



European CAsE Study Alliance
2019-1-DE01-KA203-005037

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



ECASA

Case Competition 2022

Official Rules and Guidelines – Online Competition

Current Status: 25.03.2022

© 2022, ECASA

The following rules and guidelines for the ECASA Case Competition are intended to ensure fairness to all participating teams. The organizers and judges of the Competition, as selected by the ECASA Organizing Committee, will strictly enforce Competition rules. Any interpretation of these rules that may arise during the Competition will be solely the responsibility of the organizers. Their decisions will be final.

The ECASA project (2019-1-DE01-KA203-005037) is financed by Union funds (ERASMUS+). But the content of this document only reflects the views of the authors, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Introduction

The ECASA Case Competition provides students from Europe with an opportunity to test and showcase their analytical and problem-solving and skills. The competition is judged by academics and managers with international business expertise.

Outline of the online competition

- The competition starts with a Qualifying Round.
- Teams will be assigned to a division using a random draw that accounts for the order of finish in the Qualifying Round.
- Cases used in the competition will be selected by the Competition Organizing Committee and will be multi-disciplinary and focused on European SMEs.
- The competition will consist of four cases including the qualifying case.
- The Championship Final will feature the three divisional winners.
- Details are discussed in the respective sections below.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Student Eligibility

The ECASA Case Competition is open to any student registered, *for the duration of the Competition*, in an undergraduate (bachelor level or equivalent) programme.

1.2 Team Composition

The team is composed of four eligible undergraduate students chosen by their university, accompanied by a team coach.

1.3 Team Coach

A coach is an individual assigned by a participating university to oversee the preparation and training of his team for the ECASA Case Competition. The team coach is normally a lecturer of the university.

1.4 Absence of a Team Member

No extra person will be allowed to join a team in the event, if the team starts the competition with only three team members; the team will be allowed to participate with three team members. When a team member becomes ill and is unable to participate during the competition, the team will be allowed to participate with the remaining team members.

1.5 Withdrawal of a Team

On very rare occasions, a team may withdraw from the competition after the teams have been announced. When this happens with sufficient lead time, the school will be replaced. If a substitute cannot be found, a spare team from one of the other participating universities may be invited to take the spot. It is also conceivable that a team may need to withdraw at the last minute – potentially as late as one or two days before the start of the ECASA Case Competition. In that case, the competition will be modified to allow for the participation of the actual number of teams. The competition schedule will remain the same.

The ECASA project (2019-1-DE01-KA203-005037) is financed by Union funds (ERASMUS+). But the content of this document only reflects the views of the authors, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

1.6 Language

All case presentations and discussions are held in English.

2. THE ECASA CASE COMPETITION STRUCTURE

2.1 4 Matches, 4 Cases, 1 Final

Round 0

The competition starts with a Qualifying Round, ± three weeks before the competition itself. 16 Teams get the qualification case by e-mail and have 9 days to come up with a solution. Each team sends this solution in form of a taped video-presentation of 5 minutes max. to the ECASA Organizing Committee. An independent jury will rank the teams and the best 9 teams will proceed to the actual case competition week. The participating teams will be divided into three divisions. A random draw that considers the Qualifying Round results will be held in order to assign teams to divisions.

Round 1 and 2

The first two rounds of matches will be contested in three divisions of three teams each. Preparation time is 8 hours, presentation time 12 minutes (live online presentation) and questions & answers (Q&A) time is 10 minutes (live online Q&A). In each round, after all three teams have presented and have been judged, the three teams will be ranked from 1 to 3 and get points.

Round 3

Friday is the Final Round, which sees the three divisional winners compete head-to-head against each other and present their solution of a 6-hour case. Again, presentation time is 12 minutes (live online presentation) and questions & answers time is 10 minutes (live online Q&A). Directly after all three finalists have presented and have been judged, the teams will be ranked from 1 to 3: gold, silver and bronze.

