



DEBATE  
IT!

# CONCERN DEBATES



## HANDBOOK

CONCERN  
worldwide

A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE FOR  
**STUDENTS  
& TEACHERS**



# CONTENTS

## Section 1: Introduction

Meet the Concern Debates team .....	2
Everything you need to know about the Concern Debates in 10 Easy Steps.....	3
1. Eligibility and Registration .....	3
2. Debates Team Panel.....	3
3. Debates Format.....	3
4. Debates Dates.....	3
5. Debates Adjudicators .....	3
6. Debates Training.....	3
7. Debates Motions.....	3
8. Debates Points .....	4
9. Awards and Prizes .....	4
10. Contact Concern.....	4

## Section 3: The Marking Sheet, and what adjudicators look out for in a Debate

Marks for Content.....	14
Marks for Debating Skills .....	15
Refutation and Rebuttal Explained .....	16
Marks for Captain's Duties.....	17
Marks for Team Work.....	18
Team Roles.....	19
Timing .....	20

## Section 2: Rules and Regulations

Admissions to the competition.....	6
Fixtures.....	6
Chairperson and timekeeper .....	6
Teams.....	7
Home and Away.....	7
Who is responsible for organising what?.....	7
Date and Time Changes .....	7
Date Change Procedure. ....	8
Timing .....	9
Behavior at a Debate .....	9
Adjudicators .....	9
League and Knockout Phase .....	10
Points Awarded .....	10
Knockout Phase .....	11
Cancellations, Withdrawls and Byes .....	12

## Section 4: Hosting a Debate in Your School

Chairperson and timekeeper .....	21
The Timekeepers Role .....	21
The Chairpersons Role .....	21
Debates running order .....	22
Refreshments .....	22
Who will adjudicate at the debate in our school? .....	22
Adjudicators wanted .....	22
Liaising with the adjudicators on the night of a debate. ....	22
FAQs on the night of a debate .....	23
After the debate.....	23
Complaints procedure .....	23



Sacred Heart Secondary School, Clonakilty, celebrating at the Concern Debates Final May 2017. Photo: Ruth Medjber

## Section 5: Preparing for your Debate

Check your dates .....	25
Preparing the Team.....	25
Substitutes .....	25
Research .....	25
Writing your speech.....	26
Practise, practise, practise.....	26
On the night.....	26
Have a go .....	26
Active listening.....	26

## Section 6: All the photocopiable sheets you could ever need

Marking Sheet .....	28
Results Sheet .....	29
Timekeepers Sheet .....	30
Sample Chairperson's speech .....	31

## Section 7: Guiding Principles and Safeguarding of Children

Information for Parents and Teachers whose Children/Students will be attending a Concern Worldwide event or activity .....	34
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## SECTION

# 1



## INTRODUCTION

### MEET THE CONCERN DEBATES TEAM



**Geraldine Carroll**  
085 254 0574

Geraldine organises debates in Cork, Claire, Waterford, Tipperary, Kilkenny and Limerick. She has a BA (Hons) Sociology and Politics from Queen's University, Belfast, an MA in International Organisations from Dublin City University and recently graduated from University College Cork with an MSc Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy. Her favourite motion is; "For women to access leadership positions, gender quotas must be implemented"

**Interesting fact:** She has skydived from a plane at 15,000 ft.



**Jennifer Flynn**  
087 797 3636

Jennifer organises debates in Donegal, Sligo, Mayo, Longford, Westmeath, Meath, Kildare and Roscommon to name a few! She graduated from the Institute of Technology Blanchardstown with a BA in Social and Community development and then went on to complete an MA in media and international conflict at the Clinton institute in University college Dublin.

**Interesting fact:** She has seen a family of orca whales swimming in the Pacific Ocean.



**Olga Brodescu**  
085 803 1801

Olga organises debates in Dublin, Kildare and Meath. Born in Republic of Moldova, Olga studied the piano in music school and went on to university to study Applied Foreign Languages. From a very young age Olga was keen to understand the way car engines work and would usually spend days on end in her father's repair shop dismantling engines and trying to put them back together.

Olga has always been passionate about development issues and for this reason has worked with a number of NGOs over the years.

**Interesting fact:** She dreams of one day opening her own animal shelter/coffee shop.

# Everything you need to know about the Concern Debates in 10 EASY STEPS...

## 1. Eligibility and Registration:

- The Concern Debates are open to Senior Cycle Students from TY to 6<sup>th</sup> year in the ROI and GSCE and A Level in NI.
- Each school must register a teacher as the Debates mentor. The teacher will be the point of contact between Concern and your Debates Team.
- A fee of €100/£80 is charged for participation in the Debates to help cover some of the running costs. A discount is offered to DEIS schools and for early registration.
- Registration for the Debates takes place from early June, closing in mid September. Only online registration will be accepted at [www.concern.net/debates](http://www.concern.net/debates)



## 2. Debates Team Panel:

- A Concern Debates team is made up of 4 students, however we recommend having a panel of 6 or more to help with research, preparation and substitution.
- Your Concern Debates Team members can be changed for any given round, for example if a team member is sick or on a school trip and needs to be replaced or if you want to give another student a 'go'.
- For information on how to **prepare your team** for a debate go to section 5.

## 3. Debates Format:

- The Concern Debates is made up of a League Phase and a Knockout Phase.
- The **League Phase** runs from October to January with each participating school having 4 debates.
- The **Knockout Phase** begins in February and runs through to the **National Final** in May.
- Each speaker is given **4 minutes and 30 seconds to speak**. The team captain speaks twice, once to introduce his or her team and the arguments they will be making and again at the end to sum up the points that have been made and to refute those of their opponents.
- For more information on the Debates Format and Rules go to **page 6**.

## 4. Debates Dates:

- Concern will assign your debates dates along with **the motion** to be debated, the **side of the motion** your team will be on (propose or oppose) as well as the **name of the school** you will be debating.
- To **Change** an assigned date you should contact Concern ten days before the scheduled Debate (to give us enough time to recruit adjudicators). You will also need to contact the Debates teacher from the

school you were scheduled to debate to agree an alternative date.

- Time:** All debates are scheduled for 8pm. It may be possible to hold the debate earlier, for example at 7:00pm or 7:30pm but this will depend on the availability of adjudicators as well as the school you are scheduled to debate
- For more information on **Dates and Times** go to page 8.

## 5. Debates Adjudicators:

- The Concern Debates Adjudicators are volunteers from the local community. Ideally there will be **three adjudicators at each debate** however circumstances (difficulty in recruiting volunteers, illness or lack of availability) sometimes mean that just **two adjudicators will be present**.
- In areas of the country where Concern struggles to recruit adjudicators we will ask that teachers and the school community help recruit adjudicators in their local area. Concern will provide all training needs for new recruits.
- For information about the **marking sheet** used by the adjudicators go to section 3.

## 6. Debates Training:

- Concern also offers a highly informative and engaging '**Debates Days**' workshops for clusters of Concern Debates Teams in a given area. The workshop lasts from 10am to 3pm and covers everything from focused research and argument presentation, to active listening, team work and effective refutation and rebuttal.
- Concern NI will run three debates sessions with limited spaces available. These sessions will run from 10am – 12noon and cover all aspects of the programme including some interactive debating practice to hone those debating skills.

## 7. Debates Motions:

- All four motions for each round of the Concern Debates, will be assigned at the beginning of the League Phase.
- The motions will cover topics related to international development (hunger, poverty, overseas aid, gender, conflict, the United Nations, etc.) and the **Sustainable Development Goals**.
- The motions are set by Concern and always aim to be balanced, fair, topical and (occasionally) fun.
- Schools who are asked to Propose the motion in each round, will host the debate in their school.
- For more information on **Hosting a Debate** go to section 4.

## 8. Debates Points

- A. 3 points are awarded for each debate as follows;
  - i. 3 points given for a unanimous 'win'
  - ii. 2 points given for a majority win
  - iii. 1 point given for a majority loss
  - iv. 1.5 points given for a draw (only in the League Phase)
- B. For more information on Debates Points and the Knockout Phase go to page 11.

## ADJUDICATOR CODE OF CONDUCT - Child Safeguarding

Concern Worldwide is committed to the protection of children and young people with whom we work and to upholding good practice across the organisation. This Code of Conduct for Debates Adjudicators arises out of our adherence to the Children First Act 2015 and the Children First National Guidance 2017.

The Concern Designated Liaison Person is the Head of Active Citizenship, Michael Doorly. Email: michael.doorly@concern.net Phone: 087 955 5979

Any person serving as a Concern Debates Adjudicator must fully comply with the following:

### ✓ DO

**Pre Debate:** Upon arrival at the school wait in the foyer where you will be brought to the Debate location by a teacher or students.

**Debate:** Ensure that a teacher from the school remains in the room as per the school's child safeguarding procedures.

**Post Debate refreshments:** Remain in the same area with other adjudicators, audience members and school staff while giving feedback and advice to the debate participants.

