



**ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION**

discovering voices

**ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION SCOTLAND**

**SCHOOLS' MACE HANDBOOK 2018-19**

# Contents

**Welcome and eligibility criteria**

**Motions, Conduct of ties, Disqualification**

**Glossary**

**Guidelines for hosts**

**Organising a round**

**Setting up a room**

**Chair**

**Timekeeper**

**Adjudicators**

**Results**

**Guidance for Speakers**

**Research and Preparation**

**Structuring arguments**

**Making arguments REAL**

**Using notes**

**Expression and delivery**

**Role of each speaker**

**Defining the motion**

**Rebuttal**

**Points of Information**

**Floor debate**

**Summary speeches**

**Adjudication**

# WELCOME FROM ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION

## SCOTLAND

The English-Speaking Union (ESU) was founded by Sir Evelyn Wrench in 1918. Today, the ESU is a dynamic educational charity with a presence in more than 50 countries worldwide; ESU Scotland celebrated its sixtieth anniversary in 2012.

The aims of the ESU have remained the same – to promote the value of effective communication around the globe and to help people realise their potential.

The importance of effective spoken communication skills cannot be underestimated. Even in a global village where communication is dominated by Google, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube (the list goes on), the ability to speak confidently in public remains invaluable for people in all walks of life. World leaders in politics, law, religion, business, science and technology all have an important skill in common. They speak with confidence.

Today, the Speech and Debate department runs a wide range of competitions, workshops and other programmes for people of all ages and backgrounds, which focus on persuasive spoken English.

The Schools' Mace provides students with an opportunity to develop the vital skills that enable them to speak with confidence in public. Not only does the competition enhance these public speaking and critical thinking skills; it also gives students the opportunity to showcase them in a national competitive arena, which makes the practice of public speaking even more engaging and exciting for everyone involved.

The Scottish Champions will go on to represent Scotland in the international final organised by the English-Speaking Union.

The international final is held in each of the 4 nations' capital cities on a yearly rotation.

Any questions about the competition or the other activities of ESU Scotland should be emailed to :

[debates@esuscotland.org.uk](mailto:debates@esuscotland.org.uk)

Or by post to:  
English-Speaking Union Scotland  
23 Atholl Crescent  
Edinburgh  
EH3 8HQ

Or by phone on: 0131 229 1528

### Eligibility

The ESU Scotland's Schools' Mace is open to schools in Scotland only, unless by specific agreement between a non-Scottish school and ESU Scotland.

Teams consist of two students, both of whom must be in full-time secondary education at the same school, at the time of the competition. Entrants into the Schools' Mace tend to be those students in S4 to S6, who are now too old to enter our Juniors' competition which is specifically for students in S1 to S3, although younger students are not excluded should they wish to enter. A student must be aged 18 or under on the closing date of the competition.

Speakers may be substituted between rounds, though teachers are advised not to do this unless absolutely necessary. Should a team containing a substitute speaker progress, in subsequent rounds it must continue in that form and not revert to the original speaker.

## Motions

Throughout the competition ESU Scotland will be responsible for setting motions and allocating positions to each school in each debating tie. We will aim to give at least two weeks' notice to each school in each tie, to ensure that students and teachers have as much time as possible to prepare for the debate.

## Conduct of Ties

If two ties are scheduled for the same event, then they must be run **sequentially** and **not concurrently**, as the same judging panel must pick two teams from the four competing teams. This means it is entirely possible that both teams from either the first or second tie may progress to the next round of the competition.

Teams in the second debate may not watch the first debate; however teams in the first debate may watch the second debate.

Should a school withdraw from a scheduled single tie event, then attempts should be made to re-schedule the event. However, if this cannot be achieved within the time frame set to complete all the ties within that round, then the school which has not withdrawn will progress to the next round.

Host schools are asked at the beginning of the competition if they can provide to provide a reserve or 'swing' team so that should a school withdraw from a scheduled two tie event, both ties may still go ahead.

If the host school is unable to provide a 'swing' team then the event should proceed as follows:

- The tie which is still intact should take place first, even if it was originally scheduled as the second tie.
- The team in the first tie which is on the same side of the debate argument as the team which has withdrawn should then be requested to debate again in the second tie, in order that the third school may still be judged. This means they will take on the role of a 'swing' team.
- The 'swing' team which agrees to debate again will only be judged on their performance in the first debate and the judges will take no account of their performance in the second debate.
- Should the proposed 'swing' team not wish to debate again, then the school which remains in the second tie will automatically progress to the next round and only one team may then progress from the first tie.

The use of props or visual aids is not permitted. Amplifying microphones are also not permitted. Microphones may be used for the purpose of recording the debate only.

The format of the debate, including the role of the chair, the order of speaking and the length of speeches are outlined in the following pages of this handbook and form part of the competition rules.

## Disqualification

Participants who breach the rules relating to registration, eligibility, motions or the conduct of rounds may be disqualified.

Participants who, in the opinion of ESU Scotland, act in a manner which would bring themselves or ESU Scotland into disrepute may be disqualified.