Time before competition	Round 0: Qualifying round preparation and presentation via pre-taped video	16 teams
Day 1	Round 1: preparation (8 hours)	9 teams
Day 2	Round 1: presentation and feedback	9 teams
Day 3	Round 2: preparation (8 hours)	9 teams
Day 4	Round 2: presentation and feedback	9 teams
Day 5	Round 3: preparation (6 hours) Round 3: presentation	3 teams

The ECASA project (2019-1-DE01-KA203-005037) is financed by Union funds (ERASMUS+). But the content of this document only reflects the views of the authors, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

2.2 Preparation Time

One digital copy of the case will be e-mailed to all four of the team members at a pre-selected time.

Once resolution begins and continuing until the PowerPoint presentation has been delivered, the team is only permitted to communicate among themselves, and – for very urgent questions only – with the ECASA Organizing Committee. Communication in any form with anyone else is strictly prohibited. This prohibition on communication includes communication in any form with faculty advisors / coaches.

Coaches are NOT allowed to have any contact with their teams until the live Q&A period of their teams has been finished. Furthermore, competitors are NOT permitted to contact the company/ies discussed in the case.

For round 1 and round 2, each team has eight hours to prepare its case analysis and case solution: for round 3 (the final) it is six hours. Analysis and solution will have to be described and represented in a number of PowerPoint slides (PowerPoint version 16.0). The maximum number of slides permitted in a presentation is 25. Slides may be retained by the presenting group for use in the question & answer session that follows the presentation. The total amount of slides, however, may never exceed 25. In case pictures are used in the slides, make sure to compress them for web-friendly format. The file must be uploaded with the following strict filename format: slides-<name University>-Case <number 1, 2, 3 or 4>. For instance: slides-FHDO-Case 1.

After eight hours (six hours in the final) teams must save the final version of their slides onto their computers, upload them in their MS TEAMS room and send them to the Organizing Committee via e-mail. Via whatever channel the file is received first, determines the submission time. Exceeding eight hours (six hours in the final) of preparation and uploading time leads to deduction of points and possibly even exclusion from the case round.

Permitted

- Each team may use one or more ready-made presentation templates in PowerPoint. No third-party templates are allowed.
- A template may contain graphics such as images, arrows, boxes, organization charts, icons, maps, and photographs. Videos and dynamic/animated images are NOT permitted in the template.
- Teams are encouraged not to use school logos, but to design own logos that represent the consultancy agency they want to be in the matches.
- The use of textbooks and the use of internet is permitted, but “open sources” only.

Not permitted

- Accessing password protected websites and databases during the competition preparation times (e-mail, dropbox, JSTOR, LexisNexis etc.).
- No outside help is allowed during the case solving and presentation recording, this includes, but is not limited to; help from faculty staff, other students and any non-team member.
- The coach / faculty advisor is not allowed to be in contact with the team about the case content, solution, or presentation in between case submission and Q&A.
- Competitors are NOT permitted to contact the company/ies discussed in the case.

2.3 Presentation Rules

Competing in a division means that teams in one division present the case to the same panel of judges.

The ECASA project (2019-1-DE01-KA203-005037) is financed by Union funds (ERASMUS+). But the content of this document only reflects the views of the authors, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

At the time set in the division schedule, each team will start presenting live to the judging panel, with each presentation lasting a maximum twelve (12) minutes. Teams are expected to use the entire 12 minutes.

As soon as the presentation has finished, the Question & Answer (Q&A) period will begin, maximum ten (10) minutes.

The timekeeper controls the time. Presentations and Q&A will be cut off at the conclusion of the allotted time.

All four members of the team must present. These team members must be visible as well as the PowerPoint slides must be visible.

When team members present, they must all be on separate computers so that each individual appears separately (i.e., individuals who are working from the same location may not appear on the same camera). This helps to ensure that all presentations will have a similar look and feel, which makes judging more equal and provides a level playing field.

Participants are encouraged not to use their school name during the presentation, but rather to create a unique name for their consulting firm.

In case a team faces technical difficulties during the presentation or Q&A, the clock will be stopped until the difficulties have been solved. However, the time will not be paused for longer than 5 minutes in total.

