



# Standard Operating Procedures

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## 1. Programme Format

- The debating season is conducted during Terms 2 and 3.
- Debates take place on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings as specified on the **Calendar of Events**.
- All divisions except Senior and Open have 5 preliminary rounds. Senior and Open have 4 preliminary rounds.
- Each team attends the same designated venue for the preliminary rounds.
- First debates begin at 6:40pm. Debaters should arrive 10 minutes before the scheduled time of their debate.
- Short Preparation debaters are required to arrive 90 minutes before their scheduled debate to receive the topic.

## 2. Divisions

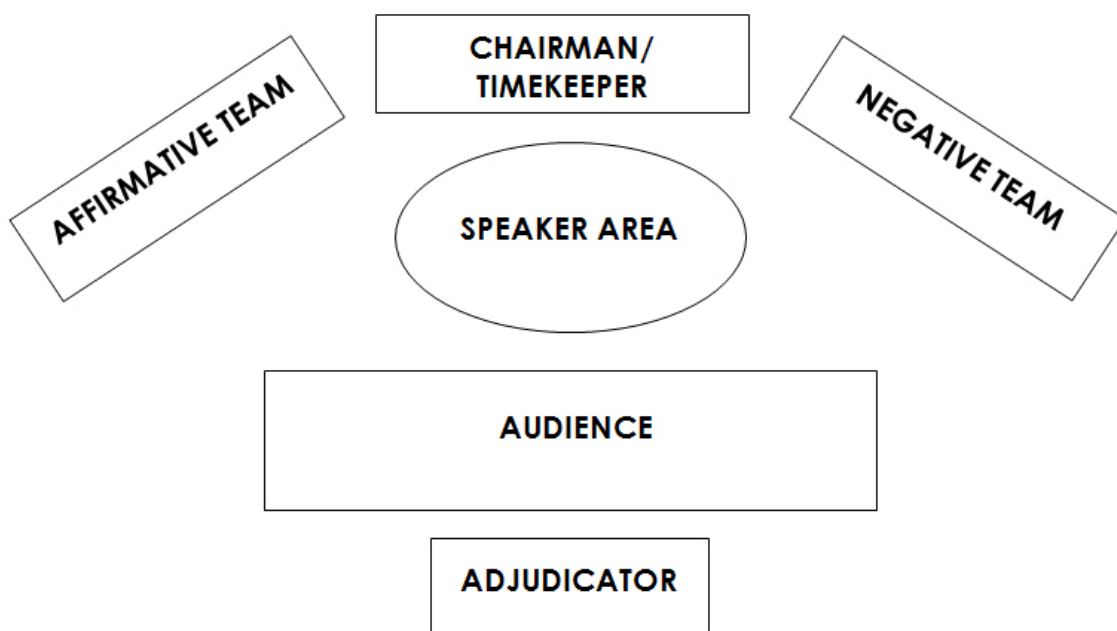
- The programme is comprised of seven divisions as follows:
  1. Primary B: Students in Year 5
  2. Primary A: Students in Years 6 and 7
  3. Year 8
  4. Year 9
  5. Year 10
  6. Senior: Students in Years 11 and 12
  7. Open: Students of any age. Adults may participate in this division provided that they register through a school.
- Debaters may only debate as an official team member in a division equal or above that of their own.

### 3. Debates

- There are two teams in a debate: an Affirmative Team and a Negative Team.
- The Affirmative Team agrees with the topic.
- The Negative Team disagrees with the topic.
- Each team has three speakers.
- The speaking order of speakers is as follows: First Affirmative, First Negative, Second Affirmative, Second Negative, Third Affirmative, Third Negative
- Each speaker speaks for a set time (see **Topics** sheet) with a warning bell one minute before the final bell.
- Times for speakers are determined by division level.
- Speeches may not be interrupted by any other speakers, with the exception of the **Point of Information** format.
- The winner of each debate is decided by an adjudicator.
- Adjudicators will deliver a brief summary and constructive criticism at the end of a debate.
- The Adjudicator's decision is final.

### 4. Room layout of a debate

A debate is set up as shown in the diagram below.



