



# Standard Operating Procedures

2011 Edition

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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

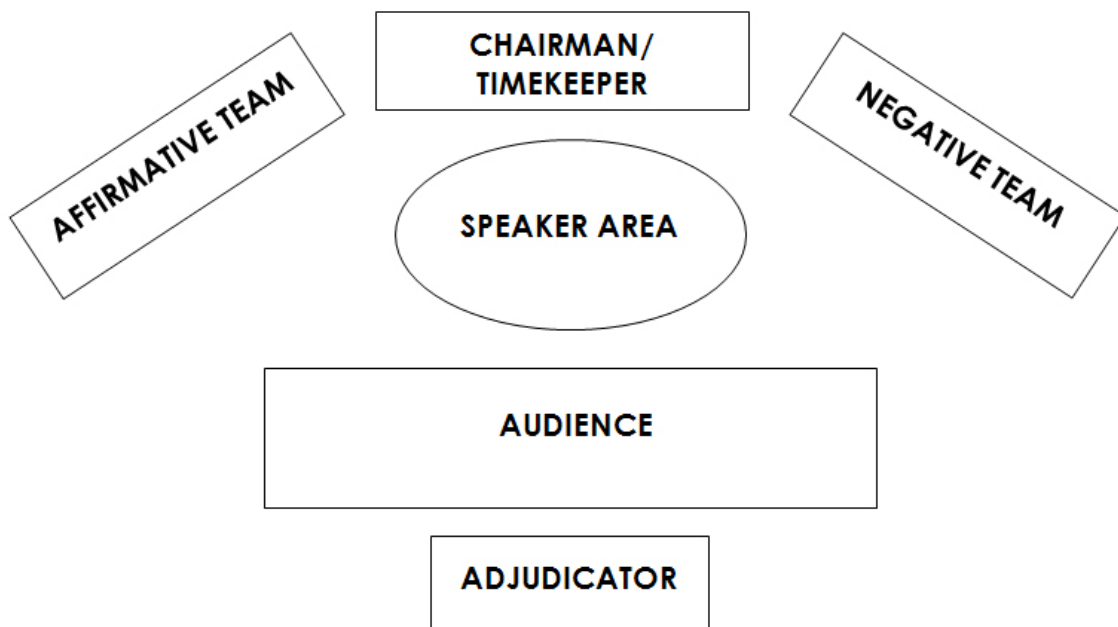
- The programme is comprised of seven divisions as follows:
  1. Primary B: Students in Year 5
  2. Primary A: Students in Years 6 and 7
  3. Year 8
  4. Year 9
  5. Year 10
  6. Senior: Students in Years 11 and 12
  7. Open: Students of any age. Adults may participate in this division provided that 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.
- 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 is responsible for ensuring all debaters have access to cups and water.
- 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. The score will range from 70 to 100.
- Marks are allotted to speakers on the basis of:

Argument	50
Presentation	30
Structure	20
- A **team score** is the **average** of the three speakers' scores. The team with the highest team score at the conclusion of the debate is declared the winner.
- Primary School students are not permitted to view the score sheet with individual scores at the end of the debate, but may ask the adjudicator for their team score.

## 7. 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 speaker points each. The official members of that team may receive up to a maximum of 85 speaker points.

## 8. 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 a debate.
- Teams will receive **win/loss points** according to the following table:

Official Team win	4 points
Official Team loss	
- against Official Team	3 points
- against Unofficial Team	4 points
Unofficial Team win	2 points
Unofficial Team loss	1 point
Forfeit	0 points

- Teams will be ranked first according to win/loss points, then by aggregate team scores.

## 9. Debates without Opposition ('vs 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 option of:

1. **Not debating at all.** The team will be awarded a win by default and each speaker will receive 85 points each; or
2. **Debating against another team without an opposition.** Both teams will be awarded a win by default. Speakers of both teams will receive no less than 85 points each; or
3. **Debating against the adjudicator.** The adjudicator will give the team feedback and present possible opposing arguments. The team will be awarded a win by default. Speakers will receive no less than 85 points each.

## 10. 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.

## 11. 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.

## 12. Quodlibetical Debates

Quodlibetical Debates are debates where the topic is in the form of a scenario, which often presents debaters with a moral dilemma. Debaters should debate the issues presented by the scenario.

Quodlibetical topics may feature as Short Preparation Debates and are used at the Year 10, Senior and Open divisions.

### 13. 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.

### 14. 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 Debating SA website.

### 15. Late teams

- Teams should aim to arrive to a debate at least 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 15 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 incurring a forfeit without notice charge.

## 16. 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.

## 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 register the forfeit on the website at **[www.debating.com.au/login](http://www.debating.com.au/login)** OR complete and fax a **Forfeit With Notice Form** OR email the 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 9.**
- A \$30 forfeit charge will be charged to the forfeiting school. This charge is increased 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 may participate in a **debate without opposition** if it chooses to. The school which attempted the postponement will not be charged a forfeit fee.
- 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 by the website at [www.debating.sa.com.au/login](http://www.debating.sa.com.au/login) OR via the **Postponement Form** OR by email. 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. 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 or 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 if 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 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 speaker feedback is not given by adjudicators in Semi Final and Grand Final debates.

## 20. Debater of the Year Awards

Debater of the Year Awards will be held for all divisions to recognise excellence in debating. The Debater of the Year for each division will be decided based on the following criteria:

- Debaters must have participated in at least half of the debates for their division to be eligible for consideration, that is, 3 debates for Primary B, Primary A, Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10; and 2 debates for Senior and Open.
- In each debate each speaker is ranked relative to the other participants in the debate (usually 1 through 6 in the case of 6 different scores) according to the speaker scores. This ranking is called a **Debater of the Year Debate Ranking**
- Speakers who have participated in the required number of debates will be ranked according to the following (in order):
  1. The average of their best 3 Debater of the Year Debate Rankings (2 in the case of Senior and Open).
  2. The average of their best 3 speaker scores (2 in the case of Senior and Open).
  3. If two or more speakers are ranked the same under these criteria then the speakers' positions as at the previous round will be used.
  4. If no distinction between speakers can be drawn according to the above criteria then additional criteria may be applied by Debating SA.

## 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 102, Rosewater East, South Australia 5013

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)