**TITLE I: GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**Part I: Organisation**

**Article 1 – Witness Interviewing Competition**

1. The Witness Interviewing Competition (hereinafter referred to as “WIC”) is a simulation of a witness interview in a criminal law context. Specifically, the members of each team, acting as defence attorneys for the defendant (hereinafter “defence attorneys”) or as public prosecutors, must conduct an interview with a fictitious witness in order to obtain information useful for developing a trial strategy for the case proposed in the Competition.
2. The WIC is organised by ELSA [National/Local Group], a non-political and non-profit association that promotes impartial and independent cooperation in the field of legal culture at both local and national levels.

**Article 2 – Regulations and Amendments**

1. For the organisation of the initiative, the Board of ELSA [National/Local Group] may appoint a specific Organising Committee (hereinafter “OC”), composed of members of the Board itself and/or Directors, who may also be appointed ad hoc for the event.
2. These Regulations, proposed by the Vice President in charge of Competitions, are unanimously approved by the Board and constitute the basic rules governing the WIC.
3. Any amendments to these Regulations, as preliminarily approved by the OC, must be promptly communicated to the WIC participants via email.

**Article 3 – Governing Bodies**

1. For the Competition, the OC relies on:

* A Academic Board (hereinafter “SC”) is responsible for drafting the case subject to the Competition;
* A Judging Panel (hereinafter “JP”) responsible for evaluating the conduct of the interviews with the fictitious witness, the cross-examination of the witness, and the trial strategies developed by the participants.

1. The members of these bodies are selected from among lawyers, professors, and professionals in the field who have chosen to contribute their experience and legal expertise to the initiative.
2. The Judging Panel consists of at least three members. Before the start of the Competition, the Vice President for Competitions designates one of the members as the President of the Judging Panel.

**Article 4 – The Fictitious Witness**

1. The OC appoints a fictitious witness (hereinafter “Witness”), who is adequately prepared by the OC on the details of the case and conducts interviews with the teams.
2. The OC may select a person who is not a legal professional and/or is external to ELSA [group] as the Witness, as no specific legal expertise is required for this role.
3. It is considered incompatible to act as a participant in the Competition while also serving as a member of the Judging Panel and/or the Academic Board.

**Article 5 – Language**

1. The WIC is conducted in Italian, unless otherwise specified by the OC.

**Article 6 – Competition Phases**

1. The Competition is divided into three phases: Preliminary, Semifinal, and Final.
2. Each phase of the Competition, aimed at simulating the examination of a witness during trial, consists of:

* The examination of the witness by the team acting as the public prosecutor;
* The cross-examination by the team acting as the defence attorney;
* A possible re-examination upon the public prosecutor’s request;
* The development of arguments based on the information gathered during the hearing and a subsequent thesis on the nature of the case, which must be theoretically suitable to be sustained in court and designed to meet the needs of the party, depending on the specific role each team is assigned;
* The presentation of the thesis and the party’s conclusions;
* The discussion with the Judging Panel.

**TITLE II: THE COMPETITION**

**Part I: Participation in the Competition**

**Article 7 – Registration**

1. Participation in the WIC is open exclusively to students or graduates in legal subjects who have graduated no more than six months prior and who are mandatory members of ELSA [group]. These requirements must be met by each member of the participating teams for the entire duration of the Competition.
2. The following conditions are deemed incompatible with participation in the WIC:

* Engaging in legal professional practice, including early practice;
* Undertaking internships or traineeships lasting more than three (3) months at judicial or investigative bodies, companies, or law firms;
* Attending post-graduate specialization or training courses or schools.

1. Participation is also excluded for members of the OC and elected or appointed members of ELSA [group].

**Article 8 – Training and Opening Conference**

1. The OC may organise an Opening Conference, which registered participants are required to attend.
2. Alternatively, the OC may arrange a series of training sessions. In such cases, participants must attend at least 75% of the sessions.