# GLOSSARY

**Speech:** A short oral presentation given on a particular motion or resolution.

**Motion:** The subject or issue to be debated, usually beginning with “This House Believes,” “This House Would,” or “This House Supports.”

**Debate:** A formal contest in which the affirmative and negative sides of a motion or resolution are advocated by speakers on opposing sides.

**Adjudicator/Judge:** An observer of a debate who is responsible for deciding which team has won. Where there is more than one adjudicator, they sit as an adjudication panel.

**Chair:** The person who is responsible for introducing speakers, inviting them to the podium to give their speech, inviting them to resume their seat at the end of their speech, ensuring that the rules of the competition are observed and keeping order generally.

**Timekeeper:** The timekeeper assists the chairperson in the running of the debate by timing each speech and providing signals to the speakers indicating how much of their time has elapsed.

**House:** The chamber or auditorium where the debate takes place.

**Floor:** The members of the audience.

**Prepared Motion (Long Prep):** The motion is released in advance of the competition to allow for research into the subject or issue to be conducted.

**Limited Preparation (Short Prep):** The motion is released on the day of the competition,

usually 30 minutes prior to the debate taking place.

**Proposition/Government/Affirmative:** The team that argues in favour of the motion or resolution.

**Opposition/Negative:** The team that argues against the motion or resolution.

**Point of Information (POI):** A formal interjection which may be made during an opposing speaker’s speech. A POI is offered when a speaker stands up and addresses the current speaker saying “on a point of information” or “on that point.” POIs may be accepted or declined by the current speaker. If declined, the speaker offering the POI must resume their seat. If accepted, the speaker offering the POI may make a brief point, after which they must resume their seat and the current speaker continues with their speech.

**Protected Time:** The period of time during which POIs may not be offered, usually the first and last minute of the speech.

**Unprotected Time:** The period of time during which POIs may be offered.

**Rebuttal/Refutation:** The term given to an argument made in direct response to a contrary argument put forward by an opposing speaker.

**Case:** The entire set of arguments a team lays out for one side of the motion/resolution.

**Model/Policy:** The framework of a proposition. Where a motion or resolution requires a proposition team to propose a policy which is contrary to the status quo, the first proposition speaker must specify the parameters within which that policy change

will operate. For example, a team proposing the motion “This House Would ban the teaching of religion in schools” would need to specify the jurisdiction within which the ban is proposed to operate, as well as any exclusions or exceptions to the ban.

team defining the debate in a way that you did not expect does not automatically make that definition a squirrel!

**Summary Speech:** The final speeches on each side of the debate. Summary speeches should summarise the debate including any floor debate or questions from the audience and should not contain any new material. POIs cannot be offered during summary speeches.

**Status Quo:** The state of affairs which currently exists, the course of action currently pursued or the present system.

**Manner/Style:** The collective term for a range of mechanisms employed by a speaker in the course of a speech including but not limited to emotion, humour, vocabulary, tone of voice and body language.

**Matter/Content:** The substance of a speaker’s case, including the strength of the individual arguments and the extent to which those arguments are supported by empirical evidence, logical analogies and reasoned analysis.

**Truism:** Something which is so obvious or self evidently true that it does not require proof or argument. To define a motion in a truistic way is to effectively make it self-serving and undebatable.

**Squirrel:** Defining a motion in a manner contrary to the spirit of the motion and the intended debate. Both a verb (“he squirrelled that motion”) and a noun (“that definition was a squirrel”), an example of a squirrel would be taking the motion “This House Believes that China should go green” and proposing that China should give the green light and grant independence to Taiwan (thus turning a debate which should have been about environmentalism into a debate about Taiwanese independence). A proposition

# GUIDELINES FOR HOSTS

## Organising a Round

Hosting rounds is not a prerequisite to entry. The competition relies on schools hosting, so if no school offers to host in a particular area, a school may be asked to host by the competition organisers.

Host schools are responsible for supplying available dates to ESU Scotland, who, in turn, will then send a choice of dates to the other schools in each heat, until a mutually convenient date is set.

ESU Scotland will provide the host school with a schedule detailing the list of the participating schools together with a teacher contact point and the team positions in each debating tie. ESU Scotland will also be responsible for finding adjudicators and providing contact details.

## Setting up the Room

There are number of ways that the room can be prepared for a Schools' Mace debate.

One option is that three tables should be set up at the front of the room: the centre table is for the chair and the timekeeper, the table on the left (as the adjudicators look at it) is for the proposition team and the table on the right (as the adjudicators look at it) is for the opposition team. The first speaker on each team should sit closest to the centre. The adjudicators' table should be placed at the back of the room or half-way down if the room is large. The adjudicators should have an unobstructed view of the speakers.

The layout above is an example; if a more suitable table arrangement fits your available space (and is not creating a bias) please do arrange the tables how you see fit.

Jugs of water, glasses and paper should be placed on all four tables.

## Chair

Debates are usually chaired by a student or teacher of the host school. The chair is expected to remain impartial. The chair is responsible for inviting speakers to deliver their speech, thanking them once they have delivered their speech and calling on the next speaker, calling on audience members to make points during the floor debate and maintaining order generally.

