



## **international debate education association**

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### **International Trainer Accreditation Process and Standards**

#### **I. The Mission of IDEA**

The International Debate Education Association (IDEA) believes that free and unabated discussion is essential to the establishment and preservation of open, democratic societies. Through debate and speech activities — powerful means of encouraging analytical thinking, personal expression, and tolerance for the opinions of others — IDEA provides students and teachers with the opportunity to examine issues affecting their lives and their communities, and empowers them to participate confidently in public discourse.

The following set of standards have been created in order to ensure the quality of all programs carried out under the auspices of IDEA. In addition, this document is an articulation of a ‘Code of Ethics’ that IDEA hopes its members, partners, and affiliates will embrace.

IDEA possesses no investigative agency, nor any coercive authority over its members by which it will enforce these guidelines, but rather, extends them as principles of accreditation and standards to which its members should hold themselves accountable. IDEA appeals to all its members, partners, and affiliates to review them, adapt them to their local circumstances, and then accept them *voluntarily*.

#### **A. Scope of the Standards**

The standards and rules outlined in this document apply to all members of the Dutch-registered International Debate Education Association (IDEA-NL). The General Assembly (GA) of IDEA-NL retains ultimate authority over these standards.

These standards have also been voluntarily and independently endorsed by the Board of Directors of the United States-based International Debate Education Association (IDEA-USA). IDEA-USA has adopted these standards as guidelines for its activities, including those IDEA-USA sponsored activities performed in conjunction with IDEA-NL. IDEA-USA will employ these standards for accrediting trainers, clubs, coaches, and judges in the United States.

#### **B. Modification of the Standards**

This document does not comprise a set of unalterable rules, nor are these standards listed herein all-encompassing. The standards will no doubt evolve and take shape over the course of time, drawing from the feedback and experience of IDEA and its members.

Proposals for changes to this document must be submitted, in written form, to the IDEA-NL Accreditation Committee at least one month prior to the annual General Assembly meeting. For a description of how the Accreditation Committee is constituted see Section II.B., Accreditation Committee.

The Accreditation Committee will review all proposed changes to this document and will present its recommendations in writing to the members of the General Assembly at least one month in advance of the annual meeting. The General Assembly must approve changes to the document by

a majority vote. If a change to the document has passed, it will be immediately binding on IDEA-NL members. The change will then be submitted for approval to the board of IDEA-USA for approval. In the event that the IDEA-USA Board does not approve the change, that change will have no effect on its operations and procedures.

## **II. The Accreditation Process for International Trainers**

### **A. The Importance of Accreditation**

Accredited International Trainers share the vision and goals of IDEA and have successfully completed all requirements of the International Trainer accreditation process. Additionally, they demonstrate a readiness to train others within the educational framework and principles of IDEA, to provide leadership within the organization, and to implement international debate training seminars.

Once a trainer has been accredited (either locally or internationally) he or she will be an International Trainer for two years. During this time they can conduct trainings, and should then input information from these trainings – including information regarding the training's participants – directly into [DebateTracker](#). Based upon this information, trainers will then be able to print "official" IDEA certificates for distribution. International Trainers may offer certificates acknowledging the completion of IDEA seminars and workshops.

IDEA's International Trainer standards and the associated assessment and accreditation process are designed to meet three needs:

- To serve as tools for participant self-assessment
- To serve as a focus for peer evaluation and exchange of experiences related to effective training
- To serve as the basis for certification in order to establish and maintain International Trainer standards.

International Trainer accreditation is seen as a developmental process, one in which participants who do not initially receive accreditation are provided with clear recommendations and effective mentoring so that they can prepare for a subsequent process of accreditation. When trainers familiarize themselves with these standards and assessment processes and incorporate them as goals into a personal commitment to excellent training, they are taking an important professional step for themselves and the audiences they serve.

### **B. The Accreditation Process**

#### **1. The Accreditation Committee**

The Board of IDEA-NL, in consultation with the most experienced trainers, will appoint the International Trainer Accreditation Team. These assessors will, in turn, be eligible to select additional International Trainer assessors. The selection of assessors will be based upon the following criteria: (1) understanding of and adherence to the principles of the IDEA speech and debate programs; (2) outstanding service as trainers, coaches, and mentors; (3) the geographical and linguistic needs of the project; (4) exemplary leadership qualities, including the ability to provide constructive feedback and make decisions, and (5) ability to reflect on their own practice and that of others.

