

Chairing

—

at Royal Russell

How you should and shouldn't behave 1

Do:

- Look in control as much as possible
- Have a good knowledge of procedure
- Have good knowledge on the topic you're the expert chair of
- Prioritise amendments
- Be civil to **all** delegates

Do:

- Respect those with higher authority and the Secretariat
- Stick to the conference rules
- Stay calm if there is an issue that you're not sure how to solve
- Make your delegates feel welcome and comfortable

How you should and shouldn't behave 2

Don't:

Act as though delegates
are far below you

Act too friendly with the
delegates this could make
them lose respect for you
*(This can be tricky as you also
need to be personable)*

Don't:

Show any conflicts that you are
having with your co-
chairs/presidents during debate
or outside of debate

Act as if you are never wrong

Do anything that would make your
delegates lose respect for you

Flow of debate
(typical
procedure):

Before debate begins

Call the floor to order: “Delegates can the floor/house please come to order”

Floor = Committee

House = Plenary or GA

Present the topic of the resolution and the main submitter: “We will now be proceeding with debate on [insert issue here] as submitted by the delegate of [insert country name here]”

Set the time for debate and what debate style it will be in: “The chair sets [insert time here] of open debate on this resolution” or “the chair sets a debate time of [insert minutes here] in favour and [insert minutes here] against this resolution”

To proceed with debate

Ask the main submitter to read the operative clauses: “Could the main submitter please take the floor and read out their operative clauses”

Once done tell the speaker the time limit for their speech and ask the delegate to proceed: “Thank you delegate, you have [insert time here] minutes for your speech please proceed”

Once the speaker has finished ask if they are open to any POIs: “Thank you delegate, do you open yourself up to any points of information?”

If yes open the floor up to points of information: “The delegate has opened themselves up to points of information are there any such points on the floor?”

After POIs ask if they yield the floor to the chair or to another delegation: “Thank you, does the delegate yield the floor to the chair or to another delegation”

If they yield the floor to another delegation:

Check if the delegation is allowed ie: are they from the same school or has the delegate/delegation that they wish to yield to spoken too much?

If the delegate/delegation can't be yielded to because of the above reasons:

“That is not in order delegate, please yield the floor to the chair”

If the delegate/delegation can be yielded to: “This is in order delegate does the delegate of [insert country name here] accept this yield”

If the delegate/delegation does not accept the yield: “Then can the delegate please yield the floor to the chair”

If the delegate/delegation does accept: “Then can the delegate of [insert country name here] please come to the podium”

If they yield the floor to the chair (and normal debate)

Say that the floor is yielded: “Thank you delegate, the floor has been yielded to the chair”

Open up the floor for another speaker: “We are still in [either open debate/time for this resolution/time against this Resolution] any delegates wishing to make a speech please raise your placards now”

Recognise a delegate: “The delegate of [insert country name here] you have been recognised”

When they have finished their speech open up to POIs etc....

Move on with debate by saying: “We are still in open debate, can all those wishing to speak for, against or submit an amendment please raise their placards now” or “We are still in time for/against this resolution can any delegate wishing to speak please raise their placard now”

Amendments - 1

When looking at amendments choose **WISELY** some will be better than others

If you are not going to consider an amendment at all, send a note to the delegate that submitted it explaining why (only if you have time)

Don't prioritise destructive amendments (strikes etc.) unless:

- The clause/subclause that is being struck has been criticised by the committee constantly and the resolution won't pass without it being struck
- The delegate wants to strike a clause and replace it with something better

Amendments - 2

Communicate with your co-chairs and don't recognise an amendment that hasn't yet been typed up

Only recognise amendments on official amendment paper, if it's not on official notepaper then send it back to the delegate along with official notepaper

Amendments 3

All amendments are debated in closed debate

It's better to set a number of speakers for and against than a time for and against this is because time is very hard to stick to and doesn't always give the optimal amount of debate on the issue

I would recommend two speakers for and two speakers against

The number of POIs would be dependent on the length of the speakers speech.

Amendments 4

Once you have recognised a delegate that you know has an amendment and they haven't asked to debate it say: “Does the delegate wish to debate his/her amendment?”

YOU read out the amendment and then set the debate for the amendment: “The chair sets [insert number here] speakers in favour on this amendment and [insert number here] speakers against this amendment”

Ask the delegate to proceed with their speech: “Could the delegate please proceed with their speech”

Once they've finished continue with POI's next speaker etc.