## Timekeeper

A student or a teacher of the host school usually acts as timekeeper. The timekeeper assists the chair with the running of the debate and has two functions:

First, the timekeeper is responsible for giving audible signals (usually using a bell or a gavel or by clapping or tapping a glass or the table) indicating when the speaker is in protected or unprotected time, and indicating when the speaker's time is up.

For the first four speeches, a single audible signal should be given at the end of protected time (after 1 minute) and at the end of unprotected time (after 6 minutes).

At the end of protected time until the end of unprotected time, Points of Information (POIs) may be offered to the speaker by the opposing side although these do not have to be accepted by the speaker.

At the end of the allotted time for the speech (after 7 minutes), a double signal should be given. If the speaker is still speaking at 7 minutes 15 seconds, the timekeeper should give a triple signal and again at 7 minutes 30 seconds, at which point **the chair should ask the speaker to conclude their remarks.**

For the summary speeches, POIs are not allowed. A single audible signal should be given after 3 minutes and a double signal should be given at the end of the allotted time for the speech (after 4 minutes). If the speaker is still speaking at 4 minutes 15 seconds, the timekeeper should give a triple signal and again at 4 minutes 30 seconds, at which point **the chair should ask the speaker to conclude their remarks.**

Secondly, the timekeeper is responsible for recording the length of each speech and giving the timings to the judges after the debate. The timekeeper should make a highlighted note of any speaker whose speech was significantly under or over the allotted time.

## **Adjudicators**

ESU Scotland will be responsible for finding adjudicators for the individual heats.

Adjudicators must have experience of school or university debating or some experience of debating, argumentation, mediation, dispute resolution or advocacy from their professional lives.

Ideally, each heat should be judged by three adjudicators. However, it is entirely acceptable and not uncommon for heats to be judged by one or two suitably qualified adjudicators. These must not be connected with any team that is participating in the round. This includes parents, relatives, teachers, coaches, students and other employees of the school.

Where there is a tenuous connection which may give rise to bias or the perception of bias (eg an ex-student or ex-teacher), the connection must be disclosed to all teams before the competition and all teams must agree to be adjudicated by the person in question.

It is the responsibility of the adjudicator and the host teacher (if they have knowledge of

the connection) to ensure that this disclosure is made.

**At all stages of the competition, the adjudicators' decision is final.**

## **Results**

The number of regions, the number of heats in each region, the number of schools competing in each heat and the number of schools progressing will change from year to year (depending on the overall number of schools that have entered the competition and their location).

ESU Scotland is responsible for ensuring that the adjudicators know how many teams they need to select to progress to the next round.

The chair of the judging panel is responsible for informing ESU Scotland which team(s) have been selected to progress to the next round. As well as selecting the team(s) progressing to the next round, the adjudicators should select a reserve team, in case one of the teams selected to progress to the next round is unable to compete. The adjudicators should announce the teams going through but should not announce the reserve team (this should, however, be recorded on the results sheet, which should be sent to ESU Scotland).

Adjudicators are not required to disclose the individual marks awarded to any team or speaker, but adjudicators should endeavour to give some constructive feedback to all schools and make themselves available to give individual feedback to teams/speakers, if requested.

# GUIDANCE FOR SPEAKERS

## Research and preparation

Although only two team members from your school will be competing in each debate, it is great if you can prepare with more students. Not only does this give your team more information to draw from during the round, but it means that taking part in the competition can become a classroom or club effort.

### Initial brainstorm

You will be given the motion and your position for each round at least two weeks before the round.

- Mind map or brainstorm the motion with a class or the debating/public speaking club.
- Don't restrict yourselves to arguments which relate to one side of the debate only; it's important to think about the other side's arguments to think of ways to rebut them. Some coaches tell their team the motion but not the side they are on until a week before the round to ensure the speakers know both sides of the issue.
- In addition, look for arguments that are subtle, and that might at first seem closer to the other side's case.
- Once you have done an initial brainstorm, group the thoughts into areas and allocate groups to do further research into each area.

### Research

The best sources for research are broadsheet newspapers, journals and the internet.

- Most of the motions set for debate rounds are topical, so your information should be up-to-date.
- Make sure the information is reliable
- Keep a note of where information came from so your team can refer to the exact source in their speech.
- Always check where facts come from. Even if you don't use them the team opposite may; knowing where their information is from can be a great starting point for undermining it.

### Secondary brainstorm

Bring the groups back together to report on their findings.

- Make two columns on the board: 'In favour/Pros' and 'Against/Cons'
- Write up all the arguments including weak/poor ones. Some arguments that were initially dismissed may turn out to be valuable main points, sub-points or rebuttal once you have a list of all the arguments which are likely to come up.
- The first arguments you come up with often provoke questions about what the motion means. These are useful in determining possible definitions.

## Structuring arguments

After brainstorming and researching, the team should have thought of all possible arguments for their speeches and come up with a definition (if they are the proposition).

