

# Adjudicators' Briefing



This is an adapted version of the materials from Serbia WSDC 2024 collated by the WSDC Board, for the purposes of Judge Training. All credit should be given to the WSDC 2024 CAP for content.

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# PART 01

Model Judge

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# THE MODEL JUDGE

- Hypothetical ‘ordinary intelligent voter’ (‘average reasonable person’) Possessing general knowledge: Take on the role of an average, intelligent listener and is aware of current affairs and basic facts without letting specialist knowledge interfere with the debate.
- **Impartial: Doesn’t judge teams they have a personal bond with** (nation of affiliation, teams they have coached, etc.).
- **Unbiased:** Has no prior idea who is going to win the debate. They set aside their personal opinion about the motion or specific arguments. They don’t expect teams to argue their preferred arguments or discount arguments they don’t like. They judge the debate that happened before them.
- **Open-minded and concerned** to decide how to vote – they are thus willing to be convinced by the debaters who provide the most compelling case for or against a certain policy.
- **Observant and diligent:** Listens carefully to what debaters say and doesn’t construct ideas that haven’t been explained well. They look for substantiation and evidence equally from both teams. They track arguments, responses, and POIs – and are able to fairly and accurately summarize the debate (not necessarily to the debaters, even just to themselves) before evaluating it.
- **Expert on the rules:** Knows WSDC debating rules well and understands the words in the motion and the roles of teams/speakers.
- **Accountable & Constructive:** Can justify their decision based on a sound understanding of issues in the debate and the criteria for judging & gives debaters constructive and concrete feedback after the result of the debate is announced



# JUDGES SHOULD NOT

- **Use extremely specific knowledge on a certain topic. A judge should never say:**
  - “The proposition claimed that 1 million electric cars were produced in the UK last year, and it wasn’t attacked by the opposition, but since this is my field of expertise I know that the correct number is 39000 which is why the argument falls.” → adjudicators judge the debate as it happened.
- **Assess the content in the debate based on the arguments a team could have made. A judge should never say:**
  - “I penalized you because you didn’t bring an argument about the economy, even though I think that is really relevant in the debate.” → adjudicators can not penalize teams for not bringing certain arguments. They can, however, give this as explicit feedback for teams to improve. Not as a legitimization of the call for the given debate.
- **Assess the content based on refutation the judge is able to think of against an argument. A judge should never say:**
  - You explained your arguments about violence pretty well, but I thought of 3 different ways to rebut it which is why I penalized you on content. → Judges only take into account what has been said, not what could have been said in the debate.
- **Fill in the gaps in analysis or rebuttal that a team has themselves**
  - You tried to explain why this policy harms minorities, and even though you didn’t give the right reasons, I do agree with you that it’s an important argument because of reason X, Y and Z. This is why I awarded you on content. → Judges only take into account what has been said, not what could have been said in the debate. They can only give such advice during feedback for improvement purposes, if teams want to know how to make their argument(s) stronger, not as a justification of awarding marks.



# JUDGES SHOULD

- Be **courteous and respectful** to the teams and coaches
- Do **not allow coaches or audience members to make signs** or signals to debaters beyond time signals, and **maintains room decorum**
- Enforce the Electronics Policy
- Always makes themselves **available for feedback**
  - The schedule will generally allow for team and individual feedback at the end of each round. Unless emergencies occur, judges should provide feedback immediately after the round (in the debate room), rather than asking teams to do so informally (e.g. during lunch or via Discord)
- **Pay attention** in rounds:
  - Not checking their phones
  - Taking good notes
- While we allow judges to use their laptops to take notes, we ask judges to **not** check social media/Discord during the round, and to be mindful of the volume at which they type.

# PART 02

## Judging Criteria

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# JUDGING CRITERIA

## Deciding the win:

- Judges should determine which team did the best to persuade them, by reasoned argument, within the constraints set by the rules of Debating, that the motion ought to be adopted or rejected. The judges do so as the ordinary intelligent voter, and their assessments are always holistic and comparative
- Role fulfilment can be considered, but should not be the sole or primary criterion for judging a debate.
- Speeches are marked holistically, with a consideration of these three categories. Debaters should use these three categories to consider how their speech could be improved in future debates.
- In the next three slides, we will provide three examples of how the three categories work together.





