

HKCERT Capture the Flag Challenge

CTF 2026 香港網安 奪旗賽

Organisers



數字政策辦公室
Digital Policy Office



Hong Kong Computer
Emergency Response Team
Coordination Centre
香港網絡安全事故協調中心

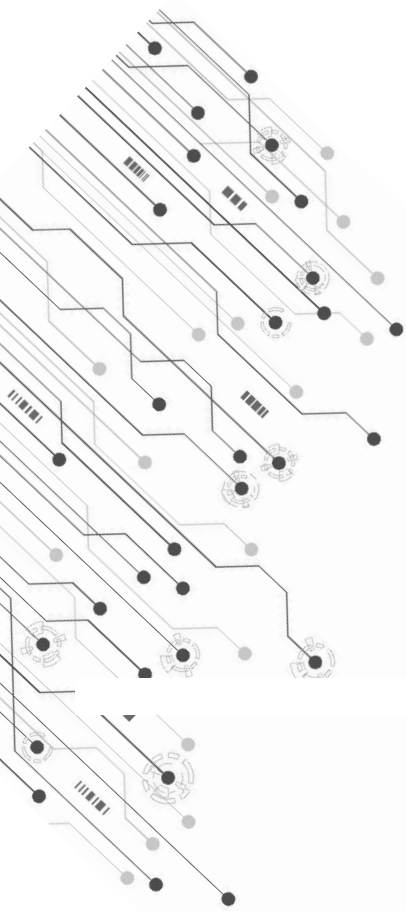


Co-organisers

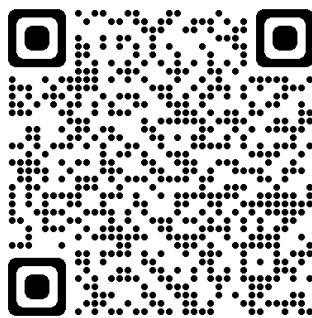


Black
Bauhinia





Website



<https://ctf.hkcert.org>





CAPTURE THE FLAG CHALLENGE 2026

In recent years, cybersecurity has become one of the most prominent and talent-scarce fields in the information technology sector. Offensive and defensive cybersecurity, in particular, will be a key future demand for industry professionals. This has led to the rise of positions such as "Penetration Tester," "Ethical Hacker," and "Red Team Operator." These roles require a deep understanding of hands-on technical skill such as programming, cryptography, application systems' security, reverse engineering, and etc. The mindset and techniques akin to those of hackers will also be the elements in order to quickly identify and remediate security vulnerabilities.

Capture The Flag (CTF) contests are designed to train these specific skills and mindsets. Participants must find hidden vulnerabilities in a simulated environment based on real systems to break through security defences. Upon success, they capture "flags" and earn points. Such contests are held worldwide to enhance security techniques, with some even featuring global rankings to compete for the title of the best in the world.

"HKCERT Capture The Flag 2026," organised by the Digital Policy Office (DPO), the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) and the Hong Kong Computer Emergency Response Team Coordination Centre (HKCERT) is now in its seventh edition. It is one of the largest cybersecurity contests in Hong Kong, featuring four categories: Secondary School, Tertiary, Open, and International.

In addition to the contest, the event includes various workshops and sharing sessions. Through these TechEd (technology education) activities, students can learn skills such as programming, cryptography, and digital forensics, fostering creative thinking and preparing them for the future. Industry professionals can also use this opportunity to test their skills, train their cybersecurity teams and connect with ethical hacker communities worldwide, delving deeper into cybersecurity to become experts in the field.

Last year, the contest attracted over a thousand participants and received widespread acclaim. This year, new formats have been introduced, promising an even more exciting and intense experience.

Sign up now, and get ready for the challenge!



Contest Format

The contest is divided into **qualifying round** and **final round** with different gameplay, assessing the capabilities of participants' offence and defence in cybersecurity.

Qualifying Round: This is a 24-hour online competition conducted in the form of a "game". Participants are required to apply their cybersecurity skills to search for "clues" within the "game" and complete various "missions". Points will be awarded upon successful completion of the missions.

- **Type of Challenges and Samples**

- Binary Exploitation
- Cryptography
- Forensics
- Reverse Engineering
- Web Exploitation
- Miscellaneous

* All the challenges in this contest are in Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese and English.

- **Time**

6:00PM (HKT), November 6 – 6:00PM (HKT), November 7, 2026 (24 hours)

- **Arrangement**

Online contest. The participating teams will receive the email from the **organiser at least one day before the qualifying round**, containing the login account for the platform and the platform link.

