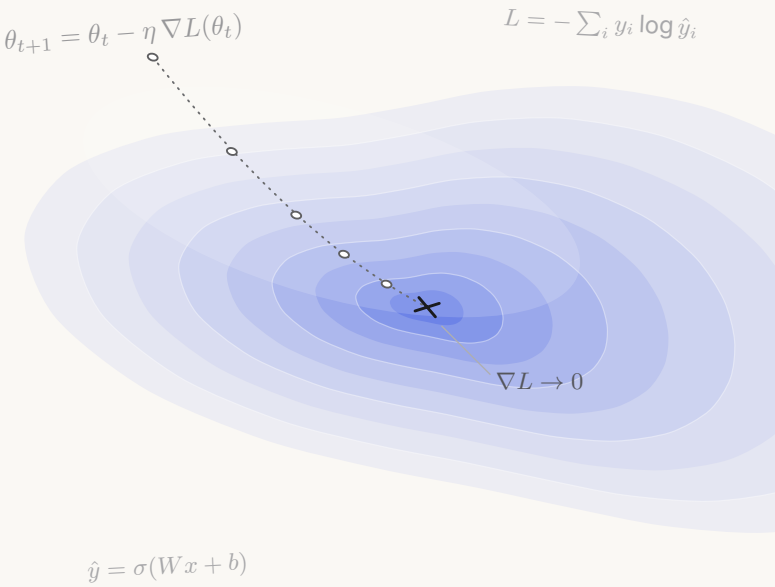
INTERNATIONAL MACHINE LEARNING COMPETITION

Final Round

EDITION 2026



$\hat{y} = \sigma(Wx + b)$

Participants who successfully completed the Pre-Final Round are eligible to participate in the Final Round. In this document you can find details about the following:

00 SECTION

1 Exam Format and Question Types 2

2 Final Round Process 3

3 Supervision System 4

4 Preparation and Support 7

01 SECTION

Exam Format and Question Types

The Final Round consists of a 40-minute supervised exam. Finalists take the exam from home on a computer, laptop, or phone via an online exam portal. Unlike previous rounds, you will see each question for a limited time only and cannot return to previous questions once you move forward. The exam features two types of questions:

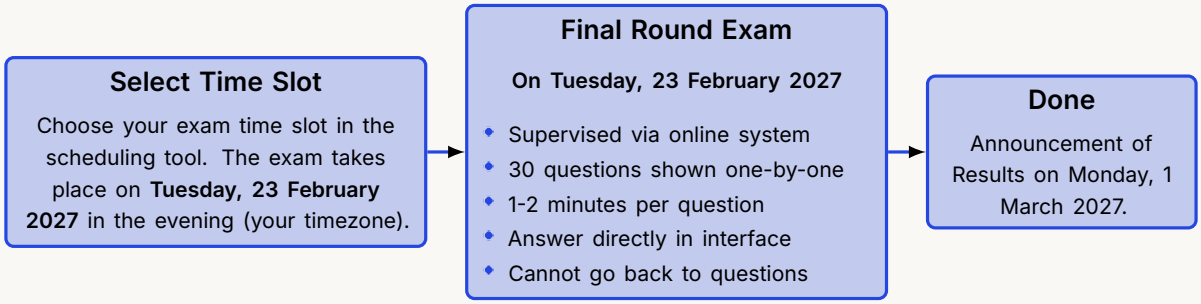
- **Short-Answer Questions (1-2 points)**
  These questions require you to provide a single word or number as your response. You will have 1-2 minutes per question.
- **Multiple-Choice Questions (1 point)**
  These questions present four possible answers, and you must select the correct one. You will have 1 minute per question.

All questions are answered directly in the exam interface. There is no paper solution upload. Questions appear one-by-one and you cannot go back to previous questions.

There are no negative points for incorrect answers. The awards and prizes are given to the Finalists with the most points in the Final Round. If multiple participants have the same score, the points from the previous rounds are used to determine the final winners.

02 SECTION

Final Round Process



Step 1: Select Your Exam Time Slot

The Final Round Exam takes place on a single day: **Tuesday, 23 February 2027**. All qualified participants must select an exam time slot in advance using the scheduling tool. You will receive a link to the scheduling tool via email and through your participant account.

The exam is scheduled in the evening in your local timezone. Available time slots will be shown in the scheduling tool. Time slots are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis, so we recommend choosing your slot early.