# JUDGES CRITERIA



## Content (40%)

- Deals with **WHAT** is being presented.
- Evaluates the quality of content
- Covers arguments, rebuttal, content of POIs and responses to POIs.
- Even if material is not explicitly flagged as rebuttal, it may be responsive to the other side's material
- If an argument or rebuttal is weak / poorly developed, it is generally a content weakness

## Strategy (20%)

- Deals with **WHY** content is said
- It's the sum of choices that a team makes in order to win a debate.
- It includes interpretation and relevance of the motion, time allocation, structuring of the speech (prioritization), consistency between arguments and speeches, dealing with POIs in your speech
- Strategy points are awarded when a speaker identifies and addresses the right issues in the debate, even if they don't analyse these issues very well.
- Good strategy can be independent of good content, and is intrinsically tied to good engagement

## Style (40%)

- Style deals with **HOW** the content is presented.
- Style does **NOT** include Accents. A speaker's accent (foreign-ness or familiarity of an accent, or perceived harshness or pleasantness of an accent) should never be consideration when scoring for style.
- Style also does not include the format speakers choose to organise and deliver their speech (palm cards, sheets of paper, etc.)
- Style includes body language and hand gestures (if applicable), pace of speech, volume and tonal variations, choice of vocabulary (too technical or too lay? Emotive or dry?), eye contact maintained, or fixated on notes? (if applicable), variation of pace, volume, and so on.
- Bad style typically hinders the intelligibility or persuasiveness of the argumentation offered, and could include mumbling, shouting too loudly, or speaking too quickly to be understood.



# EXAMPLE ONE

A speaker identifies the correct issues, but is not able to prove why their team wins the issues due to their rebuttals being mostly strawman attacks. However, they provide emotive characterisation that makes the issues seem more important to the average reasonable person.

- Upward pressure on Strategy – good issue identification
- Downward pressure on Content – poor analysis
- Upward pressure on Style – emotive characterisation that adds to the persuasiveness of a given material

Overall: Likely average to slightly above average



# JUDGING: POINTS OF INFORMATION

- a. POIs are allowed between the 1st and last minute of the speech. This means that speakers on the other side may choose to offer a POI at any time during that time so long as they do not badger the speaker holding the floor. **The CAP highly discourages speakers from declaring that they will only take a POI at a specific point in the speech before starting their speeches (e.g. “I will only take a POI at 6 minutes and 50 seconds”).**
- b. As a matter of etiquette, **speakers should stand up when offering POIs.** POIs should not be offered sitting down, unless the speaker is physically unable to stand up, e.g. because of a lower body injury.
- c. Unlike in online debating, there are no “preferences for how POIs are given”. **POIs should be announced verbally with either “point”, “point of information”, “on that point” or other words that do not announce the point before it is delivered (e.g. “on the point of freedom”, “on the model”, etc).**
- d. **As a rule, speakers offering POIs must complete their POIs within 15 seconds.** If a speaker takes longer than 15 seconds to do so, the chair-adjudicator or the speaker holding the floor has the discretion to ask the speaker to sit down.
- e. **We would like to remind speakers to not heckle or barrack speakers when offering POIs,** e.g. having another speaker standing up immediately after a POI was rejected. As a guide, POIs should be spaced out, with at least a 15-30 seconds gap between the offering of each POI.



# Evaluating Analysis

## Arguments

Merely stating a consequence v. explaining why it is a consequence and its impact

Quality of analysis (missing logical links)

## Rebuttal

Misrepresenting and then attacking v. attacking the actual argument

Stating an argument is false v. using logical steps to disprove it

## Examples

Quality of examples (broadly applicable or cherry-picked? generalised or personal anecdotes?)

Stating overly specific, irrelevant examples v. explaining relevant persuasive examples

## What is good analysis?

- **Rigorous Logic:** Links made, conclusion cleanly derived from assumptions
- **Goes beyond assertions:** not just claiming outcomes such as harms and benefits without analysis to back up why that outcome is likely.
- **Relevance:** Decided on by the teams, and what they make relevant to the debate
- **Relative Importance:** Why is this argument important in the world/in the debate?
- **Tracking Evolution:** Responding to responses, adding new illustrations/language

## How should knowledge of good analysis affect judge behavior?

- A good judge never takes what teams say they have proven at face value; always check if they actually did so! Labels can be misleading
- Saying why something is important is not the same as proving that it happens.