Presentations and Q&As of all teams will be recorded.

2.4 Audience

Coaches are allowed to join the live Presentation and Q&A session of their team and other teams but must stay muted and switch off their camera throughout the entire session. Teams are not allowed to watch other presentations, except the presentations in the Final Round; teams are encouraged to watch all final presentations! Teams that are in the finals themselves, are permitted to watch the presentations which occur after they have presented.

3. JUDGING

3.1 Scoring Rules (Round 1, 2 and 3)

When judging the cases, judges will allocate 6, 8 and 10 points based on their assessment of the relative performance of the three teams (10 for best team, 8 for the second-best team, etc.).

Apart from presentation skills and persuasiveness judges will closely look at:

- I. Identification of the key issues
- II. Main descriptive facts and assumptions – as required as a foundation for the subsequent analysis
- III. Analysis of supporting data – relevant to the problem and recommendations
- IV. Identification of alternatives – all feasible and relevant to the problem
- V. Decision matrix – the basis for selecting among leading alternatives
- VI. Implementation, including financials – the recommendations / action plan that the team believes (and the analysis proves) will solve the problem; the team has to address the areas of Marketing, Finance, Operations, Human Resources, ICT and other relevant areas.

Results of the Qualifying Case will be communicated via e-mail.

The ECASA project (2019-1-DE01-KA203-005037) is financed by Union funds (ERASMUS+). But the content of this document only reflects the views of the authors, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Results of the 8-hour cases will be communicated during the feedback sessions.

The teams that lead their respective divisions in points after round 2 will be chosen for the finals. If there is a tie in the total scores, the team with the higher score in the last case (round 2) will advance.

The structure and rules of the final round are identical to those of the 8-hour cases.

3.2 Judging panel and logistics

Judges are selected by the ECASA consortium partners and represent different professional experiences and backgrounds. Ideally, each judging panel contains representation from the business community, government leaders, case competition alumni, and university faculty members. Each judging panel consists of three judges. This panel is composed in such a way that at least an academic, a businessperson and – if possible - an alumnus is represented. Each panel has a judging head. The formation of the judging panels is the sole responsibility of the organisers and cannot be contested.

Prior to each round, a briefing session will be held to provide judges with additional information about their role and that day's case. Judges will arrive in the digital judges' room 60 minutes before the first scheduled presentation time. The digital platform is Microsoft Teams for which they will be invited via e-mail.

After the briefing they will go to the digital presentation room and take seat in the judging panel. The judging panel is encouraged to develop a judging strategy depending on the available capabilities amongst the panel. Some judges might be good in finance and others in marketing etc. These capabilities can be used during the presentation and Q&A session. They will “act” as an advisor to the protagonist in the case.

Judges will receive a digital copy of the presentation slides submitted by the team for viewing on their own computers.

After watching the presentation, judges will pose questions to the team which has just presented. Right after every Q&A round judges begin their deliberation. The head of the jury collects feedback from every judge and fills in the feedback form. Judges will work to come to a consensus when evaluating and scoring the teams. There are no ties.

3.3 Judges' Feedback

Feedback will be given according to a schedule made by the Organizing Committee. Judges will give both oral and written feedback to the competing teams (and their coaches), one team at a time, for 15 minutes, in such a way that the teams understand the reasons why and how they should or could improve their performance in the next round.

Teams are not permitted to hear the feedback of other teams. The completed feedback form used by the judges in their evaluation will be made available to each of the teams.

4. PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF RULE VIOLATION

The organisers retain the right to disqualify any team from the ECASA Case Competition, if the rules are not observed or if a team does not maintain a proper standard of conduct in the professional and collegial spirit of the competition. Any concerns or disputes regarding the implementation of these rules and/or any improper or disloyal behaviour must be brought to the immediate attention of the organisers. Please note that the decision of the organisers is final and not subject to review.

The ECASA project (2019-1-DE01-KA203-005037) is financed by Union funds (ERASMUS+). But the content of this document only reflects the views of the authors, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.