

CONSTITUTION OF THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES DEBATING CHAMPIONSHIPS

As amended to April 2004

Preamble and Definitions

- (A) Student debating societies, unions and other debate organisations of the institutions of further education of Europe met at Erasmus University in Rotterdam on 8 to 11 April 1999, in a tournament in the style of debate similar to that adopted for the World Universities Debating Championships, to form a European Universities Debating Championships. It was envisaged that these championships should continue annually with the annual winning team being entitled to the title of European Universities Debating Champions.
- (B) To that end the first meeting of a European Universities Debating Council was duly convened from the elected delegates of the countries represented in order to regulate future Rounds of the European Universities Debating Championships. This Constitution is intended to establish the rules and mechanisms governing the conduct of the Council and the Championships as a whole.
- (C) In this Constitution the following words and expressions have the following meanings:

“the President”	means the president of the European Universities Debating Council as described under Articles 5, 6 and 10;
“the Championships”	means the European Universities Debating Championships as annually or from time to time held under the authority of this Constitution;
“the Committee”	means the European Universities Debating Committee as described and established under Articles 18 – 21;
“the Council”	means the European Universities Debating Council as established under Article 1;
“ESL”	means speaking English as a second (or non-native) language;
“institution”	means any university, college or other institution of further education awarding degrees or other qualifications as recognised by the laws of the country in which the aforesaid are situated;

“the Registrar”	means the Registrar of the European Universities Debating Council as described under Articles 5 and 8;
“Round”	means the debating tournament held annually or as otherwise from time to time as may be the case under the authority of this Constitution to decide the title of European Universities Debating Champion, and the Council meeting duly convened immediately after said tournament;

- (D) The headings to the Articles of this Constitution shall not affect its construction.
- (E) All references to the masculine shall, unless inconsistent with the context, be deemed to include the feminine and all references to the plural shall, unless inconsistent with the context, be deemed to include the singular.
- (F) the words “include”, “including” and “included” will be construed without limitation unless inconsistent with the context.
- (G) references to Articles and Schedules are to the clauses of and Schedules to this Constitution.
- (H) the Preamble, Definitions and Schedules form part of this Constitution and shall have the same effect as if in the body of this Constitution.
- (I) Any reference to a vote by the Council within this Constitution shall mean a vote of the eligible members present and voting providing at all times that the meeting is quorate.

Establishment of the Council

Article 1

The European Universities Debating Council is hereby established.

Article 2

There shall be a competition, which for the purposes of this constitution shall be named the European Universities Debating Championships. A round of the Championships shall be held once during each and every calendar Year. Without prejudice to the aforesaid, if a Round of the Championships shall fail, for whatever reason, to take place during any given calendar year, nothing in this Constitution shall be invalidated.

Article 3

(1) The purpose of the Championships shall be the promotion of debate, the free exchange of ideas and European and international contact and co-operation;

(2) It should be noted that nothing said by any debater during a debate round necessarily represents the debater's personal beliefs, or those of his nation.

Article 4

The functions of the Council shall be as follows:

(1) To promote university debating in Europe and communication between university debating societies in Europe.

(2) To appoint a host for each Round of the Championships;

(3) To decide on appropriate sanctions against a host organization in the event that it fails significantly to comply with the terms of the bid;

(4) To perform the functions conferred upon it by this Constitution.

Article 5

(1) The Council shall consist of the following members: the President, who shall have been elected in accordance with Article 6; the Vice Presidents for the Islands of the North Atlantic (IONA), Northern and Western Europe, Central and Eastern Europe and South-East Europe and the Middle East, with the composition of those regions being as listed in Appendix A and who shall have been elected in accordance with Article 6; delegates, who shall be appointed in accordance with Article 7; the Registrar, who shall take office in accordance with Article 8; the Convener of the last Round of the Championships or a representative of the host institution nominated by the Convener; and the Convener of the next Round of the Championships.

No person may hold more than one of the positions of President, Registrar and Convener of the next Round of the Championships at one time.

Article 6

(1) The Council shall elect the President and Vice-Presidents each year at the main meeting of Council and the appointments will be effective from the end of that Championship until the end of the next championships;

(2) Candidates for the office of Vice President must reside in a country in the region for which they would be responsible and only delegates representing countries in a region shall vote in the election of the Vice President for that region;

(3) The President and Vice Presidents may resign from office only by appointing a successor in writing;

(4) Where the office of President or a Vice President becomes vacant other than by reason of paragraph (3) above then the committee shall appoint a successor who shall hold office until the end of the first following meeting of the Council.

