

W E L L I N G T O N

SPEAKING

UNION

Debating in Wellington

<http://www.wsu.co.nz>

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President and Intercollegiate Convenor
1C/135 Taranaki Street
Te Aro
Wellington

January 2013

Debating Convenors
Secondary Schools
Wellington / Porirua / Kapiti Coast / Hutt Valley

Dear Debating Convenor

I am pleased to invite your school to participate in the Wellington Speaking Union intercollegiate debating competition in 2013.

As per previous years, your school may enter one team in the Senior Premier A grade, one team in the Senior Premier B grade, one team in the Junior Premier grade, three teams in the Senior Certificate grade, and five teams in the Junior Certificate grade. As last year, the entry form is to be filled out online, and is available at www.wsu.co.nz/signups. Please note that it is very important to include correct email addresses for all adjudicators and coaches, as this is the primary method of communication. Please fill out the form by **Friday 15 February**.

2012 Champions

Congratulations to the following schools and students who won competitions last year:

- Premier A: Wellington College
- Premier B: Wellington College
- Senior Certificate: Wellington Girls' College
- Junior Premier: Wellington Girls' College
- Junior Certificate: Wellington High School
- Impromptu Cup (Senior): Wellington College
- Impromptu Cup (Junior): Wellington High
- Stockley Cup: Wellington Girls' College
- Dunsheath Plate: Queen Margaret College

About the Grades

The Senior Premier A grade is designed for senior students who are experienced debaters with well established skills. Typically, students will who have debated in either the Premier B or Senior Certificate grade before entering Premier A. The Senior Premier B grade is appropriate for students with some debating experience and skill.

The Junior Premier grade is for students in years nine and ten who have some debating experience. Certificate grades are for beginners (junior) or for students wishing to gain experience before debating at the premier level (senior). Entry to the junior grades, both premier and certificate, is restricted to students in years nine and ten. Senior grades are open to secondary school students of all ages.

Grade Convenors

The convenors of each grade (and their email addresses) are as follows:

- Premier A: Daniel Wilson (danielgraywilson@gmail.com)
- Premier B: Emma Smith (emma_smith91@live.com)
- Senior Certificate: Jane Dewar (jdewar@hibs.school.nz)
- Junior Premier: Kathy Ryan (kathy.ryan@scc.school.nz)
- Junior Certificate: Helen Scott (hscott@tawacollege.school.nz)

Grade Organisation

The Senior Certificate, Junior Premier, and Junior Certificate grades have a dedicated day on which the debating for that round must take place (see the attached calendar). Teams must be ready to debate on that particular day listed in the calendar, but the time of the debate, the venue, and an adjudicator must be arranged by schools. A team that cannot debate on the day listed in the calendar defaults that debate. Each grade convenor has the ability to waive this rule in exceptional circumstances only.

For the Senior Premier A and B grades, all debates happen contemporaneously at the same venue, with adjudicators arranged by the grade convenor. Premier A and B debating nights are held on alternating Tuesday nights throughout the year (see the attached calendar).

The Senior Certificate grade is not divided into two pools this year.

The Junior Certificate grade is divided into three pools: Northern, Valley, and Wellington. Schools debate other schools within their pool for the preliminary rounds.

The below table summarises the grade organisation:

Grade	Day	Venue	Time	Adjudicator/s
Junior Cert (three pools)	Wednesday	Arranged between teams	Arranged between teams	Arranged between teams
Junior Premier	Wednesday	Arranged	Arranged	Arranged between

		between teams	between teams	teams
Senior Cert	Thursday	Arranged between teams	Arranged between teams	Arranged between teams
Senior Prem B	Tuesday	Arranged by convenor	7pm	Arranged by convenor
Senior Prem A	Tuesday	Arranged by convenor	7pm	Arranged by convenor

The rounds

In 2013 there will be **five rounds of debating** in all grades of Wellington Speaking Union.

