



**AUSTRALIAN  
LAW STUDENTS'  
ASSOCIATION**

# **PAPER PRESENTATION CHAMPIONSHIP RULES**

ALSA CONFERENCE

## 1. COMPETITORS

- 1.1 Each law school in Australia whose Law Student Society is affiliated with ALSA may nominate one competitor to compete in the championship.
- 1.2 Any international law school may at ALSA's invitation nominate a competitor to compete in the championship.
- 1.3 The nominated competitor is the sole competitor for that law school in the championship.
- 1.4 Team members must not have completed a law degree or equivalent qualification for legal practice in any jurisdiction.
- 1.5 Competitors shall register by the date set by the Conference Convenor and ALSA President. By 5pm of the date of registration, competitors must provide the Championship co-ordinator with:
  - 1.5.1 Three bound copies of their paper;
  - 1.5.2 A copy of their paper in electronic form, either on a disk, on a CD or by email, in Microsoft Word format (.doc), Rich Text Format (.rtf) or Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf);
  - 1.5.3 Certification (on the form provided) that the length of the paper is between 3000 and 5000 words; and
  - 1.5.4 Each competitor may submit only one paper.

## 2. CHAMPIONSHIP STRUCTURE

- 2.1 The championship consists of a preliminary round and a grand final.
- 2.2 Preliminary Round Procedures
  - 2.2.1 Competitors are divided into two groups for the preliminary rounds, in a randomly allocated order.
  - 2.2.2 Each competitor is allocated a mark out of 40 for their written paper.
  - 2.2.3 One judge assesses all written papers. That judge must not be a member of any oral judging panel for the preliminary rounds.
  - 2.2.4 All competitors within a group are judged by the same judging panel.
  - 2.2.5 The judging panel awards each competitor a mark out of 60.
  - 2.2.6 Judges also rank competitors within each group. No two competitors may be ranked equally.
- 2.3 Progression to the Final
  - 2.3.1 Four competitors will progress to the final.

2.3.2 The two competitors with the highest total score in each group will progress to the final.

2.3.3 In the event of a tie, the competitors will be separated in accordance to the following criteria:

2.3.3.1 The score will be broken down into the oral and written component of the score. The competitor with the highest score for the oral component will progress to the final.

2.3.3.2 If scores remain even, the rank of the competitor from the preliminary round will be taken into account. The competitor ranked higher will progress to the final.

#### 2.4 Finals Procedures

2.4.1 The final round of presentations is judged by a new panel.

2.4.2 This panel judges a second oral presentation, individually giving each competitor a mark out of 60. An average oral presentation mark is calculated for each competitor. That mark is then combined with the written paper mark.

2.4.3 The winner of the Paper Presentation Championship is deemed to be the competitor with the highest combined oral and written mark in the final.

2.5 The winner is announced at the Closing Dinner.

### **3. JUDGING**

3.1 Judges shall not be told which University competitors are from until after they have judged that particular group of competitors.

#### 3.2 Number of judges

3.2.1 Each preliminary round group and the finalist group present their papers to a panel of three judges.

3.2.2 Judges will be judges, magistrates, legal practitioners, legal academics, or others with a demonstrated experience in paper presentation competitions.

### **4. PENALTIES**

4.1 The following penalties apply:

4.1.1 Late registration or late submission of paper: a reduction of 2% of total marks for each day late will be enforced in each round of competition.

4.1.2 Exceeding maximum word limit: Papers are penalised 2 marks (of 40) per 100 words or part thereof over the maximum word limit (5000 words).

4.1.3 Failure to meet minimum word limit: Papers are penalized 2 marks (of 40) per 100 words or part thereof under the minimum word limit (3000 words).

4.2 Judges do not have the discretion to dispense with these penalties.

4.3 Judges shall not be notified of the application of any of these penalties at any time.

## **5. DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

5.1 Appeals will be dealt with accordingly as prescribed in the Appeal Procedure bylaw.

## **6. PAPER SPECIFICATIONS**

6.1 The subject for the paper (and oral presentation) is to be selected by the participant.

6.2 The maximum word limit is 5000 words.

6.3 The minimum word limit is 3000 words.

6.4 The word counts do not include basic footnotes, bibliography, titles and subtitles.

6.5 Explanatory footnotes may be used but must be counted in the word count.

6.6 The paper should conform to the championship's designated Style Guide, the *Australian Guide to Legal Citation* (available online at <http://mulr.law.unimelb.edu.au/>).