## 5. Chairman and Timekeeper

- The Affirmative Team will provide the Chairman for a debate.
- The Negative Team will provide the Timekeeper for a debate.
- The Chairman will introduce the debate and speakers according to the Chairman's sheet.
- The Chairman is responsible for obtaining forms for a debate from the Committee Desk and filling them out ready for the adjudicator.
- The Timekeeper will keep a record of the speaking times and record these times on the timekeeper's sheet which should be handed to the adjudicator at the conclusion of the last speaker's speech.
- The Chairman or Timekeeper will ring a warning bell once, one minute before the end of a speaker's speaking time and twice at the allocated finishing time.
- In the event that there are not two people available to assume the roles of Chairman and Timekeeper, one person may perform both roles.
- Both the Chairman and Timekeeper will act in a professional and impartial manner throughout the debate

## 6. Scores

- Each speaker receives a score out of 100.
- Marks are allotted to speakers on the basis of:

Matter	40
Manner	40
Method	20
- A **team score** is the sum of the three speakers' scores. The team with the highest team score at the conclusion of the debate is declared the winner.
- Only the team score is available for viewing in Primary School debates.

## 7. Results

- The adjudicator is responsible for handing the results sheet to the Committee Desk at the conclusion of the evening.
- Results will be posted on the website by the Monday following the debate.
- Teams are ranked first by team scores, then win-loss record.

## 8. Prepared Debates\*

- A **Prepared** or **Standard Debate** is one for which the topic is known to teams before the scheduled debate.
- All divisions have Prepared Debates.

## 9. Short Preparation Debates

- A **Short Preparation Debate** is a debate in which teams are given the topic 90 minutes before the scheduled debate.
- The Year 10, Senior and Open divisions all have Short Preparation Debates.
- A maximum of 5 team members can participate in the preparation.
- An adult can help with short preparation for Year 10.
- Senior and Open division teams must prepare Short Preparation debates without adult help or supervision.
- A dictionary and/or thesaurus is the only preparation aid allowed.
- No mobile phones, computers, other electronic devices or materials which may give a team an advantage are to be used during the preparation time.

## 10. One Card Debates

- **One Card Debates are held for Year 9, Year 10 and Senior divisions.**
- A **One Card Debate** is a prepared debate in which the debaters may only use one card. It encourages debaters to speak more from “dot point” notes rather than to write out their entire speech.
- The card must be no larger than a standard index card (3 inches x 5 inches).
- Small or cramped writing is not to be used. A minimum of 10 point type or handwriting equivalent to be used.
- Speeches should not be memorised.
- Only one side of the card may be used for the prepared speech. The other blank side may be used for rebuttal. No additional rebuttal cards are permitted.
- **The Adjudicator will ask for the card to be shown before the debate begins.**
- Speaking times for One Card debates are as for Prepared Debates.

## 11. Cross Examination Debates\*

- **Cross Examination debates are held for the Open division only**
- A **Cross Examination Debate** is an interactive style of debating in which an opposition team can ask questions of a speaker for 2 minutes after s/he has finished presenting his/her debate.

## 12. Point of Information (“POI”) format debates\*

- **Point of Information debates are held for the Open division only.**
- A **Point of Information Debate** is a far more interactive style of debating than other debates.
- In most respects a Point of Information debate is the same as a normal prepared debate with the exception that during each of the six speeches presented, the speaking team’s opposition may interject and ask a question about the content of the speech being presented during its delivery.

## 13. Official and Unofficial Debates and Teams

- An **Official Team** is one which consists of 3 members who:
  1. are students of the school for which they are competing and;
  2. are in the designated Year level or lower.An Open division team need only have 3 members to be an Official Team.
- During finals, an **Official Team** must also consist of members who have debated for that team at least once during the preliminary rounds.
- An **Unofficial Team** is one which does not satisfy the definition of an Official Team given above.
- An **Official Debate** is one in which both teams are Official Teams.
- An **Unofficial Debate** is one in which one or both teams are Unofficial Teams. In such a debate the Official Team, if one exists, is declared the winner by default.
- If a team debates one or two persons short, a member of that team may speak more than once. If that member is an official team member, then s/he will be counted as an Official team member for one speech only.
- In an unofficial team, team members receive a minimum of 70 points each. The official members of that team may receive up to a maximum of 75 points.

#### 14. Debates without Opposition (“versus adjudicator debates”)

- If a team arrives at a debate where there is no opposition due to a forfeit or otherwise, that team shall have the opportunity to receive credit for their work.
- If a team presents its debate to the adjudicator, each speaker will receive no less than 75 points for that round. A team which does not present its case will receive 75 points per speaker for that round.
- The adjudicator may, at his/her discretion, award more points based on the quality of the case, if it is presented.

#### 15. Preliminary Round Draw

- The draw for Rounds 1 to 5 will be distributed to schools before the end of Term 1.
- There may be minor changes to the draw as a result of forfeits or postponements. In such an event the coaches of all affected teams will be notified by email, or fax where no email address is available.
- The current draw is available from the website.