Article 7

(1) Every country represented by a team or adjudicator at a Round of the Championships shall be entitled to send a delegate to the meeting of the Council convened during that Round;

(2) Where there exists in relation to a country a debating body consisting of an executive elected by the debating organizations in that country, and relating to parliamentary debate as generally understood in common law Countries, the President of that body, or equivalent, shall be deemed to have been appointed as delegate for that country provided that he or a nominee in writing is present at the Round of the Championship during which the meeting is held;

(3) In any other case the representatives of the institutions originating from a country that are attending the Round in question shall by common or majority action appoint one of their number as the delegate for that country;

(4) Every delegate shall provide the Secretary with notice of his appointment, a home telephone number and address, an e-mail address and an alternative contact number and address if home details do not relate to permanent residence. This information shall be provided within 24 hours of appointment of the delegate or, in the case of an appointment not taking place during a Round of the Championship, within two weeks of appointment. The Secretary shall furnish a list of all the information provided under this paragraph to all delegates within two weeks of the end of the Round for which he is responsible; A delegate may resign from office only by appointing his successor in writing; A delegate shall hold office until his successor takes office; Delegates shall take office immediately upon appointment; Each delegate member of Council shall be entitled to cast one vote on every substantive motion placed before the Council; Every substantive motion placed before the Council shall be decided by majority vote; The President shall not have a vote on any substantive motion placed before the Council, save on the event that the number of votes cast for and against the motion are equal, in which case he shall exercise a casting vote; The Vice Presidents, Registrar and Conveners shall not have a vote on any substantive motion placed before the council. This section shall not prevent any member of the Committee who is also a delegate from casting his vote as a delegate; Where there is placed before the Council a substantive motion which proposes amendment to this Constitution, such a motion shall not be carried unless it gains support of at least two-thirds of the delegates;

Article 8

(1) The Registrar to the Council shall be appointed by the Council, and such appointment shall give due consideration to the necessity of preserving continuity in the membership of the Council;

(2) The Registrar may appoint a proxy to act on his behalf;

Article 9

Any member of the Council may appoint, in writing, by e-mail or by facsimile, a proxy to attend meetings, speak, vote, and otherwise act, on his behalf. Such appointment must be given to the Registrar 48 hours in advance of the Council meeting at which the proxy is to act and the Registrar must be satisfied as to the authenticity of the notice so provided, such satisfaction of authenticity not to be unreasonably withheld. If a proxy notice is given at less than 48 hours' notice before a Council meeting to the Registrar, then such notice must be approved by the Registrar who may be overruled by a simple majority of the Council.

Article 10

The duties of the President include:

- (1) Convening at least one meeting of the Council during each Round;
- (2) Convening such other meetings of the Council as are in his opinion necessary, provided that there be not less than one meeting per calendar year;
- (3) Giving notice to the other members of the Council of any meeting of the council. Such notice shall be given in writing at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting and shall include an agenda containing full details of any proposed amendments to this Constitution;
- (4) Regulating the proceedings of the Council, subject to this constitution;
- (5) Assisting the work of the Vice Presidents and coordinating their activities.

Article 11

The duties of the Vice Presidents include:

- (1) Encouraging participation in the Championships by institutions in their region;
- (2) Encouraging the organisation of debating events in their region;
- (3) Raising awareness among debaters across Europe of debating events in their region;
- (4) Raising awareness among debaters in their region of debating events across Europe;
- (5) Raising issues of importance to debaters in their region in the Committee.

Article 12

The quorum for meetings of the Council shall be half of the countries attending that Round of the Championships in which the meeting is held.

Article 13

(Deleted)

Bidding for future Rounds

Article 14

(1) On meeting during a Round of the Championship, the Council shall consider bids to host future Championships up to two years in advance. Successful bids shall be ratified at the meeting of the Council during the previous year's championships, if the conditions specified in a memo drawn up by the Council at the time of the bid have been satisfied. If the said conditions have not been satisfied, bids shall be reopened without prejudice to any bidder;

(2) All bids shall be submitted in writing and shall be signed by a proposer. Bids may be signed by one or more seconders. A bid shall state the institution(s) which will host the Championship, the name of the Convener, the dates of the round, the debating procedures to be followed and any relevant financial or other information.

Article 15

When a bid is accepted, the appropriate Round of the Championship shall be held in accordance with its terms, subject to Article 16.

Article 16

When the Council accepts a bid, the President shall indorse a copy of that bid with the resolution of the Council and such indorsed copy shall be evidence of the acceptance of the bid.