## **7. ORAL PRESENTATIONS**

7.1 The maximum time for the presentation is 15 minutes.

7.2 During the presentation there shall be no interruptions or questions.

7.3 Following the presentation, the judges may ask questions concerning the oral presentation. Questions from spectators will not be permitted.

7.4 Ten (10) minutes of question time is allocated for each presentation.

7.5 The competitor's paper must form the substantive basis for the presentation.

7.6 A warning will be given at the following intervals:

7.6.1 10 minutes after commencing;

7.6.2 13 minutes after commencing;

7.6.3 15 minutes after commencing.

7.7 The competitor must not seek external assistance in the preparation of their oral presentation.

- 7.8 The following equipment is available for use by the competitor in the presentation:
  - 7.8.1 a lectern;
  - 7.8.2 an overhead projector;
  - 7.8.3 a whiteboard;
  - 7.8.4 a microphone;
  - 7.8.5 computer equipment for power-point presentations.
- 7.9 The equipment, at a time set at the discretion of the ALSA Conference Convenor, is to be available to the competitor prior to the competition for the purpose of familiarisation.
- 7.10 No other equipment will be permissible unless a special request is made in writing to, and is approved by, the ALSA Conference Convenor.
- 7.11 The competitor is responsible for arranging his/her preferred set up for the equipment and will be given an opportunity to do so before being introduced by the Paper Presentation Championship co-ordinator.
- 7.12 For the purpose of this championship, competitors may assume that the audience will be composed of "legally literate people with a non-expert interest in the paper".

**APPENDIX ONE: EXAMPLE ASSESSMENT SHEET (WRITTEN PAPER)**  
*Paper Presentation Championship*

Competitor: \_\_\_\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

**Final Score:** \_\_\_\_\_ / 40

| Content       | Overall score range: <i>descriptive criteria (please tick as appropriate)</i>  |   |  | Comments<br><i>(additional space over page)</i>  |
|---------------|--|---|--|--|
|               | 20-25  | 26-30   | 31-35  |  |
| Written Paper | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> poor choice of topic; subject is commonplace, too narrow or too broad</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> lacks clear identification and definition of issues</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> argument lacks clear structure or direction</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> inadequate or inappropriate use of headings, sections or footnotes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> basis of argument is flawed, misunderstood or misconceived</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> analysis is pedestrian</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> treatment is sometimes unbalanced or analysis is incoherent or inconsistent</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> inadequate research</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> poor management of primary and secondary sources</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> expression is poor or inappropriate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> style guide is ignored</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> bibliography or referencing inadequate</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> topic is interesting or important but not original</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> fails to identify all relevant aspects of topic</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> structure of argument lacks clarity or directness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> some inadequate or inappropriate use of headings, sections or footnotes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> approach lacks coherent conceptual or analytical framework</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> analysis is largely derivative or irrelevant</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> further research necessary to substantiate analysis or conclusion</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> fails to identify significant sources</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> excessive reliance on secondary sources</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> expression is at times ambiguous or unclear; some grammatical errors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> style guide is not consistently observed</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> challenging or difficult subject, of interest or importance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> identifies and addresses all relevant aspects of topic</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> clear definition of issues; analysis identifies an appropriate conceptual and theoretical framework</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> logical structure and development of ideas, leading to an appropriate and reasoned conclusion</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> argument is well-developed throughout</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> discussion includes some independent, original and insightful treatment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> research is extensive, detailed and comprehensive</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> identifies and engages with significant sources; some evaluative comment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> sound expression and presentation throughout</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> style guide is observed throughout</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> challenging or difficult subject, of interest or importance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> clear definition and logical structure of ideas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> analysis defines and engages with a sound conceptual, analytical and theoretical framework</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> argument is focussed and well-developed throughout</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> independent, original and insightful treatment of all aspects of topic</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> identifies and engages with all relevant aspects of topic and includes appropriate comparative references and insight</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> critical evaluation of primary and secondary sources</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> argument is reasoned, persuasive and supported by appropriate evidence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> expression, style and presentation are excellent</li> </ul> |