Voting on Amendments 1

There are no abstentions when voting on amendments

To start voting procedure: “We will now be moving into voting procedure on [insert country name]’s amendment that reads [read out amendment] the chair would like to remind all delegates that abstentions are not in order when voting on amendments, and could the secretariat please suspend note passing, secure the doors and move into voting positions”

When Admin are in position “Can all delegates wishing to vote in favour of this amendment please raise their placards now” let the admin count the votes and you total them “Please lower your placards, can all those wishing to vote against please raise their placards” let the admin count and you total the votes

Voting on Amendments 2

Once all votes have been counted: “Thank you delegates please lower your placards”

When you are sure of the numbers: “ With a total of [number of votes] in favour and [number of votes] against this amendment has passed/failed clapping is not in order”

Clapping is never in order if an amendment has failed

Sometimes it's easier to say an overwhelming majority - this is up to the chair's discretion

Voting Procedure 1

To start voting procedure: “Time on this resolution as a whole has now elapsed we will now be moving into voting procedure could the secretariat please suspend note passing, secure the doors and move into voting position. The chair would like to remind delegates that Abstentions are in order at this time”

When the secretariat are all in position: “Can all delegates wishing to vote in favour of this resolution please raise their placards now” let the secretariat count them and then you add them “Please lower your placards, all those wishing to vote against” let the admin count and you add them “please lower your placards, all wishing to abstain” let the admin count them and you make a note of them “Thank you please lower all placards”

Voting Procedure 2

When you have all of the votes: “With a total of [insert number of votes] in favour, [insert number of votes] against, and [insert number of votes] abstentions”

If the vote is in favour: “This resolution has passed clapping is in order”

If the vote is against: “This resolution has failed clapping is not in order”

Give at least a five minute break unless time is really short as delegates can get restless, make sure it's an indoor break if it's a short one and ask the secretariat secure the door: “The chair will now be entertaining a [insert time here] minute indoor/outdoor break” add this only if it's an indoor break “Can the secretariat please secure the doors”

Linking debate

To swap chairs: “I will now be passing my chairing duties to my co-chair/president [insert name here]”

To move into time against in normal debate: “Time in favour of this resolution has now elapsed, we will now be moving into time against this resolution amendments are now in order”

To move into time against when debating an amendment: “Having had [insert number of speakers] in favour of this amendment we will now be moving on to speakers against this amendment”

RRSIMUN procedure

Introduction

Every MUN conference has a different chairing procedure and want you to chair and manage debate in different ways

RRSIMUN changed in 2015 and it is important that chairs know the procedure off by heart

One important rule is that only one person is chairing at a time and the other chair(s) should never address the committee unless invited to do so by the chairing chair

Policy statements

At Royal Russell MUN every delegate is expected to make a policy statement.

To make sure everyone speaks either call out delegates in groups of 5 – 7 according to the list of delegates, or ask delegates to speak row by row.

Royal Russell Procedure

We always debate resolutions in open debate

Amendments we debate in closed debate

We don't clap if an amendment fails

If a vote is tied it fails

We don't allow motions to divide the house – (i.e. we do not prevent countries from abstaining on the resolution as a whole because it goes against the nations right to decide), but you CAN allow a re-vote

Points

Typical Procedure on Points

Only a Point of Personal Privilege due to audibility can interrupt a speaker

When you hear a point always say: “There has been a point of [insert the type of point here] can the delegate please rise and state their point”

You can correct a delegate on what a point is if they have the point wrong - but don't disregard their point

Do not let delegates use points to make speeches (this mainly happens in Points of Order or Points of Information to the Chair)

You DON'T have to accept all points – if one delegate is making too many points or points are disrupting the flow of a debate too much say “The chair will not entertain that point”

Point of Order

Usually refers to when a delegate feels as though they or their country have been offended

It is up to you how you deal with this, usually it's fine to say:
“The chair believes that this was in the delegate's own opinion, could the delegate please retract their statement”

NEVER ask a delegate to publicly apologise it is demeaning and can cause further issues

Point of Information to the Chair

This refers to when a delegate wants to make the committee aware of something or has a question for the expert chair of the topic

If it is to make the committee aware let them speak and then say:
“The committee has been made aware, thank you delegate”

If it is to ask a question then the chair that knows the most about the topic should be allowed to answer the question.

If no chair knows the answer then say that you will look up the answer and tell the committee as soon as possible.

Point of Personal Privilege

This refers to when a delegate has an issue with something in the room such as audibility or temperature

A point of Personal Privilege due to audibility is the only point that can interrupt a speaker, if this happens just tell the speaker to speak louder or into the microphone (if there is one)

If there is nothing you can do then say so, remember that delegates don't need to wear a blazer when sitting down but have to wear it when speaking

Point of Parliamentary Procedure

This refers to when a delegate feels as though something goes against procedure such as a delegate not wearing a blazer, or a chair accidentally doing something wrong like confusing an amendment for a resolution.

(If it's about a delegate not wearing a blazer then, if they have one, tell the delegate to put a blazer on. There may be a good reason why a delegate does not have a blazer – never make an issue of such a situation and allow the delegate to still take the floor.)

