

BEHAVIOURAL GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

1. INTRODUCTION

We at ELSA4Schools cherish our beloved volunteers. In the absence of your tremendous passion, hard work, and talent, this remarkable format would be impossible to implement. You are its lifeblood, the very essence of this format. We would hence like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to each of you for the exceptional dedication you have shown towards this format. We at ELSA truly believe in the potential imbibed within this format to shape tomorrow's society, and we believe in your ability to maximise this potential. Together, we can spark change, fostering values of justice, human rights, and democracy in society, thus helping us fulfil our vision of 'a just world in which there is respect for human dignity and cultural diversity'.

In pursuit of these aims, we have created this document to provide you with a concise, coherent set of guidelines that will help govern your conduct during the session. For guidelines regarding preparation for the session, look no further than the **Volunteer Training Guidelines** which have also been included in this package.

2. DO'S AND DON'TS

We have divided this document into two sections – Do's, and Don'ts. The former section encompasses guidelines regarding positive actions that must be indulged in during the session, while the latter focusses on providing a non-exhaustive list of examples of conduct that must be avoided.

3. DO'S

In this section, we shall discuss the traits, values, and actions that are expected of you as a volunteer for an ELSA4Schools session.

3.1 Punctuality

As ELSA4Schools sessions tend to occur in external venues, punctuality is a vital trait to possess. If, for example, the session takes place within the walls of a school, there is a very limited window of time we are bestowed with. It is our duty to ensure that we utilise this time effectively. As presentations are planned, rehearsed and delivered in adherence to these time pressures, it is imperative that punctuality is ensured to avoid conflicts and confusion during the session. Further, one must not forget that we visit these schools as representatives of ELSA, and a lack of adherence to time guidelines does not present a positive reflection of our excellent organisation.

3.2 Semi-formal dress code

Creativity and individual expression have always been at the forefront of the ELSA4Schools format. We aim not to stifle your individuality, but to help you find positive outlets to express it through. Clothing and outfits are one such outlet. The subtle balance we strive to strike between considerations of professionalism and camaraderie is reflected through our outfit choices. We do not recommend excessively formal outfits, as this could give rise to intimidation within our

audience. While we do intend to impart lessons of legal wisdom, we also attempt to do so in an environment fostered by friendliness and sociability, rather than one built upon the premise of respect and authority. On the other hand, we also advise against outfits that are excessively casual, as such outfits may detract from the essence of the project, and provide a negative image of ELSA as an organisation. We hence endorse a semi-formal dress code. Outfits comprising or a regular pair of shirts and pants, for example, would prove adequate.

3.3 Have a positive attitude

Your mission as part of this format is to convey ideas and messages of exceptional significance to the audience. It is our belief that the best educational processes occur in positive, friendly environments. Hence, in order to effectively fulfil your responsibilities, fostering a positive environment becomes a necessity. A positive attitude goes a long way towards ensuring this. Always have a smile on your face. Remember the sheer value of the activity you are indulging in, and the impact your every action has on these young, impressionable minds. Be polite, and treat everyone you meet during the course of the session with respect. You may also indulge in informal conversations with the audience, as such interaction allows them to feel more comfortable and open.

3.4 Manage time effectively

When planning the session, ensure attention to detail, drafting an overall timeline for the event. We recommend imposing draft progress checkpoints every 10 minutes of the session. By doing so, you can compare your progress during the session to where you would ideally have liked to be at that specific point of time. Depending on this comparison, you may be better placed to make executive decisions, increasing, reducing, or maintaining the pace of the session. If so needed, the project trainer or the volunteer leader in his absence may make executive decisions regarding the timeline of the session, opting to exclude certain parts of the session in the interest of effective time management. While we understand that such situations may at times be unavoidable, every effort must be made to avoid them where possible.