#### 16. Finals Series

- There will be a Finals Series for the Year 8, Year 9, Year 10, Senior and Open divisions, consisting of Quarter Finals, Semi Finals and a Grand Final.
- There are no finals for Primary B and Primary A.
- The top eight teams in each division according to the **Results** are eligible to participate in the Quarter Finals.
- Finals elimination is conducted on a win-loss basis.
- Debating SA will release finals topics at the conclusion of the preliminary rounds.
- Sides and oppositions for finals are determined by team rankings, as follows:

##### Quarter Finals

Debate number	Affirmative	Negative
QF1	First ranked	Eighth ranked
QF2	Second ranked	Seventh ranked
QF3	Third ranked	Sixth ranked
QF4	Fourth ranked	Fifth ranked

### Semi Finals

Debate number	Affirmative	Negative
SF1	Winner QF1	Winner QF4
SF2	Winner QF2	Winner QF3

### Grand Final

Debate number	Affirmative	Negative
GF	Winner SF1	Winner SF2

- Debating SA may alter the above team pairings in the case that there are less than 8 teams eligible to participate in the finals.
- Quarter Final debates will be judged by a single adjudicator, Semi Final debates by a panel of 3 adjudicators and Grand Final debates by a panel of 5 adjudicators.
- In the event that there is a panel of adjudicators, the the winner will be determined by a majority vote of the panel. The decision of each individual adjudicator is secret and the overall decision final.
- Individual feedback is not given by adjudicators in finals debates.

## 17. Forfeits

- A team **forfeits** when it does not debate at all in a given round. Forfeits should be avoided at all costs. **Postponements and Unofficial Debates are alternatives to forfeits.**
- In the event that a team wishes to forfeit:
  1. The person in charge of that team should complete and fax a **Forfeit With Notice Form** or email the relevant details to Debating SA.
  2. The Debating Coordinator of the opposing school should be notified. **Please note that the opposing team may still choose to attend the debate as scheduled as described in Section 14.**
- A \$25 forfeit charge will be charged to the forfeiting school. This charge is doubled to \$50 if the team forfeits without notifying Debating SA. A finals forfeit will incur a forfeit charge of \$60.

## 18. Postponements

- Debates may only be postponed if **all** of the following are satisfied:
  1. The debate to be postponed is in Rounds 1 to 4. If the debate is a Round 5 debate, it may only be brought forward.
  2. The opposing school agrees to the postponement.
  3. An adjudicator is available to adjudicate the postponed debate.
- If the opposing school refuses the postponement, the postponing team will have forfeited automatically. The opposing school will participate in a **debate without opposition** if it chooses to.
- The postponing school is responsible for contacting the opposing school to organise a suitable postponement date and time. In the first instance, it is preferable to hold the postponed debate on another scheduled debating date at a scheduled debating venue. If this is not possible, the two schools should negotiate a suitable date.
- The responsibility of hosting the postponed debate lies with the school wishing to postpone, however, the opposing school is welcome to host if it is more convenient to them.
- The date and venue of the postponement should be conveyed to Debating SA via the **Postponement Form**. Debating SA will notify both schools if an adjudicator is available.
- If the postponed debate is held outside of scheduled debating nights then the postponing school will be charged \$20 for the services of the adjudicator.

## 19. Late teams

- Teams should aim to arrive to a debate 10 minutes before the scheduled debate time.
- If a team or team members are running late, Debating SA should be contacted on **0406 982 012**.
- If all the members of a team have not arrived 20 minutes after the scheduled debate time, that team:
  1. may debate as an unofficial team, if one or more team members have arrived, or;
  2. will forfeit the debate.

## 20. Wrong side of topic prepared

- If a team prepares the wrong side of the topic, that team will have 20 minutes after the scheduled debate time to prepare the correct side.
- If the team is not willing to debate after 20 minutes that team will have forfeited the debate.

## 21. Further Information

For further information regarding debating please refer to the **Official Debating Manual** which has a detailed explanation of all the formalities of debating.

## 22. Queries and complaints

- Please direct all queries to the **Administrative Officer**
- Please direct all complaints in writing to the **Complaints Officer**

### **Contact Debating SA**

PO Box 10404 Gouger Street, Adelaide Business Centre SA 5000

Phone: 0406 982 012

Fax: 8219 0070

Email: [enquiries@debatingsa.com.au](mailto:enquiries@debatingsa.com.au)

Website: [www.debatingsa.com.au](http://www.debatingsa.com.au)