**ANSWER FORMAT GUIDELINES for students and coaches**

1. **Answers must be exact** unless specified otherwise in the question.

Exact answers: √2; 3.9222222… (or 3.922 with a bar over the last two); 2/3; 5 pi

Note: none of these can be written “exactly” without the included symbol (√ , …, a bar, / or pi)

2. **Repeating decimals** should have a bar over the repeating portion or be written in reduced fraction

form. The use of three dots is not recommended since identifying the exact set of digits that repeat

can be tricky.

3. “**Integers**” have no decimal point.

4. When **rounding**, include trailing zeros if needed. Ex: 4.96 to the nearest tenth is 5.0

5. If an exact answer cannot be found (even without a calculator!), and no specific form is requested, only

then should the answer be rounded to the nearest ten-thousandth. (this is rarely, if ever, the case).

6. “Coordinates of a point” require **parentheses** and a comma between the numbers.

7. If a question requests a specific form, such as “(a, b, c)”, be sure to include the parentheses and

commas in your answer and put the numbers in the requested order. (refer to 10c below)

8. **Parentheses** should not be included in answers except in the above cases. (refer to 10c below)

9. Sets of numbers can be written with **braces or brackets** or neither, but not with parentheses. (refer to

10c below)

10. **Answers must be in the form requested**. For example,

a. “in terms of pi” requires 3 pi not 9.4248

b. “in simplest polynomial form” requires 3x2+8x not 3(x+1)2+2(x+1)-5.

c. “in the form a, b, c” if a = 5, b = 3 and c = 7 requires 5, 3, 7 or {5, 3, 7} or [5, 3, 7]

but NOT (5, 3, 7) or 3, 5, 7 which illustrate incorrect use of parentheses and incorrect order.

11. When more than one value solves a problem, unless the question says otherwise, **all possible**

**values** must be in your answer. If too few or too many values are given, no credit is given.

12. **Answers must be in simplest** **form** unless otherwise stated in the question.

Examples of NOT simplified answers: 4/6; √18; 52; 3(2x-1);

13. **Simplest form of a fraction** has integer denominator.

14. The **simplest form of a polynomial** does not have parentheses. Terms are written in either

decreasing of increasing degree order.

15. There is **no partial credit**.

16. When a question asks for a **specific format or range for the answers**, the answers must meet

those conditions. For example, if a trig question asks for a solution in the range pi to 2pi, than the

answer 210 degrees, though is may solve the equation, is not acceptable but 7pi/6 is acceptable. That

is because 7pi/6 is approximately 3.665191429…and that is between pi (approx. 3.14159…) and 2pi

(approx. 6.28318…) where as 210 is not in that range.

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