

# DEBATES HANDBOOK

NI • UPDATED 2020



A comprehensive guide  
for Students and Teachers





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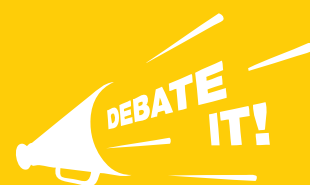
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# SECTION 1

## Introduction





## MEET EMMA HASSARD



### EMMA HASSARD

07402997698

debatesni@concern.net

Emma looks after schools in Northern Ireland. She has a MA (Hons) in English and Italian from St Andrews University, Fife. Emma worked for the NI Council for Integrated Education and is currently a parent governor at her local integrated primary school. Emma then took up a role with the Comber Foundation - an Irish NGO who work in orphanages in Romania, before joining Concern six years ago.

**Interesting fact:** Emma is a fluent Italian speaker.



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



### 1. Eligibility and Registration:

- A. The Concern Debates are open to Senior Cycle Students from TY to sixth year in the ROI and GSCE and A Level in NI.
- B. Each school must register a teacher as the Debates mentor. The teacher will be the point of contact between Concern and your Debates Team.
- C. 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.
- D. Registration for the Debates takes place from early June, closing in early September. Only online registration will be accepted at <https://www.concern.net/schools-and-youth/debates/information/register-for-school-debates>



### 2. Debates Team Panel:

- A. A Concern Debates team is made up of four students, however we recommend having a panel of six or more to help with research, preparation and substitutions.
- B. 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'.
- C. For information on how to **prepare your team** for a debate go to section 5.



### 3. Debates Format:

- A. The Concern Debates is made up of a League Phase and a Knockout Phase.
- B. The **League Phase** runs from October to January with each participating school having four debates.
- C. The **The Knockout Phase** begins in February and runs through to the **National Final** in April/May.
- D. 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.
- E. For more information on the Debates Format and Rules go to **Section 2**.

### 4. Debates Dates:

- A. 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.
- B. To **Change** an assigned date you should fill in the change of date form <https://www.concern.net/schools-and-youth/debates/get-your-school-involved/change-date> 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.
- C. **Time:** All debates are scheduled for 7pm. It may be possible to hold the debate later, for example at 8:00pm but this will depend on the availability of adjudicators as well as the school you are scheduled to debate. ***As of 2020, we may run some debates during the day depending on location. The Concern Debates team will inform relevant schools and guide them through this process.***
- D. For more information on **Dates and Times** go to page 10.

### 5. Debates Adjudicators:

- A. The Concern Debates Adjudicators are volunteers from the local community. Ideally there will be **two adjudicators at each debate** however circumstances (difficulty in recruiting volunteers, illness or lack of availability) sometimes mean that just **one adjudicator will be present**.
- B. 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 for new recruits.
- C. For information about the **marking sheet** used by the adjudicators go to section 3.

### 6. Debates Training:

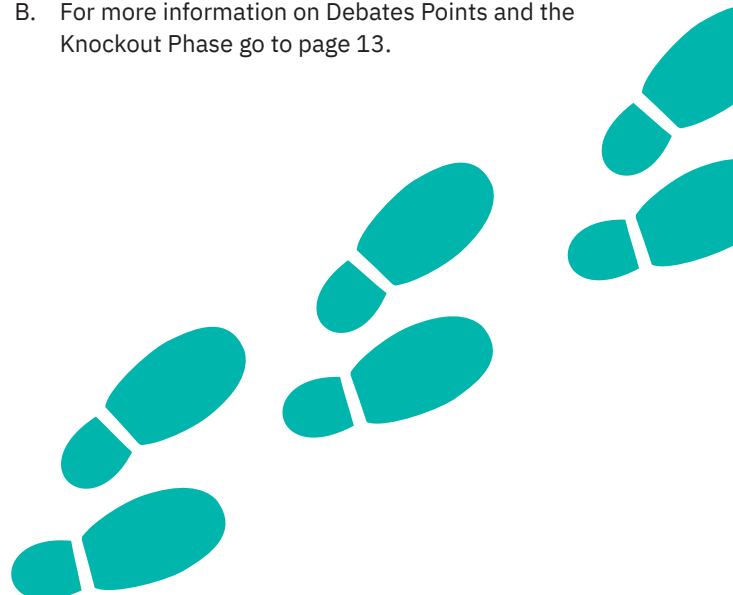
- A. Concern also offers a highly informative and engaging '**Debates Days**' workshops for clusters of Concern Debates Teams in a given area. The workshop lasts from 10am to 2pm and covers everything from focused research and argument presentation, to active listening, team work and effective refutation and rebuttal.
- B. 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:

- A. All four motions for each round of the Concern Debates, will be assigned at the beginning of the League Phase.
- B. The motions will cover topics related to international development (hunger, poverty, overseas aid, gender, conflict, the United Nations, etc.) and the **Sustainable Development Goals**.
- C. The motions are set by Concern and always aim to be balanced, fair, topical and (occasionally) fun.
- D. Schools who are asked to propose the motion in each round, will host the debate in their school.
- E. 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' (both adjudicators agree on one team)
  - ii. 2 points given for a majority win (adjudicators have a close result between two teams)
  - iii. 1 point given for a minority loss
- B. For more information on Debates Points and the Knockout Phase go to page 13.





## 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 multiple categories that include;
  - Best Quote
  - Best Debates Team Mentor
  - Best Social Media
  - Best New School
  - Best New Blog
- C. Teams that reach the quarter and semi-finals are presented with trophies at the National Final in April/May
- D. Both Finalists receive trophies in addition to a trip organised by Concern Worldwide. Details will be confirmed by Concern Debates Team at the end of the competition

## 10. Contact Concern

You can access the debates section of the Concern website at <https://www.concern.net/schools-and-youth/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).

Please refer to **page 2** for your designated Concern Debates Staff member's mobile. Please note we are only available between 9am and 5pm

Phone: 01 417 77 33

Concern Debates, Active Citizenship Unit, Concern Worldwide, 52-55 Camden Street, Dublin 2.

### For NI schools:

Email [debatesni@concern.net](mailto:debatesni@concern.net)

Phone: 028 90 26 1524

Concern Debates, 47 Frederick Street, Belfast, BT1 2LW

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

**THEY BRING HELP,  
AND MONEY,  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE.  
THEN YOU WAKE UP  
ONE MORNING,  
AND YOUR COUNTRY IS**

*Gone*

**ANNABELLE**  
Sandford Park  
#concerndebates  
#debateit

Debating the motion: China in Africa  
is more 'Monster than Messiah'

