

HANDBOOK

House of Commons

12th Edition

DARE TO
SPEAK



Welcome to the Handbook for EAFITMUN 2022 House of Commons, here we will explain everything about procedure, order of the day, the way motions are intended to work, how to use points, and how the debate will be carried out.

Roles

The Chair

- **Speaker:** is the supreme authority in the chamber, his/her key role is to keep order and moderate the debate. He is also an MP.
- **Deputy Speaker/Chairman in Ways and Means:** when he/she is in the Chair, shares authority with the Speaker but also has additional responsibilities within private bills and subsidiary committees.

Delegates

- **Member of Parliament (MP):** represents the interests of a specific constituency, they participate in debates and propose new laws in bills, to this house, MP's will amend the drafting bill and debate.

Logistics/Floor Secretary

- **Serjeant in arms:** the role of the serjeant in arms is to enforce the warrants of the Speaker and to keep order.

Strangers

- Sponsors and press delegates.

Protocol

Discipline

Due to the procedure and costumes of the House, some of the dispositions in the delegate's Handbook shall not apply in the chamber. However most of the general sanctions contemplated in the Handbook which do not compromise the normal procedure of the house, will apply. Thus, the Speakers will decide when to "name" a member according to the general rules of the model and the costumes of the house.

The first aspect to consider is that in the rules (EAFITMUN 2022 Delegate Handbook), there are not such things as warnings, instead there is the process of Naming which will be explained later.

When the offense is not significant, the Speaker may correct or warn the MP who committed the offence several times before naming him/her. Furthermore, when there is a major offence the individual may be named at once. Besides, interrupting and muffing an MP while speaking is permitted in the house if it is not very offensive or disrespectful. Gestures and sarcasm are permitted in the chamber.

Naming a member

“If a Member has disregarded the authority of the Speaker, or has persistently and wilfully obstructed the House by disregarding its rules, he or she (after generally being given every opportunity to apologize or respond) may be ‘named’. That is, the Speaker says “I name Mr”. In such instances, any MP, rises and makes the motion “that Mrbe suspended from the service of the House”. A division may follow: if the motion is agreed to, the Member is directed to withdraw, and suspension follows (for five minutes for a first offense). A second offense in the same session will lead to suspension for 10 minutes, and a third, to suspension for a period that the House has to decide.”

Offences which leads to a “Naming” are:

- Repeatedly referring to other MPs or the Chair with disrespect or without the respective titles or constituencies.
- Repeatedly defying the authority of the Speaker.
- Misconduct: it may include obstruction of the work in the house, being late when entering the committee, use of unauthorized electronic devices, eating inside the room, among other conducts which shall be considered by the Speaker. Note: the disregard of the dress code, the schedules and other aspects will lead to verbal warnings.
- Abusing of the costumes of the House during the debates.

Standing order 42 and 43

“The Speaker, or the chair, after having called the attention of the House, or of the committee, to the conduct of a Member who persists in irrelevance, or tedious repetition either of his own arguments or of the arguments used by other Members in debate, may direct him to discontinue his speech.”

“The Speaker, or the chair, shall order any Member or Members whose conduct is grossly disorderly to withdraw immediately from the House during the remainder of that day’s sitting; and the Serjeant at Arms shall act on such orders as he may receive from the chair in pursuance of this order. But if on any occasion the Speaker, or the chair, deems that his

powers under the previous provisions of this order are inadequate, he may name such Member or Members, in which event the same procedure shall be followed as is prescribed by Standing Order No. 44 (Order in debate).”

Procedure

Motions

A motion is a petition that is submitted to the Chair by any of the MPs, or it is suggested by the Speaker who also determines the pertinence of such motion. The motion is to be presented as “I beg to move that...”. If the result of the division for the motion is not the desired by the speaker, he can repeat the voting process two times, if the result remains the same, the speaker can take the decision it considers, in each of the division which cannot be made within a term longer than 2 minutes between divisions, the Speaker shall announce the results of the voting process. The most used motions are:

- **The sitting (session):** the Speaker suggests a motion on the sitting, it asks the question, and it is voted by division.
- **Reading of the Bill and substantive debate:** a Minister of the Crown shall rise and say “I beg to move that, the bill ... be now read the/a ... time”, then, the Speaker must consider the motion, if he approves the motion, he must ask to the house “The question is, that the Bill be now read the/a ... time”, after asking the question there will be a division, if the motion passes, the Chairman will proceed to read the bill. When the Chairman ends the reading, the debate on the bill begins. In accordance with the standing order 24, if the motion passes during the division (voting process), the Chair must announce “the length of the debate and the time at which it is to be held”. When the debate is over, the Chair shall ask the question again and it must be submitted to division.
- **Emergency debate:** in order to debate a topic which does not have relation with the bill that must be presented or simply, to debate the topic without interfering to the bill, a member shall rise and move a motion “that the house considered the matter...” or “that the house should debate the matter ... which requires consideration”. Then, the chair must state whether he considers the topic pertinent and if he approves it, he asks the question “that the house debates ...” or “that the house considers...” and submit it to division, if it passes, the Chair must announce “the length of the debate and the time at which it is to be held”. Then the MP who proposed the motion, must do an intervention of maximum 3 minutes. When the debate ends, the question is to be asked again.

- **Adjourning:** at any moment, an MP[1] may ask for a motion to adjourn the House for a specific period of time. It may be implemented for Lobby time or suspending sitting (a sitting last for a day). “I beg to move a motion to the adjournment of the house”, then the question is to be asked and will be voted on.
- **Amendments:** when an amendment is submitted to the chair (it can be done at any time during the debate) and the Chairman in Ways and Means considers it pertinent, the chair will give 3 minutes to the MP that proposed the amendment to explain why it should be accepted ,after that a motion to vote the amendment is to be done by rising and asking, “I beg to move that, the question be now proposed” or simply, “the question be now proposed”, if the Chair considers it pertinent, then the chair may ask “That the amendment be made”. there shall be a division.
- **Voting:** “I beg to move that, the house votes...”, someone asks for the motion and the Speaker must ask the question.
- **Motion of no confidence:** “A motion of no confidence, or censure motion, is a motion moved in the House of Commons with the wording: ‘That this House has no confidence in HM Government’. If such a motion is agreed to, and a new government with the support of a majority of MPs cannot be formed within a period of 14 calendar days, Parliament is dissolved and an early General Election is triggered.”

Development of session

1. Entrance of the Speaker and Chairman.
2. Prayer.
3. Roll call.
4. Opening of the sitting.
5. Reading of the agenda.
6. Reading of the bill.
7. Reading of written statements.
8. Debate/amendments.
9. Second reading.
10. Adjourning.

Explanation of procedures

Entrance of the Speaker, prayer, roll call and agenda

When the chairman and the Speaker are entering the room, the serjeant in arms, shall shout “Speaker! hats off Strangers”, and everyone must rise and look to the - wall in front of the Chair. Subsequently, the Chairman will do the following prayer (after the prayer, everyone must take a sit):

“Lord, the God of righteousness and truth, grant to our Queen and her government, to Members of Parliament and all in positions of responsibility, the guidance of your Spirit. May they never lead the nation wrongly through love of power, desire to please, or unworthy ideals but laying aside all private interests and prejudices keep in mind their responsibility to seek to improve the condition of all mankind; so may your kingdom come and your name be hallowed. Amen.”

When the prayer ends, the chair will proceed with the role call, calling each member for its constituency. After the role call, the Chair proposes a motion and asks for objections, the motion that the chair moves is “that the house commence its sitting”, then it is voted, when it passes, Upon the Speaker’s direction, the Chairman shall read the orders of the day, without any question being put. If any member wants to modify the order because of extraordinary circumstances, he/she may make a motion to do it.

Reading of the bill

A bill is a proposal for a new law or to modify an existing one, it can be proposed by the commons, the lords or a private/non-governmental entity. The bills are discussed in the house in order to modify them and pass them. Therefore, a bill for each topic is to be presented by all the MPs, then the chair will create a bill with the compendium of the individual bills sent to the chair until a day before the model starts.

When a motion to read the bill passes, the Chairman will read the bill, then the debate on the bill will start. During the debate, a member can submit amendments at any time, the Chairman will determine whether the amendment may proceed to be voted or not.

Written statements

Members must bring Written statements which will serve the purpose of opening speeches, they must be sent to the Chair with anticipation, and a printed copy must be handed to the chair, during the first sitting.

iDebate

The debate can be either an emergency debate or a substantial one, in both cases, it will start after the motion passes. The debate works in a different way from the average MUN procedure.

