



The Speakers Guide



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Letter to You – The Member

You may be here because you are building your own business, wanting to make an impact with your networking pitch, going for promotion, speaking at a wedding, or perhaps honouring a friend. Whatever your purpose, we are here to help you find your voice.

So, well done. You have started a process of growth and development and with this guide, you are now equipped to embark on your speaking journey. A good early goal is to work your way through the first ten assignments, each one focusing on a new skill required for effective public speaking, culminating in the showpiece.

In your local speakers club, you'll be able to draw upon the mentoring and guidance of those who will evaluate you, encourage you and support you to hone your speaking skills as you advance through each of the speaking assignments. The more experienced club members will help you to develop confidence and self-belief, so you will never fear public speaking again.

Another key to learning lies in watching others as they seek to progress. Absorb their feedback and you will be surprised at how much you can learn. Taking part in Topics sessions and other club activities will help develop your speaking skills even further.

Another thing that may surprise you is how much you will laugh during any speaker's club meeting! Having fun taking part, enjoying the humour of other members, and relishing the shared experience of public speaking, can be a huge pleasure and give you a big smile or perhaps even a full-on belly laugh.

The Association of Speakers Clubs (ASC) provides a well-defined development pathway which enables you to develop both your speaking and leadership skills in a multitude of ways. Joining in with the fun activities of your local speakers club and learning about communication among friends will result in you being able to give a professional, credible account of yourself whenever you are called upon to speak.

We wish you well. Let your journey commence.

Using This Guide

The Association wants to support you in achieving your communication goals. You might want to progress through our speaking certificates, learning the skills and techniques of public speaking and developing your presentation style. Maybe you want to take part in competitions and test yourself against some of the best speakers in the country. You may want to enjoy the experience of being a member, making new friends and having fun. Perhaps you want to strengthen your leadership potential by taking on roles and leading projects in the ASC.

This guide will give you an overview of the various activities and opportunities available to all members and contains some excellent advice and suggestions on communication. To get the most out of the guide it is important to understand a few things about it:

1. **One of many resources** – This guide is not meant to be your one stop shop for all things public speaking. All through the guide you will be pointed to other tools from the ASC including video content, support resources, online learning, events, and people you can go to for help and advice. Some of these resources will be available through our website while your club will hold some of the tools and forms as well.
2. **Flexible and modular** – We have designed the guide to be responsive to different types of members and able to be understood even if you are only interested in one part, section, or pathway. There is enough information here to give you a thorough grounding in the workings of the entire Association but only when you want to know.
3. **Member at the centre** – We ask our members to tell us why they are a member, what support they need and how we can work together. The whole Association and each individual club will work to create the best learning and the best social environment that they can for you.

We hope that this guide and all the other resources available to you through the Association will be of use to you. Do not forget to keep track of your progress through speaking certificates, competitions, training courses, awards and other communication experiences using "Your ASC Record of Achievement" available on our website.



The ASC Development Pathway



There are so many routes for personal development and growth in the Association and the member is at the centre of that journey. You decide how you become the best version of yourself that you can possibly be.

The Certificates of Achievement for progressing through the speaking assignments described in this guide are designed to recognise and reward your efforts towards becoming a speaker.

Leadership is a skill that can be developed through practise. The ASC has several options available for aspiring leaders to test their approaches and increase their abilities for the mutual benefit of themselves and the Association.

Learning should always be purposeful and there are many ways that you can showcase your talents as a presenter. It can be hard to recognise your own development sometimes. However, when you see your audience responding to you – whether it's in a competition, seminar, fun night or anything else, that is irrefutable evidence of the progress you have made in your journey to becoming a presenter.

A Speakers Club Meeting

When you walk into a speakers club meeting you will receive a warm welcome from people who want you to succeed. Just like you they are there to practise and develop their public speaking skills in a safe environment among friends. The format of club meetings will be different across the country and vary throughout the year to maintain enthusiasm and interest. The core elements of a meeting are:

1. **Prepared speeches** – The speakers will have been approached well in advance to discuss taking on their next speaking assignment and they have prepared a speech to deliver at the club.
2. **Evaluations** – This is one of the most important parts of what we do. Every speaker will be offered advice and feedback in some form so that they can always learn and improve.
3. **Impromptu speaking** – This can take the form of a warm-up 30 second group topic and or introductions from guests at the start of the meeting. It can also be two- or three-minute topics as part of a session.
4. **Education and Development** – This can be an educational session on an aspect of speaking, a development input about the ASC or the club, or something else where someone is offering a contribution towards progressing the club members or the club itself.
5. **Short business session** – A brief formal meeting to deal with club matters.

There is plenty of scope for variation at a club meeting (readings, poetry, famous speeches, comedy nights) and this guide is a great place to start looking for ideas. Some clubs will include a formal business session in their meetings to help manage the running of the club. While this is important it is not the reason most people join a speakers club, so consider doing this at the end, before, or after the meeting.



Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

- Every member achieving speaking confidence.

Mission

- Helping people to become better speakers, better presenters, and better leaders in a supportive environment among friends.

Values

- **Quality** – Employing reflective leadership, self-evaluation, and improvement science we constantly refine our products, services, and environment to improve the member experience and achieve our shared outcomes.
- **Flexible** – We start with the member and their needs and adjust our processes around them. Our education, development, governance, social and other activities all strive to be person centred recognising the values and talents of members both new and experienced.
- **Involving** – We strive to involve members in our decision-making processes from idea development through implementation to reflection. We continually mature the ASC Development Pathway which describes the various ways that members can participate and improve their abilities.
- **Collaborative** – We know that we do not have a monopoly of ideas around public speaking, presentation skills and communication. We actively seek out partners who can enhance our understanding and add value to our learning and development opportunities.
- **Enjoyable** – Learning in the ASC should be fun! From members giving speeches in clubs to the national contests all our speaking opportunities will be pleasurable as well as developmental experiences.



Structure of the ASC

The ASC has clubs across the UK and its structure contains 4 tiers each with a specific role and remit:

- **Strategic Leadership Team** – Provides direction, governance, administration, manages the national website and organises the national conference with support from that year’s regional conference team.
- **Regions** – Single officer, the Regional Coordinator, whose role is to support the national officers on the Strategic Leadership Team and coordinate the areas in their region to organise a regional contest that decides who will compete in the various national finals that year.
- **Areas** – Provide practical management of the ASC with a full committee that meets regularly and is in constant communication with the Strategic Leadership Team and clubs in their area.
- **Clubs** – Members join clubs and the clubs support their members using every asset they have in their club plus all the support available from the ASC.

Regions and Areas of the ASC

Region	Areas
Scotland	Highlands Tayside East Central Scotland Western Scotland
Western	North West England West Pennine South Pennine
Eastern	West Yorkshire Yorkshire and North East
Midlands	South West Midlands North Midlands South East Midlands
South West and Wales	Cotswolds and Wessex Wales
South East	East Anglia South Kent London





Become A Better Speaker





Learning About Speaking

This part of the guide describes our core learning and development offer – the certificates of achievement in public speaking. Each certificate is made up of different assignments and challenges. Specific advice is provided at every step along the way but there are some things that you should think about every time you speak.

Preparation	Choice of Subject
<p>It might seem obvious but every communication trainer and every book on public speaking will tell you that preparation is the key to success.</p> <p>This includes drafting and editing your content, working your visual aids, rehearsing your speech, practising your gestures and voice modulation, and carefully arranging your material into a clear structure.</p> <p>Speaking to an audience is a privilege and the biggest compliment you can pay them for their time and attention is preparation.</p>	<p>Many speakers jump straight into construction and delivery before fully thinking through their subject.</p> <p>Will your subject allow you to complete the assignment by showing off gestures or being humorous? Will your subject enable you to satisfy your reason for speaking about it? Is your subject likely to be of interest to your audience?</p> <p>If you spend 90% of your preparation time thinking about your subject, your purpose and how you want your audience to change... this time will not have been wasted.</p>
Use of Notes	Narrative
<p>This is a tricky area even for experienced speakers and it just takes practise. Whether you use a full script, a mind map, bullet points of discussion topics or any other form of notes, it is important to consider how you will handle them.</p> <p>Notes can become a distraction if they are obvious or if the speaker becomes 'tied' to them. They can also be effective if they are used subtly or employed as a prop with a purpose.</p> <p>Talk to members in the club and practise using different forms of notes to discover your preferred style.</p>	<p>For most speeches in the ASC storytelling, narrative and anecdote should be viewed as tools to help you achieve your purpose rather than a replacement for your speech.</p> <p>The structure, vocabulary, and often the purpose of stories or personal histories is different to that of a speech. It is challenging for the evaluator to give feedback on a speech which is mostly narrative account, story, and anecdote.</p> <p>The exceptions to all of that is the assignment on 'Storytelling and Narrative' and any storytelling competitions held throughout the ASC.</p>

Foundation Certificate of Achievement

This award is given to members of clubs in the ASC who have completed the five assignments relating to the fundamental aspects of speaking. Delivering these speeches will give you a solid grounding in public speaking and increase your confidence as a speaker. Through agreement with the Victoria College of Music London (VCM), speakers who achieve this award are exempt from the theory and discussion elements of VCM exams in Speech/Public Speaking up to Grade 6.

There is no “move on” or “try again” for these assignments. You are at the start of your journey so focus on learning as much as you can both from preparing and delivering your speech and by listening to the analysis and advice from your evaluator. The first three speeches are designed to build on your existing strengths and interests. You can speak on almost anything you like in the ASC apart from party politics, sex, and religion/faith. The more experienced members of the club can support you as you prepare for your early speeches if you like.

Your club will have printed copies of the evaluation forms that are available from the ASC website. You can look through these forms to get a better idea of the communication elements your evaluator will be looking for and that you are trying to demonstrate. If you want more information about the different assignments below, you will find blogs, videos, and other support resources on our website.