If it is because the chair has done something wrong then own up to it you are only human and you make mistakes, so say: “I apologise, the chair stands corrected” after just continue with debate as normal

Rights to reply

Rights to reply are follow-up questions to Points of Information made by the same person who has just asked a question

At Royal Russell we usually do not allow Rights to Reply but chairs may accept a Right to Reply if:

- The delegate on the floor is strong enough to deal with a follow up question
- The debate is likely to be improved by a follow up question

Motions

Typical procedure for motions

1. Motions can not disrupt a speaker
2. They are always used to move on or change something about the debate procedure
3. Motions need to have no objections to go through but can be up to the chairs discretion if there isn't time

Motion to Divide the House

This is NOT in order at RRSIMUN

If someone says this motion then just respond: “This motion is not in order at Royal Russell.”

If a vote is very close, or if there are more abstentions than actual votes (this usually happens when delegates are fed up at the end of the day) then you can do a re-vote where you encourage states to vote for or against

Motion to move to the Previous Question

This is to move to the next stage of debate ie. if you're in time for in an amendment then you would move to time against

Delegates can either use that phrase or say 'for example' motion to move to voting procedure, either is fine.

You need to say: “There has been a Motion to Move to the Previous Question are there any objections?” or “There has been a Motion to move into time against / voting procedure.”

If there are objections then you carry on with debate as usual, if there are no objections then move to the next stage of debate

Motion to Extend Points of Information

This refers to when a delegate wants to ask a speaker more POIs when they weren't recognised in the first set of POIs

This is up to the chair's discretion, if you think there is time for more POIs then you must ask if everyone is in favour if there are any objections then you can't recognise any more POIs

Remember to ask the speaker if they are happy to take more POIs (most will but it's better to be safe than sorry)

You should recognise the delegate who asked for POIs to be extended (it is VERY frustrating when chairs forget to do this)

Motion to Pass as a Friendly Amendment

This is said when a delegate thinks that an amendment should be in a resolution and doesn't need a vote

This cannot have ANY objections, if there is only one objection then you should let the delegate that made this objection have the floor later in the Amendment debate

This can only be made once the main submitter has finished their speech and has preferably taken POIs (it is not integral that POIs have been taken but is better)

Some conferences do not allow this motion but a competent chair will move to voting procedure if they think that the whole committee is in favour of the amendment

Motion to make an amendment to the Second Degree

These are not normally entertained at Royal Russell however it can be allowed if it corrects a small grammatical change to an amendment or is something as simple as changing ICC to ICJ if the amendment mentions taking countries to court

These motions cannot change the thrust of the amendment but just make the amendment coincide with a bodies jurisdiction, or just improve the grammar

This requires no objections

It is wise to say how the amendment would read with this small change before you ask if there are any objections so that delegates know the extent of the change

Tricky Situations

Delegate trouble

This can be anything from the secretariat informing you that a delegate wants to send an entirely inappropriate note to a delegate directly disrespecting your authority by making a “Motion to evict the chair”

Wait until a break if you can, take the delegate outside and speak to them

If they continue to disrespect you then call a member of the Secretariat General they will then deal with the situation in the best way that they deem necessary

Don't lose your temper and say anything that they could use against you as then the issue is with you and not the delegate that's in the wrong

Conflicts with your co-chair/president's

These could exist for a number of reasons including:

Disagreements over how to handle something / Personality clashes

Do not show that there is an issue in front of the committee (unless it is unavoidable)

Speak to them privately, this can be through note or in a quiet place in a break

If it's bad then go to the member of the President of GA or Sec Gen that is in charge of your committee, if they can't sort it out then they or you should go to a director

You get something wrong or don't know something

1. DO NOT PANIC you're allowed to get stuff wrong
2. Admit that you don't know or that you've made a mistake
3. If you make a mistake then correct yourself and move on
4. If you don't know the answer to something look it up or ask someone then give the answer at the opportune time - this is usually between speakers

Remember that chairs are people too you're not supposed to be superhuman and perfect at everything, delegates also seem to forget that Chairs also get extremely tired. The worst chairs are those who never admit their mistakes. It will make experienced delegates lose respect for you and this could have a BIG impact on debate.

Tips

Tips that will make your time easier

Keep a tally of who speaks - it only has to be simple with 3 columns: one for the country name, one for a speech tally, and one for a POI tally

Be strict with timings

Give a good amount of breaks - it is better if the committee doesn't want to kill you because they're tired and fed up

Near the end of the committee stage

When the committee atmosphere seems to be lacking start a confessions box whenever - it's usually best to check in with the person in charge of your committee first though

Do superlatives on the last day but give yourself time to tally them - it's easiest to go award by award and the smaller your committee the luckier you are!