CONCERN DEBATES 35 YEARS





## What If's...

- 1. You have a debate this week and no one has contacted you from the Concern Debates team:**
  - Please text your regional Concern Debates staff member. Numbers are on **p2**
- 2. In the week coming up to your debate you will receive an information sheet giving details of the debate. If you have not received an information sheet for your debate and it is the following day:**
  - Please text your regional Concern Debates staff member. Numbers are on **p2**
- 3. On the day of your debate you will receive a reminder text with details of the debate. If you have not received a reminder text for your debate that evening:**
  - Please text your regional Concern Debates staff member. Numbers are on **p2**
- 4. The chief adjudicator announces the result but is unclear about who has won the debate:**
  - Ask the adjudicator for clarification of the results, was it a unanimous win (3-0) or a majority win (2-1).
- 5. The chief adjudicator announces the winner but it contradicts with the feedback given:**
  - Ask the adjudicator for clarification regarding the feedback. Make sure any concerns about the result are raised on the evening and email [debates@concern.net](mailto:debates@concern.net) / [debatesni@concern.net](mailto:debatesni@concern.net) as soon as possible to raise these concerns with the team.
- 6. The team you are debating against are using any form of technology during the debate (phone, tablet or laptop):**
  - Unless a student requires a laptop or tablet for learning difficulties no forms of technology should be used during the debate – raise the issue with the debates mentor from the team as soon as possible. If there is a need for a student on your team to use an electronic device, please inform the debates mentor for the other team and the adjudicators before the debate starts.
- 7. The team you are debating with cannot debate on the scheduled date or time and you are unable to change the date or time:**
  - Debates mentors should contact each other as soon as they realise there is a conflict with the scheduled date or time for a debate. The Concern Debates team should only be contacted once a decision has been made – a new date or time arranged and agreed upon.
  - If a new time or date cannot be arranged the team that is requesting a new date/time should inform Concern that they will have to forfeit this debate.
- 8. Your debate is cancelled and cannot be rearranged:**
  - Your team will receive 3 points via the BYE system.
- 9. Your team have questions they would like to ask the Concern Debates team?**
  - If a member of your team wishes to ask a question or raise a concern we would ask that the debates mentor contacts us. We love hearing feedback from the students – but due to child protection regulations it is best practice for the debates mentor to relay the message to us.
- 10. The debates mentor changes during the competition:**
  - In the case that a debates mentor is replaced during the competition, the team at Concern Debates should be contacted as soon as possible by the new mentor to ensure they have received all up to date information and that we have correct contact details for them to clear up any queries from the onset.

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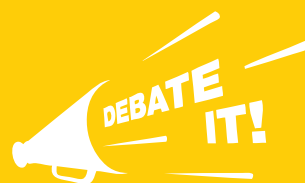
**Each year we offer debates workshops to help teams prepare for their upcoming debates. If your team are interested in attending a workshop please email [debates@concern.net](mailto:debates@concern.net) / [debatesni@concern.net](mailto:debatesni@concern.net).**

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# SECTION 2

## 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 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 adjudicators!**

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 opposite for Terms and Conditions in full.

## 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 the Concern Debates team and we will be asking you to confirm that the debate is going ahead on the arranged date and 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 / 028 90 261524.

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-Island 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 calendar.



## CONCERN DEBATES

### 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 and hampers their progress.
- Schools must pay their Concern Debates Registration Fee in a prompt manner. If not, schools risk non entry to the competition in subsequent years and will be placed on a waiting list.
- 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 at: <https://www.concern.net/schools-and-youth/debates/get-your-school-involved/change-date> Debates must be scheduled no earlier than **7:00pm**. Additionally the dates scheduled for the Semi Finals and the All Ireland Final cannot be changed as venues have already been booked. Schools may only reschedule a maximum of two times during the league phase.
- 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. Teachers must be mindful of speaking or creating distractions during the debate.
- During the debate, students must ensure they are respectful whilst making rebuttals and refutations. It is essential that students do not make reference to opposing teams based on individuals, but rather on the content of their speech. Sarcasm is not tolerated.
- Schools are encouraged to promote their teams and debates on social media. However online bullying of other teams, schools, students or teachers is prohibited and may result in a formal warning from Concern.



- Concern offers trips as prizes to the finalists in the competition. These trips are offered subject to Concern funding, and partner organisation and dates cannot be changed for individual pupils or schools.
- Concern Worldwide will provide volunteer adjudicators for each debate. These adjudicators are Garda vetted/Access NI checked and briefed on Concern's Child Protection policies and guidelines.
- Adjudicators are to be treated with the upmost respect and dignity by teachers, students and members of the audience. Complaints reported by Adjudicators may result in non-entry for schools in subsequent years. Complaints of this nature will be assessed by the Head of Active Citizenship.
- 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.
- 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:  
ROI: Claire Marshall on 01 417 8078  
NI: Emma Hassard on 07402997698

**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 providing as much support and training to participants as feasible. We will strive to continuously improve the programme for the benefit of all.**

Debates Teachers' mobile numbers and emails will be shared with the opposing teacher from the participating school and other participating Debates Teachers when taking part in a debate. This is to ensure the event runs smoothly, that all parties are aware of the location and time of the debate, to communicate changes to timetables, changes to the venue or any issues which may arise. Teachers commit to maintaining the strictest confidentiality with any personal data which may be shared with them during the debates and to delete any such information at the end of the debate unless they have prior consent from an individual to keep that information.

