

2025

# Format Fremdsprachenwettbewerb BHS Englisch



Konzeption: FLORIAN WIESBAUER

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## Introduction

This guideline is aimed at providing an overview of the dates, aims, and methods to be used in the 2025 Vorarlberg BHS English Language Competition.

*Florian Wiesbauer*

## Date

**February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 8.30 – 12.30**

## Place

**Room A 16 (Lefthand wing of the building)**

**WIFI Dornbirn**

**Bahnhofstraße 24**

**6850 Dornbirn**

## Conditions of Participation

- Contestants must register via the official application form by **January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025**.
- Registrations are limited to **two (2) participants plus one (1) substitute per BHS**.
- **Students whose L1 (first language) is English cannot participate** in the competition.
- Please note that due to the recent rise in popularity of text generation algorithms such as ChatGPT, participants will be **precluded from accessing their electronic devices** throughout the competition.



## Requirements

To put their skills on display, participants will be given the opportunity to prove their English proficiency in a variety of contexts. As such, they must have sufficient command of the language to perform the following acts on-stage:

- Introduce themselves and explain their relationship with English in a brief self-presentation.
- Give authentic, spontaneous reactions to visual stimuli.
- Participate in a group debate about a given topic.
- Give a prepared speech about a given topic.

## Topics

The topics chosen for this competition will be in line with the [National Austrian BHS Curriculum 2014](#). As such, they may be selected from areas pertaining to **cultures, societies, politics, economy, ecology, technology, work and travel, the world of work, current societal issues, and personal experiences**. Sample topics will be provided below.

## Procedure

- **Round 1: Impromptu Round (Self-Presentation and Reaction to Visual Stimuli)**
  - **No preparation time** provided.
  - Participants must wait their turn in a separate back-stage room.
  - Speakers will have 2-3 minutes to **present themselves and their relationship with the English language**.
  - Subsequently, speakers will be confronted with a **sequence of three (3) images**. They must produce **spontaneous language output** relating to these images, ideally by weaving them into one coherent narrative.
  - Speakers will then be asked to engage in an **impromptu roleplay** with the presenter. This sequence will last approximately **one (1) minute**.
- **Jury Intermission 1**
  - Jury members will judge the participants based on the criteria outlined below. Depending on the total number of participants, the best **9 or 12 contributors will advance into Round 2**.
  - The jury decisions will be narrated by the presenter and visualized on-screen by the organizer.



- **Round 2: Debate Round** (Panel Discussions)
  - **No preparation time** provided.
  - Participants must wait their turn in a separate back-stage room.
  - **Separated into three (3) groups** of equal size, speakers will **participate in panel discussions** moderated by the presenter.
  - Speakers must give an **opening statement** of around one minute that may not be interrupted by the other debaters and that outlines their stance on the given topic.
  - The topic will be provided by the presenter.
  - The presenter or organizer may intervene to ensure that proper debating etiquette is maintained.
  - The discussions last for **15 minutes**. The presenter will ensure that all candidates are provided with ample opportunities for contribution.
  
- **Jury Intermission 2**
  - Jury members will judge the participants based on the criteria outlined below. Depending on the total number of participants, the best **5 or 6** contributors will advance into Round 3.
  - The jury decisions will be narrated by the presenter and visualized on-screen by the organizer.
  
- **Round 3: Oration** (Individual Speeches)
  - The speech topic will be given to each participant individually and in a staggered manner to ensure equal preparation time for all.
  - Speakers must **choose between two (2) topics** provided.
  - **15 minutes of preparation time** provided.
  - Participants must wait their turn and prepare for their speeches in a separate back-stage room.
  - The topic will be revealed to the audience by the presenter.
  - The speeches last for **4 minutes each**. Performance assessment will be based on the criteria outlined below.
  
- **Jury Intermission 3**
  - Jury members will judge the participants based on the criteria outlined below.
  - Subsequently, participants will be ranked from **last to first** based on their individual scores.



- The jury decisions will be narrated by the presenter and visualized on-screen by the organizer.

## Timeline

This timeline is tentative and may be subject to change based on unforeseeable events.