“ Since I achieved the Foundation Certificate of Achievement my confidence has increased significantly enabling me to present internally at work and externally to a room of strangers. The process of achieving the certificate has given me a strong grounding in the necessary skills allowing me to take on the higher graded assignments. I have also had the pleasure of meeting a great group of people who have encouraged me to do things I never had the confidence to do before. I have highly recommended ASC to family, friends and peers.”

Claire Thompson, Newport Speakers Club

F1 – Starting Your Journey

The purpose of this speech is to allow you to introduce yourself to the club by speaking either about yourself or a topic you are completely comfortable with. Aim to speak for about 6-8 minutes but if it is shorter do not worry! Look through the ASC “Public Speaking Cheat Sheet!” – available on our website for the basics of speech preparation, construction, and delivery.

This is your first speech at the club so enjoy it as much as you can. The club members want to enjoy this experience with you. Prepare enough to make you feel comfortable and say it out loud a couple of times – spoken English and written English are very different. You will be given an entirely supportive evaluation afterwards as your club begins to support you building your skills and confidence. Congratulations on starting your journey as a speaker.

F2 – Constructing a Speech

The purpose of this speech is to encourage you to organise your facts, feelings, and arguments to greatest effect. Your speech should have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion. A good introduction could include a quote, rhetorical question, shock statement, humorous line, etc. and should give an indication of the purpose of the speech and a subtle outline of what is to follow.

The main body of the speech should contain two to five linked points each organised as mini speeches with their own introductions, bodies, and conclusions. There are different ways that information can be organised: compare and contrast, cause and effect, chronological, categorical, and this is not an exhaustive list. Think about your argument development and if your construction is highlighting your best material.

The conclusion should signpost the end of the speech with its first line. It should summarise the main arguments of the speech and contain a last line that again, by its construction and content, is obviously the final thought. If you can memorise this last line it will help you deliver it in a way that the audience know you are finishing so that they can confidently begin applauding!

When preparing this speech look through the “ASC Speech Construction Guidance” available on our website.

Embrace	Avoid
1. Preparation and lots of it. Refine your purpose and content.	1. A “shopping list” introduction pointing out every single part of your speech to come.
2. Reviewing the “Public Speaking Cheat Sheet!” again.	2. Too much material.
3. Practising out loud and timing it. Start to explore what your voice can do.	3. Saying “in conclusion” or finishing the speech with “thank you”.

F3 – Speaking with Conviction

The purpose of this speech is for you to explore speaking with sincerity, conviction, and persuasiveness.

Pick a subject that you care about. Your objective with a speech like this is to show your audience just how important you think this subject is and start to move them towards sharing your passion. A speaker can get away with many technical errors if they can demonstrate to an audience that they really care.

This is an opportunity for the speaker to consider how to develop a convincing argument. There are different ways to do this including appealing to logic, emotion, or credibility (or all three) and balancing passionate advocacy with calm reflection on counter arguments. Dropping in moments of spontaneity around use of language or humour can encourage your audience to attend to your most crucial points.

Remember you are not dealing with logical creatures but reaching out to emotional people with various motivations. Think about how you will deliver your message in terms of physical animation and tone of voice. Will you be more convincing with a rousing, motivational call to action or a measured, emotive explanation of an unsatisfactory situation? The most successful speakers almost always demonstrate the key ingredients of enthusiasm, vitality, and sincerity in their presentation.

Review some well-known political speeches (from community activism to parliamentary presentations) to get further ideas on how to speak with conviction.

Embrace	Avoid
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thinking about your subject from the audience's perspective. 2. Researching debate tactics and strategies. 3. Practising in front of a mirror. What more could you do to look like a trusted source? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reading your speech. Eye contact connects you and your audience. 2. Going on too long. 3. Antagonising or attacking people... win the argument and win the crowd.

F4 – Using Gestures and Body Language

The purpose of this speech is to develop gestures to help illustrate the meaning of your words and emphasize the important parts of your speech. A big part of communication is visual and how your body behaves in front of an audience will signal to them your comfort level and give them clues as to your intent. Look through “Body Talk”, the 1-page ASC tool for advice on gestures, on our website.

Your stance, hand gestures, facial expressions, body movements and eye contact can all be employed to show the audience that you are comfortable in your role and will also enhance the content of your speech. Be courageous and try out various gestures at the club to discover your style.

Gestures should illuminate your points and add force to your messages. Your audience's acceptance of your argument will be influenced by the quality of your physical delivery. Strive for flowing, defined body movements when making a gesture. Try not to be constantly moving your body and hands as this can become a distraction from the delivery of your speech.

The importance of eye contact cannot be overstated. We understand we are being engaged and listened to not through the ears but through the eyes. Look at an audience member for a few moments and speak before moving on. If you have a big audience split it up into sections and return to them periodically with your eyes.

Try rehearsing in front of a mirror to practise and develop your physical presentation. Your evaluator and other members of the club will be able to offer advice on whether you need to make greater use of gestures or remove some of the physical things you do inadvertently which may be a distraction to your audience.

Embrace	Avoid
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing a “station” position for your hands. 2. Making your gestures visible, bold, and definitive. 3. Facial expressions that transmit feeling and meaning powerfully. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clasping or gripping your hands. 2. Constantly or repetitively moving your hands and body. 3. Staying within yourself. Gestures may seem artificial at first but keep practising and growing.

F5 – Using Your Voice

The purpose of this speech is to increase your ability to make full use of the most powerful tool a speaker possesses.

Begin with audibility and articulation because if your audience cannot hear or understand you then you will not be able to create an impact. Most speakers rush when they are nervous so consciously slow down your pace of word delivery. Tension will also tighten your facial muscles so try to relax and fully form every word. Adopt a relaxed but open posture and increase your volume of breath without going too full.

Experiment with alterations of pace and pitch. Use a pause to inject emotion, draw attention to an important point or reflect the content of your speech. Intonation, emphasis, briefly taking on the voice of a character, straining, singing a line, repetition of vocal delivery (e.g. high fast voice to a low slow voice over three sentences back to back)... there are so many ways that the voice can be engaged to bring life to a speech.

Try watching monologues delivered by famous actors and actresses and listen to what they do with their voices. Meaning is found in our words, supported by our body, and carried by our voice and when all these things “speak” together you will make a real impact on your audience.

Embrace	Avoid
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sticking with your regional accent (if you can be understood). 2. Putting reminders in your notes when you are doing something special with your voice. 3. Preparing your voice... after all, athletes stretch before exercise. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Slipping into dialect can alienate if audience members do not follow the meaning. 2. Varying your voice for no reason. 3. Staying within yourself again. This is your chance to really explore what your voice can do.

ASC Certificate of Achievement

This award is made to members of clubs in the ASC who have successfully completed the Foundation Certificate of Achievement and have completed the five assignments relating to the developmental aspects of speech making. Through the agreement with the Victoria College of Music London (VCM), speakers who achieve this award are entitled to direct entry to the Grade 8 (Gold Medal) examination in Speech/Public Speaking and are exempt from theory and discussion elements.

When you attempt these assignments, your evaluator will offer constructive feedback and advice and will let you know whether you need to “move on” from this assignment or “try again”.

You have the fundamentals of communication in place but as you build towards your A5 showpiece speech and for speaking outside the ASC – it is important that you can incorporate use of language, storytelling, humour, and rapport. These are the tools that will allow you to reach out to your audience and enable your message to make an impact with them inside or outside the ASC.

The A5 speech is evaluated by two members – one from your club and one from another club. Your club will have printed copies of the evaluation forms available that you can look through to get a better idea of the communication elements you are trying to demonstrate and see the criteria you are being evaluated against.

“ Completing the ASC Certificate of Achievement enabled me to concentrate on the feedback provided and improve on specific areas within my preparation and delivery style in a safe and friendly environment. Since completing the certificate, I feel more confident and less anxious about delivering a social speech or business presentation and have been invited to speak at some very large events including the CIPD Conference, Olympia 2016.”

Steve Pamphilon, Thanet Speakers Club

A1 – Vocabulary and Word Pictures

The purpose of this speech is to investigate how imaginative words, phrases and descriptions can illuminate meaning and create attentiveness in your audience. Alliteration, repetition, simile, metaphor, hyperbole, analogy, metonymy, understatement, parallelism, and antithesis are just some examples of the ways that language can be reconstructed to be surprising, attention grabbing, and memorable. Onomatopoeia is probably the strongest tool for drawing together what is in the mind of the speaker and what is in the mind of the audience.

For some advice and examples of these and other types of literary techniques look up the “Using Language Creatively” tool available on our website.

Word poverty, cliché and vagueness hamper many speakers when trying to connect rational and emotional appeal. Try and provide detail so that your audience can imagine the picture you are trying to create. ‘A cluster of Delphiniums’ is a more compelling description than ‘a bunch of blue flowers’. ‘A tear rolled down her cheek’ creates a more arresting image than ‘she was crying’. Remember the senses, how did a situation smell, sound, taste or feel?

Rehearsal is particularly important here as you are moving beyond your everyday use of language. Take the time to prepare well and be as precise as you can when crafting your vivid images. Use this assignment to truly reach your audience and achieve beautiful impact!

Embrace	Avoid
1. Coming back to your speech to see if the same images come up.	1. Cliché and vagueness.
2. Looking to poetry and plays for examples of figurative imagery.	2. Overcomplicating things. Simple language well-crafted creates powerful images.
3. Practising your gestures. Are they giving the same message as your words?	3. Using words that are difficult to pronounce and or understand!

A2 – Storytelling and Narrative

The purpose of this speech is to allow you to be creative and imaginative by sharing experiences and events through words, sounds and visual images. Terry Pratchett, a master storyteller, said “imagination, not intelligence, made us human”.

Storytelling brings meaning, feeling, and context to ideas that may be dry and lifeless by themselves. You can create the extraordinary out of the ordinary. An effective storyteller captures the attention of listeners and accomplishes the goal of storytelling by sharing an experience, conveying information, teaching an important life lesson, or persuading listeners to take some action while being entertaining.

