

## **ANU DEBATING SOCIETY CONSTITUTION**

*Italicised sections are amendments passed by a majority of members at the OGM held on 17 March 2009.*

### *Section A:*

- A.1 The ANU Debating Society (“the Society”) is affiliated with the Clubs and Societies Committee of the ANU Students’ Association and with the Postgraduate and Research Students’ Association.*
- A.2 Anything in this Constitution which is inconsistent with the ANU Students’ Association Clubs and Societies Regulations or any amendment thereto or special rules thereunder shall be null and void to the extent of the inconsistency.*
- A.3 The assets and income of the Society shall be used only for the promotion of the Society’s objectives and no portion may be paid or transferred directly or indirectly to members of the Society except:*
- A.3.1 Bona-fide remuneration for services rendered by the members of the Society;*
  - A.3.2 Repayment of expenses incurred on behalf of the Society;*
  - A.3.3 Interest at a rate not exceeding the rate as would have been charged by the Society’s bankers for money lent to the Society;*
  - A.3.4 Bona-fide rent for premises let to the Society.*
  - A.3.5 This section shall not be interpreted so as to exclude the payment of subsidies to members for registration, transport and expenses in connection with intervarsity tournaments, training seminars or competitions.*
- A.4 The Society can be dissolved by decision of the current membership at a general meeting or when the Society ceases to operate due to no members being elected to the executive/trustee positions and the Society ceasing to function through natural attrition. In the case of the Society being dissolved, any excess assets, property, funds or money remaining after all debts and liabilities are paid shall not be given to members but shall be given or transferred to the ANU Students’ Association.*

### *Section B: Objectives*

*The Society aims to:*

- B1 Encourage interest and involvement in the activity of debating among ANU students;*
- B2 Encourage participation, enjoyment and success for the Society and its members at intervarsity debating and public speaking competitions.*

### **Section 1: The Committee**

**1.1: The Society shall be administered by a committee (“the Committee”).  
The committee shall constitute of at least ,**

- (i) President**
- (ii) Vice President (External Competitions)**
- (iii) Vice President (Internal Competitions)**
- (iv) Secretary**
- (v) Treasurer**
- (vi) Women's Officer**

(vii) 2 x first year representatives.

(b) The committee can also include any or all of the following:

- (i) Training Officer
- (ii) Sponsorship Officer
- (iii) 2 x Social Officer
- (iv) IT Officer
- (v) 2 x Publications/Promotions Officers
- (vi) Public-debates Officer
- (vii) Intervarsity debating Officer

(c) The committee may create new positions at its discretion, these must be ratified by an Ordinary General Meeting.

1.2. The Committee shall be responsible for,

- (i) Passing the budget
- (ii) Making policy decisions regarding, sponsorship, internal competitions, intervarsities, and social events.

1.3: The Executive shall consist of:

- (a) The President
- (b) The Vice President
- (c) The two internal competitions officers.
- (d) The Treasurer
- (e) The Secretary

1.4

- (a) The Committee, with the exception of first year representatives will be elected at the Annual General Meeting held in term 4 of semester 2.
- (b) 1st Year representatives will be elected by an Ordinary General Meeting.

1.5

The Quorum for Committee meetings in which removal/election of an officer, passing/alteration of budgets, or selection policies for IVs is on the agenda is half of the elected committee members including at least 2 trustees.

1.6

*A decision made by the Committee can be changed or set aside by the Society's members at an ordinary meeting, subject to 1.6.1*

*1.6.1 Members seeking to change or set aside a decision made by the Committee must submit a motion which relates to that decision*

*1.6.2 The motion shall be subject to debate, and shall then be voted on by members*

*1.6.3 The motion must receive a number of votes equivalent to two-thirds of the number of voting members present at the meeting*

*1.6.4 The Committee must change or set aside its decision in accordance with a successful motion, insofar as it is reasonable in the circumstances to do so.*

Section 2: Affirmative Action

- (a) At least one of the adjudicators on any grand final panel should

be female.

(b) 1/3 of the committee must be women.

(c) 1/3 of the Executive must be women.