<b>Time (Approx.)</b>	<b>Event Stage</b>
8.30	Ceremony Opening Speech (Organizer)
8.35	Introductory Speech (Presenter)
8.40	<b>Round 1</b>
9.30	<b>Jury Intermission 1</b>
9.40	<b>Round 2</b>
10.40	<b>Jury Intermission 2</b>
10.50	<b>Break</b> (Preparation time for candidate #1 starts here)
11.20	<b>Round 3</b>
11.50	<b>Jury Intermission 3</b>
12.00	<b>Announcement of Rankings and Winners</b>
12.30	<b>Closing statements</b> (Winner, presenter, organizer)



## Assessment Criteria

- **Fluency and Interaction:**
  - Interaction with other members, adherence to debate rules, spontaneity, taking initiative, identification with a given role.
- **Language Competency:**
  - Range, register, situationally adequate language use.
- **Accuracy:**
  - Vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, intonation
- **Contents:**
  - Persuasiveness of arguments, coherence, cohesiveness of speech, coverage of bullet points, relevance, subject knowledge, variety of ideas and arguments, creativity.
- **Presentation Skills:**
  - Situational awareness, body language, recovery from mistakes.

The criteria mentioned above are based on the [B2 Foreign Language Assessment Scale according to the CEFR](#).

## Team

- Organizer: Florian WIESBAUER, HAK Bregenz
- Moderator: Bronwyn KONRAD, WIFI Dornbirn
- Assistant: Beaux ATWOOD, Teaching Assistant HAK Bregenz

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- **Impromptu Round:**

- Within the next three (3) minutes, introduce yourself to the audience.
  - Who are you and where are you from?
  - What is your relationship with the English language?
  - What made you decide to enter the English language competition?
- Now, react to the following images. What is the first thing that comes to your mind?



- Next, imagine the following situation:
  - You are walking down the streets of your hometown.
  - Suddenly, you are approached by a person who appears to be very confused.
  - In a frantic manner, they ask you: **“Have you seen my precious pet leopards?”**
- Respond to the presenter and engage in conversation with her about her pet leopards.





- **Debate Round:**

### **No Snow in Montana: Is Skiing Still Sustainable?**



#### **Panel Discussion**

As the world is transforming around us, glaciers are melting and periods of sustained snowfall are becoming increasingly rare. Moreover, water has been recognized as a valuable resource, and artificial ski slopes have been criticized as wasteful. On the other hand, a large part of Vorarlberg's flourishing tourism industry is dependent on guests from all over the world enjoying the famous slopes of Arlberg, Lech, and many other ski resorts.

- Discuss the following points:
  - Does the ski sport have a future in this country?
  - Is a more sustainable form of skiing possible, and how would it look like?
  - Skiing is becoming more expensive as a result. Are there positive aspects to this development?
- Candidates must give an uninterrupted opening statement, outlining their stance on the issue in 1 min. Afterwards, the debate floor is open.



- **Oration Round:**

- You have **15 minutes** to prepare and memorize a speech about one of the two topics given below. Your speech should last **4-5 minutes**.
- You must address the **content points** listed below the topics, but you are also **free to add your own ideas**.

- **Option #1: Rise of the AI Overlords**



Some have feared that day, others have longed for it: An advanced AI has taken over the world! Rather surprisingly, it has chosen **regular citizens** as ambassadors who are supposed to hold a speech in front of their respective countries. You have been selected to be the **AI ambassador** of Austria, and your **speech** will be broadcasted live on national television.

In your speech, you should:

- Outline the changes to society that the AI has in store for all of us.
- Highlight the benefits of this new system.
- Address any potential concerns from those who are critical of AI systems.



- **Option #2: Working until the End**



It has become increasingly normal in Western societies to keep on working past the retirement age. Some do it because they love their job and want to feel fulfilled, while others work out of necessity because their small pensions do not allow them to live a comfortable life. As a **young adult** who will be affected by this trend in the future, you are supposed to hold a **speech** in front of an **expert panel**.

In your speech, you should:

- Argue for or against the trend of working past retirement age.
- Address the potential impact on society (working culture, economic outcome...).
- Appeal to the audience to (not) join the workforce after retiring.