The speaker may draw on their own life experience or it may be totally fiction, even fantasy. But you will need all the other elements of a good speech, such as a clear construction, use of word pictures, gestures, etc. as well.

Storytelling is a performance, bring energy and enthusiasm, be dramatic and passionate. Using the space around you allows you to be active and animated. Consider how you can create powerful images using words, ‘She had fire in her eyes’ creates a stronger word picture than ‘she was upset’. Dramatic pauses, good eye contact and a liberal sprinkling of emotion will enhance effect, heighten drama, and draw your audience into the story.

When preparing for this assignment read the storytelling section in the “Become a Better Presenter” section of this guide.

Embrace	Avoid
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Crafting characters that people can relate to and support. 2. Balancing between storytelling for its own sake and speaking with purpose to an audience. 3. Practising your voice music. Stories speak to emotions, so your voice needs to support that. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long and dense narrative. 2. Complex storylines. Remember that your audience cannot re-listen to your speech like they can re-read a passage in a book. 3. A story without a direction, moral, purpose, or lesson.

A3 – Using Humour

The purpose of this speech is to enable you to get a better understanding of humour – what works, why it works and how humour can be meaningfully deployed to enhance your main points. For this assignment you are not being asked to suddenly become a comedian! You are being asked to try to analyse why situations and jokes seem humorous to you so that you can begin to understand what makes humour such a powerful tool.

Humour can provide moments of light relief for the audience where they can briefly let their attention wane before the speaker draws them back in. It can also be used to highlight a serious message thus making it more likely that the audience will remember the point. Remember you can successfully use humour without the need for your audience to be roaring with laughter.

You can establish audience rapport with self-deprecating humour, build credibility with well-crafted linguistic playfulness, startle your audience with a joke that draws out some fundamental truth or influence your audience’s emotions with a funny story. There are plenty of books about using humour and telling jokes and YouTube videos of after dinner speeches. Humorous speech contests will also provide good reference material for learning.

Embrace	Avoid
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Watching and listening to comedians and comic actors. 2. Reading books of jokes, anecdotes, and one-liners. 3. Testing out your speech and humour prior to delivery. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Being rude or offensive. 2. Delivering a string of jokes without structure or purpose. 3. Copying well known jokes from high profile comedians.

A4 – Developing Audience Rapport

The purpose of this speech is to take all the technical tools you have learned in the previous assignments and use them to generate an affinity or harmony with your audience. Connection or rapport is what all speakers are aiming to achieve because this shows that your audience has empathised with your core message or perhaps your own story.

Subject choice is particularly important for this assignment as you want to induce a reaction from your audience – surprise, thoughtfulness, silence, laughter, etc. Speakers who talk about what life has taught them will always have their audience’s attention but try to avoid making the entire speech a personal history or narrative. These are tools for building a bridge to the minds of your audience.

The use of pause is another important tool here as you need to provide time for your audience to think through the salient points of your speech and be affected by them. You may want your audience to laugh, cry, think or applaud. Whatever reaction you are aiming for, be brave and pause to allow them the space and time to do so.

For this assignment draw on learning from the process of ‘Applied Speaking’. Consider your broad purpose (entertain, inform, persuade, or pay tribute) and write down how you want your audience to change by the end of your presentation (your specific objective). This will help you refine and strengthen your key messages and edit what material you keep and what you let go.

Embrace	Avoid
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making your core message as inclusive as possible. 2. Using humour to bring moments of levity, comfort, and relief. 3. Pausing. Become comfortable with silence while your audience reflect and take in your ideas. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thinking that you must be funny to achieve rapport. 2. Being reliant on your notes. Eye contact is important. 3. Rushing. Take note of your audience reaction and adjust the pace of your speech and word delivery accordingly.



A5 – The “Showpiece”

The purpose of this speech is to confirm your ability to deliver a polished speech, demonstrating all the skills that you have developed in the previous nine assignments. Reflect on all the progress you have made and the skills and experience you have gained on your journey so far. Review old evaluation sheets if you have kept them and talk to experienced members of the club for advice.

You also have the Area Training Officer and the National Education Director to go to for support. For this important speech, prepare and rehearse (out loud and against the clock) as much as you can. Make sure you have looked through the evaluation form, so you know what you need to demonstrate.

Remember that both of your evaluators will be looking for evidence of the skills and techniques built up over previous assignments. Make it easy for them to find and tick off good construction, interesting word pictures, well developed rapport, etc.

This is a challenging assignment, but you are ready for it. Take your time when getting set up, enjoy the speech as much as you can and afterwards make sure you think about just how far you have come since the first day you walked into the club.



Diploma in Public Speaking

This award is given to members of clubs in the ASC who have successfully completed the ASC Certificate of Achievement, gained the skills and experience to deliver speeches outside the ASC and completed five of the assignments below relating to the challenging aspects of public speaking. Through agreement with the Victoria College of Music London (VCM), speakers who achieve this award are entitled to direct entry to the Licentiate Diploma in Speech/Public Speaking.

These assignments are designed to test your new skills and stretch your abilities. As such, your evaluator will be looking for a high standard of communication competence and a tangible delivery of the features from the assignment being attempted. These are the challenges that most closely mimic “real life” speaking. Your club will have printed copies of the evaluation forms available that further describe the standard expected at this level and shows the criteria you are being evaluated against.

“ I enjoyed the challenge of attaining the Diploma in Public Speaking which really honed the skills I had already learnt in the earlier speech assignments. I am enormously proud of that achievement and it has genuinely helped me gain confidence to speak to an audience. I also feel it has given me the validation to support and encourage newer speakers and this is something I am very passionate about.”

Gwendolen Rowe, Craven Speakers Club

D1 – The Impromptu Speech

The purpose of this speech is to challenge you to deliver fluently with little time for preparation and no time for rehearsal. You will need to combine all the skills, experience and learning you have gained from previous assignments and taking part in Topics in the club to achieve this goal. Your club Education Director will offer you a choice of three titles and give you ten minutes preparation time in a quiet area.

Use whatever processes or techniques you prefer (mind mapping, brainstorming, cluster diagrams, rich pictures, etc.) to quickly marshal your ideas, thoughts and feelings and structure them into a coherent and purposeful presentation. Consider annotating your notes with reminders of where to include illuminating word pictures and or expressive gestures. This is arguably the most challenging assignment in the Speakers Guide. When you have successfully completed the Impromptu Speech... you will have proved that you can speak anytime and anywhere.

D2 – Speaking to a non-ASC Audience

The purpose of this speech is to extend your experience and achieve our shared goal when you started with the Association – to become a demonstrably better communicator outside the ASC. You already have the necessary skills, confidence, and abilities for this speech so all that is left is preparation for the event. When speaking in any situation a great separator between adequate delivery and true success is preparation.

Ask as many questions of the host organisation as you can and get as much information prior to speaking as possible. What's the venue like, what are the aims of the organisation, what communication modes are the audience used to, number of people attending, what facilities are available, any taboo subjects, time allocation, is a question and answer session expected, does anyone need to be mentioned by name? This is not an exhaustive list so do take the time to carefully consider everything around delivering the speech.

Have an open, honest conversation with your key contact in the organisation about what you both want to achieve by delivering the speech and how you want your audience to change. If these motivations and desired outcomes can be aligned, then you are much more likely to give a presentation that will satisfy everyone involved. Make use of personal history, narrative and storytelling to connect you, your message, and your audience. Almost all successful professional speakers do this.

D3 – Using Presentation Aids

The purpose of this speech is to explore how presentation aids can enhance your message and enable you to have a greater and more lasting impact on your audience. It is important to remember that visual aids are not a replacement for the speaker. There are three key things to think about when using a presentation aid whether that is a flipchart, prop, presentation software, or anything else:

1. **Purpose** – Visual aids at their best make the audience more curious about the speaker's message. A high-quality photograph or short statement on a presentation slide will drive your audience to you for insight and explanation.
2. **Accessibility** – If presentation aids are going to make an impact then they must be as accessible as possible. Ask about your audience's accessibility needs prior to speaking, consider how you will share a visual aid (up on a screen, in your hand, being passed around the audience, etc.), make sure the venue has technology available for good sound and video presentation, etc.
3. **Handling** – Practise a lot so that your handling of the presentation aid (physical or software) is seamless. When you are not actually using a physical aid, hide it from the audience unless there is a clear purpose in keeping it visible. Otherwise it will become a distraction. When you do not need a presentation slide, use the "B" button on your computer to blank the screen, thereby making sure your audience refocus their attention on you.

Since TED Talks became open to everyone via YouTube there has been a constant stream of examples of speakers using presentation aids effectively. Make use of this resource when you are preparing for this assignment.

D4 – Two other assignments drawn from:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a) Giving a lecture | b) Making a business presentation |
| c) Speeches for occasions | d) Prepared speaking without notes |

D4a – Giving a Lecture

The purpose of a lecture is to educate your audience on a topic in which you are extremely well versed. The challenge of this assignment is putting across detailed and complex information that will allow your audience to learn more about the topic and retain the key information.

Taking account of different learning styles and introducing multiple communication modes (speaking, presentation aids, storytelling, question and answer, use of imagery and analogy, etc.) will make it more likely that you will reach your audience on an intellectual level. Also try to consider how your audience might feel about the subject and how you are talking about it – 'People will never forget how you made them feel.' – Maya Angelou. With so much to think about and a high degree of subject knowledge required, this assignment will take as much preparation and construction time as an A5 Showpiece speech, if not more!

D4b – Making a Business Presentation

The purpose of this assignment is to persuade and motivate your audience towards a product or service, to instruct them in an element of business, or to inform them of forthcoming changes which will affect them. Knowing your precise purpose is everything for this type of speech. What is your ask and what is your offer? Make sure that your message is strong and simple while retaining enough flexibility to handle questions or challenges. Remember that brevity is the key to clarity.