**Incident Report:** Should a student make you aware of a situation where they are experiencing harm, contact the Concern Designated Liaison Person (DLP) immediately. Should you happen to witness a child being harmed while in the course of the Debate, pre or post, contact the Garda immediately.

**Returning Home:** It is best if a teacher or other school representative bring you to the school door.

### ✗ DO NOT

**Pre Debate:** Wander the halls on your own looking for the debates room. Leave the foyer unless accompanied by two students or a teacher.

**Debate:** Remain in the room if there are no other adults present or in any situation where you may find yourself alone with a student.

**Post Debate** Leave the area where the refreshments are being served to talk to students. Never create, or remain in a situation, where you are in unsupervised contact (alone) with a student.

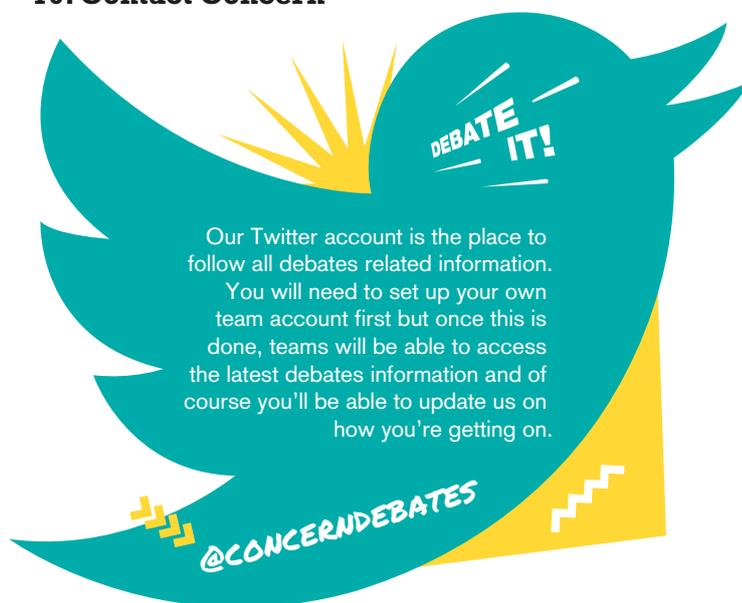
**Incident Report:** Dismiss or ignore what you are being told. Refer the student (child) to someone else. Ignore an incident by failing to report to the Gardai, a teacher and the Concern DLP.

**Returning Home:** Wander the halls alone, Leave with a student, Offer a student(s) a lift home.

## 9. Awards and Prizes

- A. All Concern Debates Team members whether researchers, debaters, practice partners or all round helpers will receive a **Certificate of Participation** from Concern
- B. Concern gives an award to schools across 8 categories that include; **Best Debates Supporters, Best Debates Team Mentor, Best Debates Researchers, Best Whole School Involvement, Best Debates Bloggers, Best Social Media, Best Debates Photo, and Best Debates Newcomer School**
- C. Teams that reach the quarter and semi-finals are presented with trophies at the National Final in May
- D. Both Finalists receive trophies in addition to a visit to a country where Concern works (National Champion) or a visit to the European Parliament and International Criminal Court (Runners Up)

## 10. Contact Concern



Our Twitter account is the place to follow all debates related information. You will need to set up your own team account first but once this is done, teams will be able to access the latest debates information and of course you'll be able to update us on how you're getting on.



You can access the debates section of the Concern website at [www.concern.net/debates](http://www.concern.net/debates). Here you'll find all the relevant forms and resources along with research tips and the league table. We'll use Twitter to link to the latest information on the website.

Make things easy on yourself and keep in touch with us by email at [debates@concern.net](mailto:debates@concern.net).

Phone: **01 417 77 33**  
 Mobile: **087 7973636** (office hours)  
 Fax: **01 475 4164**

Concern Debates, Active Citizenship Unit, Concern Worldwide, 52 Camden Street, Dublin 2.



**We'll send you reminders and updates by twitter and text – so please make sure we have your current mobile number!**



DEBATE  
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**SECTION**

**2**

**THE RULES AND  
REGULATIONS**





## Admission to the competition

Concern reserves the right to refuse admission to the competition if it is over-subscribed, if applications arrive after the deadline, or if a school has a history of dropping out of the competition or rescheduling debates without notice and good reason.

**Concern may also refuse right to admission if there is a lack of available volunteer adjudicators in a given area. Please help us negate this problem by encouraging staff members and friends to sign up as an adjudicator!**

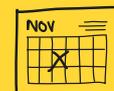
Each school may only enter one team in the competition. By registering for the Concern Debates competition, you have agreed to the terms and conditions and code of conduct set out by Concern.

Please see below for Terms and Conditions in full

### Terms and Conditions & Code of Conduct

- By entering the programme, you are agreeing to complete all four of the debates assigned in the league phase. It is not acceptable to drop out halfway through the competition, or forfeit your final debate if you have already lost your other debates, as this has a knock-on effect on your opponent's experience.
- Schools must pay their Concern Debates Registration Fee in a prompt manner or risk non entry to the competition in subsequent years
- Schools must give Concern two full weeks' notice before rescheduling a debate unless there are exceptional circumstances. If at all possible, efforts should be made to secure substitutes for a debate so that it can go ahead on the original date as planned. When rescheduling a debate, the schools must agree on a new date/time and submit the revised date/time online here. Debates must be scheduled no earlier than 7:00 pm. Additionally, the dates scheduled for the Semi-Finals and the All Ireland Final cannot be changed as venues have already been booked.
- During the debate, teachers must ensure they are respectful of all pupils taking part, remembering that it is an educational programme, designed to help pupils develop skills as well as learn about development issues. In any discussions that follow, teachers must allow the pupils the opportunity to discuss the topic without unnecessary interruption.
- Concern offers overseas trips as prizes to the finalists in the competition. These trips are offered subject to Concern funding, and partner organisation and field office availability and dates cannot be changed for individual pupils or schools.
- Concern Worldwide will provide volunteer adjudicators for each debate. Adjudicators will have signed up to the Concern Debates Adjudicator agreement and be briefed on Concern's Child Safeguarding policies and guidelines.
- It is the school's responsibility to ensure that adjudicators are NEVER left alone with pupils, on any occasion. For example, if an adjudicator needs to be accompanied within the school premises, from room to room, it must be by a teacher or by more than one pupil.

## Please confirm your debates times and dates!



At the beginning of the league phase you will be sent the list of your four debates. All four debates will have predetermined dates, and we are aware that these dates do not always suit.

When you receive the dates of your debates have a look at the school calendar and if a debate is in conflict with another event contact the teacher of the school you will be debating with to arrange another date (even if it's not until January) and once a new date has been confirmed let us know at Concern HQ.

A week or two prior to your debate, if you have not changed the date you will receive an email from Geraldine, Olga or Jeni, depending where your school is located, and we will be asking you to confirm that the debate is going ahead on the arranged date and at the same time. It is really important that both debates mentors from both schools confirm that the debate is indeed going ahead – if you do not reply to the email you will either be texted or phoned to ensure the debate is going ahead.

**If we receive no confirmation we will assume the debate is not going ahead and we will not recruit adjudicators.**

On the day of your debate before lunch time you will receive a reminder text from Concern Debates if you have not received a reminder text before lunch time on the day of your debate then please call us on 01 4177733.

The adjudicators are all volunteers and we really hate to waste their time, so the earlier we know a debate is not going ahead the better. Canceling a debate at the last minute is really a huge inconvenience and there needs to be a very valid reason as to why or your team will be asked to forfeit. We always do our best to accommodate date changes but towards the end of the league phase in January this becomes more difficult. As an All-Ireland competition Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have different holidays and exam times so we work to a really tight schedule. Rearranging one debate date is fine, but more than one can cause problems later on in the debates.

- Schools should ensure that any students attending debates workshops or fixtures outside of their own school have full permission of their parents/guardians if required by their own school Child Safeguarding policy. It is not Concern's responsibility to ensure they have permission.
- Adjudicators are not permitted to share their confidential marking sheets with schools. If you are unsatisfied with the result, you must not confront the adjudicators, who are volunteers, after the debate; instead, you can contact Concern's Debates staff for more information.
- Schools must report any concerns they have about individual adjudicators to Concern Worldwide as soon as they arise, by contacting: Claire Marshall on 01 417 8078. In return, Concern will make every effort to ensure all participants have a fulfilling experience as part of the Debates Programme, including providing information and responding to requests in a timely manner, and provide as much support and training to participants as feasible. We will strive to continuously improve the programme for the benefit of all.

## Teams

Each Concern Debates team is made up of four members. However there is no upper limit on the number of substitutes and teams are free to rotate speakers from one debate to the next. Each team will appoint a captain who speaks twice, firstly to introduce their team and secondly at the close of the debate to sum up their team's arguments and to refute those of their opponents. The captain can be changed from one debate to the next.

If a team has not arrived 30 minutes after the assigned start time they forfeit the debate and concede the round. (If however they make contact with the host school and let you know they will be late, you can agree to delay the start until they arrive.)

## Fixtures

Concern will decide motions, team pairings, sides and fixtures for each debate. If dates have to be changed, the other school must be contacted to reschedule the debate and Concern must be notified immediately using the change of date/time online form only. Concern will not accept hard copies by post.