**Article 9 – Registration Fee**

1. The OC has the authority to set a registration fee for each participant in the Competition.
2. ELSA [group] will determine the deadlines and methods for payment of the fee and will provide adequate notice at the time of the event’s announcement.
3. In the event of withdrawal or any other personal impediment communicated after registration, the participation fee will not be refunded.

**Article 10 – Team Composition**

1. Teams must consist strictly of two (2) participants.
2. Registration will automatically close upon reaching 24 (twenty-four) teams. ELSA [group] will promptly communicate the closure of registrations.
3. In special cases, and subject to prior notification to the OC, changes in the composition of already registered teams are permitted. Such changes must be communicated to the OC no later than seven days before the start of the Competition and must be approved by the OC.
4. In any case, the requirements set out in Article 7 of these Regulations remain applicable.

**Article 11 – Registration Form**

1. Registration must be completed using the specific form published on ELSA [group]'s social media channels and sent via mailing list to members.
2. Registration is considered finalized upon the completion of the registration form or upon payment of the fee, if applicable.

**Article 12 – Team Code**

1. Within 48 (forty-eight) hours of the closure of registrations, the OC will provide each team with a competition code.
2. This code replaces the personal details of the participants and must be used throughout the entire duration of the Competition.

**Article 13 – Subject of the Competition**

1. The subject of the Competition is determined by the OC in agreement with the SC. It constitutes the topic on which the case presented during the Witness hearing is based.

**Article 14 – Technical Preparation for the Competition**

1. Each participant may be provided with or referred to scientific materials essential for the WIC, selected in agreement with the Academic Board, according to the methods and timelines determined by the OC.

**Part II: Conduct of the Competition**

**Article 15 – Submission of General Information and Assignment of Roles**

1. The OC shall send the registered teams the General Information regarding the legal issue subject to the Competition, either at the end of the training sessions if provided, or upon the closure of registrations.
2. Simultaneously with the submission of the aforementioned information, the OC shall assign each team, by means of a draw, the role they will assume—public prosecutor or defence attorney—ensuring an equal number of teams for each role. If the number of teams does not allow for equal distribution, the extra team will still be assigned a role through a draw.
3. It is strictly forbidden to consult members of the OC, SC, or JP regarding the case or the General Information outside the methods and timeframes specified in Article 28.1.
4. The OC guarantees the transparency of the draw procedure referred to in paragraph 2 of this article.

**Article 16 – The Witness Hearing**

1. Each phase of the WIC begins with the hearing of the Witness. During the hearing, the teams must attempt to uncover the unknown factual elements that constitute the case, with a view to developing a thesis appropriate to the role they have been assigned.
2. Team members may ask questions of the Witness. The Witness may disclose more or less information depending on the questions asked. Such information is identical for all participants, and its disclosure depends solely on the teams’ ability to ask the most useful questions.
3. The Witness Hearing consists of the stages set out in Article 20, paragraph 1, letters a), b), c), and d) of these Regulations.
4. Both team members must speak during the interview. Failure to comply with this provision will result in a 3-point penalty.
5. The team not examining the witness may raise oral objections to the opposing team’s questions.

**Article 17 – Development of the Thesis**

1. Once the witness examination is concluded, the teams will have time to confer privately and develop their thesis.
2. During this phase, teams may consult the Code of Substantive and Procedural Law, notes taken during the interview, and any materials related to the case that may have been provided by the OC prior to the start of the Competition.
3. Upon request, submitted no later than five (5) days before the start of the Competition, the OC may authorize the use of additional legal sources, provided they are relevant to the subject matter of the case.

**Article 18 – Presentation of the Thesis and Conclusions to the Judging Panel**

1. At the end of the allotted time for thesis development, the teams will present their thesis and conclusions regarding the case to the Judging Panel (JP).
2. This presentation should be delivered as though it were addressed to legal experts and must take the form of a final argument.
3. During this phase, both team members must speak. Failure to comply with this provision will result in a 3-point penalty.