People will always act for the most part in their own interest so what levers will you employ to shift your audience's thinking? Reviewing the basics of debating (pathos, ethos, and logos) and watching videos of business pitches is useful preparation for this assignment. When crafting your speech, consider how you will make what is important to you become important to your audience. Whatever you are "selling", remember to talk about the why as well as the what and the how. Consider lacing your speech with interactive elements to build interest and excitement in your idea.

D4c – Speeches for Occasions

The purpose of this assignment is to challenge you to deliver a presentation that has a specific remit. This could be a toast, eulogy, wedding speech, after dinner speech, response, welcome, vote of thanks, etc. Speaking to fellow ASC members is your first and potentially best source of guidance as they may have been on a similar journey to you. Then there exists a wealth of knowledge and advice on the internet for every speaking occasion. Prepare thoroughly by drawing on different references and arriving at a style of speaking that reflects your own but is tailored for the task.

Listening is hugely important here. You can demonstrate a high competence and care for your audience's experience by building on comments from other speakers or shifting your speaking style slightly towards others. Self-deprecating humour is also a good option for social occasions. This device can generate levity and enjoyment in the room and is a fantastic method of developing audience rapport whether your objective is to make your audience laugh or to allow them space to reflect.

D4d – Prepared Speaking Without Notes

The aim of this assignment is to develop your ability and confidence to speak to an audience without using notes while still giving a well-constructed and effective speech. The most successful speech is the one in which the speaker and the audience complement each other. This rapport can be achieved by the skilful speaker who takes the time to prepare and rehearse the speech well in advance of the assignment but who has not necessarily learnt the speech by heart. Here there is also an excellent opportunity to develop the use of the pause.

This speech can appear daunting but consider all the times you have delivered successful Topics. Think about those times when you have prepared so well for a speech that your notes have become superfluous. Consider the lengthy political, philosophical and social discussions you have and never once refer to a script! This speech is well within your reach and is fantastic preparation for competition speaking, business presentations and talks to large audiences or even in your community.

It is a huge advantage if you have a strong level of knowledge or a great affinity with the subject matter. Also carefully consider your methods of idea generation and material arrangement (mind map, journey, brainstorm, etc.). This speech can be the final bridge between methodically preparing and delivering speeches using every rhetorical device in existence, and holistically exploring a communication topic and then standing up and speaking... not presenting, reading or reciting... but speaking extemporaneously so it looks to the audience like the thoughts are just coming to your head and you are immediately vocalising them. This level is where speaking in public really changes from an anxious and exciting activity, into a way for you to explore yourself, your subject, and your audience.



Certificate in Applied Public Speaking

This award is made to members of clubs within the ASC who have successfully completed six “Applied Speeches”. Through the agreement with the Victoria College of Music London (VCM), speakers who achieve this award are entitled to direct entry to the Associate Diploma in Public Speaking and Diploma/Associate Diploma in Speech and are also exempt from theory requirements for these awards.

Applied Speaking is the parallel and complimentary pathway to our other certificates where the focus is on building up your skills, abilities, and confidence. This award and the process of Applied Speaking focus on achieving change in your audience. For each applied speech, the speaker completes two copies of the “Applied Speaking Form” – one for the Chair and one for the evaluator (if an assignment is also being attempted).

Alongside standard information such as the title and timing, the speaker also chooses the capacity in which they are speaking and the makeup of the audience. Crucially for the process, the speaker must choose one of four broad purposes – Entertaining, Informing, Persuading or Paying Tribute – and specify an objective indicating how they want their audience to change because of the speech.

Following delivery, the speaker turns away from the audience and the Chair asks if the audience believe the speaker achieved their specified objective (by show of hands). Most of the audience must agree that the speaker achieved the objective set for it to be a successful applied speech.

Regarding the title of this certificate, “applied” refers to the types of speech that best suit the speaker’s personal needs or aspirations. It is up to each speaker to choose their own preferred combination of broad purposes. Also, rather than the criteria and difficulty being set by the assignment, they are both set between the speaker and the audience.

An experienced speaker can expect to have to work harder than a new speaker to win the votes of their audience and has an opportunity for growth by setting themselves more challenging specified objectives. Other reasons for exploring this form of speaking include

- Traditional assignments can be attempted alongside the applied speaking process so improvement can be accelerated
- The process is attractive to young professionals and businesspeople who may need immediate support with their communication skills
- Audiences may be more attentive since they will have a decision to make at the end of the speech!
- Assignment evaluations can be improved because they will have more information available to them earlier
- Experienced members have a fresh challenge

Your club will have printed copies of the “Applied Speaking” forms available.

“The Certificate in Applied Public Speaking provides an ideal platform for delivering ‘real world’ speeches. It affords the speaker the luxury of practising a speech aimed at a specified audience who are only interested in one thing: are you worthy of their interest? I have used this approach to help me prepare for speaking at my 50th wedding anniversary. Having witnessed the tears of disappointment from my wife when I messed up a birthday tribute, I am looking forward to tears of joy this time around! Gaining the certificate itself was not so important to me but the experience of gaining it has been invaluable.”

Neil Walker, Edinburgh Speakers Club

Topics and Impromptu Speaking

The purpose of the Topics session is to encourage and develop the speaker’s ability to speak spontaneously without any previous preparation. The session is a vitally important part of your training. Your reputation as a speaker will be substantially enhanced by your ability to rise to the unexpected occasion.

Most new members regard the Topics session with varied degrees of apprehension. This tension, the butterflies in the stomach, is quite normal, but rather than trying to overcome your nervousness, what you should be aiming for is to control it, channelling your nervous energy into the effort you are about to make. Take a few seconds to gather your thoughts. Develop your theme and try to be thinking of your ending. Remember all the speaking skills of voice, body language, etc. and use them to full effect.

Just as when a topic of conversation arises in a social situation, you do not reach for your notes or keep everyone waiting while you marshal your thoughts, so it is with the Topics session. You can embellish, adapt, alter, and bend reality. A Topic should be a mini speech, with a beginning, middle and end. It should be well constructed with balance and a logical flow through to a conclusion. Try to start and finish with a memorable statement. Although this is not always possible, it is something to aim for – the first and last words you speak are the ones your audience will remember.

Within ASC, most Topics have a time limit of up to three minutes. The aim is to use that time to best advantage in speaking on the subject. There is no need to use all the time – it is better to end naturally than simply try to fill the time. The aim in Topics is to combine clarity with conciseness; to match what needs to be said with the time allowed. There is no requirement to be funny. Humour suited to the subject and tone of the speech is helpful, but unrelated jokes and wisecracks should be left out.

Remember that an audience is a group of individuals. Try to address phrases to people in every section of the audience. Establish eye contact with each of them but watch that this does not lead to jerkiness. No one pretends that it is easy, but it can improve with practise and it is essential if you are to achieve a successful rapport with your audience.

Topics provide an excellent opportunity to practise the presentation of your speech. You do not have a script and are not tied to notes, so your hands and body are free to demonstrate gestures. You can see your audience and can involve them visually. Concentrate on your voice by developing variation in pace and volume. When you are stuck for a word, experiment with the length of a pause.

Evaluation and Advice

Possibly the most important part of what we do in the Association is evaluation – offering useful analysis and helpful advice for speakers to develop themselves. Constructing effective feedback and delivering it in a manner that the speaker can receive it positively is a key skill in the world of work. Done well, an evaluation should be a learning experience for all involved – evaluator, speaker, and the audience.

Our form of evaluation aims to be speaker centred and give equal importance to analysis and advice. Remember that the most important person in an evaluation is the member who has just delivered the speech. If evaluation is to be meaningful then it must serve the interests of the person who took the opportunity to speak in public. Receiving feedback is not an easy thing to do, so take care not to overload the speaker with too much. Even if you mean well you may be hurting the speaker’s confidence. There are three key elements to any evaluation:

1. **Analysis** – What was good about the speech? What made those things good and why were they effective? What could be captured and replicated by the speaker and by everyone else listening to the evaluation? What could have been improved in the speech? What was the key factor in this thing not doing what the speaker wanted it to do? Why are the things you have chosen to focus on in your analysis important? Remember that you are assessing the strength of the speech – not cataloguing every success and fault.
2. **Advice** – How can the speaker maintain the strong parts of their speech? What can we all learn from the best parts of the speaker’s presentation? How can they improve other parts of their speech? Can you provide an example of what that improvement would look like for the speaker and for everyone else listening to the evaluation? Why is improvement in the areas you have chosen to focus on especially important? Remember that you are providing a pathway for progression to the speaker – not listing all the ways they could do better.
3. **Delivery** – Your evaluation should be a well-constructed speech delivered with enough clarity, warmth, and concern for the speaker that they are willing and able to take on the learning points. Remember that you are not there to show what a great evaluator you are – you are there to provide advice to the speaker in a manner that they can receive it.

Evaluations should ideally be a learning experience for all, but the most important person in the process is the speaker. It is primarily their journey being supported and they are potentially the most vulnerable, so we start with the wishes of the speaker. Always ask the speaker the meeting before they will be speaking: “What form of evaluation would suit them, and their learning needs best?” This might be a single evaluator delivering from the speaking platform, an open forum group evaluation, every member of the audience writing three positives and one area for improvement on a piece of paper, the “Evaluating Evaluation” game found on the ASC website or a private discussion between the speaker, evaluator and whoever else the speaker wishes to involve (education director, general evaluator etc).

General Evaluation

The role of the General Evaluator is a combination of learning adviser and safety net. The member assigned to this role each meeting needs to provide a summary of the meeting to draw out why the meeting was a success or how it could be improved. There is a template available on the ASC website which is a good place to start. They will also offer advice and guidance to those who have not been evaluated (usually the chair, speech evaluators and Topic speakers). The most difficult part of the General Evaluator's role is to tackle where any part of the meeting that has made members feel uneasy and if necessary, to adjust speech evaluations if a misinterpretation has occurred or if mistakes have been made.