3.5 Engage in activities

ELSA4Schools is not to be envisaged as yet another rigid lecture, doing little else but providing a regular lesson on legal concepts. You must instead strive to provide a vibrant, entertaining, and educational experience to the audience, one which is as much yours as is theirs. In order to create such an atmosphere, engaging our audience in entertaining activities may be exceptionally useful. We may do so by organising rough simulations of other ELSA Academic Competitions such as Legal Debates and Moot Court Competitions on the subject at hand, thus providing our audience with practical understanding of the material, while also enabling them to truly enjoy the session. You may also appoint one volunteer to occupy the role of ELSA Spirit for the session. Their primary responsibility in this role would be to inject energy to the session at points of time where this may be deemed necessary. This may be done through quick games and activities, such as a short dance or mini-competition. These activities must only act as small refreshers during the session, and must hence not exceed 5 minutes of time each. In the spirit of creativity, you may also devise your own unique activities that help the audience engage with the topic at hand.

3.6 Communication and interaction

Communicating with the audience is an essential part of ELSA4Schools. We aim not to provide a presentation, but to indulge in constructive dialogues with the help of the presentation itself. As

such, it is pivotal to attain an understanding of the nature of communication expected from you. As envisioned in the handbook, the general nature of communication must be one of constructive, collaborative learning. Further, engaging in conversation that provides the foundations for a positive environment is encouraged. Asking the audience about their day, for example, is encouraged. You may indulge in respectful conversation with the audience the way you would with friends and colleagues, provided this does not detract from our ultimate purpose, and does not reflect badly on ELSA as an organisation. Conduct that is unbecoming of your role as a volunteer present to support and educate the audience must not be engaged in.

3.7 Adherence to institutional policies

When entering external premises, you must follow the policies and regulations implemented by the institution. Any untoward behaviour from the audience, especially those that contradict the policies set forth by the institution, must be brought to the attention of the institution staff present during the session. While not all institutional regulations may be followed by us ourselves due to our commitments as volunteers, any regulation that may reasonably expected to be followed must be. Additionally, you must take special care to not motivate any act from the audience in violation of institutional policies. You must work as assistance to the individuals in charge. If, for example, the presentation occurs at a school and the teacher in charge requests for a certain alteration, every effort must be made to comply with this request. It is worth recollecting that we act not as leaders, but as external assistants for the institution.

3.8 Flexibility

Due to its very nature, ELSA4 Schools is not a format that may be comprehensively legislated for. It is impossible to account for all the plausible situations that may occur, not least due to the nature of our target audience. It is hence imperative that we remain flexible, and able to critically analyse situations quickly. In situations that require flexibility, you may request assistance from your Project Trainer or Team Leader. In lieu of this, you may resort to making these decisions yourself. In these situations, the overarching aim of the project must be considered, and the decision that most benefits this aim must be prioritised. As you are making these decisions as a representative of our organisation, you must ensure that they do not reflect badly on you, or ELSA. If you are unable to do so yourself, you must approach the authorities in charge of the institution, who will provide you with further guidance.

3.9 Patience

In certain circumstances, volunteering as part of ELSA4Schools may be a challenging experience. Indeed, you may often receive audiences that are uncooperative. In such situations, patience is truly a virtue. It is upon you to engage the audience, and take positive steps towards attaining their cooperation. You may use the Tips and Tricks for an Unresponsive Audience document attached to this package to help you in this pursuit. While we hope this document helps you, it is obvious that there may still exist situations where you are unable to gain the audience's attention. This is precisely when patience must be exhibited. Do not panic, or doubt your capabilities. Continue with the presentation, and see whether attention is returned to you over time. If you are still unable to adequately communicate with your audience, please request assistance from your cohorts, project leader, or the staff present at the institution.

3.10 Teamwork

In delivery of the presentation, we recommend splitting up of the responsibilities within the team present for the session. We recommend that the presentation itself be split up between the members of the team, in order to ensure that the workload is divided equally. It also ensures that each volunteer is able to experience the rigors and rewards of the teaching role. However, this is not to say that the responsibilities of each volunteer are exclusively limited to the specific section of the presentation that they are to deliver. Team spirit is exceptionally vital for this format, and you must all strive to support each other both in the preparation, and conduction of the project. If a fellow volunteer is faced with an issue impacting the overall quality of the session, it is your responsibility to support them and ensure that these issues are subdued or solved.