**Article 19 – Discussion with the Judging Panel**

1. Following the presentation of the thesis, the teams will engage in a discussion with the JP regarding the conduct of the witness hearing and the thesis they have developed.
2. The JP will ask questions to the participants to clarify the conclusions reached and the activities carried out.
3. During this phase, both team members must speak. Failure to comply with this provision will result in a 3-point penalty.

**Part III: Elimination Phase**

**Article 20 – Conduct of the Elimination Phase**

1. The schedule for the Elimination Phase is as follows:

* Examination of the Witness: 15 (fifteen) minutes;
* Cross-examination of the Witness: 15 (fifteen) minutes;
* Possible request for re-examination and its conduct: 5 (five) minutes;
* Thesis development: 20 (twenty) minutes;
* Presentation of the thesis and conclusions to the Judging Panel (JP): 10 (ten) minutes per team;
* Discussion with the JP: 10 (ten) minutes.

1. A timekeeper appointed by the OC shall inform the teams of the remaining time during each phase.
2. The team not conducting the examination may raise objections through oral motions regarding the questions posed by the opposing team.
3. During the competition, the President of the JP also acts as the Judge of the proceedings, thereby evaluating the objections raised by the teams and ensuring the proper conduct of the witness examination.
4. No team other than those currently competing may attend this phase.

**Article 21 – Evaluation of the Elimination Phase**

1. At the end of each round, each JP member will award a maximum score of 50 (fifty) points to each team based on the following criteria:

* Ability to conduct the examination and obtain useful information from the Witness for thesis development (maximum 10 points);
* Ability to respond to the opposing team’s activities, especially regarding the appropriateness of objections and potential re-examination requests (maximum 5 points);
* Suitability of the thesis in fulfilling the needs of the assigned role (maximum 10 points);
* Legal soundness of the thesis (maximum 10 points);
* Originality of the thesis (maximum 5 points);
* Clarity and effectiveness in presenting the thesis (maximum 10 points).

1. The OC may also provide for individual awards, for which JP members will assign a maximum individual score of 40 (forty) points per participant, based on the following criteria:

* Skill in managing the interview and obtaining relevant information (maximum 10 points);
* Correct understanding of the assigned role (maximum 10 points);
* Teamwork (maximum 10 points);
* Oratory skills in the oral presentation of the thesis (maximum 10 points).

**Article 22 – Qualification for the Semifinal Phase**

1. At the end of the Elimination Phase, the four teams—two per assigned role—with the highest scores based on the arithmetic mean of the points awarded by each JP member, will advance to the Semifinals.
2. In the event of a tie between two teams, the JP will, by a simple majority vote, determine which team advances. If no majority is reached, the team receiving the vote of the JP President will advance.

**Part IV: Semifinal Phase**

**Article 23 – Additional Elements**

1. The OC may introduce, in agreement with and with the support of the SC, additional elements and/or modifications to the fictitious case in preparation for the Final.

**Article 24 – Conduct of the Semifinal Phase**

1. The schedule for the Semifinal Phase is as follows:

* Examination of the Witness: 15 (fifteen) minutes;
* Cross-examination of the Witness: 15 (fifteen) minutes;
* Possible request for re-examination and its conduct: 5 (five) minutes;
* Thesis development: 20 (twenty) minutes;
* Presentation of the thesis and conclusions to the JP: 10 (ten) minutes per team;
* Discussion with the JP: 10 (ten) minutes.

1. A timekeeper appointed by the OC will inform the teams of the remaining time during each phase.
2. The team not conducting the examination may raise objections through oral motions regarding the questions posed by the opposing team.
3. During the Semifinal Phase, the JP also acts as the Judge of the proceedings, thereby evaluating objections and ensuring the proper conduct of the witness examination.

**Article 25 – Evaluation of the Semifinal Phase**

1. The scores obtained by the semifinalist teams during the Elimination Phase are reset. Each JP member will award a maximum score of 50 (fifty) points to each team, based on the same criteria outlined in Article 21, paragraph 1 of these Regulations.