Every effort should be made to safeguard those involved, including discussion with members at the interval or leaving out details from the presentation and dealing with any issues 'offline'. Not everything has to immediately be made public through the final presentation from the general evaluator.

General Evaluation can be handled in several different ways just like speech evaluations. The traditional approach is an experienced member taking on the role providing clear feedback on the whole meeting usually lasting no longer than ten minutes. However, this approach can load too much onto a single member and neglects breadth of opinion.

Alternatively, the evaluator could take questions at the end of their general evaluation or your club may decide to split this role into 'Topics Evaluator' and 'General Evaluator'. The General Evaluation could also be done by way of open, whole group feedback. With speech evaluations, we start with the wishes of the member; so with general evaluations ask your fellow club members what type of general evaluation would best keep everyone safe, maintain the standards of the Association and maximise the learning for all.

Visit other clubs to see how they take on this role. Invite members from other clubs to be your club's General Evaluator for a meeting. The best general evaluations will explain difficult concepts and tackle challenging issues in the context of the club and its members. It should not re-evaluate the speeches, cover every point in the meeting or be used as a platform for bravado. It is the last opportunity in a club meeting for everyone to move forward as speakers so when it comes around to your turn, remember why this role is so important and who it is for.



Agreement with Victoria College of Music, London

ASC certificates have been recognised and approved by the Victoria College of Music London, which is an international awarding body in music, drama, and communication. This is not an accreditation process and our awards remain ours but now with added recognition and approval. An articulation pathway has been agreed, so anyone wishing to take VCM exams in speech or public speaking will benefit from direct entry and exemptions from theory elements and detailed Q&A, depending on which certificate they have achieved:

1. ASC Foundation Certificate of Achievement – Exemption from discussion and questions in Grade exams up to Grade 6 Speech/Public speaking
2. ASC Certificate of Achievement – The certificate holder is entitled to direct entry to the Grade 8 (Gold Medal) examination in Speech/Public Speaking and is exempt from theory and discussion elements
3. ASC Certificate in Applied Public Speaking – Direct entry and exemption from theory requirements for Associate Diploma in Public Speaking and Diploma/ Associate Diploma in Speech.
4. Diploma in Public Speaking – Direct entry to Licentiate Diploma.

The ASC will also be highlighted as a learning partner in the VCM syllabus, which is distributed all over the UK and internationally. This is the most in-depth and formal agreement ever undertaken by VCM and is the only arrangement of its kind in the speaking world. The agreement creates an articulation pathway to VCM exams, recognises the prior learning of ASC member candidates and provides international exposure for the ASC.



Beyond the Diploma

First, congratulations on becoming a “Distinguished Speaker of the ASC”! To reach this level you must have delivered many speeches to a high standard and will almost certainly have engaged in topics, evaluation, chairing meetings, participating in contests, speaking about ASC to others, attending ASC events and social functions and visiting other clubs. You are a far more powerful communicator than when you started your journey! So, what is the next step for you? As always, we want you to be in control of your learning but there are several ways that the ASC can continue to support you and develop you as a speaker.

VCM Exams – The agreement with Victoria College of Music, London is the only one of its kind in the world. When the ASC decided to pursue this route, we looked at several institutions but VCM stood out because its approach and values aligned so closely with ours both in principle and in practice. Its sole aim is “to encourage” and the way they conduct their exams reflects this. The exam content is flexible and progressive, and the requirements and processes are completely transparent. The people coordinating the examinations at public centres all over the UK are welcoming, friendly, and supportive. VCM wants an examination with them to be a genuinely positive learning experience and its systems, people and resources are all designed to achieve that objective with you.

Further Challenges – Public speaking offers an almost unlimited learning experience if you have a commitment to improving, a developing imagination and access to innovative ideas. In getting this far you have shown that the first two qualities are yours and we can support you with more ideas. On our website you will find a collection of “Further Challenges” describing all types of communication scenarios that you can use to test your abilities and gain new skills. Speaking as a journalist, delivering a series of linked speeches exploring a controversial topic, giving a speech with a partner, presenting a technical speech, giving a eulogy, and doing stand-up are just a few of the options available to you. Stretching your communication muscles by taking on further assignments will maintain motivation and better prepare you for the various situations you will face when speaking out in the world.

Speaking Outside Your Club – More qualifications and different speaking challenges are great preparation but what we really want in the ASC is to prepare our members adequately for speaking with confidence and quality to audiences outside of the Association. Look for opportunities to practise speaking in different venues and situations. Contests provide several chances for speaking either as a contestant, organiser, or target speaker. Social events such as dinners, open days and celebration evenings are good opportunities as well. Talk to your Area Training Officer about leading a seminar or learning event at another club or at an area event.

Speaking Outside the ASC – Finally, just go ahead and speak anywhere! Rotary clubs need to fill their speaking programme, English Speaking Union run regular events, local community groups and groups on Meetup and Eventbrite need speakers as well. You are ready... go do it!

Become A Better Presenter





Become A Better Presenter

The ASC offers many different options and opportunities for building on the skills, abilities, and confidence which can be gained from moving through the speaking certificates. Three main national contests in speech, evaluation and topics are complimented by other events across the Association including team speaking, raconteur (storytelling and narrative), applied speech and debating competitions. The full exploration of the speaking toolbox, focused preparation process and dynamic high-quality delivery make contests one of the best ways to learn about communication.

If competitions are not to your liking, then there is a myriad of other ways you can develop your skillset. Whether at club, area, regional or national level there are resources and members available to support storytelling, poetry, use of visual aids, online speaking, games and activities, fun nights, debates and learning from famous speakers and speeches from history. National Conference and other events such as area and regional celebrations regularly have seminars involving leaders from inside and outside the Association. You can also take part in “World Speech Day” either by recording a speech and uploading it to YouTube or holding a WSD event.

Speech Contest

Contestants in a speech contest need to prepare a 6-8-minute speech on a topic of their choice and then deliver it on the day of the competition to the best of their ability. A team of judges decides the result by following the speech contest rules and guidance and using the speech contest mark sheet. Speech contests are a fantastic opportunity not only to develop you as a speaker by taking part but also by listening and learning from the other contestants.

Evaluation Contest

An evaluation contest begins with a member who is not taking part in the contest delivering a speech (target speaker) while the contestants watch, listen, and make notes. The contestants are then given time to organise their notes and thoughts before delivering the best evaluations they can. A team of judges decides the result by following the evaluation contest rules and guidance and using the evaluation contest mark sheet. Providing high quality feedback in a way that the speaker can use to improve and develop is the most important part of what we do. Practising the what, how and why of analysis and advice and delivering that feedback as a good speech is a great way of learning about speaking.

Topics Contest

Contestants in a topics contest are informed of the topic by the contest Chair as they enter the room and have the time it takes to reach the contest speaking area before delivering a 3-minute speech on that subject. A team of judges decides the result by following the topics contest rules and guidance and using the topics contest mark sheet. Impromptu speaking is a challenging discipline and superb training for real life situations. The topics contest is the highest level of this form of speaking.

Team Speaking Contest

Whilst almost all the activity within a club is individually focused this exercise allows a group of members to work together to produce a presentation which is a combination of their different approaches and delivery styles.

The team usually consists of three members and each prepares a short speech about one word of a given three-word phrase e.g. "Red Letter Day". The speeches stand alone and need to link with the other two to illustrate the given phrase.

There have been successful examples of Team Speaking Contests everywhere across the Association and you will find a "Top Ten Tips of Team Speaking" on our website.

Applied Speaking Contest

As is described earlier in this guide, an Applied Speech aims to achieve a change in the audience, be it better appreciation of an unknown topic, paying tribute to a forgotten hero, or persuading people of an argument. This style of speaking presents new and interesting challenges for the speaker, so it makes for a different form of speaking contest. In an Applied Speaking Contest one of the major changes is that there are no judges, but rather the audience votes for the winner – it is after all the audience the speakers are trying to influence.

The Chair will have an important role in running the contest, as there are a few concepts that might need to be explained to the audience. The Chair must give the speech titles, but also, they must outline the purpose of the speech as described to them by each speaker. This should be a simple one-line description, stating which of the four categories the speaker is attempting to address (i.e. Entertaining, Informing, Persuading or Paying Tribute) and what the speaker's stated purpose is, e.g. "This is a speech aiming to persuade the audience about caring for former racing dogs."

After all the speeches have been heard the audience votes. Note that the audience should not vote on the "best" speech, but on the speech that has best met the stated purpose. With this in mind it can help if the Chair repeats the stated purposes after all the speeches have been heard. This is just an outline of how to run the contest; other variables could be thrown into the mix. For instance, when delivering a normal Applied Speech in the club, you can 'choose' the audience you are aiming for. An extra category could be that the speaker can ask the contest audience to pretend they are someone else – it could be tricky, but it might make for some interesting speeches! Another option, if the Chair has someone happy to do some maths, could be the audience ranking their top three speeches and the top three places worked out by some swift additions. Also, the timings are entirely variable. If there are lots of contestants, these speeches could be made very short, challenging the speakers to meet their goals in less time.

Applied speaking is a great tool to take us as speakers a little closer to the "real-world" and slightly further from the traditional performance-like "speech" we might present at a club or a competition. It is a good skill to learn, but why not make it into a bit of a competition at the same time?

Raconteur Contest

Instead of a normal club meeting consider hosting a Raconteur contest and invite other clubs to join in:

Plan: Invite several members, with advance notice, to tell a story. About six storytellers is right. The storytellers can tell any story they wish with no lights or timings. As always in ASC, nothing religious, political, or sexual. The stories may be funny or sad, poignant, or trivial, fact or fiction, personal or non-personal.

Promote: Encourage club members to invite family and friends to the event to be part of the audience and/or invite other clubs along to the event.

Prepare: Help your speakers – refer them to the guide "Become a Better Raconteur". Make sure your stage, and the audience space, is set up appropriately. Lay on refreshments, check the heating, etc.