ROI: Concern will retain details of Teachers for two years. Concern will contact Debates Teachers 23 months after initial registration in order to see if Debates Teachers are willing to participate again in the Concern Debates Programme. If Debates Teachers wish to not participate, Concern will remove Debates Teacher's details from Concern's CRM database.

## CONCERN DEBATES

### Terms and Conditions & Code of Conduct

*Generosity as a Trojan Horse*

**BEWARE OF GREEKS AND  
BEIJING BUREAUCRATS BEARING GIFTS**

China uses its global influence and monetary loans to gain unfettered access to and control over African economies and governments, and to support brutal, corrupt and dictatorial regimes on that continent

**KEELAN**  
Sandford Park  
#concerndebates  
#debateit

Debating the motion: China in Africa is more 'Monster than Messiah'

CONCERN DEBATES 35 YEARS



## 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.

## 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.



### Can I use my phone or laptop?

**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.

## 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.

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.

## Time changes

All debates are scheduled for the default time of 7pm. 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 6pm or 6.30pm. 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  
<https://www.concern.net/schools-and-youth/debates/get-your-school-involved/change-date> 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.

China's development assistance complies with Linear Styles of **Growth Theory**.

It directly impacts on development, targeting **agriculture, mineral extraction, infrastructure** and more recently **manufacturing**.

**AARON**  
Largy College  
#concerndebates  
#debateit

Debating the motion: China in Africa is more 'Monster than Messiah'

CONCERN DEBATES 35 YEARS



## 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 students are on work experience or on a school trip?

Many schools do debating with their 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 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.

### 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 9th to 2nd November)

Your designated Concern Debates Staff member will advise if this is feasible.

### 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 25 and the timekeeper's sheet at the back of this handbook). 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.

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



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



## LEAGUE AND KNOCKOUT PHASE

### The two phases

#### Cup and Shield

After completion of the League phase the top 32 schools enter the Knockout phase which is divided into Cup and Shield. Schools finishing 1-16 from the League Phase go into the Cup round and schools finishing 17-32 in the League Phase going into the Shield.

### 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).

Sample league table

 Knockout Stage  Shield Stage

Place in competition	School Name	Debates Completed	Total Wins	Unanimous Wins (3 points)	Majority win (2 points)	Minority Loss (1 point)	Byes	Points
1	School A	4	4	4				12
2	School B	4	4	4				12
3	School C	4	4	4				12
4	School D	4	4	4				12
5	School E	4	4	4				12
6	School F	4	4	4				12
7	School G	4	4	4				12
8	School H	4	4	4				12
9	School I	4	4	3			1	12
10	School J	4	4	3			1	12
11	School K	4	4	3			1	12
12	School L	4	4	2			2	12
13	School M	4	4	2			2	12
14	School N	4	4	3	1			11
15	School O	4	4	3	1			11
16	School P	4	4	3	1			11
17	School Q	4	4	2	2			10
18	School R	4	4	2	2			10
19	School S	4	4	2	2			10
20	School T	4	4	2	2			10
21	School U	4	3	2	1	1		9
22	School V	4	3	2	1	1		9
23	School W	4	3	2	1	1		9
24	School X	4	3	2	1	1		9
25	School Y	4	3	2	1	1		9
26	School Z	4	3	2	1	1		9
27	School AA	4	3	1			2	9
28	School AB	4	3	1			2	9
29	School AC	4	3	1			2	9
30	School AD	4	2	2	1	1		9
31	School AE	4	4	2	2	1	1	9
32	School AF	4	4	2	2	1	1	9



- **The top 32 schools progress to the Knockout Stage**
- **You can see the top 16 schools in green progress to the Cup Round**
- **Schools 17-32 progress then to the Shield Round**
- **Please note that byes will be considered as equal points to a unanimous win**

## 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. 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 32 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?