- **Qualification to Final Round**

The **top 10 teams with the highest scores** in secondary school, tertiary institution and open categories and the **top 5 teams with the highest scores** in international category of the qualifying round, after reviewed by the organiser (**including identity verification and other necessary check**), will be qualified to the finals.

* If a team **waives their qualification for the finals, fails to pass the review or is disqualified for any other reason**, the qualification for the finals will be passed on to the next highest-scoring team in the qualifying round of that group.

* In the event of a **tie in scores**, the qualification for advancement will be determined by **the time the teams earned their last score in the qualifying round, with the team that scored earlier being given priority**.

Final Round: This is a 1 day daytime physical contest that combines real-world scenario challenges in a simulated environment, participants are scored based on the challenges solved.

- **Type of Challenges and Samples**

Participants are required to utilise any information technology and cybersecurity knowledge.

* All the challenges in this contest are in Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese and



English.

- **Time:**
10:00AM - 17:00PM (HKT), 7 January 2027
 - **Arrangement**
Physical contest, the venue is Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Hong Kong (tentative)
 1. **Secondary School**
 - Each participating team must **designate a teacher** from their school to accompany them to the finals.
 2. **Tertiary Institution / Open Category**
 - Participants who are under the age of 18 on the day of the finals must be accompanied by a parent or guardian to attend the finals.
 3. **International Category**
 - The organiser will provide each participant^(note 1) **accommodation at a designated hotel and a subsidy of round-trip transportation from their point of departure to Hong Kong.** The subsidy amount from different points of departures is shown in Appendix A.
 - Apart from the designated accommodation and the travel subsidy reimbursed by the organiser, all **other expenses** must be borne by the participants themselves.
 - Additional teams may be invited by the organizing committee to compete at the Final Round of the International Category, at the discretion of the organizing committee and in accordance with the partnership agreements and criteria established for the Tournament. Teams receiving such an invitation will **not be eligible for the official ranking and prize** in the final.
 - The organiser reserves the **final right of interpretation and decision** regarding hotel accommodation and travel subsidy arrangements.
- (Note 1): Only participants who reside outside Hong Kong
- **Equipment**
 - The organiser will provide power (British Style, 220V) and wired Internet services.
 - All participants must bring their own laptops, install the necessary software, bring LAN adaptor, power charger and power cords to the contest. The organiser will not provide any additional equipment or software.
 - **Award Ceremony:** Following the finals, the winners of each category will be announced.

Eligibility

The Contest is divided into **4** categories. The contest is conducted in a team format, with each team consisting of **one to four members**. Each participant should only compete in **one category** and submit only one application. Any dispute regarding eligibility, the organiser reserves the right to make the final decision.

1. Secondary School - Secondary School Students in Hong Kong

* All members of the participating team must come from the same school and must be registered by a teacher from their school.

Examples	
Scenario	Category eligible to join
Members are studying in the <u>same</u> secondary school of Hong Kong	○ Secondary school, or ○ Open Category

* Schools which sent **more than 50 students** (Only count for students from participated team^(Note 2)) will receive the “**Supportive School Award**” (The School can send an unlimited number of teams to join.)

* The school which achieved the **most outstanding result** will receive the “**Best School Award**” (Note 3)

(Note 2) Participated Team means Teams gained any score.

(Note 3) The organiser will sum the score of the **top 30 teams** on the scoreboard by schools.

2. Tertiary Institution - Full-time students studying Diploma, Higher Diploma, Associate Degree or Bachelor’s Degree in Hong Kong universities or colleges

* Participants who are **under the age of 18 as of the registration deadline** must obtain consent from their parents or guardians to register and agree to all the terms and conditions of the competition.

* Students who are studying other degrees not specified above (**e.g. master’s degree, doctoral degree, etc.**) are not eligible to join this category. They can consider joining the **Open category**.

Examples	
Scenario	Category eligible to join
<u>All</u> members are studying Diploma, Higher Diploma, Associate Degree or Bachelor’s Degree in Hong Kong universities or colleges	○ Tertiary institution, or ○ Open Category
One or more members is/are studying for a master’s or doctoral degree at Hong Kong universities or colleges	○ Open Category

3. Open Category - Hong Kong residents or holders of valid Hong Kong working or study visa is on the team

* Participants who are **under the age of 18 as of the registration deadline** must obtain consent from their parents or guardians to register and agree to all the terms and conditions of the competition.

Examples	
Scenario	Category eligible to join
All members are Hong Kong residents or holding valid Hong Kong working or study visas	○ Open Category

4. International Category

* Participants must be **at least 18 years old** by the registration deadline.

