

Teacher Tips



Before the debate:

- **Team:** You need a team of four students, plus a minimum of two substitutes. During the debates programme you will also need students to act as timekeeper and Chairperson. If you have lots of interested students you can get them involved in researching.
- **Commitment:** You will need to meet with your team at least once a week to help support your students as they prepare for their debates.
- **Consent forms:** ALL student consent forms must be uploaded onto the Concern Debates Platform. Information on using the Platform is available on our [Debates Platform Guide](#). This must include any student who will be involved as timekeeper or Chairperson.
- **Set up:** Please follow the [Room set up guide](#) on how to best lay out the room for a debate, so that we can see all the team clearly. Ideally the speaker will use a podium, with their team mates at a table to the side behind them. Please note a podium is not essential, if you do not have one please use whatever suitable table you have access to.

- **Online Debates:** As it is a hybrid programme some debates will be online, so please ensure you have read the [Debates Platform Guide](#) and are confident using your chosen platform to record the debate. Do a technical check to ensure you can hear and see the opposing team before you start to record the debate. We ask both the proposing and opposing teams to record the debate, in case of any technical issues, but it is the responsibility of the Proposition to upload the video promptly onto the Debates Platform the day after the debate. The Opposition school is asked to retain a copy of the debate recording until the results have been awarded.

- **Face to face Debates:**
As part of the hybrid Concern Debates Programme we may have physical debates in your school, or in the school premises of your opposing team, or in a neutral venue- such as a hotel or Concern office. At all times please ensure you adhere to the terms and conditions of entering the Concern Debates Programme and treat all adjudicators and the opposing team with respect and courtesy. Please remember that the adjudicators decision is final and if you require further feedback on the result please contact the Concern Debates Team and we will get back to you as soon as we can.



TEACHER TIPS

• When you are the Proposition School

For **online** debates as the proposing school you are responsible for:

- Agreeing the date and time for the debate with the opposing school debates mentor. Concern will provide you with the relevant contact details when we email you the fixture lists
- Confirming this date with the Concern Debates team
- Setting up the online meeting, over Zoom, MS Teams or any other online platform you are comfortable using
- Providing a Chairperson for the debate, please refer to our [sample Chairperson speech](#)
- Providing a Timekeeper for the debate, who will complete the [Timekeeping Sheet](#) and announce any penalties for your school when asked by the Chair in the closing comments after the debate has concluded. The opposing school will have their own Timekeeper who will announce any penalties for their team
- Recording the debate and retaining a copy of the debate until you have received the results
- Uploading the recording of the debate onto the Concern Debates Platform. For information on using this platform please see our **Concern Debates Platform video**

For **face to face** debates the Proposition are responsible for:

- Agreeing the date and time for the debate with the opposing school debates mentor. Concern will provide you with the relevant contact details when we email you the fixture lists
- Confirming this date with the Concern Debates team
- Setting up the room, as outlined on the **Room Set up Guide**
- Providing a Chairperson for the debate, please refer to our **sample Chairperson speech**
- Providing a Timekeeper for the debate, who will complete the **Timekeeping Sheet** and give this to the Chief Adjudicator before the deliberations begin
- Providing post debate refreshments (tea, coffee, biscuits) for the teams, adjudicators and audience

Chairperson's Sample Speech

The chairperson's role is to introduce the debate, to ensure that the debate is conducted in a fair and orderly manner, and to ensure that the debate is conducted in a way that is respectful to all participants. The chairperson should also ensure that the debate is conducted in a way that is consistent with the rules of the competition.

For online debates

Sample opening speech for online debates

"Welcome everyone to today's debate between (insert name of proposition school) and (insert name of opposition school) named (insert name of topic). My name is (insert name of chairperson) and I am your chairperson for today's debate. The Concern Debates Programme began in 2004 and over 50,000 students have benefited from the programme. The programme is designed to provide students with the opportunity to develop their public speaking skills, to learn how to argue a case, and to learn how to respond to an opponent's case. The programme is also designed to provide students with the opportunity to learn how to work in a team, to learn how to listen to others, and to learn how to respect the views of others. The programme is a great way for students to develop their skills and to learn how to work in a team. Today, I am your chairperson for today's debate. I will be responsible for ensuring that the debate is conducted in a fair and orderly manner, and that the debate is conducted in a way that is respectful to all participants. I will also be responsible for ensuring that the debate is conducted in a way that is consistent with the rules of the competition. I will now call on the Captain of the proposition to open this evening's debate."

When you are the Proposition school

The chairperson is responsible for ensuring that the debate is conducted in a fair and orderly manner, and that the debate is conducted in a way that is respectful to all participants. The chairperson should also ensure that the debate is conducted in a way that is consistent with the rules of the competition.

Timekeeper's role

The timekeeper is responsible for ensuring that the debate is conducted in a fair and orderly manner, and that the debate is conducted in a way that is respectful to all participants. The timekeeper should also ensure that the debate is conducted in a way that is consistent with the rules of the competition.

