

THE NATIONAL
QUR'AN
COMPETITION
UK & EUROPE 2026

IMPACT REPORT

The inaugural National Qur'an Competition, UK & Europe 2026

المسابقة الوطنية لحفظ القرآن الكريم في المملكة المتحدة وأوروبا

GRAND FINAL · 1–2 AUGUST 2026
MASJID TAQWA HALL · LEICESTER

ORGANISED BY
الكلية الإسلامية العالمية بالمملكة المتحدة
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC COLLEGE
UNITED KINGDOM

Cover: Shaykh Yassine Bendani reciting at the opening of the Grand Final

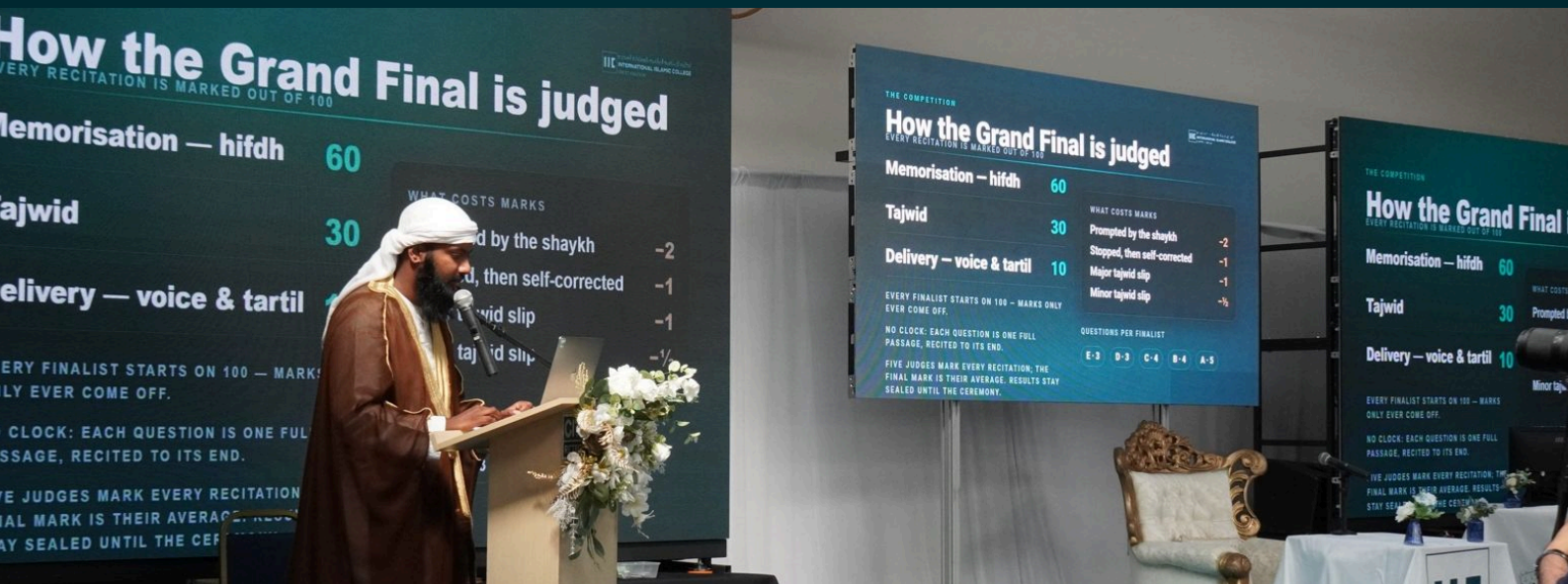


MASJID TAQWA HALL, LEICESTER,
ON THE MORNING OF THE GRAND FINAL


THE NATIONAL
QUR'AN
COMPETITION
UK & EUROPE 2026
INTERNATION
UNITED KINGDOM






How the Grand Final is judged
EVERY RECITATION IS MARKED OUT OF 100
Memorisation — hifdh 60
Tajwid 30
Delivery — voice & tartil 10
WHAT COSTS MARKS
Prompted by the shaykh -2
Stopped, then self-corrected -1
Major tajwid slip -1
Minor tajwid slip -½
EVERY FINALIST STARTS ON 100 — MARKS ONLY EVER COME OFF.
NO CLOCK: EACH QUESTION IS ONE FULL PASSAGE, RECITED TO ITS END.
FIVE JUDGES MARK EVERY RECITATION; THE FINAL MARK IS THEIR AVERAGE. RESULTS STAY SEALED UNTIL THE CEREMONY.
QUESTIONS PER FINALIST
E-3 D-3 C-4 B-4 A-5

CONTENTS

In this report

A message from the Head of the NQC	05
NQC 2026 at a glance	06
From launch to final	07
The competition	08
From 340 to 15	09
Who took part	10
Across Europe and beyond	11
Across the United Kingdom	12
Nationalities	13
The semi-finals	14
The judges	15
The Grand Final	16
Voices from the stage	17
The champions	18
The awards ceremony	19
Roll of honour	22
The weekend around the hall	24
The Qur'an Ḥalaqah Camp	25
Ethar Relief at the Grand Final	26
Statement: Ethar Relief	27
Reflection: Robert Carter, 5Pillars	28
Letter: Islam Channel	29
What families said	30
Reach and media	32
Partners, sponsors and supporters	33
Special thanks to our volunteers	34
With gratitude	35
About the organiser and the figures	36
Sponsor NQC 2027	37

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report records the inaugural National Qur'an Competition, UK & Europe, from the first registration on 19 May 2026 to the awards on 2 August.

Its figures come from the competition's own records; online figures are as at 7 October 2026. Page 36 explains how they were counted.

Statements from our partners, and a reflection from a 5Pillars correspondent, appear in full and in their own words.

The NQC 2026 documentary premieres soon on YouTube at **@StudyIIC**.

PLATINUM SPONSOR

ETHAR RELIEF 20 years

MEDIA PARTNER

islam CHANNEL



Shaykh Emran Ahmed opens the second day of the Grand Final at Masjid Taqwa Hall.

A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF THE NQC

For the people of the Qur'an

Across Britain and Europe, children and adults are memorising the Book of Allah: in masājid and madrasahs, before school and after work, often with little recognition beyond their own families. We founded the National Qur'an Competition to give them a national stage worthy of what they carry: free to enter, open to children and adults, judged with care by people of the Qur'an, and held with dignity.

This summer surpassed our hopes. Three hundred and forty registrations from across the UK and Europe, six days of live semi-finals, and a Grand Final in Leicester where families, teachers and whole communities fell silent to listen. Seeing a six-year-old recite Juz ʿAmma in the same hall as ḥuffāẓ of the whole Qur'an reminded us why we began.

