

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Roleplay National Rounds 2026 in Japan Official Rules (2026)

Definitions

Simulations: shall mean any situation of the roleplay which is founded on a fictitious, but realistic scenario of armed conflict.

Coach: shall mean any individual who serves in an advisory or mentoring role to teams applying for or competing in the Competition.

Competition: shall mean the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Role Play National Rounds 2026 in Japan.

Judge: shall mean those individuals selected by the Organizing Committee to evaluate the performance of teams during the Competition.

Organizing Committee: shall mean the selected group of international humanitarian law practitioners which oversees the organization and operation of the Competition.

Round: shall mean the segments of the Competition during which teams will receive simulations, prepare for simulation sessions, and participate in simulation sessions. Rounds are therefore, inclusive of both the preparation period, as well as the simulation sessions.

Simulation Session: shall mean the last period of Rounds, in which Team(s) performs their expected roles with other actors in the context of Simulations.

PART I: GENERAL

Article 1: Organization of the Competition

1. Introduction - International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Roleplay National Rounds 2026 in Japan (“Competition”) is the sixth round of the national role play competition on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) to be held in Japan.
2. Organizing Committee - The Competition is organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Delegation in Japan and the Japan Red Cross Society. The Organizing Committee shall be responsible for the organization and administration of the Competition.
3. In its capacity as the organizer, the Organizing Committee may amend the official rules of the Competition at any time.
4. Competition Email Account – All inquiries and request for competition materials must be sent to the Competition Committee at ihlmootcourtjapanround@gmail.com

PART II: PARTICIPATION

Article 2: Application Process

1. The team and member registration for the competition will be closed on **20 October 2026**. No fee shall be charged. Upon registration, the name, address, e-mail address and telephone number of a contact person of the participating institution shall be notified to the Organizing Committee.

Article 3: Eligibility

1. Teams comprised of three (3) students, representing a university or equivalent institution. Teams can only have 3 participants in each simulation and to assist with research. All other persons accompanying teams (aside from coaches) cannot assist the team.
2. Each Participating Institution may select one team to represent it.
3. Eligible students to participate are undergraduate or master students who are majoring in accredited course on International Humanitarian Law and Public International Law or International Relations by the time the competition begins or who can demonstrate sufficiently basic knowledge of international humanitarian law, international law or human rights law. For students enrolled in other courses, they are eligible, but basic knowledge of International Humanitarian Law will be assumed.
4. In order to avoid any inequality between teams that may arise from the participation of extremely qualified or experienced participants, the Organizing Committee may, at its discretion, decide not to accept the participation of students with significant experience in the field of International Humanitarian Law or humanitarian action. Significant experience includes but is not limited to, three months or more working for an international organization, participation in Red Cross International Humanitarian Law Moot (An Inter-University Competition for Asia-Pacific Region) twice in previous years, regardless of acting as a mooter or a researcher, or participation in the Jean-Pictet Competition.

5. Alternates – Each team may request from the Organizing Committee for replacing a member of a team who may become unavailable prior to the Competition.

Article 4: Withdrawal from the Competition- Participating teams wishing to withdraw from the Competition must notify and submit its withdrawal request to the Organizing Committee two weeks prior to the Competition.

PART III: HOLDING OF THE COMPETITION

Article 5: Criteria for Evaluating Teams-The Competition focuses on knowledge of IHL as well as the ability to use it in a practical manner. Teams will be judged on their knowledge of IHL and capacity to use it (evaluating available information to determine critical elements that directly relate to the implementation of IHL) and on their ability to understand the professional role that they undertake.

Article 6: Competition Schedule -The time schedules of the Competition shall be given to the participants on the day of the Competition.

Article 7: Language-The language used in all matters related to the Competition is English. All the reading material, official correspondence etc. must be in English.

Article 8: Judge

1. Judge Selection – The Organizing Committee shall decide on the composition and identity of the judge. To that end, it shall invite experienced IHL experts or experts on the work of international organizations to serve as judges in the Competition. The selection of the judges will be within the Organizing Committee’s discretion.
2. Decisions of the judges shall be final.
3. Conflict of Interest – The affiliation of the Participating Institution of each participating team shall not be disclosed to the judges. To this end, no coach or participant shall disclose the affiliation of his or her team and/or any other team participating in the competition to the jury. Infringement of this regulation shall result in a penalty in accordance with the sole discretion of the Organizing Committee (such penalty may include an evaluation point deduction, or, in circumstances which the Organizing Committee deems particularly severe, disqualification). All candidates for judges must disclose all prior associations with eligible academic institutions. The Organizing Committee will endeavour to select judges from institutions other than those represented by teams at the Competition. The Organizing Committee, however, reserves the right to make exceptions, provided that it is satisfied with the judge’s complete and genuine impartiality. In such case, the judge will be prohibited from evaluating the team(s) from the institution(s) the judge is affiliated with.
4. Confidentiality – Judges are prohibited from sharing information about the Competition, including, but not limited to the evaluation criteria, judging guidelines, and simulations, with the participating teams, without prior authorization from the Organizing Committee.
5. Role of the Judges – A judge’s primary responsibility during the Competition is to evaluate teams’ theoretical knowledge and practical understanding of IHL during each

