

Debating Rules

Debating can take place in many of our democratic processes, such as in Student Parliament, General Meetings and our elections among others. This section will show how to start a debate, run them well and get the most of them.

1 Debates should be run as follows:

- 1.1 Only one Motion shall be discussed at any one time. .
- 1.2 Every Motion shall have a proposer and a seconder. The proposer shall speak on the Motion first. After the Proposer has finished the motion shall then be open for discussion and may be withdrawn only with the consent of the meeting. Any amendments to the Motion will be raised after the proposer has spoken.
- 1.3 If there are amendments the first set of changes to a Motion shall be proposed immediately after the motion has been proposed.
- 1.4 The Chair shall invite the proposer of the changes to take a speech for the proposed amendments and then offer the original proposer of the motion to either accept the changes or take a speech against the changes.
- 1.5 Should the original proposer of the motion accept the change then the debate moves on with the alterations to the motion added and recorded.
- 1.6 In the event of the original proposer rejecting the changes and opting to take a speech against then the Chair shall balance the number of speeches for and against the amendments. The Chair shall then invite questions, before the vote is taken.
- 1.7 The proposer of the changes shall have the right to sum up before a vote is taken on them.
- 1.8 The current proposer of the motion shall have the right to sum up immediately before the vote is taken.
- 1.9 There shall be no new information or points of information during the summing up speech.
- 1.10 In the event of any changes being carried which were not accepted by the proposer of the original motion, the changed motion shall be taken on by the proposer of the changes, who will become the proposer of the motion.
- 1.11 When all changes have been voted upon, the motion shall be discussed and voted upon.

1.11 Motions shall be decided by a simple majority, except where otherwise specified in the Constitution.

2 Emergency Motions

2.1 Emergency Motions may be moved if and only if they deal with matters which have arisen since the date for submission of motions has closed, and if a two-thirds majority vote for the discussion of this motion. The motion should be submitted in writing to the Chair before the start of the meeting.

2.2 Points of Order and Points of Information

2.3 A Point of Order is a matter raised during consideration of a motion and may be raised at any time, except during a vote unless it relates to the way the vote is being conducted. A point of order can include:

- A request for a count to ensure that there are enough people at the meeting to reach quorum.
- A request for a ruling from the Chair on the conduct of the meeting
- A request for a Constitutional interpretation
- A request that a person who is not a full member of the Union shall be allowed to speak

2.4 Points of order, which take precedence over any other business, may be raised by any member.

2.5 A Point of Information may be raised at any time, except during a vote. A Point of Information is a known and published fact which might support information presented by the current speaker on the debate. Before this extra information is made known, the current speaker must be given the choice of whether to accept it or not.

2.6 Points of information may be raised by any member providing that the speaker occupying the floor signifies their intention to give way.

3 Procedural Motions

3.1 A motion on how the meeting proceeds can be proposed by any member of the meeting at any time apart from during a vote.

3.2 If a member wishes to submit a procedural motion it can be submitted to the chair at any time during the meeting except during the time of a vote.

3.3 Procedural motions can include and cover such issues as:

- Having no confidence in the chair
- Having another round of speeches
- Moving straight to a vote
- Adjourning the meeting
- Having a secret ballot
- Request for a recount on a vote
- Referring the issue under discussion to another body e.g. the Union Executive Committee
- To not vote on the issue under discussion

3.4 After the procedural motion has been proposed there will be a speech against. If there are no further speeches for and against there will be a vote. The procedural motion will be passed if it succeeds in getting a simple majority of those voting.