Put the list of their opponents' arguments aside for the moment, but go through it again before the debate to make sure that they have a reply or piece of rebuttal ready for every argument the opposition might make.

Now you should concentrate on your team's speeches, so that they can choose which arguments they are going to use, and in what order. Although it may not be popular in the bigger group, some arguments will not be usable. Do not use them if they are poor or weak – it is a competition!

### Why structure is important

When making a speech a great deal of information is being delivered to the audience in a short space of time. Most people's attention span means it is unlikely that they will take in all the information unless it is broken into small sections.

- You should only have three or four arguments in each speech.

- One or two substantial points is also OK (especially for second speakers who do lots of rebuttal), but you may need to divide large points into sub-points.

### **Structuring your team's case**

First you need to decide which speaker is going to make which points. You are likely to have some arguments that are very powerful or are based on some fundamental principles that your team's side believes. These should come first, so that the audience knows from the start why you believe what you do.

Divide the remaining points between the two speakers according to themes or types (e.g. political arguments, abstract principles etc). Sometimes one or both speeches might develop a theme (e.g. economic arguments or practicalities). On other occasions the division is made simply because some points are more important than others.

You should also have some arguments that only make sense in response to what the other side will say. The first opposition and both second speakers should keep room in their speeches for these points of rebuttal and slot them in where it is appropriate during the actual debate.

### **Signposting your team's individual speeches**

Make sure each introduction outlines all the points the speaker will make. Then keep the audience informed of where the speech is going by using phrases like "And now on to my second point ..." or by using pauses.

### **Timing**

Poor timing during your team's speeches will be penalised under organisation and prioritisation. If there are two points of equal importance, make sure the speaker spends the same amount of time on both; don't overrun on the first and try to cram the second into the last minute.

Don't let one speaker have all the big points, leaving them with too much to say and leaving their partner lost for words.

It is okay to use a stopwatch or a phone during a speech to monitor your timing.

## **Making arguments REAL**

The ESU developed the mnemonic 'REAL' to help debaters' structure each individual argument in a speech.

**REASON:** One of the arguments why we should agree with your team's side of the motion

**EVIDENCE:** Give some facts or examples that support your team's reason

**ANALYSIS:** Show us exactly how your team's evidence supports your team's reason

**LINK:** Link everything back to why we should agree with your team's side

For example in 'This House would abolish the UN':

**REASON:** The UN hasn't stopped wars

**EVIDENCE:** War in the Balkans and in Lebanon

**ANALYSIS:** The UN took far too long to act in both cases and even when they did they didn't do much. There is just too much disagreement between members.

**LINK:** The UN hasn't created peace, one of its main aims. So we should abolish this failed institution.

## **Using notes**

Paper versus palm cards:

- The main advantage of using A4 paper is that you can see all of your notes at once. You can easily find facts or figures from another point in the speech if you need them to answer a POI, for example.
- The downside is that it can be more cumbersome.
- Some debaters use palm cards, which leave you free to gesture with your hands.
- You can reorder the points on your palm cards very easily just before you get up to speak and add in extra cards with points of rebuttal.

Good debaters never write out a speech word for word. It is very difficult to engage with the audience as the speaker's head will be buried in their paper.

- A fully written out speech also makes it very difficult to add in notes on rebuttal and makes you stumble if you accept a POI which requires you to depart from your pre-planned speech.
- You may need more notes on evidence than on analysis; the team should know their material well enough to deliver analysis without notes.
- It takes a bit of practice to get confident speaking from notes, but the results are worth it; think more in terms of having a well-informed chat with the audience than giving a formal speech.
- If you are giving a quotation you may need to break the rule about writing things out in full to make sure you get it right.
- Start each speech by outlining what that speaker is going to say. The first speaker should also tell us what their partner is going to say.
- The second speaker should briefly remind us what their partner said in their speech.
- Close with a strong, catchy statement (the rule could be broken again here -writing some of this out in full can help you keep your focus) and a summary of what the team has said.

## **Expression and delivery**

Debating isn't just about the arguments made and how they're structured but also about effective engagement with an audience.

### **Can you be heard?**

It is vital to speak loudly enough that people at the back of the room can hear the debate comfortably. This is an issue of confidence as well as practice. Your team should practise speaking in a hall or a large room. Tell them to imagine they are addressing an elderly relative if it helps! However, part of the subtle skill of good public speaking in general is knowing how to use the volume, pitch and tone of your voice. Teachers have a lot of

practice with this and are some of the very best people to learn from - pass on your techniques!

### **Where to stand**

The team members can stand either in front of or behind the tables to deliver their speech. Each team member can choose the style with which they feel most comfortable. Whichever they choose, make sure that they engage with the audience and don't only look at their opponents.

Standing in front of the table leaves the speaker freer to move around and connect with the audience, but they must remember to take all of their notes with them!

Standing behind their table means notes can be kept on the table in order, and easily reorganised during the speech. Particularly voracious movers often make a lot of noise which can be distracting for them, and the audience and adjudicators, so perhaps it is a good idea to suggest standing behind the desk to team members who pace up and down or stamp their feet to emphasise a point.

