



Equity Policy

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1. Preface

1.1. Purpose

The Mexico World University Debating Championships (WUDC 2018) is committed to providing a tournament free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and vilification, and which fosters equity, inclusion and respect for social and cultural diversity.

This policy explains what conduct is prohibited and outlines the procedures for raising complaints when participants feel that their equity has been breached.

1.2. Background and Principles

Each year, WUDC brings together an incredibly diverse group of participants to speak on a range of issues that can be sensitive and contentious. It has long been recognized that intervarsity debate should be about the respectful exchange of ideas, in a forum where all participants are able to feel welcome and are treated with dignity. No participant should be made to feel unwelcome or disrespected by another's words or actions, and equity policies such as this exist to clearly articulate what behaviours will not be tolerated, to prevent potential equity violations from arising and to resolve complaints if they do arise.

Understanding that we want debate to be both a competitive and a learning environment, and that debate frequently throws together disparate opinions, we also think equity should be more than just an exclusively punitive. We encourage the development of equity as a positive tool for education in cases where remarks or actions were inappropriate but not intended to be malicious, instead arising from a lack of familiarity with certain backgrounds, issues or vocabulary. No debater can be perfectly knowledgeable about all the issues they may have to discuss in rounds, and in the event that such rounds are frustrating or disappointing, we want to help debaters feel comfortable debating similar rounds in the future.

Equity is also a tool for participants to anonymously or non-anonymously discuss the proper and respectful way to speak about certain actors, issues, or events outside the charged environment of competition. We are willing to mediate discussions about issues that arise during the tournament, and encourage individuals to bring incidents to our attention even if they do not wish for an apology from or the removal of the offending party.

This policy is a crystallization of those principles, and it seeks to protect all participants of WUDC 2018 from conduct that would make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe, to encourage and facilitate discussion and education, and ultimately to make debate a more inclusive space for all.

1.3. Constitutional Guidance

The establishment, responsibilities and powers of the Equity Team are outlined in ss 58 – 62 of the WUDC Constitution.

1.4. Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct for WUDC 2018 is the document that all participants have signed and that the Equity Team will be upholding. A copy of the code can be found [here](#).

2. Scope

2.1. Participants

This policy applies to all participants at WUDC 2018, including but not limited to:

- Debaters
- Adjudicators
- Members of the Organizing Committee
- Coaches
- Observers

2.2. Temporal and Geographic Application

This policy applies for the entire duration of the tournament, which includes, but is not limited to:

- During debates
- Time between debates, including meals organized as part of the tournament
- During any formal event organized as part of the tournament
- During any social event organized as part of the tournament
- On transportation organized as part of the tournament
- In accommodation organized as part of the tournament

This policy applies both to in person conduct and conduct over social media.

3. Prohibition of Discriminatory Conduct

3.1. 3.1. Definitions of Prohibited Behaviour

Bullying

Bullying is the repeated, unreasonable behaviour by an individual or group, directed towards another individual or group, either physical or psychological in nature, that intimidates, offends, degrades humiliates, undermines or threatens. This includes pressuring another individual or group to do something that they are uncomfortable with.

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination is treating another individual or group less favourably on the basis of a protected attribute than someone without that attribute in the same circumstances or circumstances not materially different.

Harassment

Harassment is any unwelcome, offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening behaviour that humiliates, offends or intimidates an individual or group on the basis of a protected attribute.

Note that sexual harassment has a specific meaning as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favours or any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that humiliates, offends or intimidates a person and which a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would anticipate making the person humiliated, offended or intimidated.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination is imposing, or proposing to impose, a requirement, condition or practice that has, or is likely to have the effect of disadvantaging an individual or group with a particular protected attribute, and which is not reasonable in the circumstances.

Victimisation

Victimisation is to cause detriment to a person because that person has made a complaint or taken part in complaints proceedings.

Vilification

Vilification is the public incitement of hatred, contempt or severe ridicule of another individual or group on the basis of a protected attributes.

3.2. Protected Attributes

It is important to note that different individuals experience different barriers to successfully engaging with competitive debating. The protected attributes listed below may not seem familiar or sensible to all individuals. However, it is precisely because of a potential lack of familiarity with or potential disagreements about certain protected attributes that we ask all participants to be open-minded when listening to others, and respectful when discussing protected attributes.