The NQC is not a one-off event. It is the first public expression of what the International Islamic College exists to do: to put the Qur'an first, to teach it and the sciences that serve it from their sources, and to do so to a standard our community can be proud of. Memorisation is the start of a journey, to tajwīd, to the Arabic language, to understanding and to scholarship. The College is building that path, from the Foundation Diploma that began in Leicester this September to the Dawrah al-Muwaṭṭaʾ in December and, in shā' Allāh, towards accredited degrees in the years ahead.

So we will continue. In shā' Allāh the NQC will return, reach further, and raise more young people who love the Qur'an, live by it and one day teach it. My thanks to every contestant and family, to our judges, partners and sponsors, to the masājid that opened their doors, and to the volunteers who carried the weekend. May Allah accept it from us all and make us among the people of the Qur'an.

Shaykh Emran Ahmed

HEAD OF THE NQC AND HOST OF THE GRAND FINAL
FOUNDER & CHIEF EXECUTIVE, INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC COLLEGE

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ

NQC 2026

At a glance

The inaugural National Qur'an Competition, UK & Europe, in numbers.



340
REGISTRATIONS

209
RECITATION VIDEOS, REVIEWED ONE BY ONE BY AN EXPERT JUDGE

148
SEMI-FINALISTS

56
GRAND FINALISTS

15
PODIUM PLACES

£14,425
CASH PRIZES

8
JUDGES

27
NATIONALITIES NAMED ON FORMS

72
TOWNS & CITIES

12
COUNTRIES NAMED ON FORMS

21,163
LIVESTREAM VIEWS

14h 42m
STREAMED LIVE

419
PEOPLE'S CHOICE VOTES

16
STALLS

12
CAMP GUESTS

4.81
AVERAGE RATING OUT OF 5

417
MASĀJID & INSTITUTIONS INVITED

104
VIP INVITATIONS TO THE AWARDS CEREMONY

100%
OF THOSE WHO REPLIED TO OUR FEEDBACK FORM SAID THEY WILL RETURN

THE NATIONAL QUR'AN COMPETITION UK & EUROPE 2026

THE TIMELINE

From launch to final

Eleven weeks from the first registration to the champion's recitation.

19 May — **Registration opens**
The first form arrives that morning.

w/c 1 June — **The busiest week**
108 registrations in seven days.

20 June — **Registration deadline**
Every contestant's age was verified against an authenticated ID. Late forms were accepted until 7 July.

4 July — **Recitation videos due**
209 two-minute videos received.

9 July — **Semi-finalists announced**
148 memorisers go through.

11–17 July — **Semi-finals, live online**
Six sitting days, 130 recitations judged.

22–23 July — **Finalists announced**
Published on the competition page.

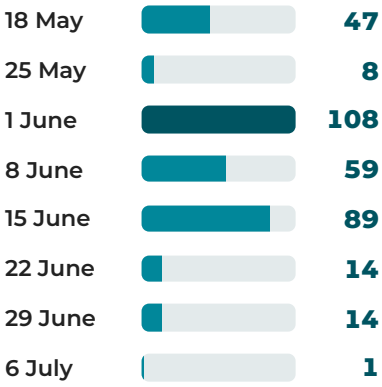
31 July — **Vote and camp open**
People's Choice opens; the camp opens after Maghrib.

1–2 August — **The Grand Final**
Two days of live recitation in Leicester.

2 August — **Awards ceremony**
The champion recites to the hall.

4 August — **Results and thanks**
Results published; thanks sent to families.

REGISTRATIONS BY WEEK



Week commencing. 340 forms in all.

11

WEEKS, START TO FINISH

Registration, a recitation video, online semi-finals and a two-day final, run by a small team with the support of the community.



THE COMPETITION

Four stages, five categories

Free to enter and open to memorisers across the UK and Europe. Each category was set by how much of the Qur'an the contestant had memorised.

1
Register
Registration and an identity check, free of charge.

2
Recite on video
A two-minute recitation video, reviewed before the semi-finals.

3
Semi-finals
Live online before two judges.

4
Grand Final
In person in Leicester, before five judges.

	CATEGORY	PORTION OF THE 30 AJZĀʾ	FORMS	FINALISTS	FINAL QS	1ST PRIZE
A	The Full Qur'ān Male, all ages		139	22	5	£5,000
B	20 Ajzāʾ Male, all ages		32	8	4	£2,000
C	10 Ajzāʾ Boys 6–17		50	8	4	£1,000
D	5 Ajzāʾ Boys 6–14		50	9	3	£500
E	Juz ʿAmma Boys and girls 6–9		69	9	3	£300

Forms: registrations received, 340 in all. Final Qs: questions set for each finalist at the Grand Final, each a passage of up to a page of the muṣḥaf, with no time limit.

THE COMPETITION'S VALUES

Excellence | Dignity | Authenticity | Clarity | Community

THE JOURNEY

From 340 forms to 15 places on the podium

Fewer than one in five registrants reached the Grand Final. Reaching it was itself the achievement.

340 REGISTRATION FORMS

From about 301 people

209 RECITATION VIDEOS

Due 4 July

148 SEMI-FINALISTS

Announced on 9 July: 71% of videos

130 JUDGED ONLINE

Recited live in the semi-finals, 11–17 July

56

GRAND FINALISTS · *On the roll of honour*

15

PODIUM PLACES · *Three in each of the five categories*

CAT.	FORMS	VIDEOS	SEMI	JUDGED	FINAL	PODIUM
A	139	91	64	58	22	3
B	32	18	13	10	8	3
C	50	28	17	14	8	3
D	50	28	19	18	9	3
E	69	44	35	30	9	3
All	**340**	**209**	**148**	**130**	**56**	**15**

Semi: announced on 9 July. Judged: semi-finalists who recited. Final: the 56 on the roll of honour.

THE ENTRANTS

Who took part

Children and adults, aged from 5 to 59. More than half of all registrations were for under-18s.