Concern must be notified of the date change at least two weeks prior to the original date. You cannot bring a date forward unless the new date is more than two weeks away too!

## Chairperson and timekeeper

The proposing team (which is generally the host team) will provide the chairperson and timekeeper for each debate until semi final stage. Concern will provide the chairperson and timekeepers for the semi finals and the national final.

## Home and away

For the league phase, each school will be given four fixtures between October and February. Two of these will be 'home' debates, where the school hosts the debate, and two will be 'away' where the school travels to their opponent's school.

In general the home team is the proposition side and the away team is the opposition side (although there can be exceptions for example, if a school can't host a debate for some reason). Concern will set the dates for each of your debates making sure that they are spread out across the year.

If the dates do not suit, debates mentors must register online here [www.concern.net/get-involved/schools/debates/change-date-debate-form](http://www.concern.net/get-involved/schools/debates/change-date-debate-form) with details why they need to change.



This must be done within two week window of the debate, giving Concern and the school time to rearrange.



## CAN I USE MY PHONE OR LAPTOP?

In the league phase, each team will debate four motions out of a possible five. These are allocated by Concern and cannot be changed. All motions will be of a similar level of difficulty.

### Who is responsible for arranging what?

The teams we are up against	Concern
Proposition and opposition sides	Concern
The motion	Concern
The adjudicators	Concern (with occasional help from schools)
The date and time	Concern
A change of date or time	The debates mentors in both schools in conjunction with Concern
The timekeeper and chairperson	The home/proposing school

## Date and time changes



There are strict rules on the changing of debates dates.

At the start of the year, we will send you your fixture list of dates and whether you are the home or away school. However we realise that schools are busy places and these dates may not suit everyone. For this reason, if the date does not suit your school, you are free to rearrange it for any date within the league phase, with the agreement of the opposing school.

However, you must let Concern know **at least two weeks before the original date**. This is very important as we need to have enough time to recruit our volunteer adjudicators. Schools must also be aware that we rely on the goodwill of our adjudicators and when debates are cancelled with little or no notice, it inconveniences our volunteers as well as staff.

**The use of mobile phones, tablets and other electronic devices is strictly prohibited.** Students must rely on the time keeper and not on a phone for time keeping purposes.

Rather than placing a watch on the podium we encourage debaters to rely on the timekeeper who will ring the bell at 3 minutes and again at 4:15.

If a student needs a electronic device for SEN purposes, Debates Mentors must discreetly disclose this information to the opposition before the debate.



## Time changes

**All debates are scheduled for the default time of 8pm.** In certain circumstances, for example if the schools have to travel long distances, it may be possible to hold the debate earlier, e.g. at 7pm or 7.30pm. However, this must be agreed by both schools, and by the Concern office. If you wish to change the time of your debate, please use the date change procedure and form, which has a section for time changes on it too.

The school requesting the change of date is responsible for contacting the other school and confirming a new date before contacting the Concern office to inform us of the new date.

### Date change procedure – step by step

1. Contact the school you are due to debate against to request a date change.
- ▼
2. In conjunction with the other team mentor, agree a new date for the debate.
- ▼
3. Submit a change of date form online [www.concern.net/get-involved/schools/debates/change-date-debate-form](http://www.concern.net/get-involved/schools/debates/change-date-debate-form) no later than two weeks before the original debate was due to take place.



**In order to do our bit for the environment, we are endeavoring to go paperless in Concern. Therefore, we will only accept change of date forms via our website.**



4. Concern will confirm whether the new date has been accepted. We will try our best to accommodate date changes but where there are two or more debates happening in the same area in the same week, we may be unable to accept the date change.

## FAQs about date changes

### What if a team member becomes sick on the day of the debate?

It is the school's responsibility to field a team for the debate and to have substitutes available should one or more team members not be able to make it on the night. We recommend that you have a panel of six to eight debaters so that if one student falls ill or cannot make the debate, you do not have to forfeit the debate. Some schools use a panel of students who are rotated throughout the competition or extra students who help with research. Substitutes should be involved in the preparation for each debate, so that they are already familiar with the motion and speeches if they are called upon.

### What if all my TYs are on work experience or on a school trip?

Many schools do debating with their TY students who are often out of school on trips, at open days or on work placements. For this reason, we advise that you check in advance with the TY co-ordinator in your school and make sure that the dates of your debates do not clash. If a date does clash, follow the change of date procedures. Remember we need two weeks notice to change a date!

### What about snow or floods?

Unfortunately we have no control over the weather! Sometimes debates have to be cancelled at short notice because of snow or floods. This is obviously not the fault of either school involved. If this happens we will endeavour to reschedule the debate and, failing that, to allocate points in a fair manner.

### What if it suits both us and our opposing school to debate with just one week's notice?

We cannot accept changes with less than two weeks notice, even if both schools are agreed on the new date. This is because we rely on volunteer adjudicators and we need to give them adequate notice of debates.

### Can we move the date of a debate forward or earlier? (e.g. from 9<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> November)

Yes, so long as both schools have agreed and you let Concern know at least two weeks in advance of the earlier date.

### Can you not make an exception just this once?

We're really sorry, but no exceptions.

## Timing



Each participant speaks for four minutes and 30 seconds. The time keeper rings the bell at three minutes and again at four minutes, 15 seconds. Anyone who speaks for longer than four minutes, 30 seconds incurs a time penalty of one mark per half-minute or part thereof. (See page 29 and the timekeeper's sheet). Adjudicators should disregard any information that is given after four and a half minutes.

### Timing is vital!

#### Four minutes and 30 seconds

The time allotted for each speech, including the captains' summations is four minutes and 30 seconds. Debaters should speak for no less than four minutes and no more than four and a half.

- Those speaking for between 4.31 and 5.00 will be docked 1 mark
- Those speaking for between 5.01 and 5.30 will be docked 2 marks
- Those speaking for between 5.31 and 6.00 will be docked 3 marks

***In addition you will not receive any marks for any information you give after 4.30 – for example even if you quote an amazing statistic or use a great piece of refutation, you will not get any points for it!***

There are no marks docked for speaking under time, but we would strongly advise you to speak for no less than four minutes. It is very obvious to the adjudicators if your speech is very short that you are not prepared, or you have rushed through it very quickly. You will not do as well as other speakers under content and debating skills.

When you are getting ready for the debate, practise reading your speech aloud and timing it, either at home in private or in school with your team! People generally take longer to read something out loud than in their heads. You will also need to build in extra time for refutation and rebuttal that comes to you on the night!

## Behaviour at the debate

Interruptions, calling for points of order or any form of heckling by either team members or members of the audience is not permitted.

Sarcasm and personal or snide remarks are not in keeping with the spirit of the Concern debates. Adjudicators will dock marks in 'ability to communicate, persuade and engage'.

Teams and their supporters should treat their opponents, their peers and the venue with respect.

Adjudicators should be mindful that they are representing Concern as a visitor to the school.

## Adjudicators

The adjudicator's decision is final.

Marking sheets are confidential. Adjudicators can give their own feedback at their own discretion after the debate and you can contact Concern for an overview of where marks were won and lost. Any queries or complaints regarding the result must be made to Concern.

Concern will assign the adjudicators. We aim to provide three adjudicators for each debate but occasionally a debate will have to go ahead with two adjudicators where it proves impossible to find three people, or where there is a last minute cancellation. We will provide five adjudicators for the national final.

## LEAGUE AND KNOCKOUT PHASE

### The two phases

The competition runs in two phases. The **league phase** takes place from October to the start of February and the **knockout phase** runs from March up to the final in May. Each school completes four debates in the league phase. The 16 schools with the most points at the end of the league phase will go through to the knockout phase.

The top 8 schools in the league, who did not gain any of their points through byes, will progress automatically to the knockout phase. The next 16 schools (including any in the top 8 who received byes) will play off for the remaining 8 places in the knockouts. 16 schools in total will progress to the knockout round. As time will be tight, there will be little flexibility in dates for the play-off debates, and any school canceling, or unable to debate, will forfeit their place.

### Points and the league table

Points from the four debates in the league phase will be credited to each team, who will all be in one big league table (a bit like a football league table).