Initial accreditation of international trainers is the accreditation of individuals upon meeting, at least, certain criteria established by IDEA. It serves to acknowledge the participant's contribution to training others internationally, nationally, and locally. The

IDEA International Trainer Accreditation Team will initially accredit international trainers based upon nominations. In addition to submission of the portfolio, the applicant is required to provide summary of the person's training background. The minimum requirements for the initial accreditation of international trainers are:

1. track record of upholding the standards outlined in this document
2. minimum of 7 years of involvement in debate activities
3. minimum of 5 years of training experience
4. minimum of 2 international trainings (at the Forum or more regional trainings)

After gathering information from an applicant's submitted self-reporting documents and the assessors reports, the International Trainer Accreditation Team will make a determination on accreditation status. The Accreditation Team will engage in ongoing discussions with consultants and applicants.

## 2. International Trainer Accreditation Application Requirements

- a. The applicant must submit a portfolio to be assessed by an International Trainer assessor.

The portfolio constitutes the foundation for the commencement of the accreditation process. An incomplete portfolio, or a portfolio that does not fulfill the requirements as they are presented in the assessment standards, are the basis for rejection of the prospective applicant. In such a case, the assessors should contact the applicant and request that the portfolio be completed. The assessor can also review the portfolio with the applicant during the assessment seminar, and ask questions for clarification, elaboration, and reflection. The portfolio and training background summary can currently be submitted through an on-line application process at <http://oas.idebate.org/idea>.

- b. The applicant must participate in a structured interview with an assessor.

The assessor will make an appointment to meet with the applicant. This appointment should incorporate time for (a) a complete presentation observation and (b) an interview regarding both the presentation and the portfolio.

The assessor should request any missing evidence or information that is deemed necessary to determine whether or not a particular standard has been met. If several pieces of evidence or information are lacking, the assessor should counsel the applicant as to the steps required to complete the process at a future time.

Applicants who do not receive a successful assessment in their initial application are given the opportunity to develop and/or reinforce their evidence and qualifications and repeat those parts of the certification process in which they were not initially successful.

[Instructions for International Trainer Applicants](#) and information on the [International Training Interview](#) provide more complete information on requirements.

## 3. International Trainer Standards

Below, please find a listing of responsibilities and qualifications that define an effective trainer. The standards set forth below are designed to be both transparent and accessible to those who accredit and those being assessed for accreditation. An International Trainer standard is considered "met" when sufficient evidence has been provided via the presentation observation (or an observation of the *preparation* of that presentation), the portfolio, or during interviews, that satisfy that standard.

IDEA not only sanction trainers but will sanction trainings that meet IDEA standards specified in [Sanctioning of Tournaments and Trainings](#).

a. Knowledge and Presentation Skills

- (1) The trainer's practices reflect his or her understanding of the goals of the IDEA speech and debate program and the ability to convey these goals. To these ends, an IT:
  - demonstrates a clear understanding of the concepts and areas related to speech and debate
  - employs appropriate terminology and conveys the concepts of speech and debate in a way that is sensitive to the audience
  - understands the importance of teaching speech and debate in a civic society and makes appropriate, relevant connections to the world outside of the classroom environment
- (2) The trainer demonstrates a firm grasp of the principles of learning, and understands how a trainer's individual teaching practices relate to these principles. To these ends, an IT:
  - relates principles to practice by providing authentic examples from the classroom
  - anticipates, stimulates, and responds effectively and accurately to questions about the principles and strategies of speech and debate education
  - adapts speech and debate principles and practice to the needs of their audience
- (3) The trainer is able to present the content of their session in a style that is both engaging and comprehensive, but which also takes into consideration other presenters. To these ends, an IT
  - employs a lively and engaging workshop presentation style that is sensitive to participants and consistently demonstrates effective and appropriate interpersonal skills
  - shares his or her responsibilities with co-presenters and waits respectfully until they have finished
  - makes appropriate use of training aids in order to facilitate the learning process

b. Organizational Skills

- (1) The trainer has strong organizational skills. To this end, an IT:
  - demonstrates foresight in anticipating problems, and flexibility in solving them
  - demonstrates the ability to plan session content, including the scope and objective of sessions, time requirements and scheduling, and staff assignments. In addition, a trainer will use evaluation, observation, and feedback for the purposes of future planning
  - demonstrates the ability to prepare required materials.
- (2) The trainer demonstrates the ability to work within a team. To this end, an IT:
  - actively contributes to the development of a project, shares her or his ideas with other members of their training team, and provides comments and solution
  - delegates responsibility
  - is sensitive to different points of view and to the needs of others, and is able to achieve consensus

c. Professional Growth/Ethics

- (1) The trainer addresses his or her own professional needs and development, and shares knowledge and skills with others. To this end, an IT:
  - is professionally active as a conference presenter, author, and/or researcher. She or he is also a member of professional associations (as pertains to their positions, disciplines, and professional interests)
  - has established, and is implementing plans to improve their personal career skills and knowledge
  - is an effective advocate of speech and debate in their professional lives and models in their own teaching
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- (2) The trainer upholds high professional ethics and standards. To this end, an IT:
  - demonstrates fairness and respect for all, without regard to gender, ethnicity, language, or culture.

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