Examples	
Scenario	Eligible to join
One or above of the members are not Hong Kong residents and not holding valid Hong Kong working or study visas	○ International Category

Please also read carefully the “Terms and Condition” section.



Team Name

All the team names will consist of 2 parts (1) Team code, which is generated by system; (2) Team name, which would be any self-defined names. The naming convention is shown below

- Self-defined name in English with maximum 50 characters
- Naming convention is (Team Code) - (self-defined name)
- E.g. O0001 – HK CTFMan

The Organisers reserve the right to change the name of the team at any time without prior notice.

Prizes

Secondary School will receive

- **Gold:** SAMSUNG Galaxy Watch9 40mm (BT) Smart Watch **(Per Teammate)**
- **Silver:** HUAWEI MatePad SE 11" (LTE) Tablet **(Per Teammate)**
- **Bronze:** APPLE AirPods 4 with ANC Headphone **(Per Teammate)**
 - * In circumstances beyond the control of the organiser where above prizes cannot be provided, the organiser **reserves the right to substitute the prizes with gifts of no less than equivalent value** without further explanation or notice.
 - * **Each winning school** will receive a **trophy** (i.e. the school of Gold, Silver and Bronze winners, and the winning school of the “**Supportive School Award**” and “**Best School Award**”)

Each category of Tertiary Institution, Open and International will receive

- **Gold:** HKD 16,000 **(Per Team)**
- **Silver:** HKD 13,000 **(Per Team)**
- **Bronze:** HKD 11,000 **(Per Team)**

All the members of participated team^(Note 4) will receive an electronic certificate of participation.

(Note 4) Participated Team means teams gained any score.

The prize is only available to participants who comply to the Terms and Condition



Important Dates

1st Qualifying Round Workshops (online) (Registration Required)

10 October, 2026 (Saturday) from 1000 to 1300 – Tentative

Agenda: Web, Crypto and Misc / Forensic

2nd Qualifying Round Workshops (online) (Registration Required)

24 October, 2026 (Saturday) from 1000 to 1300 – Tentative

Agenda: Reverse Engineering and Pwn

Deadline of Online Registration

20 October, 2026 (Tuesday)

Qualifying Round (Online)

6 – 7 November, 2026 (24 hours)

Announcement of Advancement

13 November, 2026

Post-Qualifying Workshop

21 November, 2026 (Saturday) - Tentative

Agenda: Writeup of the difficult questions in the Qualifying Round (detailed explanation of solutions and problem-solving approaches)

Workshop link: To be announced

Final Round Workshop (online) (Registration Required)

Mid-December, 2026

Final Round (onsite)

7 January, 2027 from 1000 to 1700

Award Ceremony (onsite)

7 January, 2027 (Following the Final round)

Registration

<https://forms.hkcrt.org/hkcrtctf2026>



Terms and Conditions

The participating teams should abide to these Terms and Conditions of the Contest. The Organisers reserve the right to penalise team members for noncompliance with suspension of access or disqualification. The related teams and their members shall not raise objections. The Organisers reserve the right to amend terms and conditions from time to time and inform the participants.

General Terms and Conditions

- Each participating team will be named as per the rule specified under the “Team Name” section. The organisers reserve the right to substitute any name with another name at any time without prior notice. The participants shall not raise objections.
- The whole team is disqualified if any member of the team is not eligible.
- All works of the team in qualifying round and final round must be contributed by eligible and registered members of the team.
- The decisions of the organisers on the contest results will be final and the results of the contest will be published on <https://ctftime.org>. The participants shall not raise objections to the contest results or rankings.
- The number of team members attending the Final Round **must not be less than half of the number of members** originally registered for the Qualifying Round. Failure to meet this minimum may result in disqualification from the Final Round and ineligibility for any travel subsidy.
- All teams must register with accurate information in the registration system. If any inaccuracies or omissions are found, the team may be disqualified. For teams advancing to the Final Round, they are required to submit the identity document of the members, the organising committee will verify that the submitted information matches the registered detail exactly.
- Each participant can only enrol to one team and submit one application and **agree to and comply with all the terms and conditions as well as the rules** of the competition.
- Any dispute regarding the terms and condition, the organiser reserves the right to make the final decision.