Points will be awarded as follows:

Unanimous win	3 points	All three adjudicators in favour of one team
Majority win	2 points	Two adjudicators in favour of one team, with one adjudicator against.
Draw	1.5 points each	One adjudicator with level or very close marks, and two adjudicators favouring a side each
Majority loss	1 point	One adjudicator in favour of a team when two are against it
Unanimous loss	0 points	No adjudicator is in favour of the team
Bye	3 points	No team to compete against

### Sample league table

Team name	No. of debates held	Unan. wins (3pts)	Maj. wins (2 pts)	Draw (1.5 pts)	Maj. loss (1 pt)	Unan. loss (0 pts)	Bye (3 pts)	Total points
St. Mary's SS	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	7
Loreto College	3	1	1	0	1	0	0	6
Pres. Dublin	3	1	0	0	2	0	0	5
Mount Fingal	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	4
St. Patrick's School	3	0	1	0	2	0	0	4
Sacred Heart	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1.5
St. Matthew's	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1.5

## The knockout phase

### Who goes through to the knockout phase?

If several teams are on the same points for the last place(s) in the knockout phase, the following will be taken into consideration in order of priority:

1. Number of majority wins a team has received
2. Number of draws a team has received
3. Teams with the highest average margin of victory

### The margin of victory is worked out as follows:

- Look at the results for each team's debates in the League Phase.
- For each debate- find the margin of victory i.e. the difference in scores between the two teams. This will not always be a positive value. Where the team has lost a debate, the margin of victory can be a negative value.
- Rank the teams according to their margin of victory and eliminate the bottom ranked teams

If a team from the top 16 withdraws between the end of the league phase and the start of the knockout phase, their place will be offered to the next team down the league table.

### How does the knockout phase work?

The knockout phase takes place from March to May.

<b>Playoff round</b>	16 schools	8 debates
<b>Knockout round</b>	16 schools	8 debates
<b>Quarter finals</b>	8 schools	4 debates
<b>Semi finals</b>	4 schools	2 debates
<b>National final</b>	2 schools	1 debate

Teams reaching the knockout phase are paired up according to geographic location. However, in the later rounds, please be aware that you will have to travel longer distances.

There can be no draws in the knockout phase – the adjudicators must come to a unanimous or majority decision and the winning team goes through to the next round.

From the quarter final on, debates will take place in neutral venues, either another school halfway between the two schools or in a local community centre or college.

The semi finals are usually held in the same venue on one night. At the semi finals, we announce the motion for the national final and we toss a coin to see which team will propose and which team will oppose at the final.



Sacred Heart Secondary School, Clonakilty and St. Mary's Academy CBS at the Concern Debates National Final, May, 2017. Photo: Ruth Medjber

## Cancellations, withdrawals and byes

### Cancellations and withdrawals

Cancelling a debate or withdrawing from the competition has a negative impact for all of the other schools involved in the competition. If your school cancels or withdraws, other schools lose the chance to do all their four debates so they miss out on valuable debating experience.

### What happens in the event of a cancellation?

If a team you are up against cancels your debate and cannot reschedule or if a school withdraws from the competition, we will make every effort to find you a replacement debate before the end of the league phase. This may not always be possible, in which case we will revert to the bye system.



Please think seriously before you decide to cancel or withdraw. We cannot guarantee entry to next year's competition to schools who do not complete the league phase.

### The Bye system

Where a school is unable to participate in an assigned debate or has withdrawn and a replacement debate cannot be arranged, the team who have missed out on their debate will be awarded a bye worth three points, equal to the number of points they would have received for a unanimous win.

*\* Please see the rules and regulations at the back of this handbook for further information on cancellations and byes.*

## Awards and Rewards

In the Concern Debates HQ, we are always keeping an eye out for passionate teams, schools and mentors. Each year we award debates participants with the below special awards

- Best supporter(s)
- Best new school
- Best whole school involvement
- Best team mentor
- Best debates photo
- Best researchers
- Best article/review/blog about the debates
- Best social media



You will be sent a nomination form in the spring term.

ST MARY'S CBS   
carlow

JAMES HAUGHTON KELLETT

LIBERIA

self-reliance

|| Joseph Boakai, the Liberian vice president last week backed Trump's proposal to SLASH BILATERAL AID because, as he said, an over-protected child cannot be self-reliant ||

CONCERN worldwide 



DEBATE  
IT!

## SECTION

# 3

## THE MARKING SHEET, AND WHAT THE ADJUDICATORS LOOK OUT FOR IN A DEBATE

**»»»» MAKE SURE YOUR STUDENTS READ THIS PART!**

### The marking sheet

The marking sheet is divided into four key areas:

- content
- debating skills
- captains' duties
- team work



You will find a copy of the marking sheet at the back of this book. Everyone - from adjudicators, to teachers and students - should make themselves familiar with it! Look at it while you are reading this next section which explains how many marks you get in each section, and what you get them for.

## 1. Marks for content

You get marks for content under three headings:

- Knowledge and understanding of the subject (10 marks)
- Relevance to the motion (5 marks)
- Use and variety of sources (5 marks)

TOTALS					A. Content					TOTALS				
10	10	10	10	40	Knowledge and Understanding of the subject	10	10	10	10	40				
5	5	5	5	20		Relevance to the motion	5	5	5	5	20			
5	5	5	5	20			Use and variety of sources	5	5	5	5	20		

### Knowledge and understanding of the subject

Adjudicators are looking for evidence that you know what the debate is about – that you understand the motion and have researched all aspects of the subject. You should be comfortable with what you are saying, and understand any acronyms or technical terms.

If you are going to tackle a piece of refutation or rebuttal from the other team, you should be able to show that you understood it. Or not as the case may be – it may have been nonsense!

You might be able to show you understand the subject and both sides of the debate by preempting points the other team are likely to make in their speeches.

You need to prove that you really know your speech inside out and aren't just reading out a speech someone else prepared earlier (even if you are a last minute substitute!)

### Relevance to the motion

Marks are awarded for the relevance of a speaker's contribution, i.e. they will lose marks if they deviate from the motion. Stick to your argument, and make sure you are linking your examples back to the point you are trying to prove. If you go off on a tangent, remember to come back!

Stories, quotes and jokes are OK, so long as they enhance your argument. If there is any doubt about the relevance of an issue, example or story, the onus is on the speaker to prove how the point they are making is relevant to the motion.

### Use and variety of sources

Students should be sure to quote or mention a wide range of sources in their arguments. When researching make sure you take a note of where you found a fact – what book, website or newspaper was it in? This both strengthens your case and indicates the level of research you've undertaken. If you are quoting from someone, make sure you can pronounce their name and you know if he/she is a he or a she!

**'The whole school is involved in our debates: the principal, vice principal, timekeeper, chairperson, supporters from all year groups, parents, staff, friends... Concern Debates are a big deal in our school!'**

St. Dominic's Secondary School, Ballyfermot

## 2. Marks for debating skills

You get marks for debating skills under three headings:

- Refutation and rebuttal (10 marks)  
*(except for the captains who get marks for this in their closing speech which has a separate section on the marking sheet)*
- Ability to persuade, communicate and engage (10 marks)
- Logical and well constructed argument (5 marks)

### B. Debating Skills

	10	10	10	30		10	10	10	30
					Refutation and Rebuttal				
10	10	10	10	40		10	10	10	40
					Ability to persuade, communicate and engage				
5	5	5	5	20		5	5	5	20
					Logical and well constructed argument				

#### Refutation and rebuttal (R&R)

See 'The art of debate' on page 16 for definitions and examples of refutation and rebuttal.

There are 10 marks available for R&R for speakers two, three and four. The captain receives marks for R&R in their closing speech.

When assigning the marks allocated for R&R some adjudicators like to opt for a system that allocates a maximum of three marks for each example of R&R used by each speaker. If it is a particularly good refutation or rebuttal the speaker is given three marks. If on the other hand it is more of a contradiction than a refutation or rebuttal, then only one or two marks are given. A speaker who makes around four good uses of refutation or rebuttal can then expect the maximum marks.

Other adjudicators however, prefer a less rigid structure, preferring to look for quality of R&R, ease of inclusion in the speech, or forcefulness without recourse to sarcasm or disdain.

Quality is the key, rather than quantity. A really good point well delivered, that demolishes the main point of a previous speaker is more significant than a number of throwaway criticisms.

In the main there is an expectation that there will be more rebuttals from the third and fourth speakers than from the second, as they have heard more of the opponents' speeches and so one could apply a graded standard to speakers two, three and four.

#### Ability to persuade, communicate and engage

*Persuade* – debaters should leave the audience in no doubt that their side of the motion is the right one, they should be passionate and assured.

*Communicate* – students should be articulate, speak slowly, clearly and audibly. They should know their speech backwards so they are not stumbling over it!

*Engage* – debaters should use body language, eye contact and vary their tone to keep the audience captivated.

Passion, humour, and emotion will be rewarded in this category!

Jokes can get a good response, but make sure they are appropriate, fair to your opponents and on topic! Inappropriate sarcasm will result in marks being docked in this section.

**'The logic of your argument seems to be that less people we have around us the less we have to worry about... this is Tony Soprano logic'**  
 Rob, Sandford Park School

### Logical and well constructed argument

Like any essay or exam answer it will help if you have a beginning, middle and end to your argument. Introduce what you are going to say, say it (by making three or four clear points) and then conclude by briefly reminding us what you have said. Don't just read out interesting quotes or facts, show us how they prove your point!

## The art of debate: Refutation and rebuttal explained

What separates debating from public speaking is the art of refutation and rebuttal. Essentially a debate is a conversation between two groups that disagree, with each group trying to convince the adjudicators of the correctness of their own position as well as the absurdity or irrationality of their opponents'.