Present: Have a club member chair the event, introducing and linking each storyteller. After hearing all the stories your club may wish to give feedback through a group evaluation, or turn it into a contest, and invite the audience to vote for their preferred storyteller – perhaps with a small prize for the best raconteur.

Publicise: Post an account of the meeting, with photographs, on both the ASC and your club's website and Facebook pages. Get a review published in your local newspaper (if you have not invited the editor to your meeting).

Postscript: Remember, above all, it is supposed to be a fun event.

Debating

Debating is different in many ways from the other activities within the Association. It may seem daunting at first, but it is incredible how much progress will be made during the debate. Participants will rapidly forget the fact that this is mainly impromptu speaking, determined by listening and quick note-making in response to the opposition. Being an effective debater inevitably means enhancing speaking skills. Researching evidence, the discipline of structuring the main debate speeches, listening carefully to the other side and the need to include vital spontaneous elements will all make a vast difference to the other activities enjoyed at speakers club meetings.

Whilst it is probably wise to choose debating topics (motions) which avoid direct reference to religion or politics, topical subjects often provide a good debate. With a little preparation on the part of the main speakers creating a sound, structured case supported by concrete evidence, a debate is an exhilarating experience for both the speakers and the audience. Everyone in the club can be involved through the main speeches and the floor debate; there is also the opportunity for chairing a much more heated event than normal. And the handshakes at the end are important too!

Storytelling

What are we trying to achieve when we tell a story? Storytelling is the sharing of experiences and events through words, sounds and visual images. Storytelling promotes understanding of other people and cultures. In a story we feel connected to others and this promotes compassion, tolerance, respect, and responsibility. It connects us as all as a family and community. With a story, a listener can personally experience fear and heroism, love and hate, compassion, sorrow, grief, and joy in a controlled and safe environment. Where else but in storytelling could you experience high adventure, magic and mystery or tender love in such safety? Storytelling develops presentation skills and complements our traditional offer:

- It is a less formal method of speaking in front of an audience
- For new members it is a more relaxed start to speaking publicly
- Storytelling offers the opportunity to develop communication skills which are easily transferable to professional or personal life
- Feedback can easily be given less formally through group evaluations
- Experienced members have a fresh challenge

How to prepare your story

1. **Choose your story** – Whether it is an event, an experience, a personal tale, or something totally fictional, be appropriate. Do not tell stories that have an offensive theme or content. Do not make your audience feel uncomfortable or embarrassed.
2. **Set the context** – You know what happened, and where your story is going, but your audience does not. Start by introducing details that a good reporter would include, to set the scene, and introduce your characters.
3. **Avoid tangents** – It is easy to get lost in the detail, especially if you have a mind that tends to wander and are not that good at editing your thoughts. As fascinating as they may be, these diversions will only distract and perhaps frustrate your audience.
4. **Stick to the script** – The more often we tell a story, the more details we tend to add, and as we do, the story drifts further and further away from the original. Enhancing and improvising, even as you deliver your story, is fine, but make sure you stick to the point.
5. **Short and Sweet?** – Often less is more; five minutes can be enough for many stories, although some stories may benefit from being shorter or longer.
6. **Perform** – Practise your delivery, rehearse your gestures, work up your performance. What does practise make? Perfect!

How to tell a good story

- Get excited Storytelling is a performance. You need energy and enthusiasm. Get passionate and dramatic.
- Be expressive When you tell a story, use your face. Smile if it is funny, frown if it is sad.
- Keep it short A good story does not need to be too long. Keep it short and punchy.
- Use emotions Liberally sprinkle your story with emotions. For full impact, do not be afraid to use a wide range from 'elation' to 'despair'.
- Maintain eye contact This gives the audience a sense of involvement in your story.
- Use vivid language Convey powerful images through use of words - 'she had fire in her eyes' creates stronger word pictures than 'she was upset'
- Use movement and gestures Be active and animated, use the space around you.
- Use dramatic pauses Allow time for your audience to process what you have said, pauses enhance effect and heighten drama.
- Invite interaction Use questions to draw the audience into your story to evoke sympathy, empathy, and understanding.

Poetry

A poem will live or die depending on how it is read, perhaps more so than with any other type of public speaking. It is therefore important to give yourself plenty of time to read the poem both quietly to yourself beforehand and to practise out loud.

Look up unfamiliar words and make sure you know what they mean and how to pronounce them. Spend time making sure you understand the sentiment and emotion behind the words, as well as getting a feel for the natural rhythm and flow of the poem. This will not only help you bring the poem alive but helps your audience to follow, absorb and process your words.

Whether you are reading the poem from memory or from notes, speak slowly to ensure the poem is clear and understood and think about any emphasis required for each word. Pace, pause, and intonation are important with poetry reading but try not to overdo it. There is often a fine line between conveying emotion and being overly dramatic.

Make sure you pause where the punctuation suggests a pause and not just at the end of each line as this may interrupt the flow. Finally, try and remain relaxed. As you practise reading a poem out loud, you'll probably find you come to a deeper understanding and appreciation of it than you would have if you just read the poem to yourself and this should not only help build your confidence and enjoyment but of course improve your delivery.

Historical Speeches

Many speakers clubs hold “Historical Speeches” sessions where a whole club meeting is given over to the members delivering speeches from history. These can be famous speeches, little known speeches by well-known speakers or obscure speeches deemed worthy of note by the member delivering them.

This form of speaking generates huge enthusiasm and interest in audience members and challenges the speaker to deliver someone else’s words and investigate how that alters their own delivery style. Some examples are provided below to give you a few starting ideas but look out for books and websites with titles such as “Future Speeches”, “Famous Speeches”, “Speeches that Changed the World” or “Doomsday Speeches” (usually unused presentations prepared in case a historical achievement had actually turned out to be a catastrophe).

“Our house is falling apart” – Greta Thunberg speech to EU leaders, 2019

“Women’s rights are human rights” – Hilary Clinton, United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995

“Tryst with Destiny” – Jawaharlal Nehru address to the Constituent Assembly of India in New Delhi, 1947

“In the Event of Moon Disaster” – Prepared for Richard Nixon if Apollo 11 had been left stranded on the Moon.

Speaking Online

In an age of fast, reliable, and highly available internet connectivity, it is now possible to hold high quality conversations with people from all around the world. Advances in software mean applications can be used to hold multiway conversations where everyone can see everyone else. This, in turn, makes it possible to hold club “meetings” completely, or partially, online.

All that is required is for the participants to have a computer with speakers and a webcam and an internet connection. Online speaking is generally done while sitting down and this presents some new and interesting challenges:

- Are you properly framed in your camera so that everyone can see you?
- Is the lighting setup making you appear in shadow?
- What type of microphone works best for you? Is it a desktop mic, a headset or just the built-in microphone on your laptop?
- Are you making best use of facial gestures and making sure that any hand gestures are visible?
- Are you making more use of vocal variety to enhance your speech?

For a wholly online meeting there needs to be some discipline, and just like a physical meeting there needs to be someone “in the Chair” to control who speaks when. Participants should make use of the mute function when not speaking and unmute themselves when invited to speak. Timekeeping signals can be a challenge and the speaker should make certain that they can see the timekeeper on the screen before they start their speech.

For a partially online meeting a separate webcam is better than one built into a laptop, so that it can be pointed at the current speaker. If possible, a projector or large screen TV/ Monitor should be used, so that everyone in the room can see the remote speaker(s). As well as club meetings it is also possible to carry out committee meetings, mentoring sessions, and other activities online.

Seminars

We are incredibly lucky in the ASC to be able to draw on a diverse range of talent and experiences from within the Association for the benefit of our members. Seminars have always been one of our most important learning vehicles and a great way of challenging advanced speakers to progress further while sharing their knowledge.

The ASC has now evolved a signature approach that includes interaction, playfulness, and curiosity. Using different techniques, including innovative games, exploration of topics from varying perspectives, respectful discussion and practical exercises, the ASC consistently delivers seminars that engage and inspire.

The change and improvement journey that motivated the creation of this revised Speakers Guide has also attracted experts from outside the ASC to deliver seminars for us and the ASC can now call on partners to enhance our learning events.

Games and Activities

Games and gamification of our standard activities can be a fantastic way of making public speaking fun and accessible. The ASC has developed several games and activities to bring communication learning to life in clubs by injecting fun, energy and play into what can be difficult concepts. You will find a list of games available on the ASC website including “Ditch the Dull”, “Speaking Statues” and the “Know It All Shawl”!



Fun Nights

The focus of most club meetings is helping members to reach their potential as speakers and leaders, by delivering speeches and evaluations and taking on essential roles within the meeting. It is nice to break with that tradition now and again and replace all or part of a meeting with some fun activities. In this sort of light-hearted atmosphere, members often excel without the pressure of having to succeed at an assignment. Here are a few suggestions.

Prepared Speeches – Make sure lots of notice is given so that participants can craft a good story. A five-minute time limit is often best to allow more participants.

- Some festive tales for Christmas – These can be fun stories from members' childhoods or even Christmas disasters that happened as adults.
- A tall tales meeting – Encourage speakers to make these stories as outrageous as possible, but with just a hint of believability.
- A spooky story night for Halloween – A bit of atmospheric lighting and a few spooky props can really enhance this sort of session.
- A balloon debate – This is where participants must convince the audience they do not get thrown out of a rapidly descending balloon to reduce the weight. Participants can take on the role of a historical or current prominent figure.

Topics

- The continuing story – Ideal for topics. The first speaker responds to the given topic and the next speaker must continue from where they left off. The final speaker must bring the story to a proper conclusion.
- Just a minute – When given a topic the speaker must attempt to continue without hesitation, repetition, or deviation from the subject. Anyone can interrupt the speaker and the person speaking when the time is up wins. This is best done with all participants standing during the speaking so that changeovers are quick.
- Lucky Dip – Instead of being given a topic verbally, the topic leader gets participants to select objects from a bag, which the speaker must then talk about.