# IDENTIFYING ISSUES

You must identify issues that were discussed in the debate in order to judge in a systematic manner. Issues are often questions that help you decide whether a particular motion should pass

- What are the main issues in a debate?
  - The clashes/issues most discussed?
  - You have to identify the issues that are more crucial to winning the debate than others
- How do you identify main issues in a debate?
  - Debaters do it for you
    - Example - THW ban smoking: Is it a legitimate choice to smoke?
      - Does banning smoking reduce harms on smokers and their families?
  - With no clash – you track and evaluate arguments and engagement
  - It is important to identify and issues as they emerged in the debate, do NOT enter the debate and decide what issues should have emerged
- How do I, as a judge, do that?
  - What does the motion require teams to prove?
  - What were/became the most important issues raised in the debate
  - Who won those issues effectively through arguments and evidence provided



# WEIGHING ISSUES

After deciding the issues in the debate, you need to deciding the importance of each issue in comparison with all others. This helps decide which issue is most crucial for a team to win in order to win the debate.

- How to rank issues?
  - What did teams explicitly agree on as important?
  - If that's not clear, then what did teams implicitly agree on as important?
  - If that's also not clear, then the reasons given by teams on why a particular issue matters more than other issues (weighing).
  - If there is no explicit weighing, **ONLY** then enter the debate to decide the ranking of issues (not as your personal self but as the average reasonable person we described earlier). Examples of Weighing: Size of group impacted/Extent of impact
- Finally, evaluate who won the issues, and subsequently, the debate.
- Compare the contribution of the two teams on a given issue (arguments + rebuttal)
- Decide which team ultimately won the particular issue – was there important material that stood at the end that was unresponded to by the other side? Did the existing responses adequately take down the core of a point a team made?
- The weigh up is **NOT** numerical ie prop won 3 arguments opp won 2 so prop wins. **NO**, the relevance and importance of the arguments matter - what was a more crucial issue for a team to win on?



## SECOND SPEAKER CLARIFICATION: EXTENSION V. NEW SUBSTANTIVE

Traditionally, the norm was for Second Speakers to have 1-2 new, unique, independent, and explicit argument(s).

- More recently, there is trend at WSDC that sees Second Speakers not having 1-2 new, unique, independent, and explicit argument(s). Instead, Second Speakers engage in extensive weighing, framing, rebuttal action, and advanced stakeholder analysis.

CAP Position: Second Speakers should introduce substantial new material (e.g. new examples, advanced stakeholder analysis, additional logical links, more impacts, more/new weighing or framing, etc.), even if it is not an entirely new argument. The Second Speaker Speech should not be a mere repetition of the First Speaker.

However, whether Second Speakers bring a new argument is a strategic decision for the team.

- No approach, in itself, is better than the other.
- If the decision is made to forward a new argument, that argument should be given enough time to be properly and fully analysed.



# THIRD SPEAKER CLARIFICATION I: NEW MATERIAL

What do the Rules say?

- The role of the Third Speaker is to respond to the other team's case.
- The Third Speeches from either team may provide an entirely new, unique, independent, and explicit argument, **if and only if it was flagged in the First Proposition/Opposition speech.**
- However, it is **not strategic** to leave the strongest material to the Third Speaker as it shows poor prioritisation by the team.

\*New Material: Anything that has not been mentioned in the debate, and cannot be traced to analyses already provided in the debate. e.g. an entirely new, independent, argument.

- **So long as the idea being developed can be clearly traced to a development in the debate** (e.g. picking up on an earlier response, deepening a given substantive, following on from what First/Second speakers are doing, similar analytical direction of existing material), **it is not considered as new material.**

However, even if a material is not new, it could be *late*. This means that it was not strategic for the team to leave this material to the third speaker as it is less able to be properly developed.





## THIRD SPEAKER CLARIFICATION II - RESPONSES

Responding can come in a variety of forms, such as:

- **Direct rebuttal** to an argument that the other team has made, which means providing a critique of the logic in the argument or providing new explanations for why the conclusion reached in the other side's argument is wrong
- **Weighing** of arguments by providing analysis of the relative importance of arguments or impacts
- **Indirect comments or analysis** about an existing clash point: providing new conclusions or impacts which can be weighed against the conclusions reached by the other team
- **New contextual or characterisation analysis** which broaden the understanding of conclusions reached by either team
- **New examples** which provide deeper understanding of the arguments being made or existing rebuttal

What happens if a critical portion of the Opposition rebuttal to Proposition's case is delivered by the Third Speaker, without any engagement from the First and Second Speaker?

- It is theoretically possible for Opposition to win **IF** responses are thorough.
- However this may be unstrategic given that Opposition only has 1 speech to develop this response, and it is therefore harder to sufficiently respond in a thorough way.