To refute an argument is to produce evidence (facts and figures) in order to prove it untrue (e.g. 'our opponents claim that child labour affects only a few thousand children around the world, well according to the latest ILO report, that figure stands at 218 million')

To rebut an argument is to disprove or discredit it by offering an alternative and stronger argument (e.g. 'our opponents have argued that it is the fault of the people, the everyday consumer. But I disagree, it is the responsibility of government and big business to solve this problem, and I will tell you why....')

Examples of refutation and rebuttal (good and bad)

A



'Speaker 2, you said that multinational corporations working in the developing world such as Nestlé haven't cleaned up their act, and I think you're wrong for thinking they have. Now for my first point...'

This is an example of very weak refutation, there's no evidence given and it's *bolting* on before the prepared speech rather than *woven in*.

B



'Speaker 2, you said that multinational corporations working in the developing world such as Nestlé haven't cleaned up their act, but according to the Nestlé website they are dedicated to a long term strategy putting business development above short term returns, ensuring they have become a source of stability and economic growth in the developing world'

This is a much better example of refutation.

C



'Speaker 2, you said that multinational corporations working in the developing world such as Nestlé haven't cleaned up their act. I believe that it is not the responsibility of the multinationals but the governments, to legislate and enforce human rights and environmental sustainability within their countries, to protect their own nations.'

This too is a good example, of rebuttal this time.

### 3. Marks for captains' duties

The captain gets marked in the same way as all the other team members under content and debating skills (except for refutation and rebuttal).

But the captain also receives marks for their special captains' duties. There are 35 marks in total going here, so it is important to get it right!

Opening Speech:

- Definition of the motion or response to the motion (10 marks)
- Outline of team's arguments (5 marks)

Closing Speech:

- Summary and defence of team's arguments (10 marks)
- Rebuttal of other team's arguments (10 marks)

<b>Opening Speech</b>		<b>C. Captains' Duties</b>	<b>Opening Speech</b>	
10	10		10	10
Definition of the motion or response to definition		Outline of team's arguments	5	
5	5		5	5
<b>Closing Speech</b>		Summary and defence of team's arguments	<b>Closing Speech</b>	
10	10		10	10
Rebuttal of other team's arguments		Rebuttal of other team's arguments	10	
10	10		10	10

#### Opening Speeches

The proposing captain is marked on his/her definition of the motion and outlining his/her team's arguments.

The captain of the opposing team is marked for responding to the motion defined by the proposition (and suggesting an alternative definition if they have one!), outlining his/her team's arguments and for presenting an argument of his/her own.

#### Closing Speeches

In their closing speeches, each captain is marked on their summation of their team's arguments and rebuttals, and refutation or rebuttal of their own.

No new material should be introduced in the summation, even if it shows brilliant research or understanding! Adjudicators should disregard any new information or argument introduced by the captains in their summations unless it is clearly in the form of a refutation or rebuttal.

See the box on page 19 for more information about the roles of different members of the team.

**'What kind of rationality says to free born people cut your population growth or we will cut you off, that we will allow you all to starve - the cold colonial logic of a master to his slave'**

Sandford Park Captain

## 4. Marks for team work

- Display of team work during the debate (10 marks)

10		10		D. Team Work		10		10	
				Display of team work during the debate					

There are 10 marks awarded for evidence of team work. This can be shown in various ways on the night.

Debaters need to show that they worked as a team in preparing for the debate. It should be obvious to the adjudicators how you divided up the subject, and it may be an idea to use a 'team line'. Debaters should also be familiar with each other's speeches, share research and useful statistics and refer to each others' speeches if relevant.

Do not be afraid of passing notes to each other (quietly!) during the debate – this will show that you are working together to come up with points of refutation or rebuttal.



### FAQs about debating

#### What is a 'team line' anyway?

Some schools use a 'team line' to tie their speeches together. There are various approaches you can take. Some teams might use a catchphrase or quote that they all repeat at some stage during the debate. Others might pick a word to base their arguments around – for example **AIDS** – the captain would talk about **a**bstinence, speaker two about **i**nformation, speaker three about **d**evelopment and speaker four about **s**tigma. Some teams might theme their speeches depending on the topic or time of year, or maybe give themselves titles, e.g. Minister for Finance, Minister for Health. It's entirely up to you!

#### Can I use a prop?

Although it is not against the rules to use a prop, such as a book, picture etc to emphasise a point, props should not be used to substitute for the spoken word. You won't get any extra marks for using a prop. Also, bear in mind it may be impossible for the adjudicators, who are at the back of the room, to see what you are holding up.

#### Do I have to learn my speech off by heart?

You can if you like! However it is perfectly acceptable to occasionally refer to note cards for a fact or statistic, or to remind yourself what comes next! While it is not forbidden to read from a script, the less you read and the better you know your speech the higher you will score under debating skills. It is important to make eye contact with the audience and adjudicators during your speech.

**'Ladies and gentlemen  
 humanity now stands where  
 two roads diverge; the road we  
 have travelled appears easy  
 but at its end lies disaster. The  
 other road, less travelled,  
 offers our only chance to  
 assure preservation of  
 humankind, chose wisley my  
 friends, choose Largy College,  
 choose to support this motion'**

Largy College Captain

## Team roles

### The captains

The captain gives two speeches – an opening speech, and a summation after all the rest of the team has spoken. You do not have to use the same captain for each debate, you can rotate the roles if you want to give different students the chance to be captain.

### The captains' opening speeches

The captain of the proposition is responsible for defining the motion, breaking it down to its relevant parts and giving their team's interpretation of it.

It is very important that the captain of the opposition then *responds* to the definition given by the captain of the proposition. The opposition captain may then accept, challenge or broaden the proposition's definition by giving their own team's definition of it.

Each captain should introduce their team mates and the arguments they will make.

As well as addressing the motion and introducing the team, each captain should advance an argument of their own, but bear in mind that they will not have as much time to do this as other members of the team!

### Captains' summation

Summations occur after the fourth member of the team has spoken. The captain of the opposition is called first, followed by the final speaker of the night, the captain of the proposition.

Captains should remind the adjudication panel of their team's key arguments. They should try and tie all the arguments together.

A captain may not introduce new material in their summation – they will not receive any points for any new material they bring in at this stage and may have marks deducted.

The captain's summation is an opportunity for them to refute and rebut the arguments of the other team and to recall the various rebuttals that were employed by their team.

### Second, third and fourth speakers

Each speaker should have their own approach to or angle on the motion. Everyone on the team should be aware of the points their team mates will use to avoid repetition and to ensure continuity of argument.

If you are using a team line it is important that no one forgets! But don't overuse it - it should be reserved for key moments or to emphasise a point.

Each team member is responsible for refuting and rebutting the arguments of the other team. If a speaker does not address any of the other team's points, then he/she will not receive any points under the refutation and rebuttal section of the marking sheet.

As the third and fourth speakers will have heard most of their opponents' argument there is an expectation that they will employ more refutation and rebuttal than the second speakers.

### Researchers and substitutes

Teams must have substitutes who are involved in the preparation of each debate and who are able to step-in should a member of the team be unable to debate. Researchers are very useful as they can help with interviews and listen critically to debaters as they practise and prepare. You do not have to stick to the same four speakers for each debate, for example if you have six students involved you can rotate them.





DEBATE IT!

# SECTION

# 4

## HOSTING A DEBATE IN YOUR SCHOOL

### Hosting Checklist

- Make sure the debate has been advertised around the school and that you have as many 'home' supporters lined up as possible .....
- Make sure the venue is signposted or there is someone to show visitors to the room .....
- Make sure you have assigned a timekeeper and chairperson .....
- Ensure that the following items are in place:
  - For the timekeeper: a stopwatch, bell and timesheet .....
  - For the adjudicating panel: marking sheets and notepaper, and glasses of water. ....
- Fill in the details on the chairperson's sheet/timekeeper's sheet. ....
- Ensure the motion is displayed prominently and that the wording is correct.....
- Ensure the room is laid out according to the picture below .....
- Arrange tea and coffee for after the debate .....



## Chairperson and timekeeper

The host school must provide a timekeeper and a chairperson for their debate.

The roles can be filled by a responsible student, a teacher, a parent, a member of the local community, a past pupil or a member of the school board.

## The chairperson's role

The chairperson's role is to introduce the teams and maintain order during the debate.

## The timekeeper's role

The timekeeper's role is very important – results can sometimes be decided on time penalties!