(d) 1/3 of 1st year representatives must be women.

(e) At least 1 selector on each Intervarsity selection panel must be female.

(e) Decimals shall be rounded up ( eg on a committee of 16, 5 women =1/3)

(f) AA requirements may be waived in the case where

(i) A reasonable attempt has been made to fulfill AA requirements

(ii) A meeting between the executive and the women's officer unanimously concludes that the breach of AA is acceptable in the circumstances.

### Section 3: Annual General Meetings

3.1 The Annual General Meeting will be held in term 4 of semester 2.

3.2 Notice of an Annual General Meeting should be given to all members. Email is an acceptable form of notice. If possible, more than one week's notice should be given.

3.2: At the Annual General Meeting there will be:

(a) A President's report.

(b) A Treasurer's report.

(c) Elections for the following year's committee.

3.3 Quorum for the Annual General Meeting will be 22 people.

3.4. If Quorum is not reached the results of the AGM may be ratified by an ordinary General meeting of over 22 people.

3.5 An Annual General Meeting may amend the constitution through a 2/3 majority, provided there is quorum.

### Section 4: Elections

4.1: Nominations for elections must be made before the meeting is opened in writing to the Secretary or committee nominated member of the society a working day before the meeting. However, if no nominations are received before a meeting is open, multiple nominations may be taken from the floor.

4.1 (a) Notwithstanding section 4.1, If there is more than one nomination for a position before the AGM begins and an election for that position is required, the floor will be opened for further nominations for that position.

4.2:

(a) An individual wishing to be nominated, may nominate themselves and be seconded by a member of the society.

(b) Only a member of the society may be eligible to nominate for a position.

4.3 Eligibility to Vote:

Only ANU students who have been fully paid members of the society for at least 2 months may vote.

4.4: The meeting shall be chaired by the secretary of the society or any other person approved by the meeting.

4.5: A returning officer will be appointed by the meeting: The

returning officer may not vote.

4.6: In the case of a contested position, the candidates will toss a coin. The winner will speak first. Each candidate will speak for 5 minutes. While one candidate is speaking the other will be required to leave the room. The floor may ask each candidate three questions.

4.7: The vote will be conducted as a secret ballot, a preferential system of voting will be used.

4.8 The returning officer will only announce the winner of the election not the margins.

### Section 5: Ordinary General Meetings

5.1: An ordinary General meeting must be held in semester 1, and may be held at any other time with committee approval.

5.2 The agenda for an ordinary general meeting shall be approved by the committee before the meeting.

5.3 Notice of an Ordinary general meeting should be given to all members. Email is an acceptable form of notice.

5.4: Quorum for an Ordinary General Meeting is 22 people.

5.5: An ordinary General meeting may,

(a) Amend the constitution provided there is quorum and a 2/3rds majority.

(b) Ratify the election results from an Annual General meeting.

(c) Approve or reject any committee policy important enough to warrant consideration by all the society's members.

(d) An election of 1st year representatives, pursuant to the election procedures in Section 4. 1st year representative nominations may occur during the meeting.

5.6 At an ordinary General meeting there should be ,

(a) A President's report.

(b) A Treasurer's report.

### Section 6: Intervarsity Policies.

#### Easters

##### 6.1 Constitution of Teams for Easters

Each team selected for Easters will constitute an experienced debater and two novice debaters.

6.2: A novice is an individual who has never attended, Easters, Australs, or Worlds.

If there is a shortage of novices, the President, and IV officer may count individuals who have attended one Easters as novices provided:

(i) Committee approves this amendment to the procedure.

(ii) The alteration of the definition does not severely undermine the opportunities of genuine novices to participate at Easters.

(iii) The policy is applied consistently to all participants

### 6.3 Selection for Easters

(a) Easters teams will be selected in order of merit by a panel of three selectors. Those selectors may not include,

(i) The President of the Society

(b) Every attempt should be made to ensure the selectors are independent of the debating society and non-biased.