### **Variation in tone and pace**

It isn't unusual for more experienced debaters to speak in a very fast monotone – A criticism of university level debating is often that the listener may find it very hard to follow the argument. Newer speakers may find it tempting to try to emulate this style to the detriment of their content and argument. To avoid either, try assigning a different mood to each section of each speech.

Examples of good 'mood tags' to suggest include:

- Calm • Pacy • Deliberate • Passionate
- With a sense of fear/danger • Light-hearted

A pause between each point can be a good way to change gear and let the audience know the speech is setting off in a new direction. 'Tagging' the team's speech notes with how to deliver each point in coloured pens, or using stickers with different

emotions, speeds and volumes can be a useful visual reminder.

### **Body language**

Each speaker should aim to stay comfortable for most of their speech and use gestures to emphasise particular points. If they are too hot or cold, or feel restricted by their blazers or jackets, it is okay to take them off. There is no need to ask.

Eye contact with the audience is essential. A confident speaker is able to look into the audience whilst delivering their speech because they are neither reading nor relying entirely on notes to construct their argument. Students should practise in front of the debate club, their class, their families etc. They should ask for feedback on body language and appearance.

### **Word choice**

Make sure that your team's word choice is appropriate to a formal setting and that they explain any technical terms or abbreviations as needed. Using the correct terminology in a consistent way will help them appear well researched and knowledgeable. Using powerful adjectives and carefully chosen emotional vocabulary will secure an engaging argument and style.

### **Being appropriate**

The speakers should aim to sound natural; the adjudicators are looking for a clear and interesting speaker. Speakers do not need to use traditional debating vocabulary like 'the honourable gentleman'.

Humour can be a useful tool, depending on the topic being discussed, but the team should be careful to use only relevant and appropriate humour. Offensive or otherwise inappropriate comments are likely to undermine the persuasiveness of the speech, the credibility of the speaker and be penalised by the adjudicators.

## The role of each speaker

Each speaker has a role to perform in the debate as well as their own arguments to deploy; each role is explained below. The speakers give their arguments in the following order:

### First Proposition Speaker

- To define the motion – see below.
- To outline the arguments the team will make.
- To set up the debate in the terms that the proposition want to debate it.
- To offer Points of Information (POIs) to other speakers.

### First Opposition Speaker

- To rebut the arguments made in the First Proposition speech.
- To outline all the arguments to be made by the Opposition.
- To make a substantive case for the opposition instead of just denying what the proposition has said.
- To offer POIs to other speakers.

### Second Proposition Speaker

- To rebut the arguments made in the First Opposition speech.
- To expand on the arguments made by their partner.
- To introduce new arguments that expand on the case or to introduce a new angle of argument and develop it fully.
- To offer POIs to other speakers.

### Second Opposition Speaker

- To rebut the arguments made in the Second Proposition speech.
- To expand on the arguments made by their partner.
- To use the full range of arguments made in the debate to their advantage.
- To introduce new arguments that expand on the case or to introduce a new angle of argument and develop it fully.

- To offer POIs to other speakers

A Floor Debate then takes place (see p 9-10). The Opposition team give their Summary (or Reply) speech first. No POIs are allowed during Reply speeches.

### Opposition Summary Speaker

- To use the full range of arguments made in the debate to their advantage, reminding the audience and adjudicators of the POIs their team made and why they exposed the flaws in the proposition case.
- To refer to the floor debate and draw on points or queries from the audience to their advantage.
- To persuade the audience and adjudicators that their case was stronger.
- The main summary speech should not contain any new material not raised in the main speeches or the floor debate.

### Proposition Summary Speaker

- To use the full range of arguments made in the debate to their advantage, reminding the audience and adjudicators of the POIs their team made and why they exposed the flaws in the opposition case.
- To refer to the floor debate and draw on points or queries from the audience to their advantage.
- To persuade the audience and adjudicators that their case was stronger.
- The main summary speech should not contain any new material not raised in the main speeches or the floor debate.

## Defining the Motion

The definition is delivered at the start of the first proposition speech and is very important, although it must also be kept succinct (30-60 seconds). Without a solid definition, the debate does not have a clear purpose.

Defining the motion is about far more than merely getting out a dictionary. There are several key questions that must be asked:

### Who?

If the motion proposes a specific policy or course of action ('This House would abolish the United Nations' or 'This House would bring back the death penalty'), you may need to clarify 'who' is implementing it. This is often implicit in the motion.

The UN motion implies that 'This House' includes all members of the UN. Bringing back the death penalty implies a UK focus; other countries have the death penalty already and criminal justice is generally a domestic matter.

A motion like 'This House would censor the Internet' leaves it more open; the UK? the EU? A worldwide organisation? However, simpler (e.g. UK) is often better.

### What?

What is the policy about? Would the death penalty be by lethal injection or hanging? Would it be for murder only, or other crimes, too? Exactly what would be censored on the internet (e.g. pornography, racist content)? Does the internet include email?

