



ROYAL SOUTH STREET SOCIETY
BALLARAT EISTEDDFOD



ACU Debating Challenge Cup 2026

Schedule, Rules and Conditions of Entry

Monday 03 August to Tuesday 25 August

Heats: Monday 03 to Friday 07 August

Semi Finals: Tuesday 18 August

Final: Tuesday 25 August (PM)

VENUE:

Australian Catholic University (ACU)
Connors Hall
1200 Mair Street, Ballarat

Further Information Contact

Events Coordinator

Office: 53321054

Email: admin@royalsouthstreet.com.au

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Section Chair

Loretta Kaval

Sub Committee

Rebecca Grime, Deborah Marshall, Mary-Rose McLaren, Laura Benney,
Kelly Healy, Tamara Vandenburg

Adjudicators

Years 5 and 6 – TBC

Years 7 and 8 – TBC

Years 9 and 10 – TBC

Years 11 and 12 – TBC

ABOUT DEBATING

Debates, Essays, Elocution, Readings, Lectures and Recitations formed an integral part of the South Street Young Men's General Debating Society when it was first established on 10 July 1879. The Society met every Friday night to indulge their passion for debating, literary and musical items and these quickly became a central focus for South Street's first Eisteddfod, which took place in 1891. Fred Barrow won the first debate, 'The Best Means of Coping with the Liquor Traffic'. Through the 1920's and 30's, topics tended to feature the political and social issues of the day.

Given the popularity of debating and impromptu speeches – with several of our future Prime Ministers including Alfred Deakin and James Scullin, the Society's most vibrant supporters – it was surprising to see debating deleted from the 1940 competitions. It made a triumphant return in 1977.

From then debating continued to grow and was further strengthened with the introduction of a Primary School Section in 2002. The Australian Catholic University commenced its association with the Debating Section in 2015, creating the ACU Debating Challenge Cup. The association was continued in 2018 when the arrangement was renewed for a further 3 years. That year also saw the event hosted at ACU Connors Hall, which is a truly magnificent venue. Hosting the event at Connors Hall also gives both primary and secondary students the opportunity to visit the ACU Ballarat Campus.

WHAT IS INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE?

Inclusive language is a way of acknowledging and respecting the diversity of bodies, genders and relationships.

All schools in Victoria are teaching Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR). A major focus of this program is eliminating gender-based language and developing positive gender relationships.

AWARDS

Entry Fee per team ~ \$50

*\$200 prize money will be awarded to the winner of each year level.
Sponsored by Ballarat Lions Club and Central Highlands Water.*

All year levels – 5/6, 7/8, 9/10, 11/12

Team:

Winning team:

The Debating Challenge Cup & Replica Cup, \$200 prize money & Certificate & Medal

Runner-up team:

Certificate & Medal

Individual:

Winning team members:

Certificate & Medal

Runner up team members

Certificate & Medal

Best Debater from section heats:

Certificate, Medal and

Prize money Year 5/6 - \$40 – Ballarat Zonta Club
 Year 7/8 - \$50 – TBC
 Year 9/10 - \$60 – TBC
 Year 11/12 - \$70 - Ballarat Zonta Club

Runner-up Best Debater in section heats:

Certificate & Medal

Rules and Conditions of Entry

1. GENERAL

- 1.1 Schools will be invited to enter a team or teams in one or as appropriate in more than one of the following levels. Time limits are as follows:
 - Section 001 Years 5 & 6
 - Time Limit ~ 2 minutes per speaker
 - Section 002 Years 7 & 8
 - Time Limit ~ 3 minutes per speaker
 - Section 003 Years 9 & 10
 - Time Limit ~ 4 minutes per speaker
 - Section 004 Years 11 & 12
 - Time Limit ~ 5 minutes per speaker
- 1.2 Schools are responsible for the supervision and welfare of their competitors.
- 1.3 Teams in each section will consist of four speakers, three primaries plus a nominated substitute to be available in case one of the primaries is unable to compete.
- 1.4 Names of all speakers must be submitted at least 2 weeks before the competition start date.
- 1.5 Please list all speakers in order from 1 to 3 and also a reserve.
- 1.6 In the event that two speakers are unavailable in a team that qualifies for the semi-final, that team can call on their nominated substitute speaker and one other unregistered speaker (subject to point 1.3) to compete in the semi-final if necessary. If the team has not registered a substitute speaker, it will not be permitted to use two unregistered replacement speakers and will have to forfeit.
- 1.7 A student can be a speaker in only one debating team.
- 1.8 EACH SCHOOL IS ADVISED TO CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE NUMBER OF TEAMS IT ENTERS AND MUST ENSURE THAT TEAMS ARE READY TO COMPETE WHEN SCHEDULED. THIS IS MOST IMPORTANT AS IF A TEAM MUST WITHDRAW AFTER THE DRAW IS FINALISED IT WILL MEAN THAT THE OPPOSING TEAM CAN TAKE NOT PART IN THE COMPETITION.
- 1.9 The competition requires an equal number of teams in each section. Where the number of entries received by the closing date is not even, the Debating Committee will make every effort to find an additional team to adjust the imbalance before making the decision not to accept the entry of an individual team to balance numbers.
- 1.10 Our discipline is adopting the Government's Gender Equity policy.
- 1.11 The adoption of gender equity in language is vital to the co-existence of the sexes. 'By developing a respect for one another and de-sexualizing everyday language, it is highly possible that equality can be achieved in all aspects of society. By pushing away gender stereotypes and generalizations, the human behind the gender is revealed.
- 1.12 Schools will be provided with a timetable and their debating topic/s at least one month prior to the start of the competition. Each team must register the names and speaking order of the debaters at the registration desk at least 15 minutes prior to the starting time for its debate.
- 1.13 The format of the debates will follow the generally accepted procedures in the Australian – Asian Debating Guide.