Both the Cup and Shield rounds commence in March and conclude with the respective All-Ireland National Finals in May.

#### Cup Table:

Cup round	16 schools	8 debates
Quarter finals	8 schools	4 debates
Semi finals	4 schools	2 debates
National final	2 schools	1 debate

**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.**

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.

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.

#### Shield Table:

Shield round	16 schools	8 debates
Quarter finals	8 schools	4 debates
Semi finals	4 schools	2 debates
Concern Debates Shield National final	2 schools	1 debate

## 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.

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.

### 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.

### 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.

A Concern Debates Staff member will guide you through this should your school be in with a chance of progression.



# SECTION 3

The Marking Sheet and what  
the adjudicators are looking for





## 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.

Chinese investment in Africa went from **\$5bn** in 2006 to **\$60bn** in 2015

To misquote Mary Poppins, "a spoonful of billions helps the medicine go down!" Western-centric taste buds aside, **if it works, forget about the taste!**

**CARLA**  
Largy College  
#concerndebates  
#debateit

Debating the motion:  
China in Africa is more  
'Monster than Messiah'

CONCERN DEBATES  
35 YEARS



## 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

### 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.

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

## Refutation and rebuttal (R&R)

See 'The art of debate' on page 19 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.

## 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 bolted 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.

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

Rob, Sandford Park School



### 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)

<i>Opening Speech</i>		<b>C. Captains' Duties</b>	<i>Opening Speech</i>	
10	10		10	10
		Definition of the motion or response to definition		
5	5	Outline of team's arguments	5	5
<i>Closing Speech</i>			<i>Closing Speech</i>	
10	10		10	10
		Summary and defense of team's arguments		
10	10	Rebuttal of other team's arguments	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 page 22 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).

### D. Team Work

10	10	Display of team work during the debate	10	10
----	----	--	----	----

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.

**'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

## 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 abstinence, speaker two about information, speaker three about development and speaker four about stigma. 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?

No, props are not permitted.

### 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.

Points will be awarded as follows:

Unanimous win	3 points	Both adjudicators in favour of one team
Majority win	2 points	Split decision between the two adjudicators
Majority loss	1 point	Split decision between the two adjudicators
Unanimous loss	0 points	No adjudicator is in favour of the team
Bye	3 points	Debate could not happen for various reasons

### How is a 3-0 or a 2-1 score awarded?

If the difference on the marking sheet is 1- 9 points between prop and opp teams this would class as a majority win.

If the difference on the marking sheet is 10 points and greater between the prop and opp teams this would class as a unanimous win.



#### FOR EXAMPLE

**TEAM A** score 100 points / **TEAM B** score 109 points  
*This would be a majority win as there is 9 points in the difference - 2-1*

**TEAM A** score 100 points / **TEAM B** score 108 points  
*This would be a majority win as there is 8 points in the difference - 1-2*

**TEAM A** score 100 points / **TEAM B** score 120 points  
*This would a unanimous win as **TEAM B** has scored 20 points (above the ten point threshold) - 0-3*

**TEAM A** score 150 points / **TEAM B** score 100 points  
*This would be a unanimous win for **TEAM A** as they have scored above the ten point threshold - 3-0*