(c) *Notwithstanding section 6.3(a), the Committee may elect to employ fewer than three selectors if it believes that:*

(i) *The selector(s) are sufficiently independent of the debating society and non-biased*

(ii) *The selector(s) are sufficiently experienced*

(iii) *It would be unnecessary or overly burdensome to employ additional selectors*

(iv) *Reasonable attempts have been made to employ no fewer than three selectors*

*Notice that the Committee has elected to employ fewer than three selectors must be provided to the Society's members prior to selections being held.*

(c) The selectors' decisions may not be amended by the Committee.

(d) If at the end of selections novices have missed out on selection, experienced debaters will be forced to make way for those novices. The definition of experienced for the purpose of this section is:

A debater who has participated in 2 Easters, a Worlds, or an Australs.

Australs and Worlds

6.4: Teams will be selected in order of merit by a panel of three selectors. Those selectors may not include,

(i) The President of the Society.

6.5 Every attempt should be made to ensure the selectors are independent of the debating society and non-biased.

6.6 The selectors' decisions may not be amended by the Committee.

### Section 7: Internal Competitions

There will be two competitions in 1st semester, a Novice Competition, and an Open Internal competition. In second semester there will be a British Parliamentary Competition.

#### 1st Semester Competitions

##### Team composition rules

7.1: The Novice competition will be open only to novice and intermediate debaters.

7.2: The Open internal competition will be open to all participants, except only teams that meet the composition rules will be allowed to break. These rules are,

(i) No more than two experienced people may be on one team.

(ii) Every experienced debater must have at least one novice on their team.

(iii) That novice must be allowed to participate in the team.

## Adjudication requirements

### 7.3

- (a) In order to debate in the finals, all qualified adjudicators must have provided at least one adjudication or made themselves available to adjudicate in either competition.
- (b) Experienced debaters must have provided at least 3 adjudications to participate in the finals.
- (c) The rules in sections (a) and (b) may be waived or altered at the discretion of the Internal competition officers.

## 2nd Semester Competitions.

7.4: The committee reserves the right to charge a competition entry fee to non-student members in ACT Open.

## Definitions

### 7.5

- (a) An experienced debater is one who has:
  - (i) Broken at Australs, or
  - (ii) Broken at Worlds, or
  - (iii) Made the semifinals at Easters, or
  - (iv) Broken twice at Easters.

An individual will not become an experienced debater until the year following their achievements.

- (b) An Intermediate debater is one who has:
  - (i) Been debating at university level for at least two years, or
  - (ii) Attended an intervarsity, or
  - (iii) Been a member of state schools team.

(c) A novice is someone in their first or second year of university debating.

7.6: The committee may have the power to amend these definitions if they become onerous or inadequate. Any changes thus made must be ratified by an ordinary general meeting.

## Section 8: Membership of the Society.

Membership fees can be set and altered at the committee's discretion. The society reserves the right to charge non-ANU students higher entry fees than ANU students.

## Section 9: The Removal of Committee Officers

9.1 A committee member is removed from their position if:

- a) He/she fails to carry out their duties as required by this Constitution and the Committee votes to remove them as per 9.2; or
- b) He/she fails to attend three (3) committee meetings without apology in writing at least one hour prior to the meeting to the Secretary, unless exceptional circumstance(s) apply.

9.2a) An executive officer can only be removed by a two-thirds majority of an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting vote in favour of removal.

9.2b) An officer that is not part of the executive can only be removed by a two-thirds majority of a committee meeting OR a two-thirds majority of a General meeting or Special General Meeting in favour of the removal.

9.3a) If an executive officer is removed as per 9.1 or 9.2a, then:

1a) if the officer was the President, then the Vice President, or if this is impossible, the next in the executive succession, will serve as interim President; or

1b) if the officer was not the President, then the President shall appoint at his/her discretion the interim officer.

2) A call for nominations to replace the officer will be given and a Special General Meeting will be called no more than one week after the officer's removal.

9.3b) If an officer that is not part of the executive is removed as per 9.1 or 9.2b, then:

1) the President shall appoint at his/her discretion the interim officer; and

2) a call for nominations to replace the officer will be given and the Committee shall vote on a replacement no more than one week after the officer's removal.