

The Union Debating Society (UDS) Bursary Scheme

Brief Overview of the UDS Bursary Scheme:

The Union Debating Society (UDS), as a subcommittee of the Union, strongly believes in accessibility to all the students at the University of St. Andrews, especially on the financial front. As such, the implementation of this bursary scheme will allow students from low-income backgrounds to participate in debate competitions all over the UK and internationally. We would like to ensure that as many students as possible will be given the opportunity to hone their public speaking and argumentative skills through competitions or even represent the University of St. Andrews on an international stage through Worlds University Debating Championships (WUDC) and/or European University Debating Championships (EUDC).

There are two different schemes that will be implemented: the bursary for local competitions and the scheme for international competitions such as WUDCs and EUDCs. Kindly note that this bursary will only be able to subsidise costs and cannot cover full expenses.

Trials process and selection of representatives to participate in a debate competition are made entirely separately from the bursary scheme application process. As such, a student may be able to trial for a speaker or judge spot without prior knowledge of their acceptance to the bursary scheme. The student's application to a bursary scheme does not affect their ability to obtain a speaker or judge spot.

BURSARY SCHEME for COMPETITIONS WITHIN THE UK:

The UDS currently supports the registration fees for local competitions. This bursary scheme is only meant for transportation costs across the UK. Even if the student is given the bursary, they must still cover their own food and other miscellaneous expenses.

Application Process:

Requirements in which at least one must fulfill to apply for the local competition bursary scheme:

1. Obtain either a speaker spot or judge spot to represent the University of St. Andrews at a competition AND;
2. Be a student receiving a scholarship based on need, whether it be from the University of St. Andrews or from their respective sponsor OR;
3. Come from a family with a household annual income less than £34,000 and verified by the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS), Student Loans Company (SLC) or the student's respective government student loan agency OR;
4. Any other discretionary elements as determined by the bursary scheme panel.

The student applying for this bursary must submit relevant documents in their application process to support that they have met the bursary's requirements.

The student applying must also meet with the President and Convener, and Treasurer of the UDS for the academic year, as well as the Director of Student Development and Activities (DoSDA) for the academic year and a representative from the Cash Office for a casual chat regarding their reasons for applying to this bursary scheme. Please note that this meeting is confidential and any details revealed will not leave the room.

Reimbursement Process:

The UDS will only be able to reimburse the student who receives the bursary. As such, the recipient of the bursary must keep all receipts and submit it to the Student Association's Cash Office.

Restrictions in Distribution of Bursary Scheme:

In the event that in the same academic year, there are multiple students who are applying for the bursary scheme, there must be a lot of effort taken to ensure as many students are supported. As such, it is up to the discretion of the President and Convener and the Treasurer to determine the number of times a student may be able to receive a bursary.

BURSARY SCHEME for WUDCs and EUDCs:

The UDS currently supports the registration fees for the international competitions which covers food and accommodation. Aside from any other grant that may be given by our sponsor of the academic year (eg. ISSOS Sponsorship for Worlds Cape Town 2019), this bursary scheme will help with flight costs to students coming from low-income families. Kindly note that this bursary scheme will only subsidise flight costs.

Application Process:

Requirements in which at least one must fulfill to apply for the international competition bursary scheme:

1. Must pass the trials stage and obtain a spot on the WUDC or EUDC team as a speaker or as a judge AND;
2. Be a student receiving a scholarship based on need, whether it be from the University of St. Andrews or from their respective sponsor OR;
3. Come from a family with a household annual income less than £34,000 and verified by the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS), Student Loans Company (SLC) or the student's respective government student loan agency OR;
4. Any other discretionary elements as determined by the bursary scheme panel.

The student applying for this bursary must submit relevant documents in their application process to support that they have met the bursary's requirements.

The student applying must also meet with the President and Convener, and Treasurer of the UDS for the academic year, as well as the Director of Student Development and Activities (DoSDA) for the academic year and a representative from the Cash Office for a casual chat regarding their reasons for applying to this bursary scheme. Please note that this meeting is confidential and any details revealed will not leave the room.

Reimbursement Process:

If the student is granted the bursary, the student must follow the guidelines given by the Student Association Cash Office. The student will be reimbursed only as the UDS will not be directly purchasing the flight. Further, the recipient of this bursary scheme must also participate in a pro-am competition if they are a speaker after WUDC or EUDC or train a future judge.

MEANS of OBTAINING FUNDS:

The amount of bursary funding for the academic year available must be allocated from the yearly budget received by the Student's Association. Any additional funding can also be sourced from the UDS Alumni Network and other UDS sponsors. The President and Convener and the Treasurer of the academic year must sort and decide the year's bursary scheme budget which should not be any smaller than £500.00 per academic year.