The Convener

Article 17

(1) The duties of the Convener shall include:

a) Ensuring that a Round of the Championship is organized during his term of office, which Round shall be a continuous period of not more than ten days;

b) providing notice of the Round for which he is responsible to all societies which attended the previous championships. Such notice shall be posted to the last known postal or electronic addresses of those societies at least four months before the Round.

c) setting and providing for the collection of fees for registration and accomodation provided that no increase in those fees shall be imposed after the first day on which full payments are accepted;

d) ensuring that a briefing is held for all adjudicators and debaters before the first Session of debate where the full tournament rules and forms shall be explained and clarified;

The Convener shall use his best endeavours to ensure that the Round of the Championship for which he is responsible is held within the context of the institution mentioned in the bid, but he may, with the consent of a simple majority members of the Council, alter the venue to another venue within the same metropolitan area.

(2)

a) The Convener may resign only by appointing his successor in writing.

b) Where the office of Convener becomes vacant other than by reason of paragraph (1) above, or the Convener fails totally in his duties under Article 17 (1) (ensuing the organization of a Round of the Championship), the Council, convened by registered mail sent to all members, may appoint a successor to the Convener and new venue.

The Committee

Article 18

There shall be established a European Universities Debating Committee. The committee shall:

- (1) establish and maintain European Universities Debating website;
- (2) Provide a central information resource through this website which shall include, inter alia, information on the upcoming Championships, rules of the Championships, minutes from meetings of the Council, training information, a list of available debating training resources, records of participation from universities and individuals at each Championship;
- (3) Provide a contact point through this website for participants and members of the general public;
- (4) Collect from the host university and hold records of the Championships, including attendees and results;
- (5) Make recommendations to the Council based on year long discussions with Committee members and anyone consulted by the Committee;
- (6) Investigate on behalf of the Council and report back at the next Round on any matter deemed appropriate by the Council;
- (7) Maintain and review the rules of the Championships;
- (8) Maintain and update copies of this Constitution as held under the provisions of Article 25;

- (9) Liase with potential sponsors and establish contact between them and the host institution;
- (10) Encourage university debating across Europe and facilitate communication among European debaters;
- (11) Provide a full report to the main meeting of Council regarding the completion of the Duties outlined above;

Article 19(1) The Committee shall consist of the following members of the council:

- a) the President;
- b) the Vice Presidents for IONA, Northern and Western Europe, Central and Eastern Europe and South-Eastern Europe and the Middle East;
- c) the Registrar;
- d) the Convener of the last Round of the Championships or his representative;
- e) the Convener of the next Round of the Championships;(2) the Committee shall have the power to co-op up to two others (who may be non-participants of the Championship) to be members of the Committee.

Article 20

Where any issue arises before the Committee and the President expects that it will be found controversial by the members of the Council, he must notify the members of the Council by post or otherwise of the issue, and shall make no firm decisions regarding that issue before the opinions of the Council have been assessed and, if necessary voted upon by the Council.

Article 21

It shall be the duty of the outgoing Convener to forward to the incoming Convener and to the Registrar a memorandum summarising his experience in the administration of the tournament which shall include:

- (1) Full accounts of income and expenditure of the Round;
- (2) A complete mailing list used by the Convener during the course of the Round;
- (3) A complete list of the teams which participated in the Round, which list shall include the names of competitors, their results and speaker scores in each debate before the elimination rounds and the last elimination round to which they progressed, if any;
- (4) A complete list of the adjudicators which participated in the Round, which list shall include the last elimination round to which they progressed, if any.

Eligibility of Teams and Competitors

Article 22

- (1) During the academic year of the competition, competitors shall represent the institution at which they pursue at least half of their courses toward a particular degree or qualification and must be recognised as bona fide students of that institution by the body regulating the award of such degrees or qualifications in the country of the institution that they represent or, in the absence of such body, by the government thereof.
- (2) Competitors shall be recognised by their institution's debating society or equivalent, or in the absence of such a body by the institution's administration.
- (3) Documented evidence of the participants student status should be received by the host nation prior to commencement of the Championships. Registration shall be considered incomplete until such evidence is received.
- (4) Competitors must be enrolled students and must be attending classes or pursuing research at doctoral or pre-doctoral level in the institution which they represent on the last day of term preceding the competition.

In the event of any controversy regarding the interpretation of this Article, the organisers of the Championship shall give particular consideration to **the recommendation of the president (or equivalent) of the competent national debating body (if applicable)**.

Article 23

Composite teams at may, at the organisers discretion, register in advance for the Championship. The organisers may only admit such composite teams comprising of students from the same country if that country has been unable to create a team formed from students of the same institution or if that country traditionally adopts the bona fide practice of creating teams of students from particular debate centres, cities or geographic regions for the purposes of national and international tournaments. "Composite team" shall be defined for the purpose of this Constitution as meaning any team consisting of two individuals not both attending the same institution.

