



Qualifying Round

Updated: 03/06/2025

- 1. I have a question about eligibility. I was there last year as a participant and am still finishing up my degree in process technology. Just wanted to know if I am still eligible to participate in this year's competition.**

Based on the fact that process technology is a two-year degree program at a minimum, a student may compete in the competition for two consecutive events as long as said student is currently enrolled in the PTECH program and meets all other stated criteria.

- 2. What type of computer requirements do we need? i.e. what size and resolution monitor?**

To clarify, the Qualifying Round will use a web-based Learning Management System to administer a test based on troubleshooting scenarios and related questions. Systran's Talent LMS is being utilized for the Qualifying Rounds of the competition. No simulator is required.

The primary specifications for using Systran's Talent LMS are Internet access (high speed recommended), an Internet browser such as Microsoft Edge, Chrome, or Firefox, and that any pop-up blocker software turned off. We recommend at least one 21-inch monitor or similar. Two monitors are preferred.

Teams selected to participate in the NAPTA Troubleshooting Competition Champion rounds will use a simulator from Simtronics, Inc. (the Dynamic Simulator System).

- 3. (Do we need) One or Two monitors, can it be on a big screen HD TV as well?**

You can use any monitor arrangement that suits your team's needs. However, you may want to have dual or large screen monitors to properly view some materials that will be supplied with the Qualifying Round test (such as the training manual or scenario information at the same time while you are viewing the test).

- 4. Do we need the internet to get to the simulation program?**

You will need an internet connection to access the web-based Talent LMS during the Qualifying Round. You will not use a simulator in the Qualifying Round.

- 5. How long does the first round take on average? We need to book a computer lab and I just need to get an idea of how long we need the room.**

There are three scenarios. Each requires between 30 and 45 minutes to complete. You should plan on booking at least four hours of computer-room time.

- 6. The simulator program we use at our school is GSE Envision, with many refinery models. I was told that the trouble shooting simulator is a model by Simtronics. So, it is just a different company, there will be some difference in how to navigate, what the help menu looks like, what the models look like, etc. In theory everything should operate the same, but sometimes just trying figure what the graphics all mean can be a problem.**

My questions are will the students actually be running the simulator or are they just seeing a snap shot of a graphics screen and then trying to trouble shoot from that or will they need to operate the different



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simulator, and how do we get access to the simulator needed for the testing? Is it just a download or is there a link to something?

For the Qualifying Round, teams will view troubleshooting scenarios (which can include P&IDs) through a web-based Learning Management System and take a test, answering questions about the scenarios using the supplied information. See question #4.

The NAPTA Troubleshooting Competition Championship rounds will use the Simtronics simulator. Not everyone has this simulator, so teams selected for the Championship Competition will attend a training session and have practice time on the Simtronics simulator. For more details, you can view information about the simulator by visiting www.simtronics.com.

7. Will team members get to practice as individuals (on the Learning Management System for the Qualifying Round), or are they required to practice as a team only?

Early access to the Learning Management System (LMS) used for the Qualifying Round will be provided, prior to your competition date, so a technical person from the college (or location where the team will hold its Qualifying Round) is able to ensure that the LMS can be properly accessed at the location.

Also, your team and/or individual team members will have the opportunity to become comfortable with how to use the LMS and view a sample test that contains similar content to the actual test. The actual troubleshooting competition test will not be made available until your scheduled competition date.

8. What are the steps involved for students to access the practice program (LMS)?

A document with a link and test login will be sent to all coaches. The coach should share the link with a technical person at the college or other location to verify the LMS can be accessed through the Internet at that location.

The coach can then share the link with the team so they can practice logging into the system.

9. Will the students get to practice (on the LMS) at only certain times of the day, or can they access the website and practice 24/7?

Access to the LMS is available 24 hours a day, seven days. The coach will be given a login for the team to use to log on to the LMS and take the sample test.

A separate login for the proctor and team will be provided one day before the Qualifying Round to allow access for the actual Qualifying Round. The proctor must be present when the team logs in for the Qualifying Round. The team cannot log in prior to their designated start time.

10. Ideally the whole 4-person team should access (the LMS) at the same time and at the same location (i.e. School Computer lab) ...to practice...but will the team members be able to access the (LMS) individually?

See question #7.



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11. I saw that an application called the Virtual Field Operator will be added to the National Competition. What is the Virtual Field Operator?

The Virtual Field Operator (VFO), developed by Simtronics, Inc., is an immersive 3D plant operating environment. With the VFO, users can navigate an operator around virtual units with a game controller, tracing flows and locating equipment, observing process conditions and taking readings from instruments. Activities such as opening and closing valves or starting and stopping pumps will impact the operation of the process and their impact will be visible to the console operator.