World Speech Day

Speak to the World! Every year in March, people from all over the world give speeches at World Speech Day (WSD) events or record them and upload them to YouTube. Speeches change the world: your world. Public speaking skills have the power to change lives and catapult careers.



What is World Speech Day? It's a celebration of the power of a speech to bring communities together, share ideas, and change lives. World Speech Day has now grown into live public speaking events in over 90 nations across the globe

Where did WSD come from? The idea came from founder Simon Gibson's work in establishing a free database for contemporary and historic speeches. Speeches change the world: socially, politically, in the arts, business and religion. They play a profound role in holding our societies together and shaping change.

The idea was born: a day to celebrate speeches and speech giving around the world and to reach out to unexpected voices with remarkable ideas everywhere.

How can I take part? Anyone can host a WSD event. Find a space in your school, college, community hall, office, or even in a café. Release the power of speech making around you. Or you can give a speech! Everyone has ideas and everyone can have a voice on World Speech Day. Just one voice can change everything.





Become A Better Leader





Why would you get involved in leading the Association?

Leadership is a life changing skill. If you want to achieve change in your community, manage a creative team, campaign on a social issue or be a senior executive in a company, having strong leadership capabilities and a clear understanding of your approach is crucial.

The Association offers a range of pathways for practising leadership through taking on roles, completing awards and organising major events. We want our people to be able to bring their full selves to the Association sharing all their learning, talents, and gifts for the benefit of their fellow members. Some of the greatest experiences you can have and the best friends you can make in the ASC, come through being part of a leadership team that runs a club, delivers an event or leads the whole Association.

Chairing a Meeting

One of the first steps you can take in the ASC to develop yourself as a leader is to take on the role of being in the Chair. The role of the Chair is to manage delivery of each part of the meeting so that the participants feel as comfortable as possible and the audience members are as informed as they can be.

Before the meeting, speak to club members who have done this before for advice and guidance about how club meetings generally proceed and what resources they have available such as templates and agendas. Also ask them about their experience of managing problems that arise and how you can be prepared (what could you have ready to do if a speaker does not show up, for example).

On the night try to arrive early and make sure the room is laid out correctly and all the equipment (lights, timing device, lectern) is properly set up and working. As people arrive check with all the participants (speakers, evaluators, timekeepers, etc.) to make sure they are ready to go. Get the speech titles and timings from each of the members delivering prepared speeches.

Then when you are called up to begin chairing the meeting, your preamble should include how the night will proceed, who is taking part and what they are doing. As you move through each activity in the meeting remember to consult the timekeeper. Also practise linking one part to the next with some light humour or observations. At some point you will hand over to the Topic's Chair who runs that part of the meeting.

The role of the Topics Chair is to deliver the impromptu speaking part of the meeting to members in a manner that allows speakers to develop their skills and confidence. However, you choose to run the session (all topics on a theme or not, two- or three-minute topics, allowing responses or not) there are a few things that should happen every time:

1. Involve people who have not yet spoken
2. Give members topics with enough scope to allow full and creative speeches
3. Thank each topic taker on their speech

Between the Chair of the meeting and the Topic's Chair it should be possible to involve most members in any meeting through speaking, evaluating, taking a topic, or taking a role such as timekeeper. Below is an example agenda of a typical club meeting:

- Welcome from the Chair
- Warm up activity (30 second topic for everyone, a reading, a game)
- Three speakers
- Three evaluators
- Break
- Topics session
- General Evaluation
- Business session
- Programme for the next meeting

If your club has a 'Business Session' in their meetings, it will usually be chaired by the Club President. The purpose of a business session is to record attendance and apologies, raise points requiring action by club members, make decisions about the club, monitor finances and review correspondence. It is up to each club to decide if, how and when they conduct business sessions and below is an example agenda:

- Welcome from the President
- Attendance and apologies
- Minutes of the previous meeting
- Matters arising from the minute
- Correspondence
- Any other competent business

ASC Leadership Awards

The Association presents many opportunities to explore and develop your leadership abilities and style. These awards can provide focus, motivation, and recognition, as you become a better leader. The National Development Officer encourages you to complete these challenges and have your achievements and learning recognised.

Bronze Award – Leading Yourself

1. Have completed the Foundation Certificate
2. Evaluate an F1 – F5 speech
3. Evaluate an A1 – A5 speech
4. Run a topics session or be a topics evaluator
5. Be a General Evaluator
6. Chair a meeting
7. Visit another ASC club
8. Attend an ASC event outside your club
9. Write a few lines summarising what you learned for The Speaker magazine

Silver Award – Leading Your Club

1. Complete the Bronze leadership award
2. Complete the ASC Certificate or Certificate in Applied Public Speaking
3. Evaluate an advanced speaker
4. Be a judge in a contest
5. Chair a club contest
6. Serve terms in two different roles on the club committee at least one of which should be President or Education Director
7. Serve a term in area or region office
8. Organise a substantial club event (club contest, dinner, gathering etc)
9. Write a paragraph summarising what you learned for The Speaker magazine

Gold Award – Leading Your Association

1. Have completed the Silver leadership award
2. Have completed the Diploma in Public Speaking
3. Evaluate an A5 speech as the outside evaluator
4. Chief Judge at a contest
5. Judge at region or national
6. Chair an area or higher contest
7. Serve a term as an area president or regional coordinator
8. Help start a new club or salvage a failing club
9. Organise a substantial area or region event
10. Write a half page summary of what you learned for The Speaker magazine

Evaluation and Judging Awards

The Association is always looking to drive up standards of evaluation as this is arguably the most powerful way that people develop as speakers. By being evaluated in a friendly, supportive, and constructive way and by offering evaluations of other speakers, we can gain a deeper insight into the various strands of communication excellence.

High quality judging is crucial for ensuring that our competitions remain as fair and equitable as possible and these awards celebrate and enhance speakers as they become better evaluators and judges. The National Education Director and National Development Officer look forward to rewarding your efforts and sharing your learning with the membership.

Accomplished Judge and Evaluator

1. Evaluate five Foundation and/or A1 – A4 speeches
2. Evaluate an A5 speech in your own club and another club
3. Evaluate a D1 – D4 speech
4. Take on General Evaluator role in your club and another club
5. Complete a training event or online course on evaluation/judging
6. Judge at five competitions
7. Chief Judge at one competition
8. Judge at national competition
9. Write a paragraph summarising what you learned for The Speaker magazine

Distinguished Judge and Evaluator

1. Be an Accomplished Judge and Evaluator
2. Facilitate a creative approach to evaluation (whole group discussion, evaluation game, Q&A etc)
3. Evaluate five A5 speeches
4. Evaluate five D1 – D4 speeches
5. Lead a training event on evaluation/judging
6. Chief Judge at five competitions
7. Chief Judge at national competition
8. Judge at a competition outside the ASC
9. Write a half page summary of what you learned for The Speaker magazine

Club Officer roles

The club is the most important organisational level of the ASC. It is where most members will spend most of their time focusing their efforts and their learning. Leading your club in any of these capacities can be incredibly rewarding as you get to see immediate and tangible results from your efforts to support your fellow members. Everyone in ASC should at some point take on a role with their club because the benefits are so rich, long lasting, and two-way.

Role	Remit
President	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chair the business meeting on club nights• Coordinate the work of the club committee• Represent the club whenever necessary• Organise the club annual general meeting• Ensure the club's activities conform with the aims and objectives of the ASC
Development Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produce the club programme with the committee• Contribute to club recruitment strategy• Manage promotion of the club to the public• Support club executive members in their various roles

Education Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise learning activities within the club and arrange events with partner organisations and other clubs • Keep up to date with learning and development initiatives • Ensure full use of The Speakers Guide by club members • Communicate with the National Education Director and request certificates of achievement for club members
Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take minutes of club meetings and AGM • File club records and archives • Maintain club membership records • Handle club correspondence • Recipient of mailing from the National Secretary
Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure financial stability of the club and keeps accounts • Collect subscriptions and capitations fees • Purchase items from the National Materials Officer • Produce an annual balance sheet for scrutiny at the club AGM and examination by a third party • Advise the club on its financial position
Social Convener	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise annual club dinner • Coordinate other social events • Welcome guests and visitors to the club • Arrange catering for club meetings • Contribute to club social media activity
Webmaster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the club website • Coordinate the club's online presence including social media • Manage club email address • Encourage members to provide regular content updates

Area Officer roles

Practical management of the ASC exists here. Supporting collaboration between clubs, facilitating creative partnerships within the ASC and with external partners, encouraging learning and development activities, delivering social events, and translating themes from the Strategic Leadership Team into real initiatives for the benefit of members and clubs.

Role	Remit
Area President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise and chair team meetings • Deliver a report on their activities • Be aware of initiatives from the Strategic Leadership Team • Support team members to deliver their roles • Coordinate with other Area Presidents in their region and the Regional Coordinator to organise the Regional Contest
Development Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise area AGM and contests • Coordinate promotional activities such as website, social media and press work • Support establishment and maintenance of clubs and encourage engagement with leadership awards • Communicate with the National Development Officer
Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take minutes of meetings and Area AGM • Communicate with clubs • Coordinate area correspondence • Communicate with National Secretary
Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the Area bank account • Provide updates on financial matters • Communicate with the National Treasurer
Education Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver contests at Area AGM • Organise training events • Motivate members and clubs to engage with the ASC Development Pathway, World Speech Day, evaluation awards, Victoria College of Music, and other initiatives • Communicate with National Education Director

Regional Coordinator

The Regional Coordinator has three jobs, all designed to maximise their talents and scale up success and growth at club and area level:

1. Contribute to the direction of the ASC and decision making of the Strategic Leadership Team
2. Supplement direct communication from the National President to the members and receive feedback from members in their region to share with the Strategic Leadership Team
3. Lead organisation of the regional contest in February or March each year

The Regional Coordinator is not expected or required to visit clubs. They can support clubs and areas who are demonstrating innovative practice and trialling fresh initiatives, but they should not lead on them as this is a practical management function which belongs to the clubs and areas. How they manage ongoing two-way communication with their areas is up to them (attend area meetings in person, by video link or keep in touch by phone and email for example).

