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Helga Pedersen

Moot Court Competition



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

GUIDELINES FOR ORAL PLEADINGS

HELGA PEDERSEN

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elsa

The European Law Students' Association



Guidelines for Oral Pleadings

These guidelines shall assist the teams while preparing their Oral Pleadings. They form an integral part of the Rules and thus must be followed.

1. Please read sections 5 and 8 and Appendix 2 of the Rules for the general requirements.
2. ELSA International will inform the teams about their pleading times no later than the night before the Round begins.
3. The dress code for the Oral Pleadings is formal business attire.
4. Prior to the start of the Oral Pleadings, each Team shall complete its Team Appearance sheet and submit it to the Timekeepers. Upon the start of the Oral Pleadings, one Team member shall present the Team Appearance, which shall not exceed three (3) minutes, must match the information given on the sheet, and is not included in the Main Oral Pleading time. The Team Appearance shall include:
 - a) the names of the Team members;
 - b) their order of speaking, including the Team members who will assist the speakers only;
 - c) the issues to be dealt with and the Team member responsible for the Rebuttal or Sur-Rebuttal.
5. The Team Appearance shall be limited to the points listed in paragraph 4 and must not contain any substantive legal argumentation.
6. The Bench will give the floor first to the Applicant and then to the Respondent. After their Main Oral Pleadings (35 minutes per Team), the Applicant may present their Rebuttal and the Respondent their Sur-Rebuttal (5 minutes per Team).
7. A minimum of two Team members shall present the Main Oral Pleadings, and each orator shall present for a minimum of seven (7) minutes.
8. Questions and clarifications from the Bench are allowed at any time and these are included in the main oral pleading time.
9. Books, pleading cards and time cards are allowed during the Oral Pleadings. Teams may use one (1) device for the inquiry of information and research, and one (1) additional device exclusively for timekeeping. No other electronic devices may be used, and devices must not be used for communication.



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10. A Team may request extra time to enable it to complete its Main Oral Pleadings or to answer Judges' questions. The President of the Bench has the discretion to grant the request.
11. Timekeepers will be present during the pleadings to keep track of the time and assist the Bench and the Teams with time cards. They will indicate the elapsed time at intervals of five (5) minutes, when three (3), two (2) and one (1) minutes remain, and when the allocated time is reached.
12. In the Oral Pleadings, the Case must be referred to as it is titled.
13. Teams and Team coaches may not attend the Oral Pleadings of other Teams. This does not apply once the Team has been eliminated from the Competition.
14. In the Final Oral Round, Teams representing the Applicant must send a summary of their Main Oral Pleadings to ELSA International by email before each round, by the deadline ELSA International specifies.
15. Each Oral Pleading may be awarded up to 40 points. The Bench has to consider the following points, each weighing equally:
 - i) identification of legal issues and the relevant legal framework;
 - ii) knowledge of the European Convention on Human Rights as well as relevant case law;
 - iii) quality of legal analysis and persuasiveness of arguments; and
 - iv) style.

We wish the best of luck to all participating teams,

Caisa Billger

Vice President in charge of Competitions

International Board of ELSA 2026/2027