**TITLE I – GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**Article 1 – Legal Debate**

1. The ELSA Legal Debate (hereinafter "ELD") is promoted by ELSA (The European Law Students' Association) [National Group] (hereinafter the "Organising Committee"), an independent, educational, non-political, and non-religious non-profit association that promotes impartial and independent cooperation in the field of legal culture.
2. The ELSA Legal Debate is a team-based debate on a specific topic of general interest, guided by a Moderator. This project aims to enhance the critical thinking of all students and young graduates, improving their communication skills and analytical abilities.

**Article 2 – Regulations and Amendments**

1. For the organisation of the Competition, the Board of Directors of ELSA [National Group] may appoint a dedicated Organising Committee, which is then responsible for Organising the ELSA Legal Debate. If no dedicated Organising Committee is appointed, it shall be composed of all members of the Board of Directors of ELSA [National Group].
2. These Regulations (hereinafter "Regulations") apply to every stage of the ELD and must be followed by the Organising Committee, the Academic Board, the Judging Panel, the Moderator, and the participants.
3. If necessary, the Vice President for Competitions of ELSA [National Group] (hereinafter Vice President for Competitions) has the right to introduce additional rules to these Regulations, even after the launch of the Competition, providing adequate notice.
4. Any modifications to the Regulations will be communicated to registered participants via the email address provided in the ELD registration form.

**TITLE II – PARTICIPANTS AND STRUCTURE OF THE COMPETITION**

**Article 3 – Bodies**

1. The Organising Committee is responsible for:  
    a) Planning and executing the event;  
    b) Regulating participant enrollment;  
    c) Selecting the ELD topic, the arguments related to the topic, and managing their communication;  
    d) Selecting a Moderator and adequately preparing them on the details of the ELD topic.
2. The role of the Moderator may also be filled by someone who is not a professional in the field, including a member of the Organising Committee, as no specific expertise in the subject of the Competition is required.
3. The Academic Board is responsible for drafting the arguments related to the ELD topic.
4. The Judging Panel consists of a minimum of three members.
5. The Judging Panel expresses its judgment based on a thorough evaluation, assigning scores to participants pursuant to Article 11 of these Regulations.
6. It is incompatible to be both a participant in the Competition and a member of the Judging Panel and/or the Academic Board.
7. Members of the Academic Board and the Judging Panel may coincide.
8. The Organising Committee appoints the President of the Judging Panel.
9. The Organising Committee is responsible for ensuring the successful conduct of the ELD, as well as maintaining its high scientific level.

**Article 4 – Stages of the Competition**

1. The ELD consists of two stages: the preliminary stage and the final stage.
2. In the preliminary stage, participants debate on assigned topics. The winners advance to the final stage.
3. The final stage consists of a semifinal and a final. The criteria for selecting the teams advancing to this stage are established pursuant to Article 12.

**TITLE III – PARTICIPATION**

**Article 5 – Registration**

1. Participation is open to students and graduates who obtained their degree no more than one year prior, provided they are members of ELSA [National Group] at the time of registration.
2. The membership status must be maintained by participants throughout the entire duration of the Competition.
3. Registration must be completed through the designated Google Form, published on the Organising Committee’s social media channels and sent via mailing list to members, within the deadline set by the Organising Committee.
4. Members of the Organising Committee are excluded from participating in the Competition.

**Article 6 – Training and Opening Conference**

1. The Organising Committee may organise an Opening Conference, to which all registered participants are invited.
2. The Organising Committee may arrange a series of training sessions.
3. The Organising Committee will issue a certificate of participation to each participant.
4. To receive the certificate for the training sessions, participants must attend at least 75% of the scheduled meetings.

**TITLE IV – COMPETITION PROCEDURE**

**Article 7 – Team Composition**

1. Teams must strictly consist of two participants.
2. Prospective participants may register as a team or individually. In the latter case, individually registered participants will be paired by the Organising Committee of ELSA [National Group] in order of registration.
3. The Organising Committee determines the maximum number of participants and communicates this in the event's promotional materials. If the number of registered teams exceeds the maximum allowed, selection will be based on the chronological order of registration.

**Article 8 – Team Code**

1. Within 48 hours of the registration deadline, the Vice President for Competitions assigns each team a competition code.
2. This code replaces the participants’ personal details and must be used throughout the Competition.

**Article 9 – Competition Format**

1. The Organising Committee determines and communicates the topic of the ELSA Legal Debate at the time of registration via email and through the social media platforms of ELSA [National Group].
2. The Vice President for Competitions conducts a draw to assign the arguments that each team must support during the LD. After this process, the Vice President also conducts a draw to determine matchups for the preliminary stage debates.
3. The Organising Committee communicates to each participant, via email, the arguments their team must support and the matchups for each debate.
4. The arguments consist of positions either in favor of or against the LD topic.
5. The debate takes place between two opposing positions ("Thesis A" – in favor, and "Thesis B" – against) on the same topic.
6. Through a draw, the Vice President for Competitions assigns the opening statement, as well as the opening and rebuttal phases, to one of the two teams.
7. The Moderator grants speaking turns based on intervention requests and manages the discussion between teams, ensuring an equitable distribution of speaking time during the open debate phase.
8. During the debate, team members may only communicate with each other.
9. Participants who are still competing are not allowed to attend other debates.
10. Participants must be present for the entire duration of the Competition and arrive on time for debates, under penalty of disqualification, except in cases of proven force majeure.

