

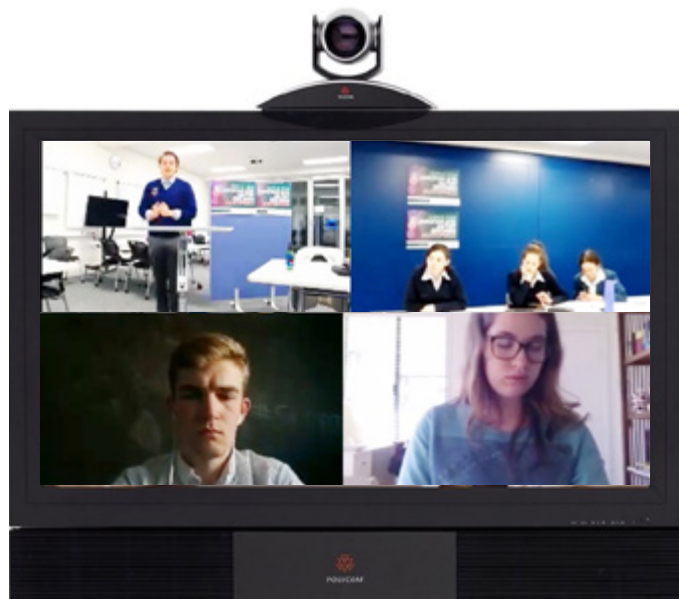
2017 National Virtual Debating Competition

Expressions of Interest from Independent Schools

Imagine your students taking part in a formal debating competition against student teams from across the country with every clash being a home debate. Virtual debating lets you do this.

A successful trial in 2015 proved that virtual debating using Video Conferencing (VC) technology was conceptually and technically viable. In 2016, 60 teams from 35 independent schools competed in the first National Virtual Debating Competition for students in four divisions (Years 5 and 6, Years 7 and 8, Years 9 and 10, and Open). Staff, students and administrators continue to be enthusiastic in their feedback. Students clearly enjoy these interactions while gaining the benefits that formal debating offers.

Expressions of interest for an even bigger and better competition in 2017 are now open.



Adjudicators observe as the final speaker for St Peters College (Adelaide) puts his team's case in the Open Final against Canberra Girls Grammar. Congratulations to St Peters as the 2016 NGS National Virtual Debating Open champions.

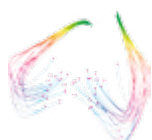
Benefits of virtual debating:

- top level competition for debating students without needing to travel
- exposure to competitors that students would not encounter in normal circumstances
- prizes and certificates for all students reaching quarter finals and beyond
- possible recognition at a national level for schools
- top-level adjudication enabled by virtual technology
- minimal level of school-based organisation
- access by either desktop computers or encoder devices opens up initiative to all
- easy virtual access for school community spectators during debates
- recordings of all debates for training and school community communication.

The anatomy of an online debate

- 1) Debating Coordinators are given the draw and negotiate a suitable day and time for their clash.
- 2) A live link is made available to spectators, teams and adjudicators.
- 3) On the day of the debate, the teams gather in front of the video conferencing device and join the allotted ZOOM conference.
- 4) The host announces the topic and flips a coin to assign sides.
- 5) Teams have an hour to prepare their arguments. They mute their audio but leave their cameras running with both teams in clear view.
- 6) After an hour, a qualified adjudicator from a national pool connects to the conference, calls the teams to order, recaps debate rules and launches the debate.
- 7) Teams alternate through their speakers in normal fashion. At all stages both teams and the adjudicator are in view but the speaker view dominates the screen.
- 8) When the speakers have finished, and after a short period of deliberation, the adjudicator delivers his/her adjudication.
- 9) Each debate is recorded and made available as a "streamed" resource to schools.

The 2017 National Virtual Debating Competition is an initiative of



Further Information

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Structure of 2017 competition

Depending on the response the competition will either have 32 teams or 16 teams in each of four divisions: Years 5 and 6, Years 7 and 8, Years 9 and 10, and Open.

Different rules govern each division. There will be an emphasis on formative activity in lower year levels with extended preparation time and teacher involvement. Older divisions will experience a more demanding competitive regime.

Debates are planned to start early in 2017 and with the Open competition completed by the end of Semester 1, allowing senior students to focus on their final assessments. For full details please see the 2017 Guide <http://tinyurl.com/guide2017>

Adjudicators

Thanks to virtual technologies adjudicators will come from all corners of the country. State and national debating societies have been approached to nominate adjudicators. This will ensure access to a pool of experienced debating practitioners who provide excellent judgement and formative direction to the students involved.

Eligibility and expression of interest

Teams from all Australian independent schools are invited to enter if they meet the technical and bandwidth requirements.

Entry fees will apply. Fees have not yet been confirmed, however they will be very reasonable. Fees will be collected in early 2017 and go directly towards paying for adjudication.

The best technical capability will come from the use of a dedicated standards based video conference encoder (SIP/H323 codec) setup.

Schools without such devices can participate using a desktop computer, if they have a suitable level of peripherals (i.e. microphones, web cam, speakers and projection/screens) and sufficient bandwidth.

The organisers reserve the right to reject a school's application to the initiative if inferior technical capability could risk the quality of experience for other stakeholders.

Please see "Equipment Requirements" in the "Eligibility to Program" section of the guide (<http://tinyurl.com/guide2017>)

Visit our Equipment Offers page for lower cost offers (<http://www.ttedsc.edu.au/partners/Pages/Equipment-Offers.aspx>) to see current offers.

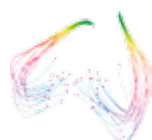
When schools register their interest they will be asked to provide the following:

- a primary contact person email and mobile. Later you will be able to supply the details of separate coordinators for different divisions.
- which divisions. Each school may nominate one team per division.
- technical capability
 - school's internet speed
 - video conference encoder (codec) connection or desktop access

If your school has desktop access do you have an echo cancelling microphone and web cam? If not, are you committed to purchasing this.

Express your school's interest in the 2017 program here: <http://tinyurl.com/EOI2017>

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