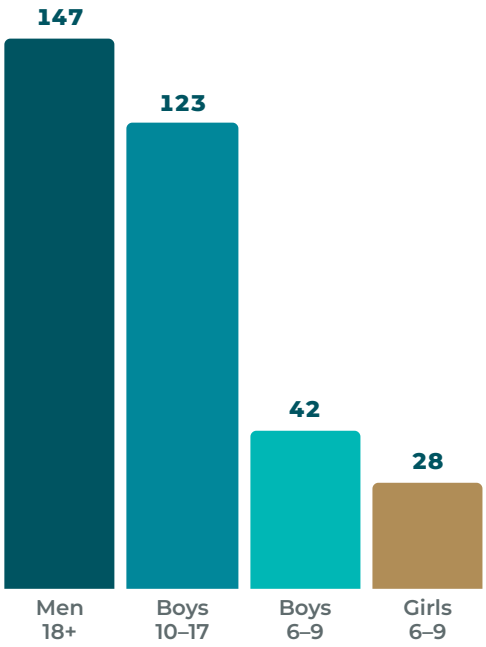
57%
OF REGISTRATIONS FOR UNDER-18S

5–59
AGE RANGE

16
MEDIAN AGE

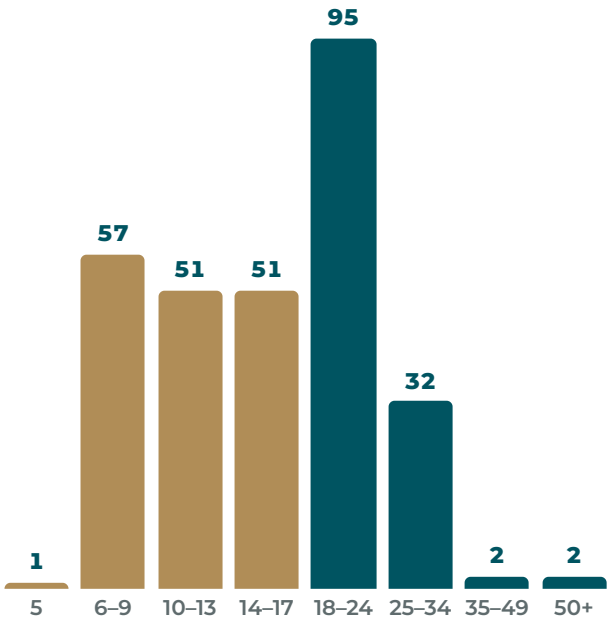
≈52%
DECLARED THE WHOLE QUR'AN

REGISTRATIONS BY GROUP



340 forms, as declared.

AGE ON 1 AUGUST 2026



GIRLS IN CATEGORY E

28	Registration forms
19	Sent a video
13	Reached the semi-finals

Girls aged 6 to 9 competed in Category E, Juz ʿAmma, alongside boys of the same age.

THE YOUNGEST FINALIST

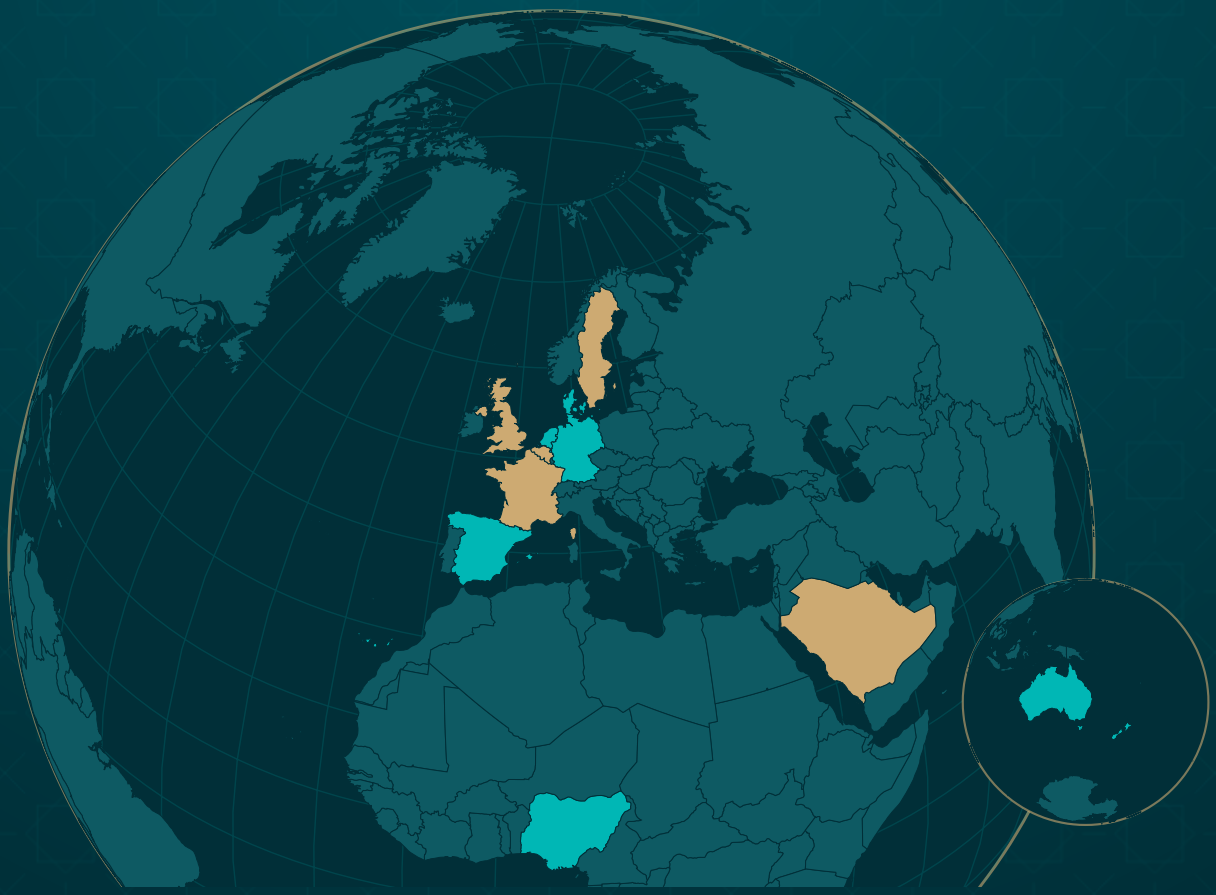
6

years old. Finalists ranged from young children reciting Juz ʿAmma to ḥuffāẓ of the whole Qur'an.

THE ENTRANTS · COUNTRIES

From across Europe, and beyond

Registrants lived in eight European countries, and a few wrote in from further afield. The finalists came from 23 cities in five countries.



THE 56 FINALISTS · 5 COUNTRIES

United Kingdom	46
France	6
Belgium	2
Sweden	1
Saudi Arabia	1

REGISTRANTS NAMED 12 COUNTRIES

- United Kingdom
- Belgium
- Germany
- Sweden
- Saudi Arabia
- Australia
- France
- Netherlands
- Denmark
- Spain
- Nigeria
- New Zealand

72
TOWNS & CITIES

16
TOWNS & CITIES OUTSIDE THE UK

THE ENTRANTS · UNITED KINGDOM

Across the United Kingdom

Registrants came from 56 UK towns and cities, from Glasgow and Newcastle to Plymouth and Dover.



