THE DEBATING COMPETITION

Each team may have 4 members, who may be rotated.

If, for any reason, a team of 4 loses 2 team members once the competition has begun and neither of them can be replaced, the team will be permitted to continue to debate with the first and third speaker being the same person.

If, for any reason, a team of 3 loses a team member once the competition has begun and cannot be replaced, the team will be permitted to continue to debate with the first and third speaker being the same person. Any debate in which one team is debating with only 2 team members may be won by the 2-member team, but it will be recorded as a forfeit for that team (score 0 points) and as a win for the opposing team (score 2 points).

The Debating competition will be run using the Rules and Guidelines of the West Australian Debating League Inc. Resources are available at https://wadl.org/resources/. Use the SDC handbook, which outlines how to debate in the WA Schools style.

Competition Format & Scoring
Ideally, each division will participate in a round robin and places will be decided by wins over losses. Teams will be ranked based on the number of points they have after the preliminary rounds.

Scoring as per the WA Debating League
- 2 points for a win or for receiving a forfeit.
- 1 point for a loss
- 0 points if forfeit

RANKINGS DECIDED BY:
1. Highest number of points after the preliminary rounds
2. Higher winning margin
3. Successful team in previous debate

1) If there are two teams with the same number of points, the team that was the winner of the debate between the two equally ranked teams will be ranked higher.

2) If there are three teams with the same number of points, or if two equally ranked teams did not debate against each other, then the order of teams will be determined by their Average Winning Margin. The team with the highest AWM will be ranked first. The AWM is calculated using points scored 'for' a team and 'against' a team.
Team A: 224 points for and 223 points against is a AWM of +1.
Team B: 224 points for and 225 points against is a AWM of -1.

3) If two equally ranked teams have the same AWM, then the order of teams will be determined by their average speaker score (the team with the highest speaker score will be ranked first) which will be calculated as a total. For example, if a team received 225 in debate 1, 228 in debate 2, 227 in debate 3 and 229 in debate 4 their Speaker Score is 909.

Teams should nominate in the appropriate division for their experience and expertise.
- A division is for more experienced debaters.
- B division is for less experienced debaters

The organisers reserve the right to cancel any divisions if there are not enough entries. Medallions for first to third place will be awarded in each division.

The affirmative and negative team in ALL debates will be decided by a coin toss before the topic is given. The toss will be made by the organiser. The team which wins the toss can choose to argue the affirmative or the negative case.

Speaking Times
All three speakers in each debate will speak for the same length of time.

Division	Warning Bell	Final Bell
A	5 minutes	6 minutes
B	4 minutes	5 minutes

Debate Topics & Preparation
All teams will take part in impromptu debates for the duration of the competition.

It is anticipated that the WADL will provide two adjudicators during prep time on Monday and Tuesday to guide teams to prepare their arguments.

Once nominations have been received, schools will be sent a glossary of words taken from the debate topics (if deemed necessary by the WADL) such as 'boycott' or 'patent', to help students to prepare.

Impromptu Debate Topic topics will be given to schools 60 minutes before the start of each debate. For each impromptu debate, all speakers of both schools must be present for the topics to be given out i.e., one school cannot begin to prepare before the other.

However, after 5 minutes if only one team has all members present, both teams will be given the topic to start prepping the debate. The team with less than three members present will be at a disadvantage.

In the case of all team members of one team being late the Speech Awards Coordinator will toss a coin with the team in attendance to decide the affirmative/negative teams and then give the team in attendance the topic 5 minutes after the time both teams were meant to be at reception to receive the topic.

Topics will be given to teams at the Reception Desk (outside the Bloomfield Lecture Theatre) and prep will take place upstairs in the Hall of Champions. No student will be permitted to leave the Hall of Champions until it is time to move to the room in which their debate will take place. All team members will be permitted to take part in the preparation.

ONLY STUDENTS PREPARING for debates are permitted to be in the Hall of Champions.

The use of the internet is not permitted during the preparation time. Mobile phones, smart watches and other electronic devices must be left with the teacher in charge of the team.

Any team found with an electronic device in the Hall of Champions will automatically be disqualified from winning but will still participate in the competition. TEAMS MAY USE A HARD COPY DICTIONARY AND A HARD COPY THESAURUS ONLY. No information booklets, such as the WADL handbook, may be used.

Debate teams must be seated in the room allocated to their debate 5 minutes before the start of the debate. For every half minute a school team is late there may be a penalty of half a point.

Note: Palm cards may be used

Preparing the Wrong Topic
If a team prepares wrong side of the argument, they will be given 20 minutes ONLY to prepare the correct argument / topic.

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Topics used in 2022 and 2023.

| THBT: This House believes that |
| THR: This house regrets |
| THW: This house would |

A division
- THW ban employers from looking at prospective employees' social media accounts as part of their recruitment process.
- THW introduce speed awareness education programs in schools.
- This house, as a teacher, would not punish a student for cheating.
- THR the prominence of online activism.
- THW introduce speed awareness education programs in schools.
- THBT that children's film makers should avoid making animated films that contain darker themes e.g., colonialism in Pocahontas, parental death in Bambi and the Lion King
- THR cars being the most common form of transport.
- THW pay all politicians the minimum wage of their country.
- THBT public policies should be subject to veto by scientific experts.
- THW have harsher sentences for celebrities who commit crimes.
- THW prosecute killers of endangered animals as if their victim had been human.

B Division
- THW legalise graffiti.
- THW prefer a world with a single common language.
- THR the trend towards 'relatable' politicians.
- This house would elect politicians using a lottery system.
- INFO SLIDE: 'Automating healthcare' refers to allocating significant responsibilities in healthcare to non-human entities, such as artificial intelligence or robots. **TOPIC:** This house supports automating healthcare.
- INFO SLIDE: Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to the ability of machines/computers to do tasks which would normally require human intelligence. AI can currently comprehend and produce speech and images, solve complex problems, and operate across most spheres of the workforce. **TOPIC:** THW ban the further development of artificial intelligence technology.
- THR NAPLAN.
- THR the use of group assignments in schools.
- THW implement mandatory speed-limiting technology in all vehicles.
- THW make donating blood compulsory.
- THBT parents should financially reward their children for improving personal school results.
- THBT should not teach their children to drive.
- Assuming the existence of aliens, THW make contact.
- THW set a maximum number of working hours.
- THW allow individuals to sell their organs legally for profit.
- THW allow students to take days off for their mental health.

NOTES RE ADJUDICATION FEEDBACK

PLEASE note that receiving feedback which emphasises different technical skills is not necessarily the same as receiving conflicting feedback. WADL adjudicators prioritise their feedback based on the things they feel would be most important for students to fix or develop. This is firstly so that they go into their next debate with the best chance of doing well, and secondly because it can be very confusing and demoralising being told that many different things need to be improved before their next debate.

If students receive feedback early in the competition that emphasises working on rebuttal and are told after their next debate that structure and signposting are important, this is likely because their rebuttal improved, and the adjudicator will focus on what they see as the next most important thing for the team to work on!

None of the feedback students are told to focus on in feedback should be taken in isolation - feedback is a cumulative process of development, and it's important for students to remember that just because they are not given repeated feedback, does not mean that their early feedback was not also important.