

Guidelines for Chairs

Before the Session

Please read through the attached biographical notes and abstracts in order to familiarize yourself with the themes of the papers in your session.

Arrive at the session at least ten minutes before it is due to start to make sure that the readers have everything they need (water?), that the necessary equipment for all papers is present and ready for use, and that the seating arrangements are adequate.

Before Each Paper

You may need to remind the audience that people wishing to leave before the end of the session should sit near the door, and to turn off mobile phones.

Introduce each speaker (see biographical notes), mentioning briefly some relevant information about his/her career to date.

During Each Paper

Try to ensure that each paper runs as smoothly as possible, by dealing with interruptions (should they occur) and giving the speaker any support they might require (for instance with equipment, handouts, etc.).

Take note of important points in order to refer back to them when encouraging discussion after the paper.

Ensure that readers do not exceed their allocated times by more than a few minutes. If you feel that readers still have a substantial amount of ground to cover once their allocated time is over, gently alert them that this is the case, so that they may cut some material if necessary.

Should a reader exceed his/her allocated time considerably, without appearing to reach a conclusion, you may have to urge him/her to conclude (politely but firmly).

After Each Paper

Lead the applause, and thank the reader for his/her contribution.

Ask the audience for questions. Should none be forthcoming, open the discussion with a comment or question of your own. It may be helpful to remind the audience of a particular aspect of the paper.

Ensure that questions are concluded in time for the next speaker to prepare for his/her contribution. It may be necessary to defer further discussion until the end of the session or afterwards.