## 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.



# SECTION 4

Hosting a Debate in your school





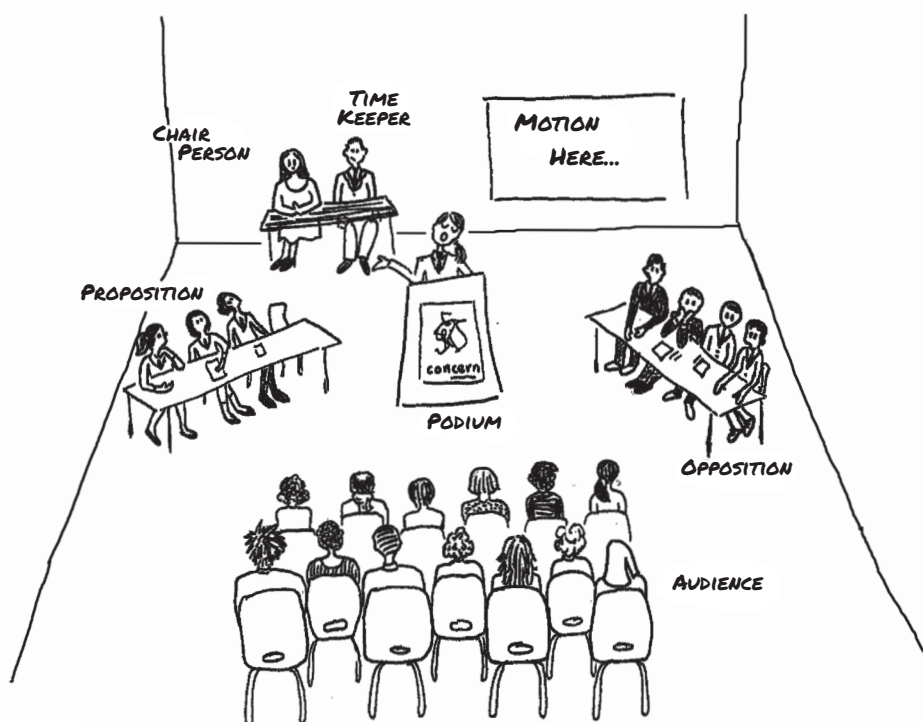
## Hosting Checklist

*To be completed by the Proposition or Home Team*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make sure the debate has been advertised around the school and that you have as many 'home' supporters lined up as possible</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make sure the venue is signposted or there is someone to show adjudicators and visitors to the room</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make sure you have assigned a timekeeper and chairperson</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fill in the details on the chairperson's sheet/ timekeeper's sheet and chief feedback/ results form</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the motion is displayed prominently and that the wording is correct</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the room is laid out according to the picture below</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arrange tea and coffee for after the debate</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

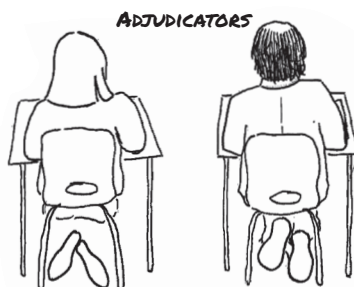
Ensure that the following items are in place;

- ☐ For the timekeeper: a stopwatch, bell and timesheet
- ☐ For the adjudicating panel: marking sheets, chief feedback form, notepaper, and glasses of water
- ☐ Make sure that you have have printed copy of the Feedback Form found at the back of this handbook.



### Room Layout for Concern Debates

*A podium is not necessary! Talk to the teacher before the debate if you would like to use it or not*





## 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 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.

### The chairperson's role

The chairperson's role is to introduce the teams and maintain order during the debate. A sample copy of their speech is found at the back of this handbook

## 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 two adjudicators; a chief and one assistant. Concern will try our very best to get two 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 one adjudicator.

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, 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
- Proceed with one adjudicator.

## 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 <https://www.concern.net/schools-and-youth/debates> and our Twitter account. League tables will be updated every fortnight. 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 ten working days.

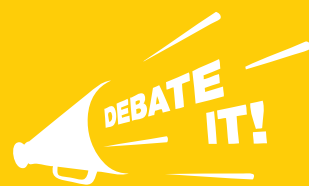
**'The Concern debates have given me an abundance of confidence which I will always carry with me throughout my life.'**

Debater from Clonakilty Community College



# SECTION 5

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.



<https://www.concern.net/schools-and-youth/debates>

<https://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!

## 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.

*Students do not need to learn their speeches off by heart and the use of notes is permitted!*

## 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, encyclopedia, 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.



## 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.

## Rule of three

One handy little rule for structuring your speech is the 'Rule of Three.'

- Say what you are going to say ~ Introduction.
- Say it ~ Main Body (your proof).
- Remind us of what you have said ~ Conclusion (sum up).

