



ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
discovering voices

ESU Schools' Mace 2018-19

FAQs

- **This is my school's first time taking part in the Schools' Mace! Do you have any resources available to help me get started?**

Yes. The ESU has a [Resources page](#) dedicated to helping you get your students interested in debating and taking part in the Schools' Mace. Everything is free to download and ready to use in your debating clubs and classrooms. [Visit the Resources page here.](#)

- **Which Key Stages are allowed to take part?**

The Schools' Mace is open to students in Key Stages 3 to 5. Many schools choose to enter an older team, but that decision is entirely up to your school.

- **Can I enter more than one team?**

A Schools' Mace team consists of two students and **only one team per school may enter**. It is possible to have a reserve or 'swing' team present on the day who are welcome to participate in floor debates. If another team is unable to attend, your swing team may then be invited to stand in to allow the competition to proceed. In these cases, the swing team will not be eligible to progress to the next stage, but will have the opportunity to receive feedback from our judges.

- **I've filled in the online registration form but I haven't received an invoice yet. When should I expect it to arrive?**

Invoices are raised by our finance team after registration closes at the beginning of October. If you do not receive your invoice by November, please alert accounts@esu.org.

- **My school will find it difficult to afford the registration fee. Does the ESU offer any financial assistance for the Schools' Mace?**

A limited number of fee waivers are available to state-maintained schools that would otherwise be unable to afford the registration fee. The registration form contains a 'fee waiver' option and outlines the criteria your school must meet in order to receive free entry. If you are unsure about this process or have any questions, please contact Debating Programmes Officer, [Bob Saull](#).

- **I've registered. What happens next?**

After registration closes on 1 October, you will receive an email stating who your host school is, which school your team will be debating against, what the motion (topic) will be and which position your team will take - Proposition (for the motion) or Opposition (against the motion).

- **What are this year's motions?**

Motions are carefully crafted separately for each round of the Schools' Mace. This is so that we can ensure they are of the best quality at every stage of the competition, taking into account feedback from each round. Round 1 motions will be announced soon after registration closes and a list of motions will be sent in the monthly Schools' Mace newsletter.

- **Can schools decide between themselves which positions they are taking in a debate?**

Proposition and Opposition are randomly allocated to schools by the ESU Competitions Team to ensure impartiality.

- **When will our Round 1 heat be?**

Each host school is responsible for organising the date and time of your heat. Soon after you are sent details of your host school, you will receive correspondence directly from them with a proposed list of dates. Your team should have at least two weeks to prepare.

Round 1 heats should be completed no later than **Monday 30 November**. This is so that the Competitions Team can collate all Round 1 results and circulate details for Round 2 before the Christmas holidays, giving your team as much time as possible to prepare.

- **My school has offered to host this year. What do I have to do as a host?**

Host schools are vital to helping run the Schools' Mace across the country, so we really appreciate schools that offer to host heats in all rounds of the competition. Please take a look at the Hosting Guide on the Schools' Mace webpage for more information on what is required by a host school.

- **If we host, can we be reimbursed for costs?**

Yes. If you wish to provide refreshments, schools hosting a Round 1 or 2 heat can claim up to £50 worth of expenses. Likewise, schools hosting a Regional Final can be reimbursed up to £250 worth of expense. Download the expenses form from the Schools' Mace webpage or contact Debating Programmes Officer [Bob Saul](#) for more details about reimbursement.

- **I've chosen our team but I have a whole class/debating club eager to be involved. Is there a way that they can all take part in the Schools' Mace?**

Although a Schools' Mace team consists of only two students, it's great if you can get a whole class or debating club involved in helping the team prepare. This allows your other students to take an active part in helping your team succeed in their debates. As a result, your team will be under less pressure than if they were to prepare by themselves, and will have explored many more sides to the motion.

Additionally, students can accompany their school's team to the heat and contribute to floor debates on the day, making the Schools' Mace a real team activity.

- **Is there a dress code?**

There is no dress code for any Schools' Mace debate. Students should wear whatever they feel comfortable in.