Terms and Conditions for the Prize, Travel Subsidy and Accommodation

- The recipient must provide the required documents as specified in the “Terms and Conditions” or any relevant supporting documents requested by the organiser.
- The recipient must provide the required information for bank remittance as specified by the designated financial institution. The recipient must be a qualified individual to whom the bank can legally remit fund according to its regulations.
 - a. The recipient must agree to accept the prize in commonly accepted currencies such as CNY, EUR, GBP, JPY, HKD or USD.
 - b. If the recipient’s bank does not support these commonly accepted currencies, the transfer may not be processed, and the organiser will negotiate with the recipient, and the payment may be delayed.
 - c. In the case of overseas remittance, the exchange rate at the time of remittance



- of the relevant amount shall apply.
- d. If the winner falls under restrictions based on Hong Kong's Trade policy or other export control regulations, the bank may be unable to process the remittance.
 - e. The recipient shall be solely responsible for any bank charges or fees incurred by the recipient's financial institution during the receipt of the prize. The organiser is not responsible for refunding or covering any such fees.
 - f. Any taxes, levies, duties, or other statutory obligations arising from the receipt of any prize money, awards, prizes, or other related benefits shall be the sole responsibility of the recipient. The organiser shall bear no responsibility or liability in respect of such obligations.
- Any dispute regarding the prize, travel subsidy and accommodation, the organiser reserves the right to make the final decision.

Responsibilities of the Team Leader

- The prize and travel subsidy will be disbursed solely to the team leader designated by the team. The responsibilities of the team leader are as follows:
 - a. Distribute the corresponding prize and subsidy to the eligible team members.
 - b. Must not allocate any portion of the prize or subsidy to individuals who are not entitled to it.
 - c. Contact team members and collect the required documents as specified in the "Terms and Conditions" or by the organiser.
 - d. If any member's information or documents do not meet the relevant requirements, the organiser reserves the right to revoke the prize or subsidy for the entire team.
- The team must carefully select and designate a team leader during registration. The organiser assumes no responsibility for the distribution of the prize or subsidy among team members

Prize

- If the individual fails to submit any necessary information and supporting documents requested by the organiser, or if the individual cannot be contacted or confirmed due to such failure, such individual is disqualified as a reward recipient, and the prize will not be delivered. In addition, no prize will be awarded if the remittance cannot be made at the discretion of the remitting bank in Hong Kong. The organiser shall not be liable to any such failure.
- Any person who qualifies for the prize for the Tournament shall forfeit the right to receive the prize unless he/she completes the procedures required by this Rules and the organizing committee within one (1) month from the date of receipt of the notice from the organizing committee regarding the remittance of the prize money. If the date of receipt of the notification is not clear, it will be deemed to have been received after three (3) business days from the date the organizing committee sends (including by email) the above notification.
- The organising committee reserves the right to cancel the prize for any player who does not comply with the rules and conditions outlined above

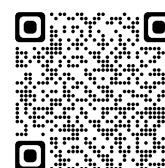
Travel Subsidy and Accommodation

- Only participants who are **qualified to the Final Round of the International Category and reside outside Hong Kong** are eligible to receive a travel subsidy and accommodation. They are **not guaranteed** and are subject to the discretion of the organising committee and the availability of funding.
- Participants must **submit their travel itinerary (including but not limited to flight bookings, boarding passes or other proof of travel, or other proof of travel)** for supporting documents.
- Participants are solely responsible for **obtaining the necessary travel documents**, including but not limited to visas or passports. The organiser is **not responsible for any travel restrictions, delays, or denials** due to personal or governmental reasons.
- If the participant is **unable to attend the event or cancels their travel, the travel subsidy will not be granted or reimbursed**.
- The travel subsidy is intended **solely to support participants in attending the event**, and not to be used for leisure or unrelated travel.
- Participants must comply with all relevant rules and guidelines as set forth by the organiser. Any breach of these guidelines, including but not limited to misrepresentation of eligibility, failure to adhere to the supervision requirements, violation of travel and accommodation policies, or deliberate cheating in obtaining the travel subsidy, may result in disqualification or forfeiture of benefits, and may lead to legal action by HKPC for the wrongdoing, including claims for compensation. The organiser retains the authority to request additional documentation or clarification from participants at any stage of the tournament.
- **The organising committee reserves the right to amend, revoke, or withhold the travel subsidy** at any time, for any reasons, including but not limited to **changes in team composition, breach of rules, or incomplete documentation**.

Rules

The competition rules, can be reviewed in detail on the competition's official website.

<https://ctf.hkcert.org>



Enquiry

For any enquiry , please contact Karina Chau +852 2788 5421 or karinachau@hkpc.org

Fully Supported By (In arbitrary Order)



Supporting Organisations (In arbitrary Order)