Article 24

- (1) The eligibility of any country to participate in the Championships shall be limited to those countries listed in Schedule A and any other decided by a two-thirds majority of the Council.
- (2) Any new country admitted on such a vote shall be added to Schedule A under the category of countries as the Council may determine. The motion to admit a country to the Championships shall specify the region to which that country shall be deemed to belong.

(3) Any new country wishing to apply to participate in the Championships, may in the first instance be admitted to do so by the organisers of the next Round in consultation with the Committee. The decision of the organisers to admit such a country must subsequently be ratified by the Council at that round in order for the country to be added to Schedule A and participate in future Rounds of the Championships. In determining whether an applicant country should be permitted to compete in the Championships regard shall be had to:

(a) the geographical proximity of the country to Europe; and (b) the level of cultural, political, economic and debating links between the country and Europe; and

(c) whether the country is eligible to participate in another regional debating competition.

(4) The Championships shall include a tournament to decide upon the best team which is ESL. Teams wishing to participate in a Round of the Championships as ESL must pre-register as such. The eligibility of such teams shall be at the discretion of the organising committee of that Round of the Championships with a right of appeal to the Council. In deciding upon the eligibility of an ESL team the organising committee of the Round and the Council shall have regard to the following criteria:

(a) the language used at home by the team members;

(b) the languages used in teaching at the team's institution;

(c) the national language(s) of the team and its members; and

(d) whether any other linguistic barrier exists to the team members speaking English.

These criteria should be applied to both members of a team requesting ESL status. Criteria exist for guidance only and are intended to help answer the question as to whether the members of a particular team suffer any significant disadvantage in being required to debate in English rather than their first languages of choice.

General Provisions

Article 25

(1) The originals of this Constitution shall be lodged with the Centre for International Debate and Communication Training of the English Speaking Union of Dartmouth House, 37 Charles Street, London and copies shall be kept on websites maintained by the Committee. Such original and website copies shall be equal, final and conclusive evidence of the text of this Constitution.

(2) Within one month of the completion of each Round of the Championship, the outgoing President shall ensure that updated versions of the Constitution (if amended) are authenticated by the incoming President and forwarded to those institutions

specified in paragraph (1) above. Upon receipt of said versions, there shall constitute equal, final and conclusive evidence of the text of this Constitution.

Article 26

All previous Constitutions, rules, resolutions, conventions and customs relating to the Council are hereby repealed, revoked and abrogated.

Article 27

The laws governing this constitution shall be those of England and Wales. Any dispute arising under this Constitution shall be referred to the World Debating Council of the World Universities Debating Championships. In the event that the said Council refuses or fails to rule on the dispute, the dispute shall be referred to arbitration in the country in which the current round is held under the rules of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (London Branch) by single arbitrator to be appointed by the parties, or in default of such appointment, by the head of the London Branch of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators.

Article 28

This Constitution shall come into effect immediately upon its adoption.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF WE HAVE HEREUNTO SET OUR HANDS TO THIS
THE CONSTITUTION OF THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES DEBATING
CHAMPIONSHIPS THIS DAY OF APRIL 2000**

**Signed and delivered as a Deed
by the aforementioned delegates
of the EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES
DEBATING COUNCIL**

**in the presence of us both present
at the same time who in their
presence and in the presence of
eachother have hereunto subscribed
our names as witnesses**

WITNESS

WITNESS

Schedule A : Participating Countries as of the date of adoption of this Constitution

Albania	C&E	Kazakhstan	SE&ME
Andorra	N&W	Latvia	N&W
Austria	N&W	Lithuania	N&W
Belgium	N&W	Luxembourg	N&W
Belarus	C&E	Moldova	C&E
Bosnia Herzegovina	C&E	Monaco	N&W
Bulgaria	C&E	Montenegro	C&E
Croatia	C&E	Netherlands	N&W
Cyprus	SE&ME	Norway	N&W
Czech Republic	C&E	Poland	N&W
Denmark	N&W	Portugal	N&W
England & Wales	IONA	Republic of Ireland	IONA
Estonia	N&W	Romania	C&E
Finland	N&W	Russia	C&E
France	N&W	Scotland	IONA
FYR Macedonia	C&E	Slovakia	C&E
Georgia	SE&ME	Slovenia	C&E
Germany	N&W	Spain	N&W
Greece	SE&ME	Sweden	N&W
Hungary	C&E	Switzerland	N&W
Israel	SE&ME	Turkey	SE&ME
Italy	N&W	Serbia	C&E

Key to regions:

C&E Central and Eastern Europe

IONA	Islands Of the North Atlantic
N&W	Northern and Western Europe
SE&ME	South-Eastern Europe and the Middle East