4. DON'TS

4.1 Don't divulge unnecessary personal information with the audience

While friendly conversations are definitely encouraged, providing personal information that may not be classed as strictly relevant is not recommended. You must also not indulge in situations with audience members where they divulge personal information about themselves to you, as this could give rise to legal implications in certain contexts. If you find yourself in such a situation, politely excuse yourself, or contact the institutional authorities if need be.

4.2 Don't refrain from being creative

The guidelines provided to you as a volunteer are intentionally drafted in a relatively lenient manner, to account for the great variations and unpredictability of the situations you may be placed in. We also hope this enables you to add your own individual spin on your role. We at ELSA believe in your creative potential, and hence actively encourage you to innovate within these fixed boundaries we have presented you with.

4.3 Don't engage in conduct that is unbecoming of your role as an ELSA Volunteer

While the emphasis on sociability and friendliness is warranted, one must be careful not to overstep this line. It must be noted that the individuals within the audience are of an impressionable age, and no sentiments that may be harmful to them must be expressed. Further, sentiments that may prove harmful to the representation of ELSA must be avoided.

4.4 Don't make inappropriate contact with the audience

Special care must be taken to ensure that you do not make any inappropriate contact with the audience. Keeping in contact with audience members through social media, for example, must be refrained from. Additionally, proximate physical contact with the audience must be avoided wherever possible during the session.

4.5 Don't back down

Resilience is an important characteristic for your role. You must not easily give up on your responsibilities as an ELSA4Schools volunteer, even when faced with improbable circumstances. Stay on course with the delivery of the session wherever possible, and only stray away from the decided plan if necessary.

4.6 Don't discipline students

You must not resort to disciplining the students yourself, regardless of the context. These tasks are left exclusively to the discretion of the institutional staff. If an untoward instance necessitating disciplinary action occurs, merely point this out to the staff in charge, perhaps a teacher.

4.7 Don't provide unapproved external items

At certain points of the session, it may be essential to provide students with certain external items. In the conduction of activities, for example, paper and pencils may have to be provided to the students. It is imperative to keep in mind that in such situations, all external items must be approved by the institution. Any external item not approved must not be provided to the audience. Certain substances, such as medicine in exceptional cases, for example, must not be provided to the students unless explicitly asked for by the institution

4.8 Don't break confidentiality

Any formal information provided to you by the institution must be held in absolute confidentiality. If such information is disclosed to you, further disclosure could have legal and societal ramifications on the institution, ELSA, the audience, and you yourself. Hence, care must be taken to maintain confidentiality.

4.9 Don't be afraid to answer questions

Interaction with the audience is the foundational principle of ELSA4Schools. It is hence imperative that you confidently answer questions they pose for you concerning the presentation. It may be beneficial to have an FAQ sheet in hand, so you are able to predict and adequately answer these questions. If you are unaware or unsure of the answer, expressing this lack of clarity is a perfectly viable option. Answer in a confident manner, and don't be afraid to ask questions of your own too!

4.10 Don't adversely impact student self confidence

During your interaction with the students, you must be careful not to make statements or take actions that adversely impact the self-confidence of our audience members. On the contrary, motivate them to be their most expressive selves, and don't dissuade students from contributing to the session, regardless of the relevancy or accuracy of this contribution. Appreciate every contribution made by an audience member, and make them feel proud of it.

4.11 Don't express personal views

We at ELSA are a non-political organisation, and the separation of the personal and professional is one of our foundational pillars. ELSA4Schools volunteers must hence refrain from expressing their personal political views. Similarly, expression of personal religious and social views must also be refrained from.

4.12 Most importantly, don't forget that this is also for you!

While we may have spent the vast majority of time talking about the audience and their enjoyment of this project, it must be noted that this is also your project. You have opted to get involved in this rewarding activity, and it is imperative to us that you find this enjoyable too. Please do try your best to truly experience and appreciate every second you spend as part of this project. The phenomenal work you do is undoubtedly a virtuous one, and we sincerely hope you are aware of just how much we here at ELSA, and the wider society around you appreciates your efforts.