- 1.14 An MC will control the debate. The MC will welcome and introduce each team, the adjudicator and timers plus announce the topic.
- 1.15 The timer will sound a warning bell one minute (30 seconds for year 5/6 debates) before the end of the speaker's allotted time and a second bell to indicate the end of the speaker's allotted time.
- 1.16 At the end of each debate the adjudicator will give a verbal critique and announce the result of the debate
- 1.17 Teams will be provided with an adjudicator's written critique and a breakdown of the results for each debate following the heats and the semi- finals.
- 1.18 THE FOUR (4) WINNING TEAMS WITH THE HIGHEST SCORES WILL PROGRESS TO THE SEMI-FINALS, with the winners of each semi-final competing for the Challenge Cup for that section. In the event that there are not enough entrants to hold a semi-final, the 2 winning teams with the highest points will progress straight to the Grand Final.
- 1.19 Perpetual trophies will be held by the winning teams for 11 months. It is an expectation that perpetual trophies must be returned to the Royal South Street Office once notified to do so. Holders of the perpetual trophies will be responsible for their safekeeping, and return. Trophies must be returned in same condition they were received along with being engraved with the school name.

2. ENTRIES

- 2.1 No entry will be accepted unless processed online with full payment.
- 2.2 Schools, clubs etc. may submit a purchase order on MyStage. Your entry reference will be your invoice number. This must be paid within 21 days of receiving the invoice and well before the start of the competition.
- 2.3 Fees are non-refundable once entries close. Applications for special consideration may be considered by the Discipline Committee, and the decision of the Committee will be final.
- 2.4 The lodging of an entry is taken as agreement to abide by the special conditions as detailed above
- 2.5 An entry confirmation will be generated for the competitor, and it will be the competitors' responsibility to confirm all details of the entry are correct.
- 2.6 Entries open **1 March** and close **30 April**..
- 2.7 Should alterations be required, a request via email must be forwarded to admin@royalsouthstreet.com.au
- 2.8 RSSS is not responsible for entries lost through incorrect or failed electronic submission. Check junk mail if confirmation is not received.

3. ENTRY FEES

- 3.1 Entries are accepted **online only** with full payment.
- 3.2 Fees are listed in the Schedule and are **non-refundable** once entries close ([refer Refunds, Withdrawals & Late Entry Policy](#)).
- 3.3 Schools or organisations may request an invoice with a purchase order (payable within **21 days**).
- 3.4 The Board may refuse entries in accordance with the **Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities**.

4. ENTRY DECLARATIONS & DISCLAIMERS

Copyright

- 3.1 Entrants confirm ownership or licensed use of all music and materials and compliance with RSSS copyright requirements. Non-compliance may result in disqualification. Please click on link for [RSSS copyright agreement](#).

Risk

- 3.2 Entrants participate at their own risk. RSSS public liability insurance does not comprehensively cover performer injury..

Photography, Videography & Image Use

- 3.3 RSSS may record performances for promotional, marketing and reporting purpose.
- 3.4 Photography/videography is **prohibited** in dressing rooms and the auditorium
- 3.5 Schools/groups must notify RSSS in advance if consent is withdrawn, in line with the Child Safe Policy
- 3.6 Should the entrant have any personal or legal reasons which would preclude them from this, Royal South Street Society should be notified upon entry, or throughout the competition season. Consent can be withdrawn via this form; [Withdraw My Consent](#)
- 3.7 Royal South Street Society may publicise the name, profile and photograph of an entrant in eisteddfod publications and results, via electronic, social and printed media at its discretion.

Privacy

- 3.8 Personal information is used for RSSS administration and may be shared with trusted organisations only where beneficial to the entrant and after consultation

Conditions

- 3.9 By entering, entrants/guardians agree to these Rules. Breaches may result in disqualification or future ineligibility.
- 3.10 Decisions of the Board or discipline chair are final.

Medication

- 3.11 Entrants requiring medication must carry it and have a responsible person available to administer it if required.

5. ADJUDICATORS

- 4.1 The board or staff may appoint substitute or additional adjudicators
- 4.2 Adjudicators decisions are final
- 4.3 Direct communication with adjudicators is prohibited except through Discipline chairs or delegates.

6. PRIZES

- 6.1 Medals, Certificates for Best Debaters and Prize Money will be presented onstage at the Grand Final.
- 6.2 Certificates may be purchased through the office or via this link [Order My Certificate](#).

7. ENTRANTS OBLIGATIONS

- 7.1 Proof of Age must be provided on request
- 7.2 Dress and performances must be age-appropriate and reflect community standards.
- 7.3 Entrants are encouraged to remain for the full section.
- 7.4 Withdrawals should be advised to admin@royalsouthstreet.com.au .

8. CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

- 8.1 RSSS complies with its Child Safe Policy (effective July 2023). Full details can be found on our [Child Safe Policy](#).

OUR SPONSORS



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