

Wellington Speaking Union

<http://wsu.wellington.net.nz>

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Debate Convenors
Secondary Schools
WELLINGTON/ PORIRUA/ KAPITI COAST/ HUTT VALLEY

Dear Debate Convenor

The Wellington Speaking Union invites you to participate in the intercollegiate debating competition for 2008. As per previous years, your school may enter one Senior Premier A team, one Senior Premier B team, one Junior Premier team, two Senior Certificate teams, two Junior Certificate teams and one additional certificate team, either senior or junior. An entry form is **enclosed**. Please return it by 22 February.

2007 Champions

Congratulations to the following schools who won grades last year:

- Premier A: Hutt Valley High School
- Premier B: St Mary's College
- Senior Certificate: Wellington College
- Junior Premier: Sacred Heart College
- Junior Certificate: Paraparaumu College

The grades

The Senior Premier A grade is designed for experienced debaters with well established skills. The Senior Premier B is appropriate for students with some debating experience and skill. 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.

How the grades will be run this year

2007 saw the introduction of a new system for the organisation of debates, with specified days

for each round of each grade to take place, eliminating the need for teams to arrange the dates for debates between themselves. This system generally worked well. This system will continue for 2008, with the exception of a slight change to the Premier B grade.

Once again, the *Senior Certificate*, *Junior Premier*, and *Junior Certificate* grades will 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 will need to arrange the time, venue, and adjudicator as per the previous system. 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.

The *Senior Premier B* grade will now operate exactly like the Premier A grade. Teams will gather at one school in the evening and all debates will happen contemporaneously. The change from 2007 is that the convenor (a member of the Victoria University Debating Society) will now arrange all the adjudicators for the Premier B evening, as the Premier A convenor does. Schools simply need to show up ready to debate. Premier B and Premier A will take place on alternating Tuesday nights throughout the year (see the attached calendar).

To summarise:

Grade	Day	Venue	Time	Adjudicator/ s
Junior Cert	Wednesday	Arranged between teams	Arranged between teams	Arranged between teams
Junior Prem	Wednesday	Arranged between teams	Arranged between teams	Arranged between teams
Snr Cert	Thursday	Arranged between teams	Arranged between teams	Arranged between teams
Snr Prem B	Tuesday	Set by convenor	7pm	Arranged by convenor
Snr Prem A	Tuesday	Set by convenor	7pm	Arranged by convenor

Entry fees

Entry fees have also risen for 2008. Premier A and B teams cost \$20.00 per team, per grade. All other teams cost \$15.00 per team per grade. Winning speakers (and runners-up) will receive individual trophies as in 2007. We are also hopeful of offering prize money to winning teams.

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. A training course for adjudicators and coaches will again take place in March. With university adjudicators now doing the adjudicating of the Premier A and B grades, and senior students for the junior certificate grade, teachers should be able to easily cover the Senior Certificate and Junior Premier grades.

The rounds

All teams debate in four rounds, most with two prepared debates, one impromptu debate and one limited preparation debate. After the first four rounds, successful teams debate in quarter, semi and final rounds. Grade convenors will notify successful teams. All debating will be complete by the end of term three.

Defaulting

A **default** is possible in emergency situations. The defaulting school must contact their opposition and grade convenor as early as possible. A letter should follow listing the reasons for the default. Defaulting seriously disrupts the debating schedule and may contribute to disappointment and disillusionment on the part of new debaters. Therefore, school convenors are asked to carefully consider their entries. A reliable coach and an additional "reserve" debater for each team generally help to keep teams in the competition. *The WSU will not hesitate to decline entries in the future from schools which regularly default.*

Impromptu and Stockley Cup competitions

Following feedback on the timing of these competitions, they will be held much earlier in the year. The Impromptu Cup competition will be held on Sunday 13 April. The Stockley Cup speech competition will be held on 16 June (preliminaries on 10 June if needed). See the attached calendar.

Entering teams

Please complete the entry form enclosed before the closing date of **Friday 22 February**. I will accept electronic entries to my email address. You can download the entry form from the WSU website: <http://wsu.wellington.net.nz>. You will be sent an invoice for the fees later.

On 28 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.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any enquiries. *Please note that the topics for round one are enclosed.*

Thank you for your interest and effort.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Bishop
Intercollegiate Convenor 2008