Circle size shows the number of registrants from each place; London is drawn as Greater London (68).

TOP CITIES AMONG THE 56 FINALISTS

Birmingham	11
Leicester	7
London	6
Luton	4
Manchester	4
Paris	3

MOST REGISTRANTS, BY TOWN OR CITY

Leicester	63
London	52
Birmingham	37
Manchester	20
Reading	8
Slough	7
Luton	7
Paris	6

One count per person. London counts people who named London itself; with its boroughs, Greater London is 68 (see By region). Paris sent the most registrants of any city outside the UK.

BY REGION

East Midlands	76
Greater London	68
West Midlands	41
North West	33
South East	24
East of England	10
Yorkshire & Humber	9
South West	5
Scotland	4
Wales	4
North East	2

56
UK TOWNS & CITIES

76
FROM THE EAST MIDLANDS

23
CITIES AMONG THE FINALISTS

THE ENTRANTS · NATIONALITIES

One community, many heritages

From British, French and Nigerian to Somali, Dutch, Indian and Pakistani: the Qur'an brought together a community of many heritages.



NATIONALITIES NAMED ON THE REGISTRATION FORMS **27**

British 185	French 15	Nigerian 15	Somali 12
Dutch 11	Indian 9	Pakistani 7	Belgian 7
Algerian 6	Swedish 4	Libyan 3	Sri Lankan 3
Portuguese 3	Ethiopian 2	Yemeni 2	Tanzanian 2
Sudanese 2	Egyptian 2	Danish 1	Iraqi 1
Senegalese 1	Malaysian 1	New Zealander 1	Lebanese 1
Syrian 1	Spanish 1	Bangladeshi 1	United by the Book of Allah

Number of registrants naming each nationality (about 301 people). British includes British-Bangladeshi, British-Pakistani, British-Indian and other dual heritages. The College published "22+ nationalities" during the competition; 27 are named on the forms.

THE SEMI-FINALS · ONLINE · 11–17 JULY 2026

Judged live, one recitation at a time

The 130 semi-finalists who took part each recited live on Microsoft Teams before the same two judges, after a short fair-play check of the room, with a parent or guardian in view for every child.

6	17	130	260
SITTING DAYS	LIVE SESSIONS	RECITATIONS JUDGED	SCORE SHEETS

HOW EACH QUESTION WAS MARKED, OUT OF 100

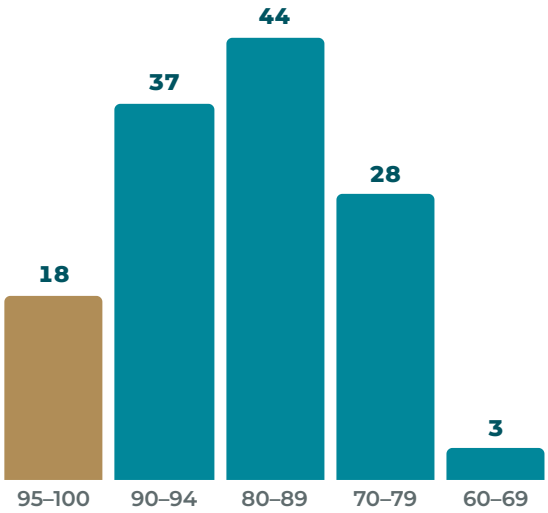


MAKHĀRIJ · 10 DELIVERY · 10

Two questions per contestant were drawn at random from their own portion, with up to 90 seconds each. Every prompt and slip was recorded on both judges' score sheets: 2,361 entries in all.

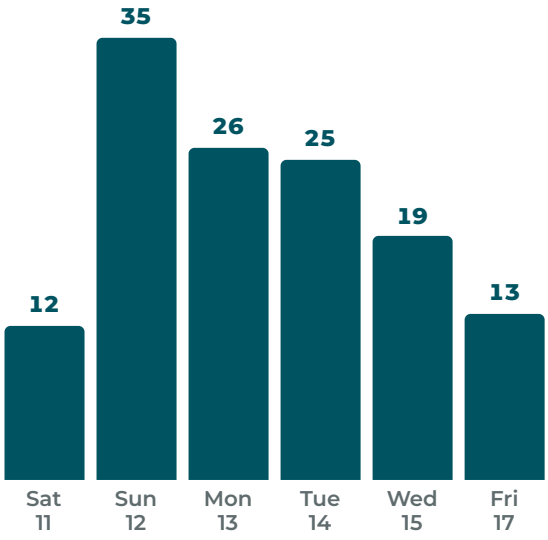
A contestant's mark was the average of the two judges' totals. The 55 finalists announced on 22–23 July were the top scorers in each category, with Category A widened from 10 to 21; after later changes to the roster, 56 appear on the roll of honour.

SCORES · 130 RECITATIONS



86.3	88.0	99.5
MEAN	MEDIAN	HIGHEST

RECITATIONS BY DAY



35	21.7	12
BUSIEST · SUN 12	AVERAGE A DAY	QUIETEST · SAT 11



JUDGING · WITH GRATITUDE

The judges

Eight judges across three stages. At the final, five judges sat as equals, with no head judge, and heard every recitation together.

FIRST ROUND

SHAYKH
Yassine Bendani

SEMI-FINALS

USTADH
Ismail Abdulilah Bouterfa

USTADH
Alaaddin Salman

GRAND FINAL

SHAYKH
Galal Salem

SHAYKH
Abdur Rahman Al-Turki

SHAYKH
Zakaria al-Andalusi

SHAYKH
Jamal Abd al-Nasir

SHAYKH
Anouar Akachar

Each judge received a certificate of appreciation from the International Islamic College. May Allah reward them for their time, their care and their knowledge.

THE GRAND FINAL · MASJID TAQWA HALL, LEICESTER

Two days of live recitation







The hall on Sunday, and finalists reciting from the chair before the panel.

DAY ONE · SATURDAY 1 AUGUST

Categories E, D and C

26 finalists · six hours live

DAY TWO · SUNDAY 2 AUGUST

B and A, then the awards

30 finalists · over eight hours live

56	5	3	14h 42m
FINALISTS	EQUAL JUDGES	LED WALLS	STREAMED LIVE

QUESTIONS PER FINALIST

A	B	C	D	E
5	4	4	3	3

Each a passage of up to a page of the muṣḥaf, with no time limit.