National Officer roles

These people are the Strategic Leadership Team of the ASC. The team's function is to provide a clear and strong guiding strategy around education, development, growth, involvement, governance, and innovation. Taking on a national role is one of the most challenging and rewarding things you can do and will provide a turbo boost to your journey in becoming a leader.

Role	Remit
National President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceremonial and administrative head of the Association looking after the interests of all members • Ensure the Association is well governed in accordance with its constitution and run fairly and equitably • Chair the National AGM and at least two meetings of the Strategic Leadership Team • Manage Strategic Leadership Team so that the officers can carry out their roles effectively • Promoting the interests of the Association

National Vice President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputise for the National President • Contribute to the strategic development of the Association • Attend all meetings of the Strategic Leadership Team • Be a member of the Constitution Committee and other working groups • Undertake varied responsibilities including being a representative for the Association at events and meetings
National Education Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the ASC Development Pathway • Organise seminars, contests and the 'Speakers Marketplace' at National Conference • Create educational content for ASC members • Set the education and training strategy for the ASC • Coordinate learning initiatives with club education directors and area training officers
National Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the National President with the conduct of meetings and liaise with officers at every level of ASC • Send out the national mailing 2-3 times a year • Maintain an ASC database, produce the directory, and deal with enquiries from our website • Collect and produce documents for use at the National AGM and prepare them for the Conference booklet • Have custody of the Constitution and Rules of the Association and general records and documents of the ASC
National Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain an accurate record of ASC finances • Highlight finance concerns • Regularly update the Finance Committee • Continually seek financial improvements
National Development Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support establishment and maintenance of clubs • Offer clubs advice on web sites and social media • Run webinars on social media • Manage YouTube channel • Offer clubs advice on membership growth
National Materials Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend ASC events to make materials available • Ensure value for money for purchases • Improve materials obtained • Measure success of material requests • Deliver orders in a timely manner

National Conference

The National Conference is where the business of the ASC is agreed and where the National Contests are held. The conference is the one opportunity a year to network with all the Association, to build up contacts and make new friends. The conference normally runs over three days, and includes an AGM, competitions, seminars, a marketplace, Gala Dinner, and other events.

At the AGM you meet your new Regional Co-ordinators, your new National President, and other National Officers. The whole weekend is designed to be a celebration of speaking. You also may be requested to take part in the competitions as a Judge, Chief Judge or Contest Chair. These are not onerous roles but are an opportunity to put into practise your experience and expertise developed at Club and Area levels. I recommend to all ASC members that they strive to attend a National Conference as there you will see and experience the best in speaking and understand the level of work carried out by the Strategic Leadership Team.

Role	Remit
Convener	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select a team that will successfully deliver conference • Provide collaborative leadership alongside Strategic Leadership Team • Write a vision for the conference providing a strong creative direction for the team • Organise and chair meetings
Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep records and action points from meetings • Liaise with National Secretary on membership involvement • Liaise with Strategic Leadership Team and external partners on administration and management of conference • Support all team members in their roles
Chief Steward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select a volunteer team that will deliver conference • Support the volunteers in their role • Manage the day to day running of conference • Ensure the competitions, seminars, marketplace, and other events are supported • Field complaints and coordinate response involving other members of the team where necessary
Event Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be responsible for delivering the gala dinner and raffle • Produce a menu and speaking agenda • Organise room and table layout • Decide on seating arrangements liaising with Secretary

Publicity Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a communications plan for conference • Manage conference website content • Coordinate social media activity liaising with Chief Steward if volunteers are running channels • Create physical publicity materials • Formulate key messaging for the conference
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Competition roles

Contests are a fantastic learning experience for ASC members and a wonderful social occasion bring people together to support their club, area, and regional representatives. To deliver high quality contests that enable members to show the best versions of themselves, we need motivated members to fulfil these key positions at every level from club through to the national finals.

Role	Remit
Contest Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be familiar with the contest rules and process • Explain the process of the contest to all those involved and draw the order of speaking • Ensure everyone required for the contest is available, ready to proceed and understand their roles • Involve the audience effectively by guiding them as to when they should applaud, when they should remain quiet to allow time for the judges to consider their thoughts, etc. • Invite the Chief Judge to offer their thoughts, help present the trophies, and congratulate everyone involved
Contestant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be familiar with the process of the contest and the criteria used to judge the contestant presentations • Adequately prepare for the contest through speech rehearsal or practise of evaluation or topics • Listen to the pre-contest brief from the contest Chair and ask any questions you might have • Deliver your presentation • Seek feedback from audience members, contest judges and fellow contestants in a spirit of learning and improvement

Chief Judge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be familiar with the content and process of the judging sheet and the criteria used to judge the contestant presentations and ensure that the team of judges are just as prepared • Consider each presentation on its own merit, mark them according to the prescribed criteria for the contest and apply a rank order to the contestants based on their marks • Collect the rank orders from all the judges and produce a final rank order for the contest • Discuss end of contest remarks with the team • Deliver final remarks and present trophies
Judge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be familiar with the content and process of the judging sheet and the criteria used to judge the contestant presentations • Consider each presentation on its own merit and mark them according to the prescribed criteria for the contest • Apply a rank order to the contestants based on their marks • Relay their rank order to the Chief Judge • Contribute to the discussion around the Chief Judge's remarks on the contest
Timekeeper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be familiar with the process and timings of each competition • Accurately time the presentations made by the contestants and the evaluation contest target speaker • Work the competition lighting system effectively • Efficiently report the times to the chair and the meeting if called upon to do so • Provide information to the Chief Judge relating to penalty points incurred by any of the contestants

Usher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be familiar with the process of the contest and their role in that process by listening to the Chair delivering their pre-contest brief • Ensure that the contestants know the order of speaking so that they are not surprised or alarmed when called upon to speak • Chaperone the contestants in the waiting area prior to them delivering their presentations • Look for a signal from the contest Chair for when the next contestant needs to be brought to the contest area • Take the contestants from the waiting area to the contest area and let them know when they should approach the performance area
Target Speaker (evaluation contest only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequately prepare for the role on the night • Be familiar with the rules and guidance for delivering speeches in an ASC context • Deliver a speech to be evaluated by the contestants of the evaluation competition • Be prepared to accept thanks and possibly a gift from the contest Chair • Take notes from every contestant's evaluation and learn from the feedback



Supporting Your Journey

It is all about you

The Association wants to meet you where you are. We all join for different reasons and we know it is important to help you develop in respect of your own goals and ambitions. There are so many different skills and capabilities you can develop and enhance starting with the obvious objectives of improving your confidence and competence as a speaker.

There are also the skills of evaluation to embrace, as well as impromptu speaking, and within each meeting there are the opportunities to learn more about chairing meetings. The mechanics of running a competent AGM are also extremely valuable skills to master and have helped many go on to become very competent at facilitating group meetings and committees. There are several leadership roles at club, area, regional and national level too.

We also focus on additional skills like using microphones or PowerPoint presentations. Other roles and responsibilities include managing finances, hosting a website and adeptness at social media. Later, as you develop your confidence you may wish to judge speaking contests in local schools or support other organisations in their work with young people and adults. Beyond the shore of your club there are opportunities to participate in inter-club competitions, area, regional and even national speaking competitions.

Finally, the fun and camaraderie within clubs and an opportunity to make great friends are reasons enough to join us. So, wherever you start, or wherever you are headed, we are here in support of you all the way.

Partners and Supporters

English Speaking Union Scotland – <https://www.esuscotland.org.uk>

Victoria College of Music, London – <https://www.vcmexams.co.uk>

Scottish Poetry Library – <http://www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk>

Rhetoric Game – <http://rhetoricgame.com>

World Speech Day – <http://www.worldspeechday.com>

Rotary Great Britain and Ireland – <https://www.rotarygbi.org>

RNIB – <https://www.rnib.org.uk>

CPD Certification Service – <https://cpduk.co.uk>

Young Enterprise – <https://www.young-enterprise.org.uk>

Organising contests, dinners, and other events

Why would people want to give up their free time to attend an ASC event? That is the first question any organiser should work on because that is what you need to sell. The content of the day and how it will be delivered are important but start with providing an answer for why people should engage.

Consider the size and make-up of your team and talk to people who have previously organised events. There is the programme, catering, venue, budget, marketing, event management and communication (ASC members, public, press and social media) to consider so draw in as much support as you can. What is going to make your event unique? You could invite a special guest, deliver the entire event to one theme, provide take away resources, showcase innovation or celebrate success.

For the practicalities of putting together an event check out the ASC website. You will find templates and resources drawn from previous successful initiatives such as 'Find Your Voice', 'Speaker Sunday', 'World Speech Day' and the 'President's Dinner'. Our events should reflect the Vision, Mission and Values of the ASC and show us at our best in how they are organised and delivered.

Communication in the ASC

Practical management of the ASC rests with the areas and clubs while the strategic direction is set by the Strategic Leadership Team. The ASC is most successful when our strategy is informed by the areas and clubs who make it come to life. We achieve this state when everyone talks to each other and there are several mature, multi-directional communication channels in the ASC.

- Mailings from the Strategic Leadership Team to clubs are distributed 3 times a year by the National Secretary to clubs by email, or by post if required.
- Several direct mailings to members are distributed twice a year – National President to all members and national officers to club officers who share their brief (education, secretary etc).
- 'The Speaker' magazine is published in spring and autumn each year and is free for every member. It contains Association news, views, and events. It also contains entertaining or instructive articles submitted by members.
- The website is the main source of information for the public and for members. Here members can find electronic copies of various ASC documents
- The ASC has several social media channels including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
- Members wishing to make their views heard by the Strategic Leadership Team should contact their Regional Coordinator whose details are available in the directory (emailed out by the National Secretary). You can also contact your Regional Coordinator through the ASC website.



Become a **better speaker,**
better presenter, and
better leader