Step 2: Take the Final Round Exam

On **Tuesday, 23 February 2027**, at your selected time, you will take the Final Round Exam. The exam must be supervised using IMLC's online supervision system (see Section *3 Supervision System*). Teacher supervision is not available for the Final Round.

To take the Final Round Exam, you will log in to the dedicated exam platform on a computer, laptop, or phone: https://imlco.org/exam. Use your regular IMLC account details to sign in. After completing the supervision setup steps, you can start the exam.

You may bring blank sheets of paper and pens to take notes and work out calculations, but all final answers must be entered directly into the exam interface.

Step 3: Exam Completion

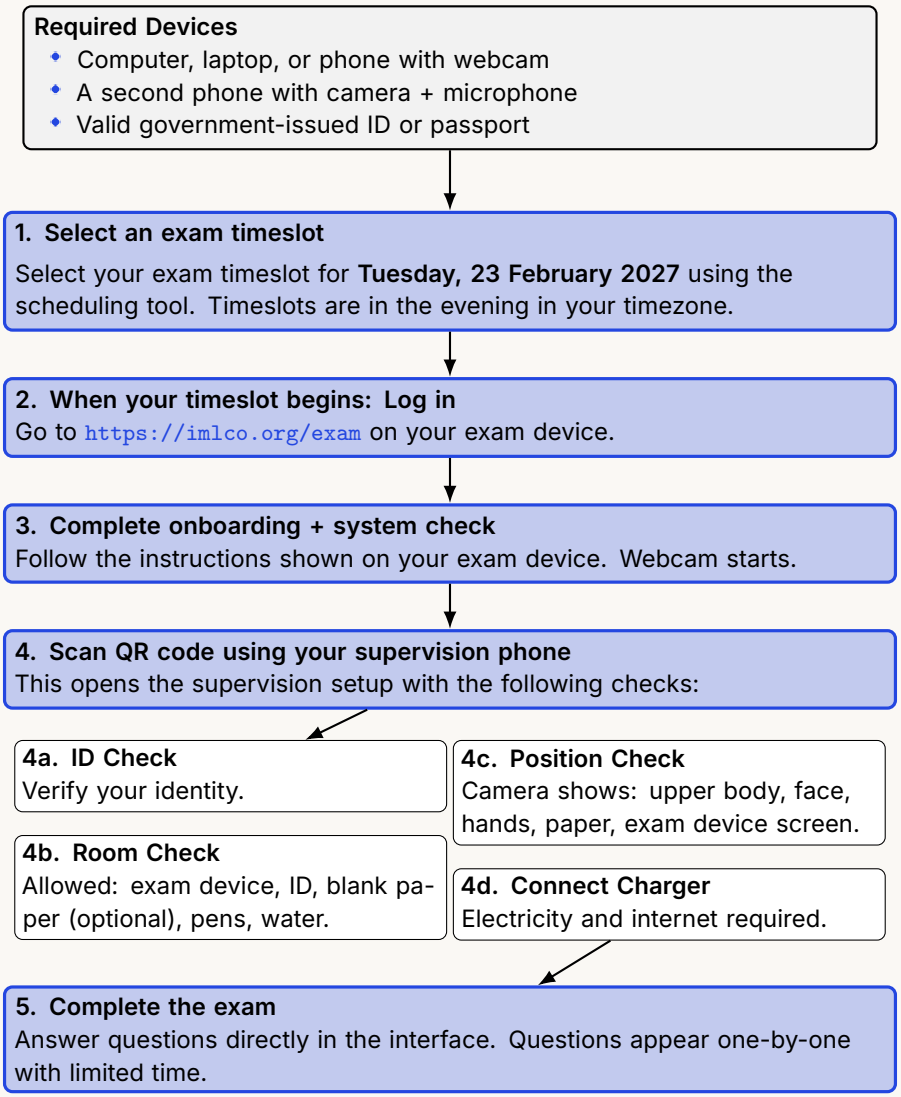
After you complete the final question, your exam is done. Your answers are automatically submitted through the interface.

The results of the Final Round will be announced on **Monday, 1 March 2027**.