### How?

How is the policy going to be implemented? Without a mechanism, model or a plan, your definition may lack the clarity necessary to set up a clear and clean debate. For instance, would you simply abolish the UN and let the world get on without it, or would you propose a replacement? Would you do it immediately, or would you allow for a phasing out period? The mechanism should not be so elaborate that it skews the debate away from the main topic, e.g. - a proposition case for abolishing

the UN must focus on the UN's bad points, not an elaborate new plan.

### Limitations?

Is this policy going to affect everyone, or only some people? Are there any limitations on the policy? For instance, a common limitation on the death penalty excludes the insane or children.

Note that the definition should make the debate clear, accessible and fair for both sides. It should not be used to make life easier for the Proposition by unfairly excluding difficult things they don't want to talk about or tricking the Opposition by proposing a topic they couldn't have been expected to prepare for. The definition should mean the debate ends up as close as possible to what an ordinary, well-informed person would reasonably expect to be debated.

Here are two examples:

#### 'This House would abolish the UN'

The United Nations should immediately be completely disbanded, including all subsidiary institutions such as the Security Council, UNESCO and the WHO. No replacement organisation will be established, for the reasons my partner will describe in his speech.

#### 'This House would legalise cannabis'

This debate is about the UK. We would make the production and sale of cannabis legal under licence and allow it to be sold in shops with the same age restrictions as tobacco.

With both of these examples the Opposition team, audience and adjudicators all know the grounds of the debate within less than 30 seconds and tying the debate to existing precedents, like the sale of tobacco, means that you don't need to waste a lot of time creating a licensing body and justifying age restrictions. What is vital though is that anything relating to the mechanism (who would do the action, where the revenue would go, how it would be enforced etc) must be in the first part of the first speech. If the

Second Proposition speaker is talking about new powers being given to the police to make the proposition happen, for example, then the team should be penalised as it is unfair on the Opposition and unclear for the audience and adjudicators.

### **Analysis debates**

Sometimes a motion is set which doesn't propose a specific policy, but gives a statement which needs to be analysed. An example would be 'This House believes that the UN is a failure'. No action is proposed, but the first Proposition speaker needs to set some measure by which the alleged failure can be measured.

Here is an example:

#### 'This House believes the UN is a failure'

The UN has failed because it has not met its own stated aims of maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations or making enough progress in alleviating international economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems. In an analysis debate you wouldn't have to prove, for example, that the UN is a failure in every single case, only that the principle is true in general (for the significant majority of cases). For the Opposition to win, they need to show one or more areas where the UN has had a major success.

### **Be bold**

In a competitive debate everyone knows that you have not picked the side you have been asked to speak on, and a bold proposition is usually more enjoyable and makes for a better debate than a timid or 'soft prop'. For example, if a debate calls for a tax on fatty food a 300% tax could make a real difference. A 3% tax would do what the motion says but would have so little impact that it would almost certainly make for a poor debate. Alternatively if the debate is about compulsory organ donation then allowing exemptions on religious grounds might make the Proposition side easier but it also closes down a really interesting area of debate.

### **Challenging a definition**

Definitions should only be challenged if they are totally unreasonable. Opposition teams need to be prepared for a slightly unusual or unexpected definition, as Proposition teams can still be clever as long as they remain fair.

Examples of 'unreasonable' definitions include truisms or narrowing beyond what the ordinary well-informed person would reasonably expect (eg defining the UN as just the Security Council). Challenges can only be made by the first Opposition speaker, who states their reasons for the challenge and introduces their alternative interpretation. This must be accepted by the second Proposition unless they can prove their original definition was valid. This type of 'definitional debate' is invariably poor and should be avoided.

### **Rebuttal**

It is important to address the other side's arguments during your own speech. This is called 'rebuttal'. The aim of rebuttal is to undermine the opposition's case, thus leaving your case looking even stronger by comparison. All speakers (except the first Proposition, who doesn't have a speech to respond to) are expected to rebut the previous speakers' arguments, even if some of their arguments surprise you or seem very convincing.

As the debate moves on, the amount of rebuttal done by each speaker should increase, as they have heard more arguments to respond to. In a typical debate the first Opposition speaker may rebut for 1-2 minutes, the second Proposition speaker for 2+ minutes and second Opposition for 2-3 minutes.

Rebuttal can come at the start of your speech, or be 'interwoven' into your main arguments; just make sure it's clear to the audience (and adjudicators!) that you are addressing the other side's arguments, so they can see you are rebutting.

You might do this by starting each point of rebuttal by briefly quoting what the other side said, or by naming one of your opponents and the argument of theirs that you will rebut.

## Points of Information (POIs)

Points of Information (along with rebuttal) are central to the interactivity of debate. They demonstrate your ability to engage with your opponent's arguments. POIs are allowed during the middle 5 minutes of main speeches, but not during summaries.

Each speaker has a period of 'protected time' at the beginning and end of their speech so they can get started without being interrupted. After this minute has elapsed the timekeeper gives a signal and the other team can offer an interruption.