Troubleshooting teams selected for the National Competition will attend a VFO training session before the completion.

12. Can we have four teams from the same campus to participate in the Qualifying Round Competition?

Yes, you can field as many teams as you want for the Qualifying Round as long as each team has three students enrolled in your Process Technology or Instrumentation programs and meet the other criteria (see page 1). The same student cannot participate on multiple teams.

13. If two of our school's teams score among the top 12, will there still only be one team selected from my school system?

Two teams from any one school system will be eligible to advance to the NAPTA Troubleshooting Competition Championship round if they finish in the top 12.

14. May the Qualifying Round Competition be conducted on a Saturday?

The Qualifying Round must be scheduled and be completed Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Central Time.

15. Can teams from the same campus complete the Qualifying Round Competition on different days?

Yes, it is up to your school, teams, and proctor(s) to agree on the Qualifying Round Competition dates for your team.

16. What if the LMS does not work with our computer infrastructure?

You will be allowed to use an alternate location with a computer and Internet access to participate in the qualifying round.

17. Is the LMS accessed via a website?

Yes, the web-based Systran Talent LMS will be used for the Qualifying Round.

18. What if I do not know who will serve as proctor yet?

Enter "To Be Determined" for all the proctor-related information fields on the registration form. You must designate a proctor by the deadline, by completing the form emailed to the team coach prior to QR starting. We need this information so we can create a Learning Management System login for your proctor.



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19. Can the team have students that have already graduated, but not worked in a plant yet?

Students must be currently enrolled in a Process Technology, Instrumentation Program, or other approved program at your college during the Spring of the competition year, in either a semester or quarter system.

20. When will we get further information?

This Qualifying Round Questions document will be updated regularly on <http://www.naptaonline.org/events/tsc>.

21. We have Envision at our school. Would we have to purchase a particular Simtronics Simulator?

No. See question #6.

22. Can you say which Simtronics model the competition will be on?

No – Students should work toward being proficient in the troubleshooting traits and skills described in the webinar presentation.

23. The previous slide...“Students must cover travel costs to Championship round”...If they make it to the Championship round. 2 years ago those costs were somewhat covered. Is any costs of the finalists covered this time?

*NAPTA will award scholarships in the amount of \$500 to help cover hotel costs for teams securing a place in the Championship Competition that are located equal to or greater than 25 miles from the competition site. These funds are paid directly to the hotel. **The host college will not receive these funds.***

Remaining travel costs will need to be assumed by the college whose team is selected for the TSC Championship Competition event. More information is given in the general documentation found online on the NAPTA Troubleshooting web page.

24. Can the proctor be an instructor from another program?

Faculty or personnel from another college program can proctor the test. The proctor should not be an instructor with the Process Technology or Instrumentation program, or in any way affiliated with the program.

25. Will the computers need specific simulator software?

See Question #2.

26. Is the Championship competition round split with inside and outside operators communicating on radios or is everyone around one simulator screen?

In previous competitions we had at least one exercise round that required the teams to split up. One person worked as an outside operator in a separate room at a separate station.

27. I have a student who completed the Process Technology program and has a degree. The student served as an alternate on a team for the previous competition. The student is currently enrolled in the Instrumentation program. Is this person eligible to participate as a team competitor?



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Per eligibility rules, all student competitors must be currently enrolled in a process technology, instrumentation, or other related program approved by the TSC Committee.

28. Comment from an industry point of view.

The competition should be discussed and promoted as an employment opportunity. Industry representatives from many companies attend and host booths to have the opportunity to speak with the competitors.

(Staff note: The industry networking opportunity has been expanded and will include activities for all students when not competing in the Championship Round.)

29. Will there be an opportunity to practice prior to the competition rounds?

Yes – There will be a practice session on Thursday afternoon starting at 2:30 PM. The competition site will provide enough computers to ensure all teams will have a chance to practice and become familiar with the system.

30. I have students who would like to compete but have not completed the needed courses. Would the team be eligible to compete?

We recommend that colleges enter teams who have completed basic process technology courses and are enrolled in advanced coursework. Colleges may enter student teams that have not completed advanced courses in order to give them the experience of competing in the event.

NOTE: If your team qualifies as one of the top twelve teams in the Qualifying Round, you will be invited to take part in the Championship Rounds of the NAPTA Troubleshooting Competition at the host college.

To submit a question, email administrator@naptaonline.org.