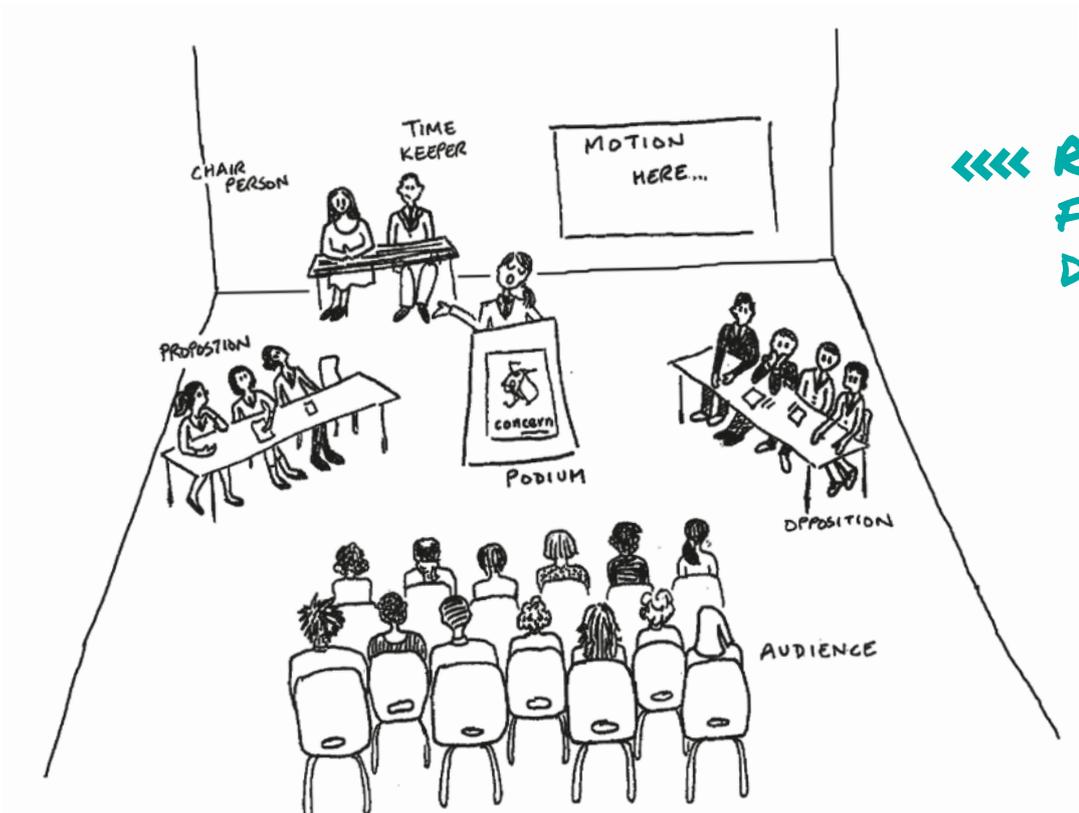


The timekeeper must make themselves familiar with the layout of the timekeeper's sheet in advance. They should also practise using the stopwatch they will use during the debate.

During the debate each speaker must be timed, and the timesheet clearly filled-in. Any time penalties should then be totted up for the adjudication panel.

The timesheet should be handed to the chief adjudicator as the adjudicators leave to make their decision.

A copy of the timesheet can be found at the back of this handbook.



««« ROOM LAYOUT FOR CONCERN DEBATES



## Debates running order

1. The chairperson welcomes the participants, outlines the night's proceedings and calls on the captain of the proposition.
2. The captain of the proposition speaks.
3. Adjudicators mark the captain of the proposition.
4. The captain of the opposition responds to the motion.
5. Adjudicators mark the captain of the opposition.
6. Speakers alternate between proposition and opposition until everyone has spoken and adjudicators mark each one.
7. The captain of the opposition sums up, followed by the captain of the proposition.
8. Adjudicators take the timekeeper's sheet and retire to another room to make their decision.
9. The chair invites audience members to pose questions or react to points made during the debate.
10. The adjudicators return and the chief delivers their feedback and the result.
11. The chief takes the marking sheets, results sheet and timekeeper's sheet and returns them to Concern.
12. Everyone enjoys a well deserved cup of tea!

## Refreshments

At the close of a night's proceedings, it is a tradition of the Concern Debates that the host school provides a cup of tea and a few biscuits.

This time also provides teams with an opportunity to chat to the adjudicators and seek pointers for their next debate.

## Who will adjudicate at the debate in our school?



Each debate requires a panel of three adjudicators; a chief and two assistants.

Concern will try our very best to get three volunteer adjudicators for each league phase debate. We may need your help though, because there are a lot of debates and we have only a limited number of volunteers. Occasionally a debate in the league phase may have to go ahead with two adjudicators.

In the knockout phase, from round five to the semi finals, Concern will provide three adjudicators. For the national final, there will be five adjudicators.

**Teachers can be adjudicators too – but not of a debate in which their own school is involved. As a debates mentor you will occasionally be called upon to adjudicate at other debates in your locality.**

## Adjudicators wanted

Is there anyone in your community, for example a parent, local business person, parish priest, county or town councillor who might be interested in becoming one of our volunteer adjudicators?

Are there any teachers in the school who might be willing to judge debates (in other local schools, not your own school!)? Are there former debaters among your past-pupils who might be interested in getting involved again?

Please encourage them to contact us to find out more!

Contact us: [Debates@concern.net](mailto:Debates@concern.net)

## Liaison with the adjudicators on the night of a debate

When an adjudicator agrees to attend a debate, Concern sends them a pack with details of the venue and schools, marking sheets and motion. Along with the information pack all an adjudicator needs to bring on the night is an open mind!

Please make sure that there is an adult available to greet the adjudicators, or ensure that the way to the room where the debate will be held is clearly marked.

Prior to the debate it is a good idea for the chairperson and chief adjudicator to agree a signal that indicates the adjudicators have finished marking and are ready for the next speaker.

The adjudicators' decision is final. Queries or objections to the result of a debate must be referred to the Concern office. Please remember that the marking sheet is confidential and the adjudicators cannot tell you where specific points were awarded, or let you see the marking sheets.



## FAQs on the night of a debate

### What if a team is late?

Efforts should be made to contact the team directly. If a team hasn't turned up 30 minutes after the agreed time, that team will forfeit the debate. If however the team arrives just after the elapsed time, and both teams consent, then the debate should go ahead.

### What if a student is sick and one team only has three speakers?

The debate should go ahead if possible, as it may be difficult to arrange a rematch. The school should provide a substitute or one of the other students on the team can double up and read the speech for the student who is ill as well as their own.

### What if an adjudicator is late?

Concern is in regular contact with adjudicators by phone call and text message. Very occasionally however, circumstances may arise where an adjudicator is late or has to cancel at the last minute. We recommend that you allow a grace period of 15 minutes after which you should:

- First have the host teacher call the missing adjudicator, adjudicator numbers will be provided to them before the debate, if no response
- Select either the chairperson or an impartial member of the audience to adjudicate, or
- Proceed with two adjudicators.

### If there are only two adjudicators, what results can they announce?

If the two adjudicators are divided on which team should win the result will be a draw (1.5-1.5). However the adjudicators are free to award a majority (2-1) decision, if they think that one team won but it was a close-run debate, or a unanimous (3-0) decision if they both think that it was very clear who the winner was.

## After the debate

As soon as Concern receives the results of a debate from the chief adjudicator we will put it up on our latest news page on the website at [www.concern.net/debates](http://www.concern.net/debates) and our Twitter account. League tables will be updated weekly. If after a week your school has not been credited with their points on our website please contact us and we will follow up.

**If you have a query about the result or want to get more feedback from the adjudicators or marking sheets, please contact us at the office. Whilst the marking sheets are confidential, we will be able to go through the sections and let you know where you gained or lost marks in your debate.**

## Complaints procedure

If you have a complaint about any aspect of the debates, please follow the complaints procedure below:

Contact the Concern Debates office as soon as possible after the debate.

We will ask you to put your complaint in writing either in a letter or by email to [debates@concern.net](mailto:debates@concern.net).

Once the complaint is received, we will investigate the matter and speak to all those involved.

You will receive a written reply within two weeks.

**'Multinational corporations haven't suddenly genetically engineered a conscience'**

Alan, St. Colmcille's, Knocklyon

**'The Concern debates have given me an abundance of confidence which I will always carry with me throughout my life.'**

Debater from Clonakilty Community College



## PREPARING YOUR TEAM FOR A DEBATE

At the beginning of the league phase, each participating team receives a Concern Debates pack. This contains the Concern Debates Handbook, posters for publicising the debates in your school, and most importantly an information sheet, detailing your four league phase debates. This will give the venues, motions, teams and whether you are proposing or opposing. It will give the date and time for each debate, and the contact details of the teacher in the school you are up against.

More information can be found on the Concern website and twitter account. Here you will find all the latest news plus research tips and later on, results and the league table.



««« [WWW.CONCERN.NET/DEBATES](http://WWW.CONCERN.NET/DEBATES)  
[WWW.TWITTER.COM/CONCERNDEBATES](http://WWW.TWITTER.COM/CONCERNDEBATES)



## Check your dates

Please check the dates you have been assigned for your debates at the start of the year, and on an ongoing basis.

Check with whoever in your school arranges the school play, the TY work experience, the trip to France, the open day and the parent teacher meetings. Don't forget to check with the students too!

You must give us two weeks notice to change a date – see pages 6 and 7 for more information.

## Preparing the team

We recommend you start preparing two or three weeks before your debate to give yourselves plenty of time!

First the team meets with their mentor to discuss the motion for their debate.

The team defines each section of the motion, paying particular attention to key words and idioms.

The team then splits the arguments four ways, each team member will be responsible for one aspect of the team's argument.

