

## Guidance for Speakers

### Objects of the Society Of Cogers

The Objects of the Society shall be to maintain the tradition first established by Daniel Mason in 1755, namely, the free discussion of questions of political, social and philosophical interest (excluding dogma or theology) with a view to encouraging discussion on contemporary issues. The Society shall pursue the Original Objects, namely, *‘the promotion of the liberty of the subject, and the freedom of the press, the maintenance of loyalty to the laws, the rights and claims of humanity and the practice of publick (sic) and private virtue’*.

### Political Non-Alignment

The Society shall not be identified with any political party or political propaganda.

### Speaking during the Meeting

After the Opening, the meeting will be open to all. Those who wish to speak may do so for up to five minutes. However, the Grand may reduce speaking times to accommodate more speakers in the event of a large attendance. Speakers will not speak more than once in a round.

When all who wish to have spoken in this first round, and if time allows, the Grand may allow a second round of speeches. These may be limited in time to two or three minutes, and not all who wish to speak again will be able to if there is insufficient time. The Grand will determine who to call to speak in this second round.

Cogers provides speakers with an opportunity to develop their public speaking skills, whether a researched and prepared speech or a response to what another speaker said only a few minutes before. Speakers may briefly refer to notes, newspapers cuttings, and books in support of their arguments and that are relevant to the topic under discussion. Speakers may not, however, deliver their speech verbatim from a prepared text. If speaking online, the ‘share screen’ tool will not be available to speakers as Cogers is about speech, not presentations with visual aids.

Speakers are free to discuss any event which has been under discussion in current news media (including newspapers, television, radio, the internet and so forth) since the last meeting. Speakers may express any point of view provided they support their views with reasoned argument.

It is the ethos of Cogers that we do not campaign for political parties or political candidates (but we may discuss political issues), that we do not have extended discussions about Theology or the justification for any religious dogma (but we may discuss the political and social impact of religious belief upon the wider community and the conduct of religious leaders), that we do not use meetings to advertise goods or services.

Meetings of the Society shall be held under the **Chatham House Rule**. “When a meeting is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed”.

Speakers must express their ideas within the ordinary courtesies of civil discourse. The Grand may disallow the use of words and phrases which obstruct the purposes of the meeting. The Grand may exclude from the meeting any speaker whose behaviour is unacceptable. continued/over...

## The Evaluation of Speeches

If a meeting is to be Evaluated, a member will assess the speeches made during the meeting. After everyone has spoken, the Evaluator will:

- provide all present with an appraisal of the overall tenor of the meeting
- provide an appraisal of individual speakers, identifying for the benefit of all recognition of effective content and delivery of speeches, and guidance for any improvements that might be made
- decide on the award of the Apple of Discord

The Evaluator may use the following criteria when assessing speakers.

SPEAKERS	
Feature	Structure
<b>Content of Speech</b>	<p>Start: does it grab attention?</p> <p>Middle: evidence, quotes, stats, opinion, personal experiences?</p> <p>Finish: on a bang? Clear summation and statement of views? what does the speaker want us to go away with?</p> <p>Vocabulary and Word Pictures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- use of descriptive words and phrases?</li> <li>- word pictures; grammar?</li> </ul>
<b>Speaking Voice</b>	Volume    Pace    Pause    Articulation
<b>Posture In-person</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Speaker standing behind the Box? A wanderer?</li> <li>- Hand gestures and body movement – good or distracting? Or none at all?</li> <li>- Eye contact with whole audience?</li> </ul>
<b>Posture Online</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engagement with the audience – looking at the camera?</li> <li>- Lighting?</li> <li>- Background?</li> <li>- Distractions in the background?</li> </ul>
<b>Impressions</b>	<p>Impact and Rapport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- was rapport with the audience evident?</li> <li>- were you captivated, informed, persuaded, amused, entertained?</li> </ul> <p>Did it work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- did the speech achieve the purpose intended by the speaker?</li> <li>- was it a masterpiece?</li> <li>- was it memorable?</li> </ul>

The purpose of the evaluation is not to repeat what was said, but praise what was good (in ideas, delivery, etc). And also, if the Evaluator believes it will help the contributor or others, to suggest how a contribution could have been still further improved. The Apple of Discord will be awarded to a speaker deemed by the Evaluator to have been the most effective or the most improved.

**Evaluation is not compulsory.** Any speaker not wanting to be evaluated should say so when they get to the Box to speak.