

1	. H	Planning and running your District debating event	. 2
	Ven	nue requirements	. 2
	Equ	uipment checklist	. 2
	Sta	ff and helpers	. 3
	Site	e planning	. 3
	Awa	ards and Recognition	. 3
	Auc	dience	. 3
	Reg	gistration timeline	. 3
	Exa	mple event day timetable	. 3
2	. N	Marking considerations for judges	. 4
3	. F	Hosting costs and reimbursement	. 5
4	. F	Planning checklist	. 5
	Initi	ial Planning (3 to 4 months before)	. 5
	Ent	ries and Communication (1 month before)	. 5
	Fina	al Preparations (1–2 weeks before)	. 6
	On	the Day	. 6
	Pos	et Event	6



## 1. Planning and running your District debating event

## Setting the motion

#### **Prepared Debate**

- · Motion is set by the host school
- Motion shared with all visiting schools in advance

#### **Unprepared Debate**

- Motion set centrally by IAPS
- Provided to hosts early in the spring term
- Must remain confidential until released on the day
- Pupils should be given 20 to 30 minutes to prepare
- Staff should not assist during preparation

### Venue requirements

- Main hall
  - o Welcome
  - o Results
- Debating rooms
  - o 4 teams per room

#### Equipment checklist

- Debating rooms:
  - o Seating and tables for 8 debaters (4 vs 4)
  - o Judges' chairs and tables
  - o Optional: screen/timer display
  - o Bell or buzzer
- Laptops/iPads (1 per team, Al access blocked)
- Timing bells
- Stopwatch or timer
- Judging sheets and clipboards
- Printed motions
- Headed paper for score sheets
- Optional: Packed teas/supper for visiting schools
- Optional: Refreshments (upon arrival and between rounds)
- Signage and site access arrangements
- Trophies



## Staff and helpers

- 1 or 2 judges per debate room
- 1 or 2 chairs/ timekeepers (to ring bells and manage timings)
- Volunteers to assist logistics (local senior schools may help)

### Site planning

- Parking for minibuses confirm access and availability in advance
- Visitor registration provide a site map or welcome pack
- Spectator policy confirm in advance how many guests each school can bring
- Safeguarding ensure adults supervising teams are DBS-checked

## Awards and Recognition

- IAPS will supply a trophy (Cup), and Plate if required
- Certificates will be provided for all participants

#### **Audience**

 Parents, staff and pupils may wish to attend, subject to space, but it does not need to be compulsory

### Registration timeline

Date/time	Activity
3-4 months before	Open entries
2 months before	Close entries
2 months before	After close of entries, contact schools to
	balance numbers/ encourage B teams, etc
4 weeks before	Confirm event details with schools
1 week before	Share motion for Round 1 and group draw

### Example event day timetable

Day of event	Activity
12:00	Set up debate rooms
13:30	Schools arrive
13:50	Welcome and event opening



14:00	Round 1 debates begin (5 mins per speaker)
15:00	Return to main hall for break
15:10	Announce <b>Round 1</b> winners and release second motion
15:15–15:45	Teams prepare for <b>Round 2</b>
15:45	Round 2 debates (Championships, Trophy - Plate & Shield) begin
16:45	Results
17:00	Schools depart

## 2. Marking considerations for judges

You will need one or two judges per room. Judges should be members of staff or adults who are familiar with the format of debating and feel confident assessing the pairs against the criteria outlined below. You may wish to use senior school pupils who have debating experience to act as a second judge.

#### 1. Content

- Relevance of arguments
- Use of evidence/ examples
- Ability to address counterarguments

#### 2. Structure

- Clear intro and conclusion
- Logical flow and organisation

#### 3. Delivery

- Clarity, volume, and pace
- Eye contact and audience engagement

#### 4. Teamwork

- Coordination between speakers
- Support for team points

#### 5. Persuasiveness



Convincing tone and logical argument

#### 6. Time management

• Speaking within the time limit

## 3. Hosting costs and reimbursement

To support schools hosting a District Debating Competition, IAPS will reimburse reasonable material costs of up to £150 associated with running the event. Reimbursable expenses may include essential items such as printed materials (for example, judging sheets or motion papers), refreshments for the children, and other resources required specifically for the competition.

All costs should be agreed with IAPS in advance, and reimbursement will be processed upon receipt of an invoice addressed to IAPS.

## 4. Planning checklist

This checklist supports you in planning your District Debating Competition between January and March.

## Initial Planning (3 to 4 months before)

- Confirm venue: main hall for welcome/results and suitable debate rooms (4 teams per room)
- Consider site access, parking, spectator policy and safeguarding requirements
- Start identifying judges and timekeepers (1–2 per room recommended)
- Begin thinking about your Round 1 motion question
- Review equipment needs (tables, seating, bells, judging sheets, timers etc.)
- Plan for light refreshments or packed teas if offering them

#### Entries and Communication (1 month before)

- Entries close
- Review entries and encourage B Teams where appropriate
- Send initial communication to attending schools including:
- Arrival and finish times
- Venue address and parking information
- Safeguarding and supervision reminders
- Spectator guidance if applicable
- Confirm judging panel and volunteers
- Ensure there is access for pupils to do research on round 2 motion
- Begin shaping your event day timetable



## Final Preparations (1–2 weeks before)

- Share Round 1 draw and room allocations
- •Share the prepared Round 1 motion
- Create and print:
- Judging sheets
- Motion sheets
- Score sheets on school headed paper
- Room signage and welcome information
- Confirm room setup including judge tables and optional timer displays
- Final staff briefing including logistics and timings
- Check trophies and certificates if required
- IAPS will provide the Round 2 motion

### On the Day

- Prepare debate rooms
- Welcome visiting schools and deliver event briefing
- Round 1 debates
- Break and release unprepared motion
- Teams prepare and deliver Round 2 debates
- Apply judging criteria: content, structure, delivery, teamwork, persuasiveness and time management
- Share results and celebrate achievements
- Thank visiting schools and collect feedback

Example day schedule is available in the "How to Host" document.

#### Post Event

- Submit results to IAPS
- Submit invoice for up to £150 reimbursable hosting costs (printing, refreshments etc.)
- Share photos or a write-up for IAPS communications (with permission)
- Celebrate success with pupils and staff