simulation session and how well they get into a role. Judges, however, may participate directly in simulation sessions by playing different roles during the simulation.

Article 9: Award, Prizes and Certificates

1. The winning team will be awarded a certificate, a trophy, and sponsorship of participation in the Jean-Pictet Competition, provided the team applies and is admitted, and travel is possible and allowed. If the team duly applies and is not admitted, the Organizing Committee may, at its discretion, decide to offer team members an alternative award related to IHL.
2. The runner-up team will be awarded a certificate and a trophy.
3. The Organizing Committee will issue certificates of participation to all participating students.

PART IV: PRELIMINARY TRAINING

Article 10: Training Prior to the Competition

Participating teams are expected to undertake independent study of IHL and may be required to attend supplementary training at their respective institutions.

Article 11: Coaching

1. Before and during the Competition, teams might benefit from training and coaching by coaches designated by their institution. However, a team may participate in the competition even if a coach was not appointed by the institution. Coaches will be available to help teams prepare for the Competition in the weeks before the competition and will be permitted to accompany teams throughout the Competition.
2. Upon the completion of each simulation round – but not for preparation period nor while the simulation session is underway - coaches will be permitted to provide feedback to their teams in relation to all aspects of their performance.

PART V: LOGISTICAL ASPECT

Article 12: Publicity

The Organizing Committee may publicize the Competition and related events. The Organizing Committee may open the Competition or parts thereof to the public, including the media, prospective employers, academic staff and the general public.

Article 13: The Organizing Committee shall have, in accordance with the provisions of these Regulations, exclusive discretion in the development, timing, format, content and implementation of the Competition.

Article 14: Each team will be responsible for bringing to the Competition all materials, including research materials and props, which they intend to use during the Competition.

PART VI: ELECTRONIC DEVICES & VIDEO RECORDING

Articles 15: Use of Electronic Devices

The use of laptops, tablets or other devices for the purposes of conducting research during the preparation period of each Round is permissible. However, the Organizing Committee strongly cautions against over-reliance on electronic devices. Simulations are designed to create a realistic environment for the consideration of legal issues. Teams therefore are not allowed to use electronic devices during the simulation sessions.

Article 16: Recording and Photography during the Competition –

Recording of the Competition is prohibited except for the official video/photographer of the Organizing Committee and those receiving prior approval of the Organizing Committee. Photography by the participants is only permissible prior to the simulation sessions provided that it does not disrupt teams preparing for the role-play. All participants, coaches, and observers, by attending and participating in the Competition, are assumed to be agreeable that they will be filmed or photographed as part of the collection of promotional material for the Organizing Committee.

PART VI: GENERAL STRUCTURE OF THE COMPETITION

Article 17: General Structure

All teams will be participating in two or three Rounds in corresponding to Simulations which shall be shared with Teams at the beginning of each Round. Simulations shall be based on the facts in the Problem of IHL Moot Court and Roleplay Competitions National Round 2026 in Japan. Any additional facts in the Simulations shall not constitute additional facts to the Moot Problem and shall not be used in argumentation during the IHL Moot Court Competition.

Article 18: Structure of Rounds

Each Round will present Teams with a different Simulation requiring them to assume different professional roles and accomplish different objectives. Teams will be expected to adjust their positions according to the organization or groups that they represent. The structure of Simulation Sessions, including the length of each Round, the number of Teams participating in a Simulation Session simultaneously, and the role of the judges during each Simulation Session may also change from Round to Round. The teams will be evaluated based on the cumulative scores of all Rounds.

Article 19: Punctuality

As time is of the essence for the Competition, any participating students found to be unduly delaying the progress of the Competition without a valid, good faith reason may incur deductions of marks at the discretion of the Organizing Committee.

Article 20: Complaints

Any complaints to be made officially should be made by either a participating student or a coach of a participating team. The complaint should be related to the Rules contained herein or a good faith, valid reason. Any other complaints will not be entertained. The Organizing Committee has the full and final discretion to decide upon the actions to be taken with regard to any complaint.