This policy prohibits any participant or group of participants from discriminating (either directly or indirectly), harassing or vilifying another participant or group of participants on the basis of the following protected attributes:

- Age or age group
- Debating ability
- Disability (including but not limited to past, present and future disabilities, genetic predispositions to a disability and behaviour that is a manifestation of a disability)
- Gender Identity (the gender-related identity, appearance or mannerisms or other gender related characteristics of a person, including but not limited to the way people express or present their gender and recognising that a person's gender identity may be an identity other than male or female)

- Infectious disease (for example, HIV status)
- Intersex Status
- Marital or relationship status
- Sexual practices or experience (for example, previous partner(s) or lack thereof, experiences of sexual assault or harassment)
- Political affiliations, beliefs, or ideologies
- Pregnancy or personal experiences of abortion
- Race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, or ethno-religious background
- Religious affiliation, belief, views or practice
- Sex
- Sexual orientation (including but not limited to asexuality, bisexuality, heterosexuality, and homosexuality)
- Socio-economic status and background

This policy also protects against discrimination, harassment or vilification on the basis of imputed or perceived protected attributes, and on the basis of association with a person or persons with a protected attribute.

The victimization of those who initiate complaints or take part in complaints proceedings is also prohibited under this policy.

4. Sexual Interactions and Positive Consent

4.1. Positive Consent and Participant Responsibility

When engaging in any sort of sexual or romantic interaction with another person(s), it is vital to do so while respecting the other party's equity, dignity and humanity.

Participants are required to seek positive consent when engaging in any conduct of a sexual or potentially sexual nature, including but not limited to flirting, making sexual jokes, suggestive bodily contact (e.g. dancing), physical intimacy or sexual intercourse. Unwanted touching or advances are always an equity violation, no matter the intent of the perpetrator.

To acquire positive consent, participants must actively affirm that other parties in any sexual or romantic interaction are freely and voluntarily agreeing to what is occurring. All parties should enquire as to what other people are feeling (e.g. "are you ok with this?" "Are we going too fast?" "Do you like this?"). If you cannot determine the consent of the parties involved, you should end the sexual or romantic interaction.

You have not obtained positive consent if:

- The other party has explicitly said no
- The other party is engaging in sexual contact reluctantly or under duress
- The other party is unable to understand what they are doing due to the influence of alcohol or other drugs
- You are using social status or a position of authority to pressure the other party into entering into or continuing a sexual interaction

4.2. Participant Conduct at Social Events

Participants must conform to the standards set out in this policy even outside of debate rounds. This includes excursions, social and formal events, and events in accommodation organized by the tournament.

The excessive consumption of alcohol will not be regarded as a mitigating factor for individuals accused of violating any part of this policy or the Code of Conduct. Moreover, pressurizing others to drink is unacceptable behaviour as well.

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5. Conduct and Matters Regarding Debates

5.1. General Conduct

Debaters are required to treat each other and the adjudicators with respect. This includes:

- Respecting the rules of the competition
- Refraining from disrupting or distracting other debaters or adjudicators,
- Accepting the decision of the adjudicator(s)

Adjudicators are also required to treat debaters and other adjudicators with respect by:

- Respecting the rules of the competition
- Refraining from disrupting or distracting other debaters or adjudicators,
- Refraining from insulting or non-constructive commentary on speeches or speakers

5.2. Language Guidelines

To ensure that WUDC 2018 can be as inclusive as possible, every participant should be sensitive and considerate in how they interact with others, which includes using appropriate language while discussing sensitive topics.

We recognize that making this inclusiveness a reality entails not just good will, but a fair amount of learning as well. While we definitely encourage participants to work towards this end and to learn on their own and from each other, we hope that participants will reference the guidelines below as a starting point.

In addition, adjudicators may comment on the use of language in a round in between speeches in the same way that they might comment to enforce order. For instance, sometimes participants may use problematic language within the context of a round. The chair might say something to the effect of "that didn't affect the rankings in this round, but the phrasing you used is very historically loaded. I don't think you realized this, but in future please avoid that phrasing."

Generalizations

- Avoid generalizations on the basis of protected attributes when referring to groups of people. Generalizations discount the possibility and existence of exceptions, and may be offensive to both judges and other speakers. Statements should be phrased as "some members of X community" rather than "all X people".
- Recognize that many conditions are externally imposed. For example, instead of saying "X people are bad at long-term planning," say "X makes long-term planning difficult for some individuals."
- Put people's humanity first. There is a subtle but important difference between the phrase "X person" and the phrase "person who is X." The former presents the protected attribute as a defining characteristic, while the latter leads with a recognition of personhood
- Members of a certain group might make jokes about their own "attributes". It is important to note that it is inappropriate for members of other communities to make these jokes, and to remember as well the above comments about generalization when speaking about this more seriously.
- As a general principle, phrase everything as if you are talking about someone in the room. If you feel what you say might offend them, then rephrase it. If what you seek to say is indeed true, this should be possible. If you cannot make it inoffensive, then simply drop it.

Graphic Language

Using vivid or graphic language to illustrate the impact or truth of your argument is a common and effective rhetorical tool in debating. However, we urge participants to be considerate in their choice of language, especially since aggressive rhetoric may be triggering for other participants.