**APPENDIX ONE: EXAMPLE ASSESSMENT SHEET (WRITTEN PAPER)**  
*Paper Presentation Championship*

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**Additional space for judge's comments:**

**APPENDIX ONE: EXAMPLE ASSESSMENT SHEET (ORAL PRESENTATION)**  
*Paper Presentation Championship*

Competitor: \_\_\_\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

**Final Score:** \_\_\_\_\_ / 60

| Content      | Overall score range: <i>descriptive criteria (please tick as appropriate)</i>   |   |  | Comments and Score<br>(additional space over page)  |
|--------------|---|---|--|---|
|              | 30-37   | 38-45   | 46-52  |   |
| Presentation | <input type="checkbox"/> lacks appropriate courtesy or approach<br><input type="checkbox"/> lacks confidence<br><input type="checkbox"/> lacks structure, direction, organisation or logical flow<br><input type="checkbox"/> too lengthy or too brief<br><input type="checkbox"/> poor eye-contact<br><input type="checkbox"/> excessive reliance on written notes<br><input type="checkbox"/> expression unclear, ambiguous or confusing<br><input type="checkbox"/> improper use of, or inadequate attention to, tone, pace and volume<br><input type="checkbox"/> distracting mannerisms<br><input type="checkbox"/> fails to convey interest or enthusiasm<br><input type="checkbox"/> conveys impression that uninformed or insincere | <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate style<br><input type="checkbox"/> generally confident<br><input type="checkbox"/> structure and direction not sufficiently clear<br><input type="checkbox"/> too lengthy or too brief in some sections; poor time management<br><input type="checkbox"/> occasionally relies on written notes<br><input type="checkbox"/> expression at times unclear or confusing<br><input type="checkbox"/> does not articulate ideas clearly or concisely<br><input type="checkbox"/> lacks variation in tone, pace, volume, expression<br><input type="checkbox"/> inappropriate use of, or over-reliance on, visual aids<br><input type="checkbox"/> lacks audience awareness; fails to convey impression of fluency | <input type="checkbox"/> clear, concise and confident expression<br><input type="checkbox"/> clear, logical structure<br><input type="checkbox"/> expression and communication of ideas is clear and concise<br><input type="checkbox"/> good management of time and written notes<br><input type="checkbox"/> good variation of tone, pace and volume<br><input type="checkbox"/> good use of visual aids<br><input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of stance, expression, gesture and humour<br><input type="checkbox"/> aware of, and readily engages with, audience<br><input type="checkbox"/> conveys enthusiasm and stimulates interest<br><input type="checkbox"/> conveys impression that at ease with subject matter | <input type="checkbox"/> expression is elegant, concise, clear, confident and articulate<br><input type="checkbox"/> conveys a clear structure and organisation; logical flow and progression<br><input type="checkbox"/> communicates ideas naturally and easily<br><input type="checkbox"/> excellent variation in tone, pace and volume<br><input type="checkbox"/> effective and intelligent use of visual aids<br><input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of stance, expression, gesture and humour<br><input type="checkbox"/> engages with audience through excellent manner and style of presentation<br><input type="checkbox"/> conveys sincerity and enthusiasm and stimulates interest |
| Substance    | <input type="checkbox"/> lacks familiarity with subject matter<br><input type="checkbox"/> argument fails to identify all relevant legal issues, is incoherent or inconsistent<br><input type="checkbox"/> fails adequately to respond to questions   | <input type="checkbox"/> familiar with all aspects of subject matter<br><input type="checkbox"/> fails to address all relevant legal issues<br><input type="checkbox"/> lacks originality<br><input type="checkbox"/> answers to question lack clarity or directness  | <input type="checkbox"/> good command of all aspects of subject matter<br><input type="checkbox"/> good understanding of legal and policy aspects of subject matter<br><input type="checkbox"/> deals well with questions  | <input type="checkbox"/> mastery of subject matter<br><input type="checkbox"/> insightful appreciation of legal and policy aspects and detailed understanding of issues and scholarship<br><input type="checkbox"/> direct and focussed response to questions   |

**APPENDIX ONE: EXAMPLE ASSESSMENT SHEET (ORAL PRESENTATION)**  
*Paper Presentation Championship*

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Competitor: \_\_\_\_\_

Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

**Final Score:** \_\_\_\_\_ / 60

**Additional space for judge's comments:**