

# **ARCHDALE DEBATING COMPETITION**

## **Operations Manual - Addendum**

For the 2022 IGSA Archdale competition  
Guidelines for Virtual Debates

Version 4  
As at 26 April 2022

## CONTEXT

In response to the situation that arose in 2020 with COVID-19, restrictions were placed on schools to limit excursions and cocurricular activity. This resulted in the 2020 Archdale debating competition being rescheduled to term 3 and running virtually and much of the 2021 season also operating virtually.

From this experience, we took away some key learnings; and as we slowly return to the F2F environment these guidelines exist for when we need to execute virtual debates.

## VIRTUAL DEBATES TO AVOID FORFEITS

If schools need to reschedule a debate and are struggling to find a mutually agreeable date and time, virtual debates can be considered, with approval from the Convenor and IGSA.

## VIRTUAL ADJUDICATORS

As agreed at the 2022 pre-season meeting, the adjudicators for the preliminary rounds of the competition will be primarily virtual, unless they choose to attend in person. In person adjudicators will be in place of the finals, government restrictions permitting.

The use of virtual adjudicators will be reassessed for the 2023 competition.

## PAPERWORK

Paperwork will remain virtual in 2022. Adjudicators will complete an online form for student feedback and results which will be sent to coordinators each week from IGSA.

## PRIOR TO THE COMPETITION COMMENCEMENT

Prior to the season commencing it is recommended that you check with your IT department as to whether there will be any issues accessing an externally provided Zoom link (firewall issues).

## TOPICS

Topics will be sent to the host school coordinator each week, unless the round is being held entirely virtually, in which case they will be sent to both school coordinators.

## PREP

Host school Coordinator will facilitate prep like normal for both teams for 45 minutes, after which time they will come together in one room for the debate. The host school should arrange for a laptop for the virtual adjudicator and have the room set-up so that the adjudicator can clearly see and hear the speakers. During these debates the adjudicator will also chair the debate.

I encourage schools to join the Zoom link and be 'waiting in the lobby' prior to the debate start time (while students are in prep) – this ensures that any issues are identified with time to rectify them.

## TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

It is recommended that you have spare laptops/iPads/tablets on hand to troubleshoot if necessary – often 'Staff' devices can bypass any issues, but students' devices are locked down.

After 15 minutes, should there continue to be technical difficulties, the team should dial into the Zoom meeting for Audio (not ideal, but better than forfeiting) i.e. they will be heard but not visually seen. If this option fails, revert to the process for when an adjudicator does not show (3.24(3) - Page 8).

## ADJUDICATOR CONDUCT

The Adjudicator will chair all virtual debates. Their camera should be on and they are expected to be taking notes, visually acknowledging speakers as if it were a F2F debate.

The Adjudicator must NOT be visibly conducting the call from their bedroom. IGSA suggests the use of a plain white Zoom Virtual background or other non-distracting virtual background.

## SPECTATORS

No parent spectators are permitted to join virtual debates via the link, each school can decide whether they allow parent spectators onsite during virtual debates to watch in the same room and this should be communicated by the host school to the visiting school the week prior.

## RISK MITIGATION

The 2022 risk warning has been updated, commenting on virtual debating. Please ensure that this is shared with the relevant stakeholders and on display at your school.

Each individual school should complete their own risk assessment of this activity.

## FAQs – Specific to virtual debates

### **The Zoom link provided is not working**

Coordinators are recommended to try the links while their teams are in prep. If you discover that a link is not working, call the adjudicator to troubleshoot, then the Convenor if the issue persists or you cannot make contact with the adjudicator.

### **The adjudicator is not there/hasn't started the debate**

Adjudicators will be asked to arrive onto the call 15 minutes beforehand. If you cannot see them, text/call them first, if no response, text/call the Convenor. If for some reason they do not end up arriving, the coach of the school listed first on the draw should adjudicate the debate.

### **The adjudicator has dropped out**

Call/text the adjudicator to try and work out the issue, they will likely just reconnect. If connection is lost during a speaker's speech, recommence the speech from the last point made. If the adjudicator cannot reconnect, the coach from the school listed first on the draw will adjudicate the debate.

### **We can't hear the other team**

In the first instance, use the chat function and/or hands up function to try and get the attention of the adjudicator. If that fails, coordinator to message/call the adjudicator. If that fails, dial into the Zoom meeting for audio and mention at what point you lost audio so the debate can continue from that point.

### **It's been 15 minutes and we can't still get the debate to work**

After following the steps previously mentioned, if after 15 minutes you are still experiencing difficulties, the teams should call into the Zoom meeting and just proceed as normal without the visual component of the debate.