## Substitutes

All teams must have substitutes who should be ready to take over at short notice, for example if a team member is sick. Substitutes should be involved in the research, preparation and practice sessions before the debate.

## Research



Concern provides a list of sources and web links for each motion in the league phase which can be a starting point for your research. But you can and should find other sources too! Don't limit yourself to our suggestions.

Look at both sides of the motion – it is important to know what your opponents' arguments might be!

Research can take many forms, such as the following:

- Surveys within your school, community, family or friends. Useful for motions that address our own responsibilities and attitudes. For instance, school surveys are great to get some local or first-hand statistics on how your fellow students feel about some of the issues. Do they care about child labour? Do they think corruption in politics is just part of doing business?
- Books, encyclopaedia, newspapers, journals, periodicals and magazines can also be a great source of statistics and quotations relevant to motions (your school textbooks may even come in handy). Check out your school and local libraries.
- Carrying out interviews by phone, email or in person with politicians, ambassadors, councillors, local business people, teachers, or perhaps someone from your local community who has travelled overseas etc.
- Documentaries, current affairs and news programmes can contain some really strong information and statistics. You can watch these on TV or find them on the internet. They can also provide useful case studies.
- Contacting NGOs, government departments, etc. for information on topics related to their work.
- Searching sites such as [www.developmenteducation.ie](http://www.developmenteducation.ie), [www.globalissues.org](http://www.globalissues.org), [www.newint.org](http://www.newint.org), [www.bbc.co.uk/news](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news) and of course [www.concern.net](http://www.concern.net). Podcasts, informative videos and other multimedia can all be found in abundance on the internet too.



Left: Scenes from the 2016-2017 Concern Debates Final, The Helix, Dublin. Photography by Ruth Medjber

## Writing your speech



Each speaker has **four minutes and 30 seconds** to speak so when you have written your speech, time it and then make it longer or shorter as needed.

Make sure you speak for no less than four minutes (or you will look like you didn't prepare well) and for no more than four minutes and 30 seconds (or you will lose some of your hard earned marks).

Don't try to cram too much information into your speech. Adjudicators prefer to hear three or four well-developed points, with clear information about each of the points.

Find some good solid facts to strengthen your arguments, and **make sure to quote your sources during your speech to back up your point.**

Ensure that your points flow on from each other and that your speech is constructed with a beginning, middle and end - marks are awarded for clarity and logical thought.

Prepare cue cards for the podium - but don't write your entire speech on them! Put key points, facts and quotes on them, and use them to guide you on to your next point.

**Look at the marking sheet and the section on adjudicating in this guide so you know what the adjudicators are looking for.**

## Practise, practise, practise!

The team should continue to meet as speeches are being drafted, to ensure team members are presenting related but not repetitive points.

Practise! Why not use other classes as audience and critics? Practise in front of the mirror; using a video camera; in front of your class or parents. The more comfortable and convinced you are of the points you are making, the easier it will be to convince others – especially the adjudicators.

Remember to have additional, relevant information and statistics that might be used for rebuttal on the night of the debate. Leave time for refutation and rebuttal when finalising your speech. Try to predict what the other team will say and keep some statistics that could be used to counteract their arguments.

## On the night

When you are speaking remember:

- Use your notes as little as possible.
- Pace yourself; do not speak too fast; the adjudicators won't be able to follow your speech and you will waste all of your hard work.
- Be confident, enjoy yourself and be passionate about the subject (even if you are shaking like a leaf). Keep your voice clear and remember you know more about the subject than your audience does.
- Quote sources for your statistics and facts.
- If you have a team line, use it sparingly and to emphasise your points (you don't want your audience or adjudicators to become bored with it).
- Remember to use your wit! Humour really livens up a debate.

## Have a go

It is essential that every speaker attempts to "have a go" at their opponents' arguments; each of you can earn 10 marks for refutation and rebuttal. Don't leave it up to the others on your team. Remember it's your chance to have your two cents and convince the adjudicators how 'absurd' your opponent's arguments are. Try not to tack your rebuttal onto the beginning or the end of your speech. It will have more impact if you can weave it into the body of your speech – try and tie it to another point you were going to make anyway.

## Active listening



Throughout the debate you and your entire team should be listening out for points to refute and rebut in the other team's arguments. Write clearly and pass them on to the next speaker or to the captain for their summation. During the debate, jot down notes, quotes and statistics so that you are prepared to call into question the arguments put forward by the other team.

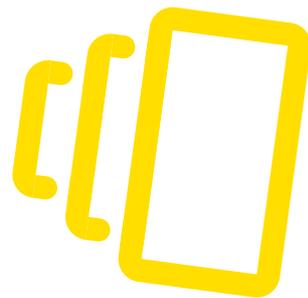


## SECTION

# 6

**ALL THE PHOTOCOPIABLE  
SHEETS YOU COULD  
EVER NEED!**

- 1 – Marking sheet
- 2 – Results sheet
- 3 – Timekeepers sheet
- 4 – Sample chairperson's speech



# MARKING SHEET



Motion: \_\_\_\_\_

Venue: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposing team: \_\_\_\_\_

Opposing team: \_\_\_\_\_

				TOTALS	<b>A. Content</b>				TOTALS	
10	10	10	10	40	10	10	10	10	40	
5	5	5	5	20	5	5	5	5	20	
5	5	5	5	20	5	5	5	5	20	
					Knowledge and Understanding of the subject					
					Relevance to the motion					
					Use and variety of sources					

				TOTALS	<b>B. Debating Skills</b>				TOTALS	
10	10	10	10	30	10	10	10	10	30	
10	10	10	10	40	10	10	10	10	40	
5	5	5	5	20	5	5	5	5	20	
					Refutation and Rebuttal					
					Ability to persuade, communicate and engage					
					Logical and well constructed argument					

<b>Opening Speech</b>		TOTALS
10	10	10
5	5	5

<b>C. Captains' Duties</b>		TOTALS
10	10	10
5	5	5
Definition of the motion or response to definition		
Outline of team's arguments		

<b>Opening Speech</b>		TOTALS
10	10	10
5	5	5

<b>Closing Speech</b>		TOTALS
10	10	10
10	10	10

<b>C. Captains' Duties</b>		TOTALS
10	10	10
10	10	10
Summary and defense of team's arguments		
Rebuttal of other team's arguments		

<b>Closing Speech</b>		TOTALS
10	10	10
10	10	10

<b>D. Team Work</b>		TOTALS
10	10	10
10	10	10
Display of team work during the debate		
Subtotal		
Less time penalties		
<b>TOTAL</b>		

Adjudicator's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

MARKING SHEETS ARE CONFIDENTIAL. THE CHIEF ADJUDICATOR SHOULD FORWARD THEM DIRECTLY TO CONCERN AND WE WILL DEAL WITH ANY QUERIES ABOUT THE RESULT.

Contact us at: Concern Worldwide, Active Citizenship Unit,  
Camden St., Dublin 2 Email: [debates@concern.net](mailto:debates@concern.net)  
Tel: 01 4177733 Mobile no: 087 797 3636

Concern Worldwide NI, 47 Frederick Street,  
Belfast, BT1 2LW Tel: 028 90 261524  
email: [debatesni@concern.net](mailto:debatesni@concern.net)

# RESULTS SHEET



This sheet should be filled in by the Chief Adjudicator at each debate in the League or Knockout Phase and posted or scanned to Concern as soon possible after the Debate takes place. **Don't forget to include the three Adjudicators' Marking Sheets and the Timekeeper's Sheet.** Please write clearly or use block capitals!

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Venue: \_\_\_\_\_

Motion: \_\_\_\_\_

The motion was **carried** (proposing team win)  / **defeated** (opposing team win)

**Unanimous win** (3-0)

**Majority win/loss** (2-1)

**Draw** (1.5-1.5) (league phase only)

## The Teams

**Proposing Team:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Opposing Team** \_\_\_\_\_

## The Adjudicators

**Chief Adjudicator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Adjudicator 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Adjudicator 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

Chief Adjudicator's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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# TIMEKEEPER'S SHEET



This sheet should be filled in by the Timekeeper at each debate.

**It should be handed to the Chief Adjudicator at the end of the debate.**

Please write clearly or use block capitals!

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Venue: \_\_\_\_\_

Motion: \_\_\_\_\_

You will need a stopwatch, a pencil and a bell.

**Time allowed: each debater has a time limit of 4 minutes and 30 seconds.**

## THE BELL SHOULD BE RUNG TWICE

- At 3 minutes
- At 4 mins 15 secs (to indicate to speakers they have 15 secs to finish up)
- The bell is NOT rung at 4 mins 30 secs

### PROPOSING TEAM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

	Actual time	Penalties
Captain		
Speaker 2		
Speaker 3		
Speaker 4		
Captain's summation		
	Total penalties:	

### OPPOSING TEAM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

	Actual time	Penalties
Captain		
Speaker 2		
Speaker 3		
Speaker 4		
Captain's summation		
	Total penalties:	

### NB: CAPTAIN'S SUMMATION

When the teams have completed their contributions each captain will sum up on behalf of his/her team. But watch out! The captain of the opposition sums up before the captain of the proposition! As before they have 4 mins 30 secs to speak.