We especially urge speakers to think about language use when motions involve bodily integrity, minority cultures, class, war and gender issues. Unnecessarily graphic descriptions of traumatic events run the risk

of violating this policy, and should be avoided.

Personal Attacks

Stating that a person doesn't have the appropriate background to have a valid argument in the debate (i.e. "what do you know about policy X, you're from Y!") is almost always of no argumentative value. That is also the case for personal attacks (i.e. "people like you shouldn't even be saying things like X because you're a Y").

Such arguments do not address the content of an argument, nor do they address its logical structure. Both these types of argumentation can upset a person, since you are referring to their background as if it is relevant for their chances of winning or losing the argument.

Reclaimed Language

Some LGBTQIA people may have reclaimed previously derogatory words, such as "fag," or "dyke." This does not make the use of these words by members of other communities appropriate.

This is because these words can still be loaded with cultural baggage in ways members of other communities might not understand, which can be very hurtful to someone still struggling with that reality. Similarly, some offensive racial terms such as "nigger" have been reclaimed by some from communities which these terms oppress. These words are still inappropriate for use by others.

Slurs

A slur is a term designed to insult others on the basis of race, ethnicity, or nationality. In the spirit of encouraging participation at a multinational and multicultural tournament such as WUDC, the use of the slurs, epithets, derogatory and insulting terms are not allowed. Moreover, the use of slang is context specific and all participants are advised to be careful in using them.

5.3. Gender Neutral Language and Gender Pronoun Policy

WUDC 2018 will have pronoun introductions at the beginning of each round. This is because participants have diverse gender identities that should be respected. No one should ever assume a person's gender identity or their correct pronouns based on appearance.

The chair will begin by introducing themselves to the entire room with their gender pronoun, and will then give a chance to any wing judges present to do the same. Debaters, in filling out the team ballot, will have the opportunity to state their preferred gender pronouns. If a speaker does not wish to identify a pronoun, they are not required to do so. The process should be explicit and deliberate, and is the responsibility of the chair, though wings and speakers are urged to initiate the procedure if the chair forgets. All participants should listen intently during introductions with a mind towards the necessary amount of nuance that can potentially present itself. For example, where some transgender or gender fluid people might identify with "ze," others may identify with "they" and vice versa. Some may have no strong preference for any pronoun. Only after each judge and speaker has been given the opportunity to introduce themselves with their pronouns will the chair be ready to call the first speaker to give their address.

When speaking, it is also an option for people to structure their sentences in a way that avoids referring to someone through gender pronoun at all. This can be useful, for example, where a speaker has forgotten someone's correct pronoun and wishes not to offend by making a mistake. Phrases such as "when the previous speaker mentioned X", "when the prime minister presented their model" and "Honourable Chair" instead of "Madam or Mister Speaker" can be used. When asking points of information, a speaker may choose to say "Point", "Point of Information" or "Prime Minister/other speaker position".

Speakers should also recognize that language has evolved in a gendered manner, and is not fully inclusive of gender identities other than male or female. It is more inclusive to make an effort to not use "he" as a default pronoun, and to instead use "they". We also recommend that all participants use non-gendered language when interacting outside of rounds with people whose preferred gender pronouns they do not know, instead of assuming their gender pronoun based on their appearance.

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Should you accidentally misgender someone, immediately apologise, and move on with your speech or conversation. Intentionally misgendering as well as deliberately mocking the importance of using respectful language to address each other will be seen as an act of degrading a person's or a group's identity, thereby violating the Code of Conduct.

6. Reasonable Accommodations for Participants with Disabilities

WUDC 2018 is committed to ensuring, as far as is reasonably practicable, that all participants can fully take part in the tournament.

As such, accommodations may need to be made for participants with a disability, such as allocation of debating rooms close to the briefing hall, or use of assistive technology.

If a participant with a disability requires such an accommodation, they should contact the Equity Team as soon as possible. The Equity Team will make an assessment and provide recommendations to the Adjudication Core and the Organising Committee, who will make any accommodations deemed necessary.

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7. Complaints Procedures and Handling

7.1. Raising an Equity Complaint

If a participant feels that there has been a breach of this policy, then they may raise the matter with a member of the Equity Team. All complaints raised are treated as confidential, and the complainant will determine whether or not a complaint is investigated further.

Complaints may be made informally or formally. An informal complaint is one that raises concerns, but does not require formal responses such as mediation or disciplinary action. These may be made in person or in writing. A formal complaint is where the complainant would like a formal response such as mediation or disciplinary action. Formal complaints must be made in writing, and can be submitted to one of the provided equity boxes, or by email to equity@wudc2018.mx.

Complaints may also be made anonymously. The Equity Team feels that all people should feel comfortable to raise concerns they may have as freely and easily as possible. However, for due process reasons, the Equity Team cannot investigate anonymous complaints or provide remedies for anonymous complaints.

