

Dear Jessup Teams and Friends of the Jessup,

ILSA is pleased to release the 2026 Official Rules of the Jessup Competition. The following is a summary of some of the changes in the 2026 Official Rules. However, Teams are advised to read the Official Rules completely and carefully: please do not rely merely on familiarity with last year's Rules or on this summary.

- 1. Clarification of use of abbreviations within footnotes (Rule 5.17(a)).** Teams are welcome to use acronyms or initialisms within footnotes that “are standard references to law reports, law journals, or other sources.”
- 2. Clarification of use of shortened references (Rule 5.17(c)).** Teams may use shortened references (for example, “The Lotus Case”) in their Memorials if the reference allows “a reasonable reader to understand what is being referred to.” This exception does *not* permit Teams to define an acronym or initialism and use it later. (for example, “Customary international law (hereinafter, ‘CIL’).”
- 3. Changes in Memorials grading procedure (Rules 10.4 and 10.6).** The Executive Director will discard any Memorials score that is 15 or more points from the average of the scores received and re-assign the Memorial, if needed, to another judge. In addition, based upon the raw data from the 2025 Memorials scores, the basis for assignment of Memorials Round Points has been adjusted.
- 4. Tie-breakers in Oralist and Memorials rankings (Rules 10.14 and 10.15).** In order to reduce the number of ties in the final rankings, the Rules now contain procedures for tie-breaking.
- 5. Procedure for assigning Moot Penalties (Rules 11.3 and 11.5).** When a Rules violation occurs during a Moot, the Administrator has discretion to deduct the appropriate Moot Penalty from either (a) an individual oralist's score or (b) the Team's combined score, based upon the nature of the violation.
- 6. Change in number of Teams in the Elimination Rounds of the International Rounds (Rules 9.6 through 9.9).** Rather than a fixed number (currently, 48), the Elimination Rounds of the International Rounds will consist of the top one-third of the Teams competing in the Preliminary Rounds. (In 2025, for example, this Rule would have resulted in 51 teams advancing to the Elimination Rounds.)