

Debating Championships Years 5-6

Competition information for host schools – Debating Festival

This guide sets out the requirements and expectations for hosting the event, including the venue, staffing, equipment and event-day arrangements.

It also explains what IAPS will provide and the support available at each stage, helping you to plan and deliver a welcoming, well-organised day for pupils and participating schools.

1. The competition in brief

- **Format: *Festival Format*** – Standalone one-day competition.
 - Two teams in each room.
 - The positions are Proposition and Opposition.
 - Each team has three speakers.
- **Speeches** - Each speech lasts four minutes.
 - The first and final minutes are protected, with Points of Information permitted in between.
 - There are no reply speeches.
- **Rounds** - There are three rounds.
 - The Round 1 motion is shared in advance.
 - The Round 2 and Round 3 motions are revealed on the day.
- **Duration** - The event runs from approximately 09:00 to 15:30.

2. Venue and rooms

You will need:

- A main hall or shared space for registration, breaks, lunch and the results presentation. This space may also be used as a debating room.
- Two, three or four debating rooms, depending on the number of teams taking part.
- Tables and seating in each debating room for six pupils, one judge and one timekeeper.

Our festival debating format requires exactly two teams in each room. The number of debating rooms therefore determines the number of teams that can take part.

Debate rooms	Teams	Pupils	Teacher-judges attending	Timekeepers	Minimum core attendance
2	4	12	4	2	18
3	6	18	6	3	27
4	8	24	8	4	36

Each debating room must accommodate at least 9 people during a round — six pupils, one active teacher-judge, one timekeeper and one inactive teacher-judge (who is not judging the round but needs space in the room).

The minimum core attendance figures include all pupils, the teacher-judge accompanying each team and the timekeepers. They do not include the host event lead, volunteers, additional accompanying adults or spectators (see section 9 for information about spectators). You should allow additional space for these people when planning room and site capacity.

The number of schools may be lower than the number of teams. A school may be invited to enter an extra team where this is needed to complete a field of 4, 6 or 8 teams.

3. Equipment checklist

You should provide:

- Tables and chairs for 6 pupils in each debating room
- A table and chair for the judge
- Chairs for all other guests and spectators
- A timer or stopwatch and a bell or buzzer to signal when the Points of Information window opens and closes
- Clipboards and pens for judges
- Pens and printed IAPS preparation worksheets for each team
- Printed copies of the motions, draw, judge allocation and scoring ballots, using the templates supplied by IAPS
- Room signage and a welcome pack or site map
- A laptop with Excel or compatible spreadsheet software for you to enter and check the results
- An optional visible timer or clock in each debating room
- An optional projector or large screen in the main hall for briefings and results

IAPS will provide:

- The winner's trophy and certificates for all competitors.

4. Staffing and judges

- Each school participating must provide a judge for each team.
- The judge can be a teacher.
- Each debate is assessed by one judge.
- The scoring workbook allocates one conflict-free judge to each room in every round so that no teacher judges a debate involving their own school.
- Judges will be allocated 1-2 rounds.

Judges should read the Years 5-6 Judge Guidance before the event. You should also provide a short operational briefing when judges arrive. IAPS will provide these details ahead of time.

Provided by you

- **An event lead** - responsible for overseeing the day and acting as the main point of contact
- **One chair and timekeeper per room** - responsible for running the clock, signalling the Points of Information window and supporting the smooth running of the debate

Provided by participating schools

- One judge for every team entered

5. Motions and preparation

IAPS will set and provide all three motions. You must not create, replace or amend any of the motions.

Round 1

Round 1 is a prepared debate and you will share the following with participating schools:

Shortly after the event bookings close:

- The Round 1 motion

At least two weeks before the event:

- The event schedule
- The full draw and room allocations
- Each team's position (Proposition or Opposition)

The position information will make clear whether each team is debating on the Proposition or the Opposition side.

Rounds 2 and 3

IAPS will send the Round 2 and Round 3 motions to you in advance. They must remain confidential until the designated preparation period on the day. Pupils will have 30 minutes to prepare for each hidden motion.

During preparation:

- Pupils may use only the printed preparation worksheet and a pen
- Staff and accompanying adults must not assist pupils
- Phones, tablets, laptops and other electronic devices must not be used
- Internet access, AI tools, books, pre-prepared notes and other materials are not permitted

You should provide a suitable supervised preparation space and enough printed worksheets for every team.

6. The competition day

The following timetable is recommended.