In the event where participants wish to file an immediate complaint to the Equity Team in person, the writing and formal submission of the complaint may be delayed due to time constraint between rounds and/or trauma faced by the individual. The Equity Team will begin investigations during this process. However, mediation or disciplinary action will only take place after a written complaint has been formally submitted for reasons of accountability.

Participants are also encouraged to raise general equity related concerns, even if they do not feel an incident has occurred. Both anonymous complaints and general concerns enhance the Equity Team's overall understanding of relevant issues occurring at the tournament, which will further assist in the prevention of future equity violations.

Members of the Equity Team will recuse themselves from investigating and handling complaints that are made against them personally, or where a conflict of interest arises (e.g. one of the parties belongs to an institution they are affiliated with, they have a close personal relationship with one of the parties).

The Equity Team recognizes that some contingents appoint institutional equity officers. Contingent leaders and contingent equity officers may also refer matters reported to them to the Equity Team (with the consent of the person who made the report). However, it is important to note that institutional processes cannot replace this policy or the procedures outlined here.

Participants may also refer to the Quick Reference included in the Participant's Guide for a summary of this section.

7.2. Progressing with an Equity Complaint

If the complainant does wish to progress with a complaint, the Equity Team shall:

- Speak with the complainant to obtain full details of the incident
- Speak with the offending participant to hear their side of the story
- Speak with any other participants as required by the circumstances

Following this investigation, the Equity Team will determine whether or not a breach of this policy has occurred. Two members of the Equity Team as a minimum shall undertake investigations, although additional members may also be involved, as required.

At any point during this process prior to resolution, a complainant may withdraw their complaint. At such a point, any investigation automatically ceases, and the initial complaint is treated as null and void.

Finally, the excessive consumption of alcohol will not be regarded as a mitigating factor for individuals accused of violating any part of this policy or the Code of Conduct.

7.3. Resolution Mechanisms and Penalties

If, following the investigation of the Equity Team, a breach of this policy is found to have occurred, the Equity Team may do any/all of the following, based on the wishes of the complainant:

- Explain the complaint to the offending participant and have a discussion with them about why their remark or action was inappropriate
- Issue a warning to the offending participant
- Request that the offending participant provide an apology
- Bring the relevant participants together to mediate the dispute
- In the event of a conflict between a debater or team and a judge at the tournament, a conflict may be filed with the Tab Team to prevent the two parties from meeting in future rounds or tournaments
- In serious cases, the Equity Team may also recommend that the Organizing Committee take formal disciplinary action. Such action may include:
 - reporting conduct to law enforcement or an Institution or an Institution's University;
 - removing a participant from the Edition of the Championships;
 - recommending to Council that a participant be prohibited from participating in future Editions of the Championships, or be removed from a position of authority under this Constitution; and
 - any other such orders as allowed by the Code of Conduct.
- Where formal disciplinary action is taken, the offending party and the complainant will be provided with written notification.

7.4. Appeals

Any participant subject to disciplinary action may appeal the decision to the Appeal's committee through the mechanisms provided in the Code of Conduct. They must do so within 12 hours of receiving the Equity Committee's decision. The appeal must be made in writing and handed in to the Appeals Committee in person. It may not be sent to the Equity Committee email account.

The Appeals Committee will convene as quickly as possible to hear an appeal. It will either uphold, amend, or overturn the Equity Committee's decision. Decisions of the Appeals Committee are final.

The Appeals Committee will be comprised of the Convener of Mexico WUDC 2018, any one member of the Adjudication Team, and the Worlds Council Equity Officer. In the event that any member of the Appeals Committee declares themselves to have a conflict of interest, or is unable to attend the hearing, the Equity Officers will nominate someone to sit in their place.

- The Convener may be replaced by another senior member of the Organising Committee;
- The representative of the Adjudication Team may be replaced by any other member of that team; and
- The Worlds Council Equity Officer may be replaced by the Worlds Council Chair, Secretary, Registrar, or Women's Officer.

7.5. Resources for Reporting Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment

In some cases, participants may prefer to file a police report rather than filing a complaint with the equity team. If this is the case, the equity team will provide whatever support the participant requests. For these cases, the equity team will also work with the legal council for the organizing committee of Mexico WUDC 2018.

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8. Contact Details

Equity Email: equity@wudc2018.mx

8.1. Equity Team



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9. Acknowledgements

The Equity Team would like to acknowledge the following documents that were used to inform the creation of this policy: the Solbridge Australs 2015 Equity Commission, the Vienna EUDC 2015 Briefing, the Thessaloniki WUDC 2018 Equity Policy, the Thailand UADC 2016 Equity Policy, the Jakarta ABP 2016 Equity Policy and the Dutch WUDC 2017 Equity Policy.