## 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.



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



## How to structure your speech

1. Chairperson, adjudicators, members of the audience, and members of the proposition/opposition. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am here with my team to strongly oppose/propose the motion that “\_\_\_\_\_”.
2. Allow me to begin by defining the motion... *(Here the Captain should explain important words from the motion using a quality dictionary.)*
3. I will begin by... *(Summarise what you will prove and how.)*
4. Our Second Speaker is \_\_\_\_\_ and she will... *(Summarise what the Second Speaker will prove and how.)*
5. \_\_\_\_\_ is our Third Speaker and will be responsible for \_\_\_\_\_. She will also... *(Summarise what the Third Speaker will prove and how.)*
6. \_\_\_\_\_ is our fourth speaker and will be explaining why \_\_\_\_\_. She will also..... *(Summarise what the Fourth Speaker will prove and how.)*
7. *(Now the Captain should make their own point/points)*
8. I believe that I have proven... *(Sum up your points and what they have proven)*
9. Thank you for listening, and I am sure that you are now convinced that you must oppose/propose the motion.

### Sample Second/Third/Fourth Speaker

1. Ladies and gentlemen, as \_\_\_\_\_ has already said, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am also here to strongly oppose/propose the motion that “\_\_\_\_\_”.
2. *(Now the Speaker should make their own point/points)*
3. *(The Speaker should also attempt to refute/rebut between their own point/points)*
4. I believe that I have proven... *(Sum up your points and what they have proven)*
5. Thank you for listening, and I am sure that you are now convinced that you must oppose/propose the motion.

**CONCERN DEBATES 35 YEARS**

**The Chinese Philosophy of**  
*Tian-xia* / 天下  
**has existed since the time of the first Emperors.**  
*This philosophy "is the basis for the elements of **equal treatment, mutual benefit and co-development** found in Chinese Foreign Policy".*

**ABIGAIL**  
*Larry College*  
**#concerndebates #debateit**

**Debating the motion:**  
**China in Africa is more 'Monster than Messiah'**



# SECTION 6

All the photocopiable sheets you could ever need!

- 1 – Marking sheet
- 2 – Chief Adjudicator Speech Template
- 3 – Chief feedback/results sheet
- 4 – Timekeepers sheet
- 5 – Sample chairperson's speech



*Please print the sheets on the left when you are hosting a debate.*





# MARKING SHEET



**CONCERN**  
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Motion: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Speaker One	Speaker Two	Speaker Three	Speaker Four	TOTALS	<b>A. Content</b>	Speaker One	Speaker Two	Speaker Three	Speaker Four	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

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

<i>Opening Speech</i>		<i>Opening Speech</i>	
10	10	10	10
5	5	5	5

<i>Closing Speech</i>		<i>Closing Speech</i>	
10	10	10	10
10	10	10	10

<b>D. Team Work</b>			
10	10	10	10
-		-	

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

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



# SAMPLE CHIEF FEEDBACK FORM



Please use the below format to announce the result at the end of the debate.

## Chief Adjudicator Feedback Speech:

**Please use this to give structure when announcing the results of the debate**

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

Thank you for attending this evening's debate between (insert school) \_\_\_\_\_

And (insert school) \_\_\_\_\_.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am the Chief Adjudicator for tonight's debate.

I want to congratulate both teams on their performance this evening. I would also like to thank the Debates mentors for their support and dedication.

Finally, I would like to thank the Chairperson, timekeeper and my fellow adjudicator for all their hard work today and ensuring the smooth running of this debate.

I will now give positive feedback to both teams:

Proposition (insert school name) \_\_\_\_\_ three areas which were good

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Opposition (insert school name) \_\_\_\_\_ three areas which were good

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

I will now give constructive feedback to both teams:

Proposition (insert school name) \_\_\_\_\_ three areas which need some work

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Opposition (insert school name) \_\_\_\_\_ three areas which need some work

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Well done to both teams once again.