MARKED OUT OF 100

Ḥifẓ · 60 | Tajwīd · 30 | 10

DELIVERY · 10

Tajwīd includes makhārij. Under the rule agreed on 30 July, each mark was the average of all five judges.

THE GRAND FINAL · SUNDAY 2 AUGUST

Voices from the stage

Between the recitations on the final day, the hall heard a reminder, a guest recitation and, before the awards, a closing address.



Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq at-Turkmānī (right) speaks before the awards, with Ustadh Ariff Ola (left) translating into English.

BEFORE THE AWARDS

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq at-Turkmānī

FOUNDER AND HEAD OF SCHOLARLY AFFAIRS, INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC COLLEGE

Born in Kirkuk, Iraq, the Shaykh is a scholar of ḥadīth who studied under leading muḥaddiths of Baghdad, and has edited classical manuscripts since the 1990s, above all the works of Imām Ibn Ḥazm.

On Sunday evening he addressed the hall in Arabic, with Ustadh Ariff Ola translating into English. He thanked Allah for the gathering, an honour to sit in the presence of the Qur'an and those who carry it, thanked the organisers, and spoke on the importance of the Qur'an and of higher education.



A REMINDER

Shaykh Dr Abdirahim Khidr

On Sunday afternoon, while the judges deliberated, he gave a short reminder on listening to the Qur'an as an act of worship, recalling how hearing a single verse changed the life of Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ.



GUEST RECITATION

Uzair Abdusamad

On Sunday evening, invited up by the host while the hall waited for the judges to return, he recited the closing verses of Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ (28:83–88).

RESULTS · ANNOUNCED 2 AUGUST 2026

The champions of NQC 2026

CHAMPION · CATEGORY A, THE FULL QUR'ĀN

Mohamed Lharod Lhadari

BRUXELLES · BELGIUM

£5,000
FIRST PRIZE

A
Full Qur'ān

1. **Mohamed Lharod Lhadari**
   BRUXELLES · £5,000
2. **Mohammed Alkhalidi**
   GLASGOW · £2,000
3. **Mohammad Younus Rahman**
   LONDON · £1,500

B
20 Ajzā'

1. **Adil Seedat**
   BATLEY · £2,000
2. **Abdimalik Fidhow**
   LONDON · £700
3. **Bilal Ahmed Chowdhury**
   BIRMINGHAM · £300

C
10 Ajzā'

1. **Muhammad Usman Miah**
   £1,000
2. **Mohammed Yahya Rahman**
   £400
3. **Hodaifa El Uazzani**
   £150

D
5 Ajzā'

1. **Yameen Ibrahim**
   £500
2. **Musa Mohammed**
   £250
3. **Ahmed Muhammed Mohamed Shafeek**
   £100

E
Juz 'Amma

1. **Idrees Mohammed**
   £300
2. **Raghad Ali**
   £150
3. **Bayan Hazem**
   £75

£14,425 IN CASH PRIZES, BY CATEGORY



A £8,500 · B £3,000 · C £1,550 · D £850 · E £525



THE AWARDS CEREMONY · SUNDAY 2 AUGUST

Every finalist honoured

Every finalist was honoured with a certificate, and clear-glass trophies went to the podium in every category and to the People's Choice.

56
CERTIFICATES PRESENTED

21
AWARDS: 15 PODIUM, 6 PEOPLE'S CHOICE

419
PUBLIC VOTES, FROM 352 VOTERS

PEOPLE'S CHOICE · ONE PER CATEGORY

A	**Mohammad Younus Rahman**
B	**AbdurRaheem Khan**
C	**Muhammad Usman Miah**
D	**Yameen Ibrahim & Yahya bin Rashid** *Awarded jointly*
E	**Maryam Ahmad**

The audience's own honour, voted by the public over the weekend: separate from the judges' results, with no cash prize.

THE ORDER OF THE CEREMONY

1. The finalists' procession
2. Certificates
3. Category awards, E to B
4. People's Choice
5. Category A and the champion's recitation
6. Closing du'ā'


THE PROCESSION
THE AWARDS
AWARDS CEREMONY
THE PROCESSION
THE AWARDS
THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE


THE NATIONAL
QUR'AN
COMPETITION
2026 · 1448 AH
المركز الأول
First Place
Full Qur'an
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC COLLEGE


Certificate of Appreciation
Ustadh Ismail Bouterfa
Ustadh Alaaddin Salman
Shaykh Anwar Alachar
THE NATIONAL
QUR'AN
COMPETITION
١٤٤٧هـ ٢٠٢٦م


AWARDS
CEREMONY







THE AWARDS CEREMONY
SUNDAY 2 AUGUST 2026

ROLL OF HONOUR · 1 OF 2

The Grand Finalists

Fifty-six memorisers from 23 cities in five countries, invited to recite before the panel at Masjid Taqwa Hall on 1–2 August 2026.

A *Full Qur'ān* — 22 FINALISTS

Abdallah Aweis	London	Ali Haddadi	Perpignan, France
Abdourrahmen Bettaybi	Bondoufle, France	Diallo Mamadou	Paris, France
Abdul-Rahman Hameed	Manchester	Ibrahim Mohammed	Bolton
Abdullah Desai	Blackburn	Mohamed Lharod Lhadari	Bruxelles, Belgium
Abdullah Hanook	Luton	Mohammad Younus Rahman	London
Abdullah Siddiqui	Birmingham	Mohammed Alkhalidi	Glasgow
Abdullahi Mohamed Aden	Stockholm, Sweden	Muhammad Sufyaan Ali	Manchester
Abdurahman Aswani	Leicester	Omar Ibrahim Hassan	Manchester
Abdurrahman Jama	Liverpool	Rayyan Saeed Abdelrahman	Birmingham
Abubakar Mohamed Omary	Birmingham	Saabiq Twaha Abubakar	Barking
Adam Bashir	Preston	Taha Abou El Kacem Bendjeddou	Paris, France

Names are listed alphabetically within each category; home towns are given for Categories A and B only.



A finalist recites from the chair at the Grand Final.