**Article 26 – Qualification for the Final Phase**

1. At the end of the Semifinal Phase, the two teams—one per assigned role—with the highest scores based on the arithmetic mean of the points awarded by each JP member, will advance to the Final.
2. In the event of a tie between two teams, the JP will, by a simple majority vote, determine which team advances. If no majority is reached, the team receiving the vote of the JP President will advance.

**Part V: Final Phase**

**Article 27 – Additional Elements**

1. The OC may introduce, in agreement with and with the support of the SC, additional elements and/or modifications to the fictitious case in preparation for the Final.

**Article 28 – Conduct of the Final Phase**

1. The schedule for the Final Phase is as follows:

* Examination of the Witness: 15 (fifteen) minutes;
* Cross-examination of the Witness: 15 (fifteen) minutes;
* Possible request for re-examination and its conduct: 5 (five) minutes;
* Thesis development: 20 (twenty) minutes;
* Presentation of the thesis and conclusions to the JP: 10 (ten) minutes per team;
* Discussion with the JP: 20 (twenty) minutes.

1. A timekeeper appointed by the OC will inform the teams of the remaining time during each phase.
2. The team not conducting the examination may raise objections through oral motions regarding the questions posed by the opposing team.
3. During the Final Phase, the JP also acts as the Judge of the proceedings, thereby evaluating the objections raised by the teams and ensuring the proper conduct of the witness examination.

**Article 29 – Evaluation of the Final Phase**

1. The scores obtained by the finalist teams during the Semifinal Phase are reset. Each JP member will award a maximum score of 50 (fifty) points to each team, based on the criteria set out in Article 21, paragraph 1 of these Regulations.
2. The OC may also provide for individual awards, for which JP members will assign a maximum individual score of 40 (forty) points to each participant, based on the criteria outlined in Article 21.2 of these Regulations.

**Article 30 – Declaration of the Winners**

1. Once the Final Phase has concluded, the JP will declare the Winning Team based on the arithmetic mean of the scores awarded by each JP member during the Final Phase.
2. In the event of a tie between the two finalist teams, the JP will declare the Winning Team of the WIC by a simple majority vote. If no majority is reached, the team receiving the vote of the JP President will be declared the winner.
3. If individual awards have been provided, JP members will select the recipients based on the individual scores assigned. For each participant who has reached the Final, the arithmetic mean of the scores obtained during both the Elimination and Final Phases will be considered.

### **TITLE III: FINAL PROVISIONS**

**Article 31 – Prizes**

1. Each participant will receive a certificate of participation.
2. The OC will determine the prizes for the Winning Team of the WIC.
3. In addition to the prizes mentioned above, the OC may provide additional team and/or individual prizes.
4. The OC will establish the procedures for accepting or declining the prizes.

**Article 32 – Requests for Clarification Regarding the Regulations**

1. Participating teams may request clarifications regarding these Regulations within five days of completing the registration process. Such requests must be sent via email to the OC at the following address: [**e-mail]**.
2. The Vice President for Competitions of ELSA [group] is solely responsible for resolving interpretative and application issues related to these Regulations. The decisions made in this regard are final and not subject to appeal.
3. All evaluations and judgments expressed by the JP members are also final and not subject to appeal.

**Article 33 – Disciplinary Measures**

1. All participants are required to comply with these Regulations.
2. In the event of any violation, the OC is authorized to take any disciplinary action deemed appropriate, including disqualification.

**Article 34 – Implementation Provisions for Health Emergencies**

1. In the event of serious reasons or force majeure, the OC will adopt all necessary measures, including converting the Competition to an online format.
2. Any amendments to these Regulations must be made in accordance with Article 2.3.

**Article 35 – Acceptance of the Regulations**

1. By registering for the WIC, participating teams declare that they have read these Regulations and accept all related provisions.