We have decided that the motion was:

(Please choose one)

☐ Carried meaning the proposition win      ☐ Defeated meaning the opposition win

This means that the winning school is (insert school name) \_\_\_\_\_.

The winning school receives (choose either 3 points or 2 points) \_\_\_\_\_

The defeated school receives (choose either 1 point or 0 points) \_\_\_\_\_

Both adjudicators will be available for feedback at the end of the debate, but we encourage both schools to contact the Concern Debates team for an in-depth analysis of both school's performances.

Thank you and good evening.



# CHIEF ADJUDICATOR FEEDBACK AND RESULTS FORM (PAGE 1 OF 2)



This form is to be filled out by the Chief Adjudicator after consultation with the assistant adjudicators and is used for giving feedback and announcing the debate result. This form should be kept confidential and returned to Concern along with the marking sheets.

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Motion:</b>	<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Adjudicators:</b>  1. _____  2. _____
<b>Proposing Team:</b>			
<b>Opposing Team:</b>			

## SECTION A Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS. Feel free to note as much or little as you wish

### Knowledge and Understanding of the subject, relevance to the motion, use and variety of sources

PROPOSITION	Positive Feedback: _____
	_____
	_____
	Areas to work on: _____
	_____
	_____
OPPOSITION	Positive Feedback: _____
	_____
	_____
	Areas to work on: _____
	_____
	_____

## SECTION B Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS. Feel free to note as much or little as you wish

### Refutation and Rebuttal, ability to persuade, communicate and engage, logical and well constructed argument

PROPOSITION	Positive Feedback: _____
	_____
	_____
	Areas to work on: _____
	_____
	_____
OPPOSITION	Positive Feedback: _____
	_____
	_____
	Areas to work on: _____
	_____
	_____



# CHIEF ADJUDICATOR FEEDBACK AND RESULTS FORM (PAGE 2 OF 2)



## SECTION C Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS. Feel free to note as much or little as you wish

**Captain's definition of the motion or response to the motion, outlining of team arguments, summary and defence of team arguments, display of team work and overall team timekeeping**

PROPOSITION	Positive Feedback: _____
	_____
	_____
	Areas to work on: _____
_____	

OPPOSITION	Positive Feedback: _____
	_____
	_____
	Areas to work on: _____
_____	

## RESULT

**Please tick box and announce the result and the score**

<b>Result</b> Please tick below to indicate who won the debate	<b>Score</b> Please tick below to indicate the score of the debate
<input type="checkbox"/> The motion was carried	<input type="checkbox"/> Unanimous Decision: 3 points to victorious side
<input type="checkbox"/> The motion was defeated	<input type="checkbox"/> Majority Decision: 2 points to victorious side 1 point for defeated side

**Additional Comments/Observation on the Debate**


Signed \_\_\_\_\_

**Chief Adjudicator**



# 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

**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)



# 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 students 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 adjudicator is \_\_\_\_\_

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.

Teachers and members of the audience are also asked to show utmost respect when a student is delivering a speech.

Personalized, individual remarks are not tolerated and both teams are asked to refrain from using offensive language when challenging an argument.

Offensive or hurtful speech is not tolerated by the Concern Debates programme and goes against the ethos of the competition.

As we have timekeepers in place, we ask that phones and electronic devices are not used.



# SAMPLE CHAIRPERSON'S SPEECH

(PAGE 2 OF 2)



**CONCERN**  
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“ 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.

**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)



# 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 home offices which lays out our Child Protection Guidelines. These guidelines are in line with the Children First Legislation and National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act/Schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018. 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/ United Kingdom working directly with children undergo safeguarding vetting.

The key section on Safe Management Practices and the Code of Behaviour are reproduced on page 40.



**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.
- 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: 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 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**

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[www.concern.org.uk/schools-and-youth/debates](http://www.concern.org.uk/schools-and-youth/debates)

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ENDING  
EXTREME POVERTY  
WHATEVER  
IT TAKES



**Irish Aid**

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

Concern gratefully acknowledges support from Irish Aid.