For online debates

Timekeeping sheet for online debates

The timekeeper should ensure that the debate is conducted in a fair and orderly manner, and that the debate is conducted in a way that is respectful to all participants. The timekeeper should also ensure that the debate is conducted in a way that is consistent with the rules of the competition.

When you are the Opposition school

The timekeeper is responsible for ensuring that the debate is conducted in a fair and orderly manner, and that the debate is conducted in a way that is respectful to all participants. The timekeeper should also ensure that the debate is conducted in a way that is consistent with the rules of the competition.

• When you are the Opposition School:

For **online** debates as the opposing school you are responsible for:

- Responding promptly to the proposing school debates mentor to agree the date and time for the debate with the opposing school debates mentor
- Recording the debate, as a back up in case of technical issues. Please retain this recording until you have received your results
- Providing a Timekeeper for the debate, who will complete the **Timekeeping Sheet** and announce any penalties for your school when asked by the Chair in the closing comments after the debate has concluded. The proposing school will have their own Timekeeper who will announce any penalties for their team

For **face to face** debates the Opposition are responsible for:

- Responding promptly to the proposing school debates mentor to agree the date and time for the debate with the opposing school debates mentor
- Arriving at the Proposition school promptly at the agreed time on the day of the debate



Preparing for your debate:

- **Time:** Each speaker has 4 minutes and 30 seconds to speak. Make sure you speak for no less than 4 minutes (or you will look like you didn't prepare well), and for no more than 4 minutes and 30 seconds (or they will lose some of their hard-earned marks in time penalties).
- **Team roles:** Your team will be comprised of four students, with at least two substitutes.

As debates mentor you will be helping your team to prepare and give five speeches- Captain Opening Speech, Speaker 2, Speaker 3, Speaker 4 and Captain Closing Speech.

The Opening Speech: The proposing captain is marked on their definition of the motion and outlining the team's arguments. The captain of the opposing team is marked for responding to the motion defined by the proposition and outlining their team's arguments.

The Closing Speech: 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!

Speaker 2 will have the least refutation and rebuttal to include, so is a good position for any nervous or first time debaters. **Speakers 3 and 4** will continue to incorporate refutation and rebuttal into their speeches.

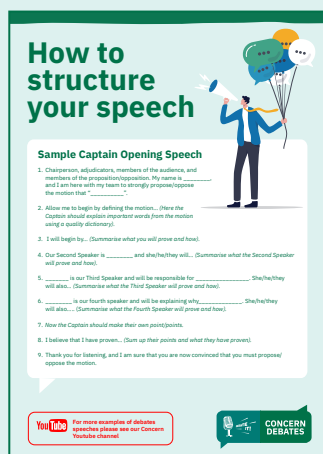
Each speech will be the same maximum of 4 minutes and 30 seconds long.



- **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 your team can and should find other reputable sources too.

Research can take many forms:

- Surveys within your school, community, family or friends. Useful for motions that address our responsibilities and attitudes
- Books, encyclopedia, newspapers, journals, periodicals and magazines can be a great source of statistics and quotations
- Carrying out interviews with politicians, ambassadors, councillors, local business people or teachers
- Documentaries, current affairs and news programmes can contain some really strong information and statistics
- Contacting NGOs, government departments
- Searching websites such as www.developmenteducation.ie www.globalissues.org www.newint.org www.bbc.co.uk/news and of course www.concern.net.
- Podcasts, informative videos and other multimedia can all be found in abundance on the internet too



TEACHER TIPS

- **Sources:** Remember your team should quote sources for all statistics and facts used in their arguments.
- **Structure:** If you have a team line, use it sparingly and to emphasise your points. One handy little rule for structuring your speech is the 'Rule of Three':
 1. Say what you are going to say ~ Introduction
 2. Say it ~ Main Body (your proof)
 3. Remind us of what you have said ~ Conclusion (sum up)
- **Humour:** Humour really livens up a debate. But please do ensure that it is appropriate and respectful at all times. You will lose points for inappropriate comments and sarcasm.
- **Refute & Rebut:** Remember your team will need additional, relevant information and statistics that might be used for rebuttal on the day of the debate. Leave time for Refutation and Rebuttal when timing speeches. Encourage your team to predict what the other team will say and keep some statistics that could be used to counteract their arguments. **Remember if your team does not include Refutation & Rebuttal you will not receive any points in this category from the adjudicators!**

Refer to our **Refutation & Rebuttal Guide** for more tips on how your team can counter your opposing team's arguments.

Refutation and Rebuttal

Adjudicator and Teacher

What separates debating from public speaking is the art of Refutation and Rebuttal.

To refute an argument is to produce evidence (facts and figures) in order to prove it untrue.

To rebut an argument is to disprove or discredit it by offering an alternative and stronger argument.

There are 10 marks available for Refutation and Rebuttal for speakers 2, 3 and 4. The captain can receive up to 10 marks for Refutation and Rebuttal in their closing speech only.

Students must clearly and accurately state the point they will be refuting in order to gain marks.

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 debate, 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.

It is advantageous for students to pre-empt what opponents may argue. However, this is not enough to score points for Refutation and Rebuttal. Speakers must state the argument they disagree with and why their opposition are wrong, backing up their point with referenced facts.

