IPSC IT FEST 2026

Judging Rubric

Hackathon

Sections 20, 21, 27 and 28 of the Hackathon Rulebook

The Doon School

DEHRADUN

20. Judging & Scoring

20.1 The Judging Panel shall score each Company out of 100 in accordance with the published Judging Rubric, which sets out what judges look for under each criterion.

20.2 Marks are allocated across three pillars and eighteen criteria as follows:

Pillar / Criterion	Points
A. Programming, Technology & Product Development	40
A1. Understanding of Problem & Technical Approach	6
A2. Core Functionality & Working Prototype	14
A3. Technical Complexity & Quality of Implementation	6
A4. UI/UX & Product Design	5
A5. Innovation & Technical Creativity	5

Pillar / Criterion	Points
A6. Testing, Reliability & Performance	4
B. Marketing & Market Strategy	35
B1. Target Market & Customer Understanding	7
B2. Value Proposition & Product Positioning	7
B3. Marketing Strategy & Customer Acquisition	7
B4. Competitive Differentiation	4
B5. Branding, Communication & Promotional Strategy	4
B6. Marketing Feasibility & Product Integration	6
C. Financial & Business Viability	25
C1. Business Model & Revenue Generation	5
C2. Costing & Budgeting	5
C3. Pricing Strategy	4
C4. Financial Viability & Sustainability	5
C5. Resource & Operational Planning	3
C6. Financial Assumptions, Risk & Scalability	3
Overall total	100

20.3 Judges assess the evidence a Company presents through its Prototype, Submission, Corporate Pitch and Q&A.

20.4 Hardware integration and AI transparency are not marked criteria. Hardware is optional, and AI use must be declared and understood.

20.5 The decision of the judges is final and abiding. Ties are resolved under Section 27.

21. What the Judges Are Looking For

A Company aiming for the highest level of performance should be able to demonstrate all of the following.

Problem

• We understand the actual problem.

• We understand who experiences it.

• We know why existing approaches are insufficient.

Technology

• We built a functional solution.

• The core functionality works.

• We understand our own technology.

• We tested it and improved it.

• Our technology choices are justified.

Product

• The solution is usable.

• The design reflects its users.

• The prototype demonstrates genuine value.

Innovation

• Our approach contains meaningful originality.

• Our innovation is purposeful rather than complexity for its own sake.

Market

• We know who will use it.

• We know who will pay.

• We know why they would choose it.

• We know how we will reach them.

Business

• We know what the product costs.

• We know how it makes money.

• Our pricing makes sense.

• Our assumptions are defensible.

• The model can potentially sustain itself.

Company

• All members understand the solution.

• Members can defend decisions.

• The final pitch is coherent.

• The team can respond intelligently to unexpected questions.

27. Tie-Breaking

If two or more Companies receive the same final score, the following tie-breaking sequence shall be applied:

1. Higher Programming, Technology & Product Development score.

2. Higher Core Functionality & Working Prototype score.

3. Higher Financial & Business Viability score.

4. Higher Marketing & Market Strategy score.

5. Judging Panel deliberation based on the overall effectiveness of the solution in addressing the Problem Statement.

27.1 The tie-breaking procedure shall be applied only where Companies have equal final scores.

28. Judging Integrity

29.1 Judges shall assess Companies independently and according to the published rubric.

29.2 Judges should evaluate the solution presented rather than: the reputation of the participating school; the identity of participants; the perceived prestige of technologies used; the personal preferences of participants; or assumptions about what a Company could have built.

29.3 Judges should not reward complexity that does not contribute meaningfully to the solution.

29.4 Judges should consider the constraints under which Companies operated during the Hackathon.

29.5 Judges should reward clear reasoning and evidence-backed decisions.

29.6 Where multiple approaches can legitimately solve the Problem Statement, judges should not favour one approach merely because it differs from their personal preferred solution.