



## 2018-19 SCHOOLS' MACE DEBATING COMPETITION INFORMATION

The Schools' Mace is the oldest and largest debating competition in the United Kingdom, contested since 1957 across England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales; with over 600 schools entering annually. ESU Scotland runs the Scottish leg of the competition, aimed at senior secondary school pupils (usually S4 upwards). It is run as a knockout competition through the academic year, with preliminary rounds leading to a Scottish Final. The Scottish National Champions go on to compete in the International Final, held on a four-year rotation, in each of the member countries.

The competition follows the two-team Mace format, with speeches, of seven minutes. In the process of the competition students develop their knowledge of the world, as well as their reasoning and presentation skills, in a fun and competitive environment.

<b>Format:</b>	Mace (1 team against 1 team). Ties usually involve 4 teams
<b>No. Pupils per team:</b>	2
<b>Open to:</b>	Senior pupils: Entrants must be aged 18 or under on 1 <sup>st</sup> Sept. 2018
<b>No. of teams per school:</b>	1 team
<b>Preparation:</b>	Long-prep
<b>Speech length:</b>	7 minutes
<b>Timing of ties:</b>	Ties will be held in the evening
<b>Rounds:</b>	Round 1, Round 1b, Round 2, Round 3, Semi-Finals, Final
<b>Deadline:</b>	<b>Friday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018</b>

### 2018-19 COMPETITION TIMETABLE

**Round 1:** Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> September, Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> September, Monday 1<sup>st</sup> October, Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October

**Round 1b:** Monday 29<sup>th</sup> October, Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> October, Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> November

**Round 2:** Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December, Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> December

**Round 3:** Monday 18<sup>th</sup> February, Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February, Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2019

**Semi-finals:** Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019

**Scottish Final:** Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019

**International Final:** April 2019

Teams from Round 1 will either progress directly to Round 2, or to Round 1b where they will have a second opportunity to compete to enter Round 2.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**This is my school's first time taking part in the Schools' Mace! Do you have any resources to help me get started?**

Yes. Our Competitions Handbook will be available at the beginning of the Autumn Term. In the ESU Scotland has a Resources page dedicated to helping you get your students interested in debating, and taking part in the Schools' Mace. Everything is free to download and ready to use in your clubs and classrooms. Visit our Resources page [here](#).

**How old do my pupils have to be to take part?**

The Schools' Mace is open to students in S4-S6.

**How much does it cost to enter the Schools' Mace?**

It costs £40 to enter a team. In our feedback questionnaire for last year's competition we asked whether some schools would be willing to help cover or contribute towards the entry fee for less

well-resourced schools. We do not yet know how many schools will kindly offer to do this, but please indicate on your entry form whether your school would be willing to provide additional fees or you would like to apply for subsidised entry. We will allocate any subsidies as fairly as possible.

### **Can I enter more than one team?**

A Schools' Mace team consists of two students and only one team per school may enter. It is possible to have a reserve or 'swing' team present on the day who are welcome to participate in floor debates. If another team is unable to attend, your swing team may then be invited to stand in to allow the competition to proceed. In these cases, the swing team will not be eligible to progress to the next stage, but will have the opportunity to receive feedback from our judges.

### **I've registered. What happens next?**

After registration closes, you'll receive an email stating who your host school is, which school your team will be competing against, what the motion (topic) will be and which position your team will take – Proposition (for the motion) or Opposition (against the motion).

### **Why are there different dates for each round?**

Each round will be held on fixed dates. In your entry form you will need to tell us all the dates you are available to compete. We will then schedule your tie on one of your available dates and let you know as soon as possible. Your team should have at least two weeks to prepare.

### **My school has offered to host this year. What do I have to do as a host?**

Host schools are vital to helping run the Schools' Mace across the country, so we really appreciate schools that offer to host heats in all rounds of the competition. Please take a look at our Hosting Guide for more information on what is required by a host school.

### **I've chosen our team but I have a whole class/debating club eager to be involved. Is there a way that they can all take part in the Schools' Mace?**

Although a Schools' Mace team consists of two students, it's great if you can get a whole class or debating club involved in helping the team prepare. This allows your other students to take an active part in helping your team succeed in their debates as your team will be under less pressure than if they were to prepare by themselves, and will have explored many more sides to the motion. Additionally, students can also accompany their school's team to the heat and contribute to floor debates on the day, making the Schools' Mace a real team activity.

### **What are this year's motions?**

Motions are carefully crafted separately for each round of the Schools' Mace. This is so that we can ensure they are of the best quality at every stage of the competition, taking into account feedback from each round. Round 1 motions will be announced soon after registration closes.

### **Is there a dress code?**

There is no dress code for any Schools' Mace debate. Students should wear whatever they feel comfortable in.

### **Why do you need my mobile number on the entry form?**

All information regarding the competition is communicated by email. However, as the ties take place in the evenings, we need contact details for outside of school hours in case of emergency. In order to organise the rounds of the competitions as efficiently as possible, we will need to share your email address with contacts from other schools. We will also need to share your email address and telephone number with the other participants in your ties i.e. the other teachers and other judges in the tie so that you are able to contact each other should you need to on the day. We will not share your details in other ways or outside these groups or further than necessary for this purpose. If you have any questions about this, please don't hesitate to ask us.