

A photograph of the University of Manchester building, featuring a large arched entrance and Gothic-style architecture with stone walls and stained glass windows.

students' Society of  
**Union** the Year 2015  
UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

# MANCHESTER DEBATING UNION

Termcard  
Spring 2016





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# Welcome!

Hello and welcome back to another semester at the University of Manchester! Hopefully, you not only enjoyed your Christmas break, but also managed to survive your exams (and Pangea) with enough brain cells to complete the year! Unfortunately, Semester 2 is a horrible time, as any non-fresher can tell you, your workload seems to increase just as the weather gets better. However for those of you looking to maximise the time spent avoiding said work, while at the same time minimising the guilt, the Manchester Debating Union will be putting on interesting public debates every other Thursday at 5pm in Roscoe Theatre B. This year we're having discussions on Jeremy Corbyn, The University of Manchester's investment in Fossil Fuels, the EU and more, all included in this term card. Who knows? We might even have one for that essay you're supposed to be writing!

For those of you looking to improve your debating and public speaking, our beginners' training sessions will also start up again on a Tuesday. These sessions are a great starting point whether you aim to be the next best World's speaker, a careerist who's looking to bump up their CV, or simply someone who wants to actually be able to win an argument with their Mum when they go home for the holidays. Debating Training will not only improve your public speaking, but the logical skills we can help hone will also improve your marks in all subjects that involve critical thinking. It's also a great place to help develop English-speaking skills for those of you who have English as a second language.

This semester we are also hosting our annual inter-varsity competition (20th and 21st Feb), where debaters from across Europe and even further afield will be joining us for 2 days of intensive debates. We'll need your help organising and welcoming all of these lovely people, so make sure you join us on the 20th!

Finally, as the MDU moves in to its 20th year, we intend to help it (and you) ease into adulthood with a number of top-notch socials! Keep your eyes peeled on the Facebook page for more details on these. We look forward to meeting you!

Declan Leahy (President) and Conor Ardill (Chair)





# Public Debates

Manchester's public debates bring together journalists, academics and politicians to speak on everything from economics to feminism, foreign affairs to religion.

Our public debates are open to all students and staff at universities within Manchester, including the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University.

Public debates take place at 5pm in the Roscoe Building Lecture Theatre B, every other Thursday during term time. Check out our Facebook page for the latest information on our public debates!

The format of our debates is a seven-minute speech given by each of the four speakers. After this the floor is opened to questions from audience members. The debate ends with two minute summary speeches.



Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February

## This House Regrets the Election of Jeremy Corbyn to the Role of Labour Leader



In September, Jeremy Corbyn was elected leader of the Labour party. Ever since there has been ongoing rumours of splits, backbencher rebellions and resignations within the Labour Party. To his supporters, he is a leader that can resurrect the old Labour values. To his critics, he is considered to be unelectable and out of touch.

On Thursday 4th February, the Manchester Debating Union meets to discuss whether we regret the election of Jeremy Corbyn to the role of Labour Leader.



Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February

# This House Believes that Science Has an Undeserved Monopoly on the Truth



Science has always been considered synonymous with truth. But should we question that definition? Can religion and philosophy provide truths about the world? About what is moral? Can it answer questions which cannot be answered through rational scientific inquiry? This week we ask- does science have an undeserved monopoly on the truth?

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March

# **This House Believes that the University of Manchester Should Divest from Fossil Fuels.**



Over the past few years there has been a growing debate over the ethics of various institutions investing in fossil fuels. The divestment movement urges institutions to show climate leadership by immediately divesting from firms who profit from the extraction of fossil fuels. It hopes that, through divestment, polluting firms will be forced to adopt more environmentally friendly business practices in order to garner further investment and remain financially viable. Institutions that have already pledged to divest include the University of Glasgow and SOAS.

In contrast, opponents of divestment believe that the approach is ineffective and does nothing to tackle climate change. Instead they think that the divestment movement is nothing more than feel-good campaigning. In partnership with UMSU, the Society of Petroleum Engineers and Fossil Free Manchester, the Manchester Debating Union will be hosting a very special debate to discuss whether the University of Manchester should divest from fossil fuels?



Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March

## This House Would Implement Protest-Free Buffer Zones Around Abortion Clinics



**Trigger Warning:** The debate will contain references to abortion and issues surrounding it.

Abortion remains a controversial topic for many in the UK. The arguments of pro-life vs pro-choice will be familiar to all. However how far does the right to express our opinions on abortion extend? In recent years there has been an increase in anti-abortion activism outside clinics across the UK. This activism can make women having, or simply considering, an abortion feel victimized. In response to this several high profile politicians have called for protest-free zones around abortion clinics in order to protect women. However, many pro-life campaigners feel that such zones would constitute a violation of their freedom of speech, preventing them from attempting a final effort to convince the woman from following through with the procedure.

Join us on the 17th March as the Manchester Debating Union discusses whether we should implement protest-free buffer zones around abortion clinics?

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April

## This House Believes the West is to Blame for Islamic Extremism



Who is to blame for Islamic terrorism is a topic which is currently under much discussion. Following several failed interventions in the Middle East by Western nations, many feel that fundamentalist Islamic terrorism is a problem that is the creation of the West, and that it is fuelled by Western actions. In the recent vote on action in Syria, opponents argued that bombing attacks by the West create more unrest increase the likelihood of radicalisation. ISIS recruits of Western origin have cited western foreign policy and a feeling of isolation caused by the police.

This week we ask - is the West to blame for Islamic Extremism?



Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April

## This House Would Leave the European Union



In their 2015 Manifesto, David Cameron promised that a Conservative government would deliver a referendum on the UK's position within the European Union. Duly elected, the matter could be decided as soon as June. Therefore we think it's time to have a debate.

Many consider Britain's membership of the EU to be an affront to national sovereignty. They dislike the ability for other European nations to have an input into the laws of the United Kingdom, superseding the role of Parliament. They also believe that any economic benefit that we gain from being inside could be re-negotiated in a style similar to Norway.

However, many worry about what the so called 'Brexit' would do to the UK both internally and internationally. Would it diminish our standing on the world stage? Would a vote to leave fuel the demands of the Scottish Nationalists for another referendum on Scotland's position within the UK?

Join us, as we discuss these questions and many more, when we ask should the UK leave the European Union?

# Competitive Debate Training

The Manchester Debating Union also holds relaxed training sessions on competitive debating – come along to debate a variety of topics and improve your public speaking and argument forming skills. These sessions take place in **room 4.3 of the Roscoe Building at the University of Manchester**.

We cater to all levels of ability and welcome new members at any point during the year – so don't worry if you can't make the first session!

We send competitive debating teams to competitions across the country almost every weekend during term time, and you can attend as few or as many as you have time for. We send all our members to competitions, whether you are experienced or a complete beginner. Attending debating competitions helps you to improve your debating whilst also giving you the opportunity to travel the country and world. In the last year our members have attended competitions in Paris, Vienna and Greece.

If you have any questions about competitive debating, please email our president [president@mdu.manchester.ac.uk](mailto:president@mdu.manchester.ac.uk)





# How to join

All of our public debates are completely free to attend!

If you're thinking about having a go at competitive debating, you can come to two of our weekly training sessions for free to try it out.

If you wish to purchase membership, chat to our Treasurer, **Toby Peggs**, or email him at [treasurer@mdu.manchester.ac.uk](mailto:treasurer@mdu.manchester.ac.uk). You can also speak to any member of committee at our events.

Benefits of membership include:

Access to our weekly two-hour training sessions

Free access to participating in debating competitions as the Manchester Debating Union (entry fees normally range from £20-£50).

Membership costs £10 for the year or £25 for life!