### TIME PENALTIES

There is a penalty of 1 mark per each 30 seconds or part thereof for any speaker who runs over 4 minutes and 30 seconds. Please fill in the penalties as per the table below.

From:	To:	Time penalty:
Start of debate	4 mins 30 secs	0 points
4 mins 31 secs	5 mins 00 secs	1 point
5 mins 01 secs	5 mins 30 secs	2 points
5 mins 31 secs	6 mins 00 secs	3 points
6 mins 01 secs	Forever!	4 points

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# SAMPLE CHAIRPERSON'S SPEECH



Page 1 of 2

## Opening the debate

“ (Call the house to order) Ladies and Gentlemen...

Welcome to this evening's debate between \_\_\_\_\_  
PROPOSITION SCHOOL NAME  
and \_\_\_\_\_  
OPPOSITION SCHOOL NAME

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am your chairperson for tonight's debate.

Since the Concern Worldwide Debates Programme began in 1984 over 40,000 people have wrestled with issues ranging from Sustainable Development and Climate Change, to Terrorism, extreme poverty and the scourge of HIV and AIDS.

We hope that by your participation in the debates, that you as audience members and debaters will become active citizens and agents of change, seeking justice and human rights for all.

Concern Worldwide would like to thank the audience for your support this evening, as well as the adjudicators, teachers and teams for making this debate possible.

## Motion

Read aloud the motion

“ The motion before the house this evening is that: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Teams

Introduce the speakers individually

“ \_\_\_\_\_  
PROPOSITION SCHOOL NAME  
i \_\_\_\_\_ ii \_\_\_\_\_ iii \_\_\_\_\_ iv \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
OPPOSITION SCHOOL NAME  
i \_\_\_\_\_ ii \_\_\_\_\_ iii \_\_\_\_\_ iv \_\_\_\_\_

## Adjudicators and timekeeper

“ Tonight's Chief Adjudicator is \_\_\_\_\_.  
The assistant adjudicators are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
The time keeper is \_\_\_\_\_.

## Rules

Briefly run through the following -

“ Each participant speaks for 4 minutes and 30 seconds. The bell is sounded at 3 minutes and again at 4 minutes 15 seconds, at which time the speaker has 15 seconds to finish-up. Anyone speaking for longer than 4 and a half minutes will incur a time penalty.  
I will now ask the timekeeper to sound the bell (so that you know what to listen out for!)  
Heckling and sarcastic remarks are out of place and will be penalised by the adjudicators.  
The use of mobile phones and electronic devices for timing purposes are prohibited.

# SAMPLE CHAIRPERSON'S SPEECH



Page 2 of 2

“ I will now call on the Captain of the proposition \_\_\_\_\_ to open this evening's debate.

(Pause/Signal) Call on the captain of the opposition: speaker's name \_\_\_\_\_

(Pause/Signal) Call on the second speaker for the proposition: \_\_\_\_\_

(Pause/Signal) Call on the second speaker for the opposition: \_\_\_\_\_

(Pause/Signal) Call on the third speaker for the proposition: \_\_\_\_\_

(Pause/Signal) Call on the third speaker for the opposition: \_\_\_\_\_

(Pause/Signal) Call on the fourth speaker for the proposition: \_\_\_\_\_

(Pause/Signal) Call on the fourth speaker for the opposition: \_\_\_\_\_

NB: Don't get confused at this stage, remember the opposition captain sums up first, and then the proposition captain has their chance!

(Pause/Signal) Call on the captain of the opposition to sum up on behalf of his / her team

(Pause/Signal) Call on the captain of the proposition to sum up on behalf of his / her team

“ I would like to thank both teams for their participation here tonight and I now invite the adjudication panel to retire to make your decision (timekeeper should discreetly pass the timesheet to the chief adjudicator).

## In conclusion

When the adjudicators return, call the house to order again and introduce the Chief Adjudicator

When the result has been announced and the Chief Adjudicator has concluded his / her remarks, compliment both teams and again on behalf of Concern Worldwide thank the adjudicators, timekeeper, audience and the school for their help with the debate.

Refreshments are generally served after the debate, so invite everyone to join you for a cup of tea.

Remind the chief adjudicator to post the results sheet to Concern Worldwide.

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**CONCERN**  
worldwide



## SECTION

# 7

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN PROCEDURES MAY 2018: CONCERN WORLDWIDE

### Introduction

Concern Worldwide is committed to ensuring the welfare of children involved in any of our events or activities. This document lays out the key points from our Safeguarding Children guidelines which parents, guardians and teachers need to be aware of if their children/students under 18 years of age are taking part in a Concern Worldwide event or activity in the Republic of Ireland.

Concern will provide this information to all teachers whose students are taking part in Concern events, and to parents/guardians and children when children are taking part in events organised independently of the school or when children are participating on overnight activities and/or trips abroad



## Information for Parents and Teachers whose Children/Students will be attending a Concern Worldwide event or activity

### Background

Concern organises various educational activities to encourage young people in Ireland to play an active part in shaping a more equal and just world. These activities include the Concern Debates for second level students, and a range of workshops, talks and events specifically for young people. Occasionally as part of these activities Concern staff and volunteers accompany students on overnight stays on trips overseas to Europe, the USA and Concern's programme areas in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. Concern occasionally facilitates students on work experience placements in our office in Dublin. This guide applies to all of these activities.

This guide contains information for parents/guardians and teachers of children under 18 who are taking part in educational activities organized by Concern Worldwide in the Republic of Ireland. It covers Concern's policy on Child Protection, the management practices Concern uses to ensure the safety of children taking part in our activities, and the code of behaviour which all our staff and volunteers who work with children must adhere to. It also explains the process parents or guardians, teachers and school administration, and children themselves can use to make a complaint regarding any aspect of a Concern activity. Specifically it outlines the complaints process a person should follow if they have any concerns relating to the safety and welfare of a child engaged in Concern activities.

### Concern – Safe Guarding Children

Concern has a document called 'Safeguarding Children - Guidelines for staff working in Concern's head office in Dublin' which lays out our Child Protection Guidelines for the Republic of Ireland. These guidelines are in line with the Children First Legislation and National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act. All Concern staff and volunteers whose roles require or facilitate regular and/or unsupervised contact with children must read and adhere to these guidelines. The Child Protection guidelines build on an existing Staff Code of Conduct and Programme Participant Protection Policy which all Concern staff must adhere to. In addition any staff members employed in a role in the Republic of Ireland working directly with children undergo Garda Vetting.

If you would like to read either of these documents in full you can download them from our website or request a copy by phoning 01 417 7733 or emailing schools@concern.net.

The key section on Safe Management Practices and the Code of Behaviour are reproduced opposite.



### Safe Management Practices: League Phase of the Debates



- During the league phase, schools will host two debates in their school (HOME DEBATES), and travel to two schools for the remaining debates (AWAY DEBATES).
- As debates will be hosted on individual school premises, Safeguarding policies of each individual school should be followed and not that of Concern Worldwide. Therefore schools have the sole responsibility to safeguard children and young people and to report any concerns they may have for the protection or welfare of a child/young person.
- The Designated Liaison Person for any complaints, abuses or incidents involving a student that takes place during a debate, is the DLP for the school in which the debate takes place.
- It is the responsibility for the organising teacher from the 'Home School' to communicate their Safeguarding policies to the visiting school, teachers and students.

### Safe Management Practices: Volunteer Adjudicators

- Volunteer Adjudicators  
The Designated Liaison Person for any complaints, abuses or incidents involving a Volunteer Adjudicator that takes place during or after a debate, is the DLP for Concern Worldwide (below).

#### Designated Liaison Person

Michael Doorly, Head of Active Citizenship  
Email: michael.doorly@concern.net  
Ph: 087 955 5979

### Attending a Debate

Whilst attending a debate staff and volunteer adjudicators will:

- Upon arrival at the school wait in the foyer where you will be brought to the Debate location by the host teacher.
- Ensure that a teacher from the school remains in the room as per the school's child safeguarding procedures.
- Remain in the same area with other adjudicators, audience members and school staff while giving feedback and advice to the debate participants.
- Contact the Concern Designated Liaison Person (DLP) immediately should they happen to witness a child being harmed while in the course of the Debate.
- Not photograph or record children taking part in the debate.
- Not gather children's names or contact details.
- Not give their personal details to children.
- Not give a child a lift home.
- Provide constructive feedback, without focusing on the personal negatives of the child in question.
- Have the host teacher walk them to the school door once the debate is finished.
- Be mindful that when talking to the students they should stay in the hall or area where teachers and audience members are present and if they find themselves alone with a child, try to rejoin the group or end the conversation.





**Concern Debates**

Active Citizenship Unit  
Concern Worldwide  
52 Camden Street  
Dublin 2

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**Irish Aid**

An Roinn Gnóthai Eachtracha agus Trádála  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Concern gratefully acknowledges  
support from Irish Aid.