

Position Paper Writing Guide

A position paper is a diplomatic statement of your country's position on the issues under consideration by a committee. For example, if you are the delegate representing Romania in the General Assembly First Committee, you will write a paper detailing Romania's position on the topics before the GA-1. Other students representing your country on other committees will write on the topics before their committees. If a country serves on four committees, four separate position papers must be submitted.

A sample position paper is posted on the Delegate page of the MMUN website, <http://www.cas.umt.edu/mun/hs-conference/delegates-tools.php>

Writing a position paper involves:

- Using the tips in the Delegate Preparation Guide to become familiar with your country.
- Reading the committee and topic background guides for your committee and following the research tips they offer.
- Following the formatting and writing instructions below.
- Proofreading for accuracy, clarity, grammar, and diplomatic language.

Once you have written your position paper, you can draw from it to:

- Discuss your country and its positions with other members of your country team.
- Make an opening speech about your country's concerns, priorities, and preferred agenda order.
- Make speeches about the clauses you would like to be included in draft resolutions.
- Collaborate with other delegates in writing draft resolutions.
- Make speeches in support of or opposing particular draft resolutions.
- Decide how to vote on a particular draft resolution.

All student delegates to the Montana Model UN Conference must submit their position paper two weeks before the conference. See the Delegate page of the MMUN website for the due date and submission instructions. Students who do not submit position papers by the deadline will not be eligible for conference awards.

Format

A position paper must meet the following formatting requirements:

- No more than one page in length
- 10 point font in Times New Roman
- Single spaced with spacing between paragraphs and headers
- Heading with the official country name, the name of the school representing the country, and the name of the individual serving as a delegate for that committee
- Short introductory paragraph, followed by one longer paragraph on each topic
- Topic sections divided by topic headings. Topics should appear in the order they appear on the topic list and in the committee background guides on the MMUN website. Each topic heading should be bold and centered.
- Either left alignment or justification of the body of the text is acceptable

How to Write Your Position Paper

A position paper should be written in diplomatic language. That is, it should express your country's position on the issues in the most favorable and respectful light possible. A position paper consists of a short introductory paragraph, followed by a longer paragraph for each topic.

The introductory paragraph lists the topics before the committee and summarizes the country's basic approach to the topics with a general greeting focused on collaboration and expressing your country's desire to address the issues.

The two topic sections should consist of a single paragraph. The paragraphs in these sections should include and be organized as follows:

1. *History*
 - a. The beginning of each topic's paragraph should provide a short introduction to the topic, the previous work of the UN and/or Member States collectively on the topic (especially actions that one's country has supported), and current issues that need to be addressed, from your country's point of view.
 - b. It should refer to important treaties or past resolutions that your country has supported.
 - c. At the conference, you can refer to these documents in your speeches and in preambulatory clauses of draft resolutions to provide other delegates with insight into your country's position.
2. *Position, Domestic Issues, and Past Actions*
 - a. Next, the paragraph should state your country's position in diplomatic terms.
 - b. It should refer to your country's work on the issue within its borders, with allies, with regional partners, and/or within the world community.
 - c. It should explain why your country is a shining example, or needs assistance, or has made progress, or can help other countries on this topic.
 - d. At the conference, you can refer to these positions and issues in your opening speech about your country's concerns, priorities, and preferred agenda order, as well as in later speeches about the operative clauses you would support in draft resolutions.
3. *Proposal*
 - a. Finally, the paragraph should summarize your country's proposal for addressing the issues related to this topic.
 - b. It should assess the progress that has been made on this issue, describe areas for improvement, and suggest specific measures.
 - c. Conclude with a strong, forward-thinking sentence.
 - d. At the conference, you can refer to these statements in your speeches and negotiate to have them included in draft resolutions.

Plagiarism

MMUN takes plagiarism (using others' ideas, words, or material as one's own) seriously. While position papers do not require citations, all of the material in position papers must be a delegate's original writing, unless quoting another person using in-text attribution (e.g. "according to Jane Doe," or "as John Doe stated"). These rules apply even to materials in the public domain. MMUN reserves the right to use plagiarism software, such as Turnitin, to determine the originality of delegates' writing in Position Papers.