**Article 10 – Debate Procedure**

1. The ELD follows this structure:  
    a) At the opening, the Moderator presents the Competition’s main question (macro-theme);  
    b) The debate proceeds in the following stages:
   * 5 minutes per team to present their thesis (opening statement);
   * 3-minute pause for participants to gather arguments for rebuttal;
   * 5 minutes per team to directly refute the opposing thesis (rebuttal) without introducing new arguments;
   * 3-minute pause for participants to prepare for the open debate;
   * 15 minutes of open debate and closing statements ("debate").
2. Participants may request to speak during the debate by raising their hand; any other form of request will not be considered.
3. Each team member must speak during the debate, under penalty of a 3-point deduction from the final score.
4. After the preliminary stage, the Vice President for Competitions conducts another draw to assign new arguments and matchups. During the semifinals and final, the Vice President may assign each team the opposite argument from the one they defended in the preliminary stage, without drawing lots.

**Article 11 – Debate Evaluation**

1. At the end of each debate, the Judging Panel assigns a score to each team.
2. Once the scoring process is complete, the Judging Panel provides brief feedback to the participants.
3. If, on the day of the ELD, a team member does not show up or withdraws from the Competition, the team is considered eliminated.
4. In such a case, the remaining team member competes alone against the opposing team. The Judging Panel will assign an individual score for the Best Speaker award.
5. If an entire team withdraws, the Vice President for Competitions will randomly select another team to debate twice. For ranking purposes, the score of the selected team will be the arithmetic mean of their two debate scores.
6. At the end of the debates, the Organising Committee compiles a ranking based on the scores assigned by the Judging Panel.
7. The final score is the arithmetic mean of the scores given for the following criteria:
   1. Argumentation & Legal Reasoning (Clarity and coherence of arguments, use of legal principles, precedents, and evidence, relevance to the motion);
   2. Rebuttal & Counterarguments (Effectiveness in addressing opposing arguments, logical consistency and persuasiveness, ability to anticipate and dismantle counterpoints);
   3. Presentation & Delivery (Confidence and clarity in speech, engagement with the audience and judges, proper use of legal terminology);
   4. Critical Thinking & Innovation (Depth of analysis and original insights, ability to think on the spot and respond effectively, creativity in legal reasoning);
   5. Teamwork & Strategy (Coordination between team members, balance in speaking time and role distribution, cohesion and synergy in argument presentation).
8. Each criterion is scored between 1 and 10 points, as follows:  
    a) Weak: 0-2 points;  
    b) Adequate: 3-5 points;  
    c) Good: 5-8 points;  
    d) Excellent: 9-10 points.
9. The Judging Panel also assigns a score from 1 to 10 to each participant based on individual performance to determine the best oral presentation for the allocation of any additional awards.

### **TITLE V – FINAL PROVISIONS**

#### **Article 12 - Qualification for the Final Phase**

1. The four teams with the highest scores as per Article 11 qualify for the semifinals. In the event of a tie between two teams, the Judging Panel declares by simple majority which team may advance to the semifinals. If there is no majority vote within the Judging Panel, the team that received the vote of the President of the Judging Panel qualifies for the semifinals.
2. The two teams with the highest scores in the semifinals, as per Article 11, qualify for the final. In the event of a tie between two teams, the Judging Panel declares by simple majority which team may advance to the final. If there is no majority vote within the Judging Panel, the team that received the vote of the President of the Judging Panel qualifies for the final.
3. Each team may request to know only the score assigned to their own performance by sending an explicit request via email to the Vice President for Competitions.
4. At the end of the Competition, the Vice President for Competitions communicates the obtained scores to the teams that have duly requested them.

#### **Article 13 - Proclamation of the Winners**

1. At the end of the Final, the Judging Panel assigns a score to both teams following the criteria outlined in Article 11, paragraphs 6 and 7. The debate is won by the team with the highest final score (“Winning Team”). In the event of a tie between two teams, the Judging Panel declares the winning team by simple majority. If there is no majority vote within the Judging Panel, the team that received the vote of the President of the Judging Panel is declared the winner.
2. The Organising Committee provides an individual award for the Best Speaker of the LD.  
    In the event of a tie between two participants, the Judging Panel declares the Best Speaker by simple majority. If there is no majority vote within the Judging Panel, the President of the Judging Panel decides the Best Speaker. The final ranking is determined by the arithmetic mean of the scores obtained as per Article 11, paragraph 10, throughout the debates in each phase of the LD by each participant.

#### **Article 14 - Awards**

1. At the end of the final, awards are given to the best team, the Best Speaker, and any additional winners.
2. The Organising Committee is responsible for selecting the awards for the winning team, the Best Speaker, and any other participants.
3. The Organising Committee issues a certificate of participation signed by the Vice President for Competitions or, in their absence, by the President to each participant who took part in the Competition.

#### **Article 15 - Requests for Clarifications Regarding the Regulations**

1. Participants may submit any inquiries regarding these Regulations to the Vice President for Competitions. The Vice President for Competitions is the sole authority responsible for resolving issues related to the application and interpretation of these Regulations.
2. In the event of a violation of the Regulations, the Vice President for Competitions is free to take the necessary measures.
3. The evaluations and judgments of the Judging Panel, as well as the decisions regarding the interpretation and application of these Regulations by the Vice President for Competitions, are final and indisputable.

#### **Article 16 - Measures**

1. All participants are required to comply with these Regulations.
2. In case of violation, the Vice President for Competitions will take all necessary measures, including disqualification.
3. Under no circumstances will the participation fee, if applicable, be refunded.
4. The Vice President for Competitions may grant extensions to any deadlines established in these Regulations for well-founded organisational reasons, provided that all competing teams are treated equally. Adequate communication of such extensions must be given.

#### **Article 17 - Acceptance of the Regulations**

1. By registering for the Competition, participating teams declare that they have read and accepted these Regulations. This declaration must be explicitly stated in the registration Google Form.