ROLL OF HONOUR · 2 OF 2

Categories B to E

B *20 Ajzā'* — 8 FINALISTS

Abdimalik Fidhow	London
AbdurRaheem Khan	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Abdurrahman Ally	Leicester
Adil Seedat	Batley
Bilal Ahmed Chowdhury	Birmingham
Hanzalah Haider	Birmingham
Ibrahim Fatade	Corby
Ismail Norat	Batley

C *10 Ajzā'* — 8 FINALISTS

- Arsalan Shahzad
- Hodaifa El Uazzani
- Imraan Twaha Abubakar
- Mohammed Yahya Rahman
- Muhammad Rayhan Ibrahim
- Muhammad Usman Miah
- Omar Hazem
- Tebbakh Mohamed Yacine

D *5 Ajzā'* — 9 FINALISTS

- Abderrahman Bakkouche
- Ahmed Muhammed Mohamed Shafeek
- Benbouziane Rayyan
- Hamza Shahzad
- Ilhan Lecru
- Musa Mohammed
- Uthman Modak
- Yahya bin Rashid
- Yameen Ibrahim

E *Juz 'Amma* — 9 FINALISTS

- Abderrahim Bakkouche
- Bayan Hazem
- Eesa Deen
- Idrees Mohammed
- Imaan Faraz Ahmed
- Maryam Ahmad
- Maryam Mohammed
- Muhammad Ibrahim Zahoor
- Raghad Ali



Families and guests in the hall at the Grand Final. Every finalist received a certificate.

THE WEEKEND AROUND THE HALL

Food, stalls and hospitality

The Grand Final was a family weekend as well as a competition: free to attend, with a community BBQ in the marquee and stalls across both days.

COMMUNITY BBQ

By the organisers' estimate, everyone who came to the Grand Final ate at the BBQ, along with around 200 more from the wider community.

Sirloin steak & chips	£14.99
Peri-peri chicken burger & chips	£6.99
Quarter grilled chicken & chips	£6.99
Lamb burger & chips	£5.00
Six grilled wings & chips	£5.00
Chicken fillet burger	£6.00
Lamb burger	£4.00
Canned drink or water	£1.00

≈200
FROM THE WIDER COMMUNITY

93
FOOD CREDITS REDEEMED

Flame-grilled; all meat HMC certified. 173 people reserved seats in advance (entry was free without one), and their bookings came back as credit at the BBQ.

HOSPITALITY PARTNER

Pamson Grill, Leicester

Pamson Grill sponsored every meal for the judges and scholars across the Grand Final weekend. Jazāhum Allāhu khayran.

THE STALLS

Sixteen stalls, from bakhoor to books

16

- Mimaz Bakhoor
- Ohmydoh! Doughnuts
- Niva Pharmacy
- Jawdah
- Islamic Calendars
- Prophetic Blends
- The Date Tree
- Qurate
- Aman Modest
- Huffad Co
- Palestine merchandise
- Ndough
- Islamic books
- Perfume oils
- The Hearty Kitchen
- The Mocktail Factory







Qur'an ḥalaqāt at Masjid al-Furqan, Leicester.

31 JULY – 3 AUGUST 2026 · MASJID AL-FURQAN, LEICESTER

The Qur'an Ḥalaqah Camp

Masjid al-Furqan opened its doors and became a home: a free residential camp where guests slept at the masjid, ate breakfast together and sat in Qur'an ḥalaqāt after Fajr and after Maghrib, with their seats at the finals held for them in between. Guests came from Leicester, Loughborough, Luton, Walsall, Birmingham, London and Wrexham.

وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا

"And recite the Qur'an in a calm, measured way."

SŪRAT AL-MUZZAMMIL 73:4

12
RESIDENTIAL GUESTS

7
CITIES

18
FINALS SEATS HELD

4
DAYS

WITH GRATITUDE

The College thanks Al-Maqari Al-Qur'aniyyah UK, who delivered the camp's ḥalaqāt after Fajr and Maghrib, and Masjid al-Furqan for the free stay and breakfasts. May Allah reward them abundantly.

PLATINUM SPONSOR · MAIN SPONSOR

Ethar Relief at the Grand Final



Ethar Relief's roll-up behind the judges' panel on the first day of the Grand Final.

Ethar Relief is a UK registered charity (no. 1169308) marking twenty years of service. Its work reaches refugee communities, especially in East Africa, and education sits at its heart: in 2024/5 its education programmes reached more than 4,400 students.

As platinum sponsor, Ethar Relief was the main sponsor of the inaugural National Qur'an Competition. Its CEO, Saeed Abdelrahman, addressed the hall at the Grand Final, and its roll-up stood behind the judges' panel on both days.

Jazākumullāhu khayran to Ethar Relief for standing with the people of the Qur'an.



Day two: the panel and the cameras, with Ethar Relief behind.

PLATINUM SPONSOR · STATEMENT

A word from Ethar Relief

The National Qur'an Competition, organised by the International Islamic College (IIC), is an inspiring initiative celebrating the memorisation and recitation of the Qur'an. It recognises the dedication of students, teachers and families while inspiring a new generation to strengthen their relationship with the Book of Allah.

We must also invest in the future of Islamic higher education in Britain. IIC's roadmap towards accreditation and university validation will pave the way for validated BA and MA degrees in Islamic sciences, with the long-term vision of becoming a degree-awarding British Islamic university. This provides an important opportunity to combine authentic Islamic scholarship with rigorous academic standards.

This vision closely aligns with Ethar Relief's commitment to education. In 2024/5, Ethar's education programmes reached over 4,400 students, supported more than 154 teachers and staff, and delivered 16 key education initiatives, including schools, kindergartens and Qur'an learning centres. From Qur'anic education within refugee communities to higher Islamic education in Britain, education transforms lives, preserves faith and builds stronger communities for generations to come.

Saeed Abdelrahman
CEO, ETHAR RELIEF



Saeed Abdelrahman addresses the hall at the Grand Final.

4,400+
STUDENTS REACHED

154+
TEACHERS AND STAFF SUPPORTED

16
KEY EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Ethar Relief's education programmes, 2024/5. Figures supplied by Ethar Relief.

Statement supplied by Ethar Relief for this report and reproduced in full. The International Islamic College is a not-for-profit company working towards accreditation; it does not yet award degrees. Its published roadmap is at theiic.uk/roadmap.

A REFLECTION FROM THE HALL

5 PILLARS
What are Muslims thinking?

> “There was something deeply moving about sitting in a hall filled with people of different ages, backgrounds and cultures, all united by their love for the Quran.”



As a British white convert to Islam, it was genuinely an amazing experience to attend the National Quran Competition in Leicester and witness so many Muslims coming together to celebrate the words of Allah. There was something deeply moving about sitting in a hall filled with people of different ages, backgrounds and cultures, all united by their love for the Quran. For me personally, it was a powerful reminder of the incredible community that Islam has brought me into and how fortunate I am to be part of it.

