

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What does the English Debating Society do?

For the new additions to our soc, we'll be teaching you all the basics of Parliamentary Debates and training you for competitive debating. We also participate in debating tournaments and provide our society members with the opportunity and resources to do the same. All our members are also given a certificate after completing one year with us!

As a society, we also organise our own tournaments. Shama Kohli is our annual conventional debate, while Dialectics and Manzar are our annual parliamentary debates. This year, we also organised Inaayat PD, a fundraiser in collaboration with Gargi DebSoc.

Q. How much time do I need to set aside for the debating society?

If this is your first year in the society, you'll be expected to show up to daily practices or sessions from Monday to Saturday. Practices take over a couple of hours, and are held in the evening.

Post your first year with us, you'll be expected to pitch in and help train the freshers (for no more than two days a week, which you can pick).

Apart from that, you can also participate in tournaments. There is no hard and fast criteria for the number of tournaments you must do, it's entirely voluntary. We do appreciate enthusiastic and willing participation, though.

Q. Is there any participation fee for debating tournaments?

Most tournaments charge a registration fee for participation. This can be anywhere from ₹400-3,000/- per person on average, though some international tournaments tend to charge higher fees. Online tournaments are generally a lot more affordable than offline tournaments. Note that you will never be forced to participate and pay a fee if you are not comfortable with it.

Some tournaments do not charge a registration fee (like our own tournament, Dialectics) and you are free to participate in those, however we must inform you that they only form a minority of the total tournaments.

The option to ask for a subsidy or a fee waiver also exists, and depends on the organisers of the tournament.

Q. Who can audition for the English Debating Society of Miranda House?

All current students of Miranda House, irrespective of year of study, are more than welcome to audition. As long as you are willing to dedicate the time and efforts, we will be more than happy to accept your application.

You can apply for auditions till the 5th of December, 2022. If, by any chance, your admission was delayed, and you joined post the deadline, we will accommodate you in a catch-up round of auditions.

Q. What other societies can I join along with debsoc?

You are free to join whatever societies you would be interested in. However, do note that some societies have the same kind of expectations with regards to time commitments that we do. It might get logistically impossible to balance such societies (eg. NCC, NSS, dramsoc etc) with debsoc because our daily schedules often overlap. So, only join those societies which you are confident you can handle without compromise. We are not in a position to accommodate the training schedules of another society.

Q. What does the audition process look like?

The audition process has two rounds. Both will take place online. Those who qualify the first round will move to the second round, and those who clear the second round will be selected for the society. The details of the rounds are -

1. The first round will consist of a turncoat debate.

2. The second round will consist of debate related questions and a personal interview.

In the turncoat debate, you will be provided with a motion (i.e. a topic). You will then have 4 minutes to prepare your stance both for and against the motion (i.e. 4 mins in total for both stances). You will then have to speak for 2 minutes for the motion, followed by 2 minutes against the motion (i.e. total speaking time is 4 minutes). 4 minutes of prep + 2 minutes for the motion + 2 minutes against the motion = 8 minutes in total.

Q. What will we be judged on?

Participants will be judged on their matter (i.e. quality of arguments), manner and method. We are looking to test your general logical and reasoning skills. Fluency and extensive vocabulary are not metrics for judgement. We will mainly be looking at your ideas. The adjudication (i.e judgement and assessment) will happen on the grounds of the sort of engagement on the topic that you show, the content as well as the logical links that you are able to draw.

Switching on your camera would be encouraged but not required. Using the internet is prohibited.

Q. What kind of motions will we be asked to debate in the auditions?

The motions will be plainly worded and simple to grasp. If any of them require clarifications, you will be given the chance to ask them. They can be political or moral or gender related or educational. Motions are varied. Some terminology you may need to know for the motions is -

TH - refers to This House

THW - refers to This House Would

THBT - refers to This House Believes That

THP - refers to This House Prefers

THR - refers to This House Regrets

THO - refers to This House Opposes

THS - refers to This House Supports

TH (as 'x') - refers to This House which is set, i.e. you have to argue from the perspective of 'x'

You need not have in-depth knowledge of these terms, the motions for auditions will be relatively simple and easy to understand.

Q. Do I need to have prior experience in debating before joining?

No, no prior experience is required! We will take care of training and teaching you everything. All you need to have is a willingness to learn, sense of commitment and a passion for debating.

Q. What are parliamentary debates?

Most debate competitions in our school followed the format of a conventional debate (i.e. a speaker for the motion and a speaker against the motion, could be accompanied by cross-questioning). Parliamentary debates are slightly different. For one thing, the motion is given to you 15-25 minutes before the debate starts. You will also be in teams with designated speaker roles. There will be a panel to judge each room, and a justification of the verdict is given by the judge/judges (note that the panel will mark you on your debate, and you will mark the panel on their justification).

There are primarily two types of parliamentary debates that we do - Asian Parliamentary Debate and British Parliamentary Debate. We will teach you everything about them, but should you wish to, you can refer to the links provided and read up on them. This is in no way mandatory.

<https://cimsa.fk.ugm.ac.id/medebate/asian-parliamentary-debate/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Parliamentary_Style

Thank you for going through our FAQs! If you still have any questions that we could not resolve in this list, please get in touch with -

→ Medhavini Singh (PR Head) - 7469977777

→ Chaahat Arora (General Secretary) - 8800392171