Scoring system for marking Refutation and Rebuttal:

Speaker 2,3,4 speeches

Need for Improvement (3-4/10)	Good (5-6/10)	Very Good (7-8/10)	Excellent (9-10/10)
A vague statement prepared in advance, not addressing any member of the opposing school. More of a contradiction than a refutation or rebuttal.	One opposition point disproven with a new point of view, backed up with reputable sources.	Two opposition points disproven with a new point of view, backed up with reputable sources.	At least two points referring to the opposition points. The statement being refuted is clearly outlined. The speaker who said the statement is mentioned. The point is disproven with a sourced fact. Your point of view has been changed. You are left questioning the integrity of the original point made.

CONCERN DEBATES CONCERTN worldwide



- **Practise:** Encourage your team to practise the speeches in front of the mirror; using a video camera; in front of parents and classes. The more comfortable and convinced they are of the points they are asserting, the easier it will be to convince others – especially the adjudicators.
- See our **Sample Speech** resource to view an example of how to format and structure a debate speech.

During the debate:

- **Safeguarding;** Please ensure that Concern's Safeguarding Guidelines are always met at any debate you participate in. We remind you that you are not permitted to take screen shots of any online debates, share your Concern Debates Platform log in details and that adjudicators must never be left unattended during a face to face debate.
- **Props:** No props are permitted for use during the Concern Debates Programme.
- **Be confident:** Encourage your team to use notes as little as possible and to not speak too fast. Debaters should use body language, eye contact and vary their tone to keep the audience captivated.



TEACHER TIPS

- **Active listening:** Throughout the debate the entire team should be listening out for points to refute and rebut in the other team's arguments.
- **Teamwork:** Debaters need to show that they worked as a team in preparing for the debate. It should be obvious to the adjudicators how they divided up the subject. Debaters should also be familiar with each other's speeches, share research and useful statistics and refer to your team mate's speeches if relevant. Encourage your team to pass notes to each other (quietly!) during the debate – this will show they are working together to come up with points of Refutation or Rebuttal.

After the debate:

- **Online debates:** **Both schools must record the debate.** If you are the Proposition school then you upload the recording of the debate onto the Concern Debates Platform. The Opposition school will retain their recording until the results are awarded. The recording will then be shared with an adjudicator to view on the Platform. You will be emailed results and feedback within a week.
- **Face to face debates:** The adjudicator (/s) will deliver the result immediately after the debate. The marking sheets are confidential so the adjudicator will not share these details with you. If you are not happy with the result, or would like further feedback, please do not ask the adjudicator. Instead contact the Concern Debates Team by email and we will provide you with further information.

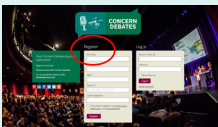
Debates Online Platform

A guide for teachers

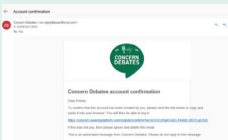
Registration

Before using the platform, all schools must register with their email address and create a password. Please do take note of this password, although there is a 'Forgot your password' function as a back-up. You only have to do this once. We would recommend you save or bookmark the address.

1. Go to: <https://debates.concern.net/>




2. Under 'Register' enter the fields as listed: First Name, Last Name, Email, Password, Confirm Password and tick the box below (having viewed the policies outlined in the links).
3. Click the purple Register button.
4. You will then be sent an email for verification:



Marking sheet guide for Adjudicators and Teachers

What to look out for

	Need for improvement (1-2/5) (1-4/10)	Good (3/5) (5-6/10)	Very Good Score (4/5) (7-8/10)	Excellent (5/5) (9-10/10)
A. Content (10 marks)				
Knowledge and understanding of the subject (10 marks)	Lacking to grasp the concept of the debate topic. Reading off speeches with no clear understanding.	Basic knowledge of the debate topic, without any depth.	Using language they can understand and explaining their arguments clearly.	The speaker knows what the debate is about. They understand the motion and have researched all aspects of the topic. They pre-empt the opponents' arguments. You are left in no doubt the speaker has a full understanding of the topic.
Relevance to motion (5 marks)	Sweeping statements made, with little or no relevance to the motion.	Referring to the topic but in very broad generalised terms, with some attempt to refer to the motion.	Staying on topic.	You are left in no doubt about the relevance of the point being made. The statement is clearly linked to the motion and always brought back to the motion in order to reinforce the point.
Use and variety of sources (5 marks)	Lack of facts and or sources for facts.	One fact that is backed up with a credible source.	Two facts backed up by a credible source.	Multiple facts backed up with clearly stated evidence relevant to point. Using facts from long established and 'trusted' organisations (United Nations, NGOs, Governments, media etc) will add strength to an argument.



Topic		Motion		Debate		Adjudicator	
Prop	Opp	Prop	Opp	Prop	Opp	Prop	Opp

A. Content

Knowledge and understanding of the subject

Relevance to the motion

Use and variety of sources

CONCERN DEBATES

CONCERN worldwide