To do this, they stand and indicate that they want to make a point by saying: "A point of information" or "on that point".

The person who is giving their speech retains control at all times and may either accept the interruption by saying "accepted", "go ahead" or "yes, please", or decline by saying "declined", "no thank you" or by indicating with their hand. Then the person offering the POI should resume their seat. This ability to accept or decline is a key tactic.

The speaker can also:

- keep the person offering the POI standing until they have finished their sentence.
- ask them (politely!) to sit down if their question lasts longer than 15 seconds.

If accepted, the person offering the POI has 15 seconds to point out something (a fact, or a contradiction in the argument) which disproves the argument being made by the speaker, or to ask a short question (for instance to ask for clarification if you think they are not saying something important).

Points of Information are a key part of debate so it is vital that all speakers offer at least two or three during every speech they hear and

take at least one (preferably two or three) in every speech they give. Don't offer too many – 'barracking' will be penalised.

Don't take too many or you won't have time to make your own points and will look as if you have lost control.

It is also a bad tactic to accept a POI as soon as the first time signal has gone (you can only be outlining your case or doing rebuttal). It is also unwise to take POIs one after another. In all likelihood the team will have spotted an error in your answer and be trying to capitalise on it.

If a POI has been made and the speaker has responded to it, there is no automatic right to a follow up. The person who offered the POI would have to ask again and be accepted again.

## Floor debate

Traditionally, the Mace format includes a floor debate between the second Opposition speech and the Opposition reply. This allows for:

- a distinction in style between the latter two speeches, and a break in what would otherwise be 11 consecutive minutes of Opp argument
- an opportunity for the audience to engage with points on which they may have been itching to offer an opinion during the main speeches
- a chance for both reply speakers further to develop their ability to think on their feet, by making reference to points raised from the floor in their summation.

It is therefore important that chairs endeavour to maintain the spirit of these aspects of the Mace format by encouraging the floor debate as far as possible.

The floor debate should, if possible, last for ten minutes. It is often the case that the chair will at this point take over the timekeeping

him/herself, the better to frame the contributions from the floor.

Some points:

- The four debaters at the table may, if they wish, respond on the spot to points directed to them from the floor. This may not, however, be strategically to their advantage; judges do not take account of what is said by the debaters during this period, but they do give credit for the incorporation of relevant responses in the reply speeches. Therefore if either partner in the team can think of a good answer to a point from the floor, they would do better to weave it into the summation.
- It used to be stated in the guidelines that the only contributors to the floor debate should be pupils. It is recognised that that these days, particularly in early rounds, this might mean that no floor debate takes place. It is therefore reasonable that anyone in the room apart from the chair may speak, with the following provisos:
  - i. The chair should make it clear in introducing the floor debate that while contributions from coaches of the teams involved may be allowed, in no circumstances should these take the form of an attack on the team in opposition to their own pupils. Some coaches will choose to remain silent; others can be relied upon to introduce new and interesting points which will provoke discussion among the audience and challenge the debaters to mention them, while still devoting the bulk of their speeches to summarising the actual debate.
  - ii. Accompanying parents may wish to speak. Again, some will make useful and informed contributions. Others may fail to appreciate the reality that the team opposed to their children may not necessarily subscribe personally to the view they have expressed. Care should be

taken by the chair to head off politically-motivated or *ad hominem* attacks.

- iii. Since the chair is at this point running the stopwatch, the timekeeper – who is probably a debater – may well wish to speak. That's fine too.
- iv. Following the second debate it is likely (unless they have a long journey and have already gone) that the speakers from the first debate will be in the audience. It is rarely the case that identical lines of argument are pursued in both debates and the contribution from these debaters will avoid the perception by members of the floor that they have already said all there is to say. A different and lively discussion should then be facilitated.

It should again be stressed that judges will take account of the contributions in the floor debate only to the extent that they appear, used as relevant evidence or rebuttal, in the reply speeches. It follows that both sets of teams must be afforded equal opportunity to demonstrate this skill. If the first floor debate has ground to a halt by eight minutes, the chair must therefore note and announce this and, crucially, allow an identical length of time for the second floor debate.

## Summary Speeches

Summary speeches are delivered after the floor debate by either speaker from each side. It is often best to pick the summary speaker before the debate begins if you know as a team who is generally better at summarising the debate. However, you can make last minute changes if you think it's better for the team. Inform the chair if you do change your mind.

The aim of a summary is to identify the major areas of clash in the debate and persuade the audience that your team's arguments are stronger than those of the opposing team in each area. A summary speaker could be compared to a book reviewer – the aim is to give an overview, reiterating major points and events and highlighting the most interesting parts.

Summaries can't be prepared before the debate (apart, perhaps, from working out some strong opening or closing statements).

### Do

- Identify the major areas of clash in the debate.
- Look at the debate as a whole; you can amalgamate two or three points into one if they are similar (e.g. 'economic' points).
- Incorporate key points raised in the floor debate if they support your case. If they were particularly damaging to your case give a reply to them.
- Make sure your summary is well structured, dealing methodically with the key issues in the debate.