Time	Activity
09:00	Arrival, registration and judge briefing
09:20 - 09:25	Buffer for Round 1 preparations
09:25 - 10:25	Round 1 prepared motion - debate and feedback
10:25 - 10:55	Break
10:55 - 11:00	Buffer for Round 2 preparations

11:00 - 11:30	Round 2 motion revealed - supervised preparation
11:30 - 12:30	Round 2 - debate and feedback
12:30 - 13:25	Lunch
13:25 - 13:30	Buffer for Round 3 preparations
13:30 - 14:00	Round 3 motion revealed - supervised preparation
14:00 - 15:00	Round 3 - debate and feedback
15:00 - 15:30	Scores collated and checked
15:30	Awards and departure

Judges and competing schools should arrive at your agreed arrival time. This gives everyone time to register and allows judges to receive their briefing before Round 1 begins.

When finalising your schedule, make sure you have allowed for time to set up each round and prepare the judges.

7. Judging, scoring and results

Judging follows the Years 5-6 Judge Guidance and uses the scoring workbook, both of which IAPS will supply.

The workbook calculates the standings automatically. You are responsible for entering the results accurately and checking them before the winner is announced.

How judging will work

- **Speaker scores** - Each speaker receives a score between 60-80.
- **Team ranking** - The team with the higher combined total wins the debate.
- **Final standings** - Teams are ranked by number of round wins first, then total speaker points.

Draw and judge allocation

The scoring workbook contains the position-balanced draw for the relevant field size and allocates one conflict-free judge to each room in every round.

Results

- You must submit the completed results workbook to us after the event.

8. Site planning and safeguarding

You should:

- Confirm parking and minibus arrangements in advance
- Provide participating schools with a site map or welcome pack
- Agree and communicate a spectator policy, including how many guests each school may bring
- Confirm how pupils will be supervised when their accompanying teacher is judging
- Share relevant safeguarding, accessibility, emergency and site-security information

Lunch and refreshments

You may decide whether the participating schools will be asked to bring packed lunches, or whether you choose to provide food free of charge. These lunch arrangements should be clearly communicated to participating schools in advance.

You should also offer refreshments on arrival or between rounds.

You should provide:

- A suitable space where pupils and adults can eat
- Drinking water throughout the day
- Any necessary information about allergies or dietary requirements if you choose to provide lunch

9. Spectators

Parents, staff and pupils are welcome to watch debates where space and your safeguarding arrangements allow.

Please confirm your spectator policy with participating schools two weeks prior to the event.

10. Awards

- IAPS will supply a trophy for the winning team and certificates for all competitors.

11. Costs and reimbursement

- IAPS will reimburse reasonable material costs of up to £150. This may include printing, refreshments and competition resources. Costs should be agreed in advance, with an invoice submitted to us after the event.
- As a thank you for hosting, you receive complimentary entry.

12. Planning and communication timeline

The following timeline sets out what you can expect from us and what participating schools will need from you.

Timing	IAPS	Host school
3-4 months before	Open entries and confirm the event listing.	Confirm the venue, number of debating rooms, capacity, site access, safeguarding arrangements and spectator arrangements.
Around 1 month before	Close entries, review and work with you to fill any remaining spaces with B teams where appropriate. Share participating school and judge information.	Confirm the event lead, timekeepers and volunteers. Share Round the 1 motion and begin preparing the information that will be sent to participating schools.

Around 3 weeks before	Confirm the final entries and provide you with all three motions, the scoring workbook, judge guidance, preparation worksheets, scoresheet templates, pre-set draw and judge allocation.	Check the materials, confirm the room plan and equipment requirements, and keep the Round 2 and Round 3 motions confidential.
At least 2 weeks before	Support you with any final questions about the draw, motions or competition arrangements.	Send schools the event schedule, Round 1 motion, full draw, room allocations and positions (Proposition and Opposition). Also share arrival and finish times, parking details, lunch arrangements, safeguarding information and the spectator policy.
Around 1 week before	Ensure that the trophy and certificates have been dispatched or delivered.	Confirm judge arrival requirements, print the event materials and hold a final briefing for the team.
Event day	Provide support where agreed.	Set up and run the festival, brief judges and staff, supervise preparation, enter and check the scores, announce the results and present the awards.
After the event	Confirm receipt of the results and process the agreed reimbursement.	Submit the results workbook and reimbursement invoice. Share photographs or a short write-up for us, where the appropriate permissions have been obtained.