Make sure you join our Facebook Group **Manchester Debating Union –MDU** to stay up to date with all of our events



# Committee 2015/16

## The Executive



**Declan Leahy**  
President



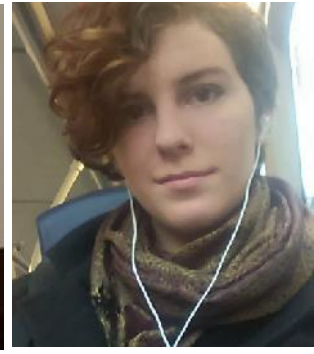
**Conor Ardill**  
Chair



**Katie McKellar**  
Secretary



**Toby Peggs**  
Treasurer



**Czime Litwinczuk**  
Publicity

## The Committee



**Hugh Phipps**  
Externals



**Sam Ward**  
IV Convener



**Alex Bidmead**  
Schools



**Allison Lau**  
Schools



**Katie McKeallar**  
Competitions  
Coordinator



**Conor Wilman**  
Communications



**Ben Capener**  
Social



**Dean Foley**  
Training



**Becky Montague**  
Advanced  
Training





# Event Calendar – Spring 2016

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
<b>Week 1</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> February Advanced training	2 <sup>nd</sup> February Debating training	3 <sup>rd</sup> February
<b>Week 2</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> February Advanced training	9 <sup>th</sup> February Debating training	10 <sup>th</sup> February
<b>Week3</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> February Advanced training	16 <sup>th</sup> February Debating training	17 <sup>th</sup> February
<b>Week 4</b>	22 <sup>th</sup> February Advanced training	23 <sup>th</sup> February Debating training	24 <sup>th</sup> February
<b>Week 5</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> February Advanced training	1 <sup>st</sup> March Debating training	2 <sup>nd</sup> March
<b>Week 6</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> March Advanced training	8 <sup>th</sup> March Debating training	9 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>Week 7</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> March Advanced training	15 <sup>th</sup> March Debating training	16 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>Easter Vacation</b> 21 <sup>st</sup> March - 8 <sup>th</sup> April	28 <sup>th</sup> March	29 <sup>th</sup> March	30 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>Week 8</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> April Advanced training	12 <sup>th</sup> April Debating training	13 <sup>th</sup> April
<b>Week 9</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> April Advanced training	19 <sup>th</sup> April Debating training	20 <sup>th</sup> April
<b>Week 10</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> April Advanced training	26 <sup>th</sup> April Debating training	27 <sup>th</sup> April

**NB. The included competitions are a subject to change – for more details contact the competitions coordinator**



Thursday	Friday	Staunday	Sunday
4 <sup>th</sup> February Corbyn debate	5 <sup>th</sup> February	6 <sup>th</sup> February	8 <sup>th</sup> February
11 <sup>th</sup> February	12 <sup>th</sup> February	13 <sup>th</sup> February Swansea IV	14 <sup>th</sup> February
18 <sup>th</sup> February Science debate	19 <sup>th</sup> February Debate workshops	20 <sup>th</sup> February Manchester IV	21 <sup>th</sup> February Manchester IV
25 <sup>th</sup> February Social – backwards debate	26 <sup>th</sup> February	27 <sup>th</sup> February Hosting of Oxford schools round	28 <sup>th</sup> February
3 <sup>rd</sup> March Fossil Fuels debate	4 <sup>th</sup> March	5 <sup>th</sup> March Lancaster IV	6 <sup>th</sup> March
10 <sup>th</sup> March	11 <sup>th</sup> March	12 <sup>th</sup> March Liverpool IV	13 <sup>th</sup> March
17 <sup>th</sup> March protest free buffer zones around abortion clinics debate	18 <sup>th</sup> March	19 <sup>th</sup> March Schools training	20 <sup>th</sup> March
31 <sup>st</sup> March	1 <sup>st</sup> April	2 <sup>nd</sup> April KLC Pro AM	3 <sup>rd</sup> April
14 <sup>th</sup> April West is to Blame for Islamic Extremism debate	15 <sup>th</sup> April	16 <sup>th</sup> April Hull Open	17 <sup>th</sup> April
21 <sup>st</sup> April European Union debate	22 <sup>nd</sup> April	23 <sup>rd</sup> April	24 <sup>th</sup> April
28 <sup>th</sup> April	29 <sup>th</sup> April	30 <sup>th</sup> April	1 <sup>st</sup> May