### Don't

- Don't focus on trivial points or non-contentious issues.
- Don't just go through the debate in chronological order listing all the arguments that came up. This won't highlight the strength of your case over that of the opposing team.
- Don't introduce totally new material; you are allowed to use new examples to rebut the other side's arguments or points raised during the floor debate, but you may not introduce new lines of argument. **Your job is to summarise the debate that has happened, not start a new one.**

# MARK SCHEME

This suggested mark scheme ensures that all aspects of the debate are evaluated. Very experienced judges may choose not to use such a rigid mark scheme.

## Main speeches

**Total 40 marks per speech**

### Expression and Delivery

**10 marks for all main speeches**

Expression and delivery focuses not on what is said, but how it is said. The mark is for how much they engage the audience, including:

#### **Use of notes**

How effective is the speaker's use of notes? Speakers should have some notes from which they speak fluently. Speakers should be penalised for reading speeches which they have written out in full beforehand or for reciting memorised speeches, which have been learnt by rote.

#### **Use of voice**

Are the speakers audible and clear, while varying speed, volume and intonation to keep their speeches interesting and to add conviction and authority?

#### **Use of words**

Is language varied, persuasive, appropriate and precise?

#### **Use of body language**

How effective are hand gestures, eye contact and facial expressions?

#### **Rhetoric and humour**

Is there an appropriate level of rhetoric and relevant humour?

### Organisation and Prioritisation

**10 marks for all main speeches**

#### **Team structure**

Did the team's speeches complement each other? Did the first speaker outline a clear case which the team followed? Were the

arguments in the case arranged such that the most important arguments were given appropriate emphasis?

#### **Individual structure**

Was each individual speech well-structured and easy to follow? Were individual arguments grouped into a logical and coherent speech? Were the most important arguments emphasised?

#### **Adaptability**

Did the speakers show that they were able to reorganise their material if developments in the debate necessitated it?

#### **Timing**

Did the speakers speak for approximately their allotted time of 7 minutes? Did they divide their time sensibly between their different points?

### Reasoning and Evidence

**15 marks for 1<sup>st</sup> Proposition**

**10 marks for all other main speeches**

Reasoning is about the content of the individual arguments each speaker makes and how well they are explained.

#### **Clarity and logic**

Are the arguments explained clearly and logically?

#### **Examples and analogies**

Are the arguments supported by a sufficient number of examples and analogies? Facts, statistics, case studies, news stories, historical or scientific references and other evidence should be relevant and have a credible source.

#### **Links to the motion**

Are the arguments relevant to the motion? The higher mark for first proposition reflects the particular importance of setting up a strong proposition case and a clear debate. A sensible, concise, comprehensive definition of the motion should be rewarded.

## **Listening and Response**

**5 marks for 1<sup>st</sup> Proposition**

**10 marks for all other main speeches**

### **Rebuttal**

Have speakers been listening carefully to their opponents and shown, in their own speeches, why they disagree?

### **Making Points of Information**

Have speakers made good POIs, showing they have been listening and picking out important points to challenge?

### **Taking Points of Information**

Have speakers taken two or three of the POIs offered during their speech and responded to them immediately and capably? The lower mark for first proposition is because they haven't yet heard an opposition speech to respond to through rebuttal. They should however show listening skills through taking and making Points of Information. Speakers should not be penalised if no points are offered to them, or if they offer enough points but none are accepted.

## **Summary speeches**

**Total 20 marks**

### **Expression and Delivery – 5 marks**

As for main speeches.

### **Organisation and Prioritisation– 5 marks**

#### **Choice of arguments**

There is not time to summarise every argument raised in the debate. Summary speakers should concentrate on the main points of contention that are key to winning over the audience.

#### **Structure**

Was the speech well structured and easy to follow? Was it logical and coherent?

#### **Adaptability**

Did the speech reflect the debate as it actually happened, rather than having been written out before the debate started?

### **Timing**

Was the allotted time used wisely, with sufficient time being given to a discussion of each major area of clash in the debate?

### **Reasoning and Evidence– 5 marks**

#### **Clarity and logic**

Are the arguments pertaining to the major areas of clash in the debate explained in a clear and logical way?

#### **Revisited material**

Did the speaker choose the most powerful examples and analogies to revisit in their summary speech?

#### **New material**

New material is only permitted if it elaborates - or responds to - material already mentioned by another speaker in the debate. A small amount of interesting, relevant new material of this type can be rewarded. Totally new material should be penalised.

### **Listening and Response– 5 marks**

#### **Own team**

Has the speaker listened to their own team, reflecting what was actually said rather than what was planned beforehand?

#### **Rebuttal**

Has the summary speaker listened carefully to their opponents and shown why they disagree with the key arguments?

#### **Floor debate**

Were key points referred to?

#### **Points of Information**

POIs are not allowed in summary speeches; the speaker's ability in this area is assessed as part of their main speech.

**Teams' total scores therefore consist of 100 points: 40 points for the first speech, 40 points for the second speech and 20 points for the summary.**