03 SECTION

Supervision System

The Final Round Exam is supervised using IMLC's online supervision system. Teacher supervision is not available for this round. This figure summarizes the supervision setup process:



To take the Final Round Exam using the online supervision system, you will need:

- 1x exam device: a computer, laptop, or phone with a webcam.
- 1x supervision phone: a phone with a working camera and microphone.
- A valid government-issued ID card or passport.

All devices must be connected to the internet. If you use a phone as your exam device (i.e., to open the exam platform), you will need a second phone to supervise the exam.

Follow these steps to take the Final Round Exam:

1. Select an exam timeslot for **Tuesday, 23 February 2027** prior to the exam.
   How?: All Final Round participants will receive a link to select a timeslot via email and through their participant account. Timeslots are in the evening in your local timezone. There is no deadline for selecting a timeslot; however, timeslots are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis, so we recommend choosing your slot early.
2. When it is your scheduled time on **Tuesday, 23 February 2027**, log into the exam platform on your exam device using your IMLC participant account details: https://imlco.org/exam
3. Follow the onboarding and system check steps on your exam device. During these steps you will also start your webcam supervision via the interface.
4. After completing the system check, scan the QR code shown on your exam device to set up the supervision system on your phone. Follow the instructions, which include:
   (a) Conducting an ID and face check to verify your identity.
   (b) Conducting a room check to verify the exam environment.
   (see below for **Requirements for the Exam Environment**)
   (c) Conducting a position check to verify correct placement of the supervision phone.
   (see below for **Requirements for the Supervision Phone Position**)
   (d) Connect your supervision phone to a charging cable.
   Notes: Please note that the supervision device requires a stable internet connection. It is the participant's responsibility to ensure a working internet connection throughout the entire exam.
5. Once the supervision setup is completed, you will be able to start the exam (see Section *2 Final Round Process*).
6. Answer the questions as they appear one-by-one directly in the interface.

Requirements for the Exam Environment:

- Only your exam device, your ID card, blank paper, pens, and something to drink are allowed.
- The room must be closed with the door shut.
- No notes, posters, or other materials may be in your field of view.
- No additional phones, monitors, or electronic devices may be present.
- No other person may be in the room.
- No noisy environments.
- No headphones.

You are not allowed to leave the exam environment at any time during the exam. Using the restroom is not permitted once the exam has started.

Requirements for the Supervision Phone Position:

The phone must be placed to your left or right side, slightly behind you, at an angle that allows the camera to clearly capture:

1. Your upper body and partial face.
2. Your hands and workspace (including any blank paper if used).
3. The screen of your exam device.

You can find examples of acceptable angles here: Examples. We recommend preparing and testing your exam setup beforehand. You may use stable materials or stands to position your phone at an acceptable angle.

04 SECTION

Preparation and Support

The Final Round is a 40-minute online exam, with 1-2 minutes allocated per question. This will challenge you in two ways:

1. ***Knowledge and Skill:***
   The Final Round will challenge your conceptual understanding of machine learning, your problem-solving skills, and your knowledge across its core domains. Moreover, many questions involve or relate to content from the Qualification and Pre-Final Round.
2. ***Time Management:***
   You have only a limited time for each question! (Note that remaining time that you have not used for a given question does not carry over to the next question.) You cannot go back to a question. This is a challenge for many participants, and questions move faster than you think. We highly recommend training with these time limits in mind to understand well what you can work out in that short window.

While the time frame is short, effective preparation will help you manage the time pressure and perform your best. Here are some key tips:

- **Review Qualification and Pre-Final Round Problems:**
  Some questions in the Final Round may be related to topics you have already encountered. Revisiting problems from both the Qualification and Pre-Final Round will help reinforce important concepts and familiarize you with potential question types.
- **Train Under Time Pressure:**
  Practice solving machine learning problems in short intervals to simulate the Final Round. This will help you build confidence and improve your ability to think quickly under time constraints.
- **Study the Pre-Final Round Research Paper:**
  The research paper included in the Pre-Final Round may contain key insights or concepts that could be relevant in the Final Round.
- **Practice Mental Calculations:**
  Some calculations without calculator may be needed. Given the time limit, improving your speed and accuracy in mental math will give you an advantage.

You can access example problems and other resources online:
https://imlco.org/training

There is a comprehensive FAQ regarding the Final Round on our website which clarifies many questions and issues of participants: https://imlco.org/en/#faq

Our IMLC team is here to support you! If you have any questions or need support, feel free to reach out at info@imlco.org.