Successful teams who make the knock-out rounds then debate in quarter, semi and final rounds. The Junior Certificate grade has an additional Octo-Final round. Grade convenors will notify successful teams at the completion of round five. Teams who do not make the knock-out rounds are encouraged to attend the Grand Final to see the two best teams in the grade.

Defaulting

Over the past couple of years, we have seen an increase in the number of teams defaulting from debates. This has led to opposition teams going without debates, and grade convenors struggling to ensure the integrity of the draw.

We understand that schools do not want to default on debates; however a worrying development has been that schools have not notified the relevant grade convenor and the opposing team of a default until shortly before the debate is set to begin, leaving students, coaches, and adjudicators in the lurch.

We have two proposals to remedy this situation. The first is that we implore schools to ensure they only sign up the number of teams that they can legitimately field. We understand that at the beginning of the year students are likely to sign up without necessarily sticking around, but we hope that school debating convenors will try to get students who are genuinely interested signed up for a team.

The second proposal is that, starting this year, for every team that defaults, a school will be charged a **\$10 default fee if they default from a debate within three days of the scheduled debate**. This nominal sum is put in place with the hope of encouraging schools to communicate their intention of defaulting with sufficient time before a debate that opposition teams and grade convenors are not left in the lurch. Schools which have incurred a fine but do not pay that fine will be ineligible to compete in the 2014 competition. Schools who are defaulting must notify grade convenors, as well as the opposition team at the earliest possible time.

We regret to have to impose this strict system, but considering the number of late defaults is a large, and every growing problem, we feel this is the best mechanism of ensuring that schools default in fewer instances, or at the very least, notify of a default as early as possible.

Entry fees

Senior Premier A and B and Junior Premier teams cost \$30.00 per team, per grade. All other teams cost \$20.00 per team, per grade. These are unchanged from 2012.

Adjudicators

Adjudicators are essential to the running of intercollegiate debating. Please supply the contact details of at least **four** appropriate adjudicators.

Please encourage experienced senior student debaters to act as adjudicators for junior grades. They are vital to the continued vitality of the junior grades, and adjudicating is a great way to improve as a debater.

An intensive training seminar for adjudicators will take place on the 26th of February at a location to be announced via email, and the WSU website. Please encourage **all** students and teachers at your school who will be adjudicating this year to attend the seminar.

Coaching

As in previous years, the Wellington Speaking Union will be hosting a coaching seminar. We encourage all individuals who will be involved with coaching teams, and indeed all individuals who wish to learn more about debating, to attend this seminar on 5 March at a location to be announced via email, and the WSU website.

Sending in results

After each debate in the **Senior Certificate, Junior Premier, and Junior Certificate** grades, the *winning* school needs to fill out the results form available at www.wsu.co.nz/results.

Please note this method replaces the requirement for teams in Junior Certificate to fill out the results sheet after round four.

Website

The Wellington Speaking Union website is www.wsu.co.nz. This letter, the WSU calendar, draws for all grades, letters from grade convenors, the WSU mark sheet, sheets about limited preparation debating, points of information, and other information, will all be posted for download on the website in the next few days.

Results for each grade will be posted on the website after each round is completed. *Please encourage coaches and students to use the website to see how other schools are doing.*

Impromptu and Stockley Cup competitions

The Impromptu Cup debating competition for senior and junior students will be held on Sunday 2 June. The Stockley Cup speech competition will be held on Monday 16 September.

Entering teams

Please complete the entry form at by Friday 15 February. You will be sent an invoice for the fees later.

Before Friday 22 February you will be emailed a finalised calendar of events (draft copy only enclosed), letters from grade convenors for coaches (including their contact details), draws and topics, and a spreadsheet containing the contact details for every team in every grade, convenors at each school, and a list of adjudicators. This information will be sent electronically to the convenor of debating at each school. Draws and letters will also be sent electronically to every team coach. The topics for round one will be enclosed with the grade letters and posted on the website.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any enquiries.

Thank you for your interest and effort.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Wilson
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Intercollegiate Convenor 2013
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