The recitations themselves were absolutely beautiful. Hearing the Quran being recited with such precision, devotion and emotion was something I found deeply uplifting. Some of the young reciters in particular displayed an extraordinary level of memorisation and tajweed, and listening to the verses being recited so beautifully created an atmosphere that was both peaceful and spiritually powerful. It is difficult to put into words the feeling of hearing the Quran recited by people who have dedicated so much of their lives to learning and preserving it.

But perhaps what I appreciated most was simply being among other believing Muslims — kind, humble and religious people who were there because of their love for the Quran and their faith. As a British convert, moments like this remind me that Islam has given me a sense of brotherhood and belonging that transcends nationality, ethnicity and background. To sit among fellow Muslims in Leicester, listening to the words of the Quran and sharing in that atmosphere of faith, was a truly beautiful experience and one I will remember for a long time.

ROBERT CARTER
CORRESPONDENT, 5PILLARS

Grand Final · Leicester · August 2026
Published in full with his permission

OFFICIAL MEDIA PARTNER · LETTER

From Islam Channel

Dear Brother Emran and the International Islamic College Team,

Assalamu Alaikum,

First and foremost, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to you and the entire IIC team on the phenomenal success of the National Qur'an Competition Grand Final. It was an absolute honor for Islam Channel to serve as the official media partner for such a prestigious and inspiring event.

We are incredibly grateful for your kind invitation to the success dinner. Unfortunately, due to prior commitments, we won't be able to attend in person. I am truly sorry to miss what I know will be a wonderful evening of celebration, but please know that the entire Islam Channel team and I are there with you in spirit.

I wanted to take this opportunity to share how deeply grateful we are for the exceptional hospitality you showed us. From the moment our crew arrived in Leicester, you and your team went above and beyond to support us. Your personal warmth, constant attentiveness, and seamless coordination made a massive difference, ensuring our production team had the absolute best experience working alongside you. It is rare to collaborate with organizers who understand the intricacies of live media so well and who treat their partners with such genuine care and respect.

The dedication you poured into creating such a flawless platform for the finalists was inspiring to witness, and we are proud to have helped broadcast that beauty to audiences across the UK and Europe.

Thank you once again for your warmth and partnership. I truly hope this is just the beginning of many more successful collaborations between Islam Channel and the International Islamic College in the future.

I wish you all a wonderful evening at the success dinner!

With my warmest regards and duas,

Hamza Khan Kakar

PRODUCER & PRESENTER, ISLAM CHANNEL

Letter to the IIC team, October 2026, reproduced in full. The "success dinner" was the College's supporters' dinner in Leicester on 9 October 2026.

WHAT FAMILIES SAID · FEEDBACK FORM, 4–7 AUGUST

In their words

4.81

AVERAGE RATING OUT OF 5

100%

OF THOSE WHO REPLIED SAID THEY WILL RETURN

We emailed the feedback form to each and every contestant. Every reply rated the weekend four or five stars.

"I loved that this beautiful Qur'an gathering was open to the public here in the UK, especially in my home city of Leicester. Hearing children and adults recite the words of Allah with such precision and dedication was truly inspiring. The event was exceptionally well organised, and as someone on the journey of memorising the Qur'an, it has brought me even closer to the Qur'an and strengthened my motivation. May Allah reward everyone involved. Ameen."

★★★★★ GUEST, LEICESTER

★★★★★

"I loved the contest. Alhamdhullilah it motivated me to participate one day and compete in the best things to compete in. … There's always loads of fruits if something is done sincerely and I believe a lot of sincerity and effort went into preparing this competition to inspire others and it worked. I thank Allah first and everyone else that has allowed to facilitate this amazing endeavour."

GUEST, BIRMINGHAM

★★★★★

"Very good organisation and I appreciated specifically the email communication that was clear and professional. I am overall very satisfied with the event. Jazakum allaho Khairan."

CONTESTANT

WHAT FAMILIES SAID

Guests and parents

More five-star replies from the people who filled the hall.

★★★★★

"Everything. I hesitated to compete this year but was inspired by the contestants and will definitely try to get involved next year insha'allah."

GUEST

★★★★★

"Alhamdulillah, it was organised very well. May Allah (SWT) accept everyone's efforts and reward all those who contributed. Jazakum Allahu khayran."

PARENT

★★★★★

"Everything. MashaAllah very organised. ... Everything was perfect. May Allah bless you all and grant success in this world and hereafter. Aameen. BarakAllahu Feekum."

PARENT

★★★★★

"Amazing atmosphere, inspiring event, judges were fair."

GUEST

★★★★★

"I loved being around the qur'an the people were all so friendly it was well organised"

PARENT

★★★★★

"Everything was incredible couldn't have been any better"

GUEST

★★★★★ Every reply rated the weekend four or five stars, and every one said they will return.

AUDIENCE AND REACH

Streamed live, both days

Both days were streamed live on YouTube and Instagram. Islam Channel, our official media partner, covered the final and, in its own words, helped broadcast it “to audiences across the UK and Europe”.



Shockat Adam MP giving an interview to Islam Channel about the NQC at the Grand Final.

21,163
LIVESTREAM VIEWS ON YOUTUBE

≈26,560
VIEWS OF NQC VIDEOS ON @STUDYIIC

14h 42m
OF LIVE COVERAGE

VIEWS BY LIVESTREAM · YOUTUBE @STUDYIIC



Views as at 7 October 2026.

THE DOCUMENTARY

The story of NQC 2026 premieres soon on YouTube at @StudyIIC

SPREADING THE WORD

VIP invitations to the awards: imams, masjid representatives and community leaders across the UK	104
Masjid & institution database	921
Masājid & institutions emailed	417
Emails to families and supporters after the final	570
Family invitations to support finalists	282
Seat-booking invitations	281

13
TIKTOK POSTS

≈11,450
TIKTOK VIEWS

3,782
INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS

434
WHATSAPP CHANNEL FOLLOWERS

WITH THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

Partners, sponsors and supporters

The National Qur'an Competition was free to enter and free to attend. It was made possible by the partners, sponsors and supporters below.

PLATINUM SPONSOR · MAIN SPONSOR

Ethar Relief

Main sponsor of the National Qur'an Competition 2026.

MEDIA

GOLD

SILVER

HOSPITALITY

Pamson Grill

SPONSORS

Hyperglow · Halal Editions · MyMadrassa · Amico Packaging

WITH THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Chaiiwala · Lesta Packaging · BBQ Base · Halal Meat Joint · Steakaway · The Meat & Fish Co.

GRAND FINAL VENUE

Masjid Taqwa Hall, Leicester

CAMP VENUE

Masjid al-Furqan, Leicester

WITH SPECIAL THANKS

To every volunteer

The Grand Final weekend was carried by volunteers: people who gave their time freely so that others could recite, listen and be looked after.