“Although notes are permitted, reading a prepared speech is not allowed, in order to maintain the spontaneity of debate. Members may not use notes when asking Supplementary Questions (though in practice, this has occurred).” Written statements are the only interventions which can be read.

Having the floor and the word

In order to speak, one should “catch the speaker’s eye” by rising or half rising in his/her sit, then the Chair will call one MP and he/she will start speaking. The Chair may call a member by the name or by the name of the constituency. When talking they must refer to the chair and stay within their place.

Members may interrupt each other in their intervention by rising and start speaking, both of the MPs, the one who was speaking and the one who interrupted can remain speaking and standing, however, when the one who was speaking first sits, everyone who rose in his intervention has to sit. Interruptions are made to refute the intervention or simply to make a question regarding it. **INTERRUPTIONS CANNOT BE MADE TO MAKE ANOTHER INTERVENTION**, it may lead to a “Naming”. If the Speaker considers that the interruption or the intervention is not pertinent it may ask the member to sit. In order not to be Interrupted the member who was speaking the member has to have established previously it’s willingness to deny the “give a way” or the right to allow interruptions.

There can be as many interruptions at the same time as the Chair considers it pertinent, when the Speaker rises to his feet and shouts “Order”, everyone must take a sit.

When a member wants to make reference to an Intervention, or is interrupting, they cannot refer to any MP directly; they must talk to the speaker. EX: “Mr. Speaker, the Rht. Hon. Prime Minister...”, “Mr. Speaker, is the PM aware...”, or “Mr. Speaker, May the Rht. Hon. PM explain to this house...”.

When a member wants to make a point of order, he/she may rise and do the point, then the chair will consider whether the point is pertinent and when it is to be considered.

When someone agrees with an intervention, he/she may say “hear, hear”, “yeah” or “aye” loudly.

When the speaker considers that a member has repeatedly interrupted and is obstructing the functioning of the house by abusing the costumes, the speaker might say “Mr. You are being an annoyance to this house” and the member shall sit.

When no one is asking for the floor, the Chair might say “I’m waiting” or “I’m late waiting”. If the Chair has called three times for anyone to speak, then it might call the Prime Minister to Speak.

The MPs must talk only to the Speaker/Chair, reason for which, the interventions will start with “Mr. Speaker...”, if they want to make reference to another member of the house, it is imperative to use the respective titles. Members must refer to each other as “Honorable member for...” naming the name of the constituency or the respective title “Honorable leader of the opposition”; if they are members from the Privy Council, they must be called “Right Honorable”. When they are members from the same party, they can say “My honorable friend” or “my Right Honorable Friend”. A MEMBER CANNOT SAY THE NAME OF ANOTHER MP, they can talk in first person, however the only one which can be treated as “you”, is the Speaker. The use of “She” “He” is forbidden.

When referring to the Peers or members of the House of Lords, the MPs may say “the others”, “the other House” or the “the other place”.

To make reference to people outside the house members usually use “strangers” but its recommendable to use “members of the Public.”

Members cannot use offensive language, accuse other members of lying or abusing the costumes of the House. If they do so, they will be “named”

Example:

- Speaker: I’m late waiting
- MP Conservative 1: *Rises* *(gave away)*
- Speaker: Mr. MPC1
- MP Conservative 1: Mr. Speaker, the issue...

- MP Labour 2: *Rises* Mr. Speaker, what the Right Honorable Member for MPC1 is saying...
- Labour MPs: Hear, hear
- MP Conservative 3: *Rises* Mr. Speaker the date which was mentioned by the honorable member for MPL2...
- Everyone: *Noise*
- Speaker: *Rises* ORDER!
- Everyone: *Sits*

Voting

Is the voting process in which the house is divided between the MPs who are in favour and the MPs who are against a motion, Bill, or any other issue that requires a vote. In the division, when the chair asks for the MPs in favor, he/she will say “those for it”, and the MPs will rise and shout “aye”. When the Chair asks for the MPs against, the Speaker will say “Those against” and the MPs will rise and shout “Nay”. MPs may abstain from voting. If the results are not clear, the Chair may ask the MPs to remain standing and it will count. After every division, the Chair must announce the results, if there is a tie, the Chairman has to vote, but he/she must vote to keep the status quo. If the Division for a motion does not please the Speaker, he may repeat the Division two more times, if the result remains the same, the Speaker might take the decision on his own.





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