

ASC Guidelines for the Conduct of Online Zoom Meetings

During the Covid 19 Pandemic

Updated 18 May 2020

During the current pandemic, it is natural and sensible that some ASC clubs should want to continue to meet online in order to practice public speaking skills and keep their sense of club spirit and community. This is new territory for us all, and the aim of these guidelines is to support and assist clubs in their management of Zoom meetings and to provide for some consistency of practice across the ASC. **These guidelines are not mandatory but should be seen as Best Practice.** We will update them if and as necessary.

The Meeting Facilitator

1. Each Zoom meeting will need a Facilitator. Ideally, the Facilitator will be a Club, Area or District President. However, in some instances, the Facilitator may be a club member where they are the only person with the relevant technical understanding.
2. The Facilitator will need to:
 - Schedule the meeting via the ASC Zoom account (see below for further details)
 - have a clear understanding of how to operate Zoom including break out rooms
 - have the ability to deal with any difficulties joining or during the meeting
3. The Facilitator does not have to be the meeting's Chairperson, but it is suggested that the Facilitator also takes responsibility for:
 - sending out clear instructions as to how to join Zoom meeting to everybody who is invited to attend

- sending reminders to invitees in advance of the meeting – it is recommended that reminders are sent one day and then one hour before the meeting
 - providing clear instructions as to meeting conduct including: use of mute buttons, clapping, explaining the equipment, rules etc.
4. A number of different timer facilities can be used during the meeting, including Timer Apps or red, yellow and green cards. Whatever method is chosen, the Facilitator should allocate one person in the meeting to be responsible for timing (ideally this will be someone other than the Facilitator). The timings need to be explained and clearly visible to all present in the meeting.

The Chairperson

5. It is recommended that each meeting has a dedicated Chairperson. The Chairperson need not be the same person as the Facilitator but should take responsibility for preparing an agenda and chairing the evening. It is recommended that both the Chairperson and the Facilitator log in 30 minutes before the scheduled start of the meeting, to check connections, deal with issues, etc.
6. The Chairperson is responsible for allocating the usual roles such as speakers, Topics chairperson and a general evaluator.

The Meeting

7. It's suggested a 10-15 minute set up / meet and greet time is allowed at the beginning of each meeting.
8. It is recommended that Topics plays the central role of the meeting. Clubs may wish to experiment with the length of the Topics.
9. It is also recommended that each individual Topic is immediately followed by its evaluation – the evaluator having been assigned by the Topics chairperson.

Comment on the content can be just as useful as an instruction on the delivery in this new 'virtual' situation.

10. A 4-minute break mid-meeting, e.g. to pour another drink, or to check on a child is useful.
11. Zoom meetings could also include a prepared speech or an educational session.
12. In light of the ongoing inability of clubs to meet, it is a matter for individual clubs to decide which speeches can be successfully delivered and evaluated. The important thing is that any speech delivered is evaluated against the criteria for the assignment on the evaluation sheet. The criteria have not been relaxed. Clubs, speakers and evaluators will need to consider how they can best facilitate, deliver and evaluate different speeches and the skills that should be on show. If it is felt by a club that a Zoom session can do justice to a speech than clubs could allow a speech to be delivered by way of practice with feedback given but a full and final evaluation should be performed when clubs can re-meet. The ASC will continue to monitor the situation and these guidelines should be treated as guidance.
13. Some speakers may want to consider standing in order to deliver their speech, so that a full array of gestures, etc. can be observed but practice will be required in order to ensure vocal volume and facial expressions aren't lost as a result of the distance from the camera.

Security

14. It's important that Zoom users are careful about how they publicise the link to any meetings. It is important to avoid publishing the link on public facing social media site such as a Facebook page which is open to the public.

For more information, please contact Paul Taylor national.secretary@speakersclubs.uk

If you would like to organise a meeting via the ASC Zoom account, please use the following link:

<https://forms.gle/g2gCt5AhLBNo1UtG8>