01
Marshals
Welcoming families and guiding people through the hall across both days.

02
The kitchen and BBQ team
Grilling and serving in the marquee from midday on Saturday and 11:30 on Sunday until nine at night.

03
Drivers
Getting judges, scholars and guests where they needed to be.

04
Hosts
Welcoming visitors and looking after every guest.

05
Our volunteers
Helping across the hall and the marquee, from the first guest to the last.

06
Every helping hand
Picking up whatever task was needed, often unseen.



A marshal in the hall during the Grand Final.

OUR CORE VOLUNTEERS · BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER

- Abdullah Azhar
- Muhammad Tava
- Faiyaz Wahabuddin Durwesh
- Fahimah Begum
- Nadirah Alam
- Zaara Alam
- Shaykh Ridwan Mustafa
- Muhammad Sayhan Abdoola
- Muhammad Athar Choudhury
- Simrha Durwesh
- Abdullah Joshie
- Rahma Alam
- Adil Amin
- Pooja Pancholi

وَاللَّهُ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ

"Allah keeps helping His servant for as long as the servant keeps helping his brother."

ṢAḤĪḤ MUSLIM 2699

Jazākumullāhu khayran. May Allah reward every hour you gave.

WITH GRATITUDE

Jazākumullāhu khayran

To everyone who carried this weekend: given freely, and mostly unseen.

SPECIAL THANKS

Shaykh Yassine Bendani
OPENING RECITATION

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq at-Turkmānī
ADDRESS BEFORE THE AWARDS

Ustadh Ariff Ola
TRANSLATING THE ADDRESS

Amer Reza VOLUNTEER LEAD	For his dedicated leadership and coordination of volunteers, BBQ operations, event logistics and wider operational support throughout the planning, delivery and conclusion of the National Qur'an Competition 2026.
Br Naeem Abdul Sattar HARAMAIN PROPERTIES	For his generous financial support, and his help with logistics from start to finish.
Br Omaer Amjad MASJID TAQWA	From the first planning meetings to volunteering on the weekend itself.
Abdul Wab Ali Saeed Makda BBQ TEAM LEADS	Sourcing and preparing before the event, running the BBQ throughout and cleaning up after. May Allah reward them.
Shaykh Arif Adam STAGE DÉCOR	For dressing the stage of the Grand Final.
Br Mohsin Moshaz THE RECITERS' CHAIR	For the chair from which the finalists recited at the Grand Final.
Luqman Master EXTRA SEATING	For organising the extra chairs for the event, and for volunteering.
The security team BOTH DAYS	For keeping every guest, family and finalist safe.

And to our masājid, who opened their doors to us; the scholars who reminded and advised; our stallholders and supporters; and every family and teacher behind a memoriser.

Masjid Taqwa

Masjid al-Furqan

جزاكم الله خيرًا

May Allah reward you all with good.

ABOUT THE ORGANISER

The International Islamic College

الكلية الإسلامية العالمية بالمملكة المتحدة
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC COLLEGE
UNITED KINGDOM

The National Qur'an Competition is organised by the International Islamic College, founded in Leicester in October 2025 to teach the Qur'an, the Arabic language and the Islamic sciences from their primary texts. A not-for-profit company, the College is building openly towards accredited degrees, and will never claim a stage before it is reached.

FOUNDER & CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Shaykh Emran Ahmed, Head of the NQC and host of the Grand Final

THE COMPANY
International Islamic College UK Ltd, not-for-profit, limited by guarantee · no. 16790844

ADDRESS
19 Church Street, Oadby, Leicester LE2 5DB

WATCH AND READ
Both days in full on YouTube at @StudyIIC, where the documentary premieres soon · theiic.uk/nqc

ABOUT THE FIGURES

How this report was counted

01 Registrations and people
340 forms from about 301 people, received 19 May to 7 July 2026: some people entered two categories or sent a form twice.

02 Finalists
55 finalists were announced on 22–23 July; after changes to the roster, including one withdrawal, 56 are on the roll of honour.

03 Ages and places
Every contestant's age was verified against an authenticated ID. Places are as written on the forms.

04 Nationalities
Counted from a free-text field. British includes dual heritages such as British-Bangladeshi and British-Pakistani.

05 Judging
Semi-final scores come from the judging portal. Grand Final placings were decided by the panel of five, as announced on 2 August.

06 Online figures and estimates
Online figures are as at 7 October 2026. The BBQ figure is the organisers' estimate.

07 Statements and quotes
Partner statements appear in full and as written. Feedback quotes come from the College's form, 4–7 August 2026.

08 Photographs
Most photographs are the College's own; some Grand Final images are stills from Islam Channel's coverage.

A note on the name: this was the first National Qur'an Competition organised by the College, which makes no claim to be the first in the UK.



SUPPORT THE NQC

Sponsor NQC 2027

In shā' Allāh, the National Qur'an Competition returns in 2027. We are raising the funds now, so that entry stays free for every memoriser.

THE NATIONAL QUR'AN COMPETITION UK & EUROPE 2026

01

The prize fund

Cash prizes that honour the memorisers: £14,425 across fifteen places in 2026.

02

Fair, expert judging

Online semi-finals and a live Grand Final before a panel of judges.

03

The Grand Final

The hall, the stage, the screens, and two days streamed live.

04

Free for every family

Free to enter and free to attend, for every contestant and every family.

GIVE ONLINE

give.theiic.uk/page/nqc2027

Scan the code or visit the link to make a one-off or monthly gift.

Businesses and organisations: to sponsor a category, the prize fund or the Grand Final, contact us at **info@theiic.uk** or **07436 436363**.

International Islamic College UK Ltd is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee (no. 16790844). It is not a registered charity, so Gift Aid cannot be claimed. Gifts support the NQC; any surplus supports the College's other educational work.


SILVER SPONSOR
SPONSORS
THE NATIONAL









THE JUDGES AT THE GRAND FINAL

THE NATIONAL QUR'AN COMPETITION

UK & EUROPE 2026

خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ

"The best of you are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it."

ṢAḤĪḤ AL-BUKHĀRĪ 5027

الكلية الإسلامية العالمية بالمملكة المتحدة
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC COLLEGE
UNITED KINGDOM

The documentary premieres soon on YouTube · @StudyIIC

theiic.uk/nqc

SPONSOR NQC 2027 · give.theiic.uk/page/nqc2027

International Islamic College UK Ltd · not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, no. 16790844
19 Church Street, Oadby, Leicester LE2 5DB