.

COBIS and GEC Academy have a data sharing agreement in place to protect the transfer of this information.

- The full name, age, and school name of any students taking part will be published on the COBIS and GEC Academy website and social media. This information may also be published and promoted at the COBIS Annual Conference in May 2027 and in other COBIS-related publications. Participants may be asked to take part in such reasonable promotional activities and material as COBIS may require. By entering the competition, the teacher confirms that the appropriate consent

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are over the age of 13) to publish this information (full name and photo/video images, and school name and logo). COBIS may request evidence of this consent at any time, such as signed parental / guardian consent forms or confirmation of school policy.

- COBIS will process and retain this data in line with their [Privacy Policy](#). GEC Academy will process this data in line with their [Data Protection Policy](#).
- In line with the applicable Data Protection Laws, the data subject or legal guardian (if the data subject is under 13) may request the removal of their name at any time. Please contact students@cobis.org.uk to make this request.

These event Terms and Conditions should be read in conjunction with the COBIS Membership Terms and Conditions (with specific reference to Schedule 14), which is linked [here](#). By agreeing to these event Terms and Conditions, you agree to also be bound by the relevant sections of the COBIS Membership Terms and Conditions. Should your school not adhere to the Membership Terms and Conditions, your membership with COBIS may be subject to review as determined by the COBIS Board.

COBIS reserves the right to publish updated guidance and Terms and Conditions regarding the COBIS Research Skills Competition 2026-27.

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