## REPLY SPEAKER CLARIFICATION: NEW MATTER IN REPLY

The Reply Speech is a summary of the debate from the team's viewpoint.

- Good reply speeches do not just report on the debate that happened, but contribute to the team's overall strategy and approach in the debate, in order to shape how the debate has evolved and panned out

**New arguments are not permitted in Reply speeches.**

- New weighing, new framing, new contextual observations, new examples are permitted, **HOWEVER** they have to be clearly derivative.
- Leaving significant proportions of a team's weighing, framing, contextual observations or examples to the reply speech would likely be considered as poor strategy

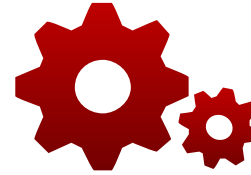
# PART 03

## Judging Process

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# TRACKING DEBATES



Speaker Name & Position			
	POIs		
CONTENT OF SPEECH	Comments and Thoughts on Content		
Comments on Speech			

## What should you record?

- Name and speaker position of the speaker
- Arguments provided by the team
- POIs (who gave, how many, content, response)
- Comments on the analyses provided
- Comments on the speech overall
- Tentative score, including POI Adjustments.

\* The image adjacent is merely an example and not a prescription of how one should track the debate.

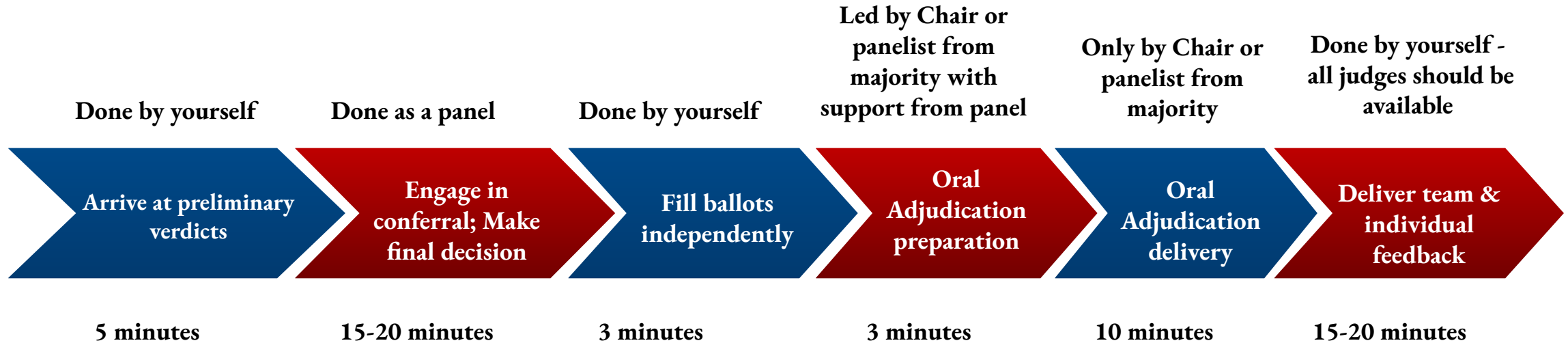


# WSDC JUDGING PROCESS

- Debate ends, debaters leave the room
- Judges take a few minutes to review notes and come up with a decision
- Chair mediates a brief conferral discussion - - everyone should be given a chance to speak; highlight points of agreement or disagreement so this can be reflected back to teams, clarify rules and content of the debate.
- Each judge fills in their ballot, individually (not consensus)
- If decision is unanimous or the chair is in the majority, the chair should deliver feedback; if the chair is dissenting, the chair has the option to appoint a panelist in the majority to deliver feedback
- In cases of dissent, the judge giving OA should include dissenting views as well.
- All members of panel should make themselves available for individual feedback.



# CONFERRAL JUDGING



*The entire process should not take longer than an hour*



# 1. ARRIVING AT A PRELIMINARY VERDICT

- **Track the debate closely through good notes and identify issues as they emerge in the debate.**
  - Issues are often questions that help you decide whether a particular motion should pass.
  - Teams will often outline issues themselves as the debate progresses.
  - Example – THW ban alcohol:
    - Is it a legitimate choice to drink alcohol?
    - Does banning alcohol reduce harms on drinkers and their families?
- **Evaluate who won the issues you have identified.**
  - Compare contributions of the two teams on a given issue (arguments + rebuttal) and check how they interact with each other;
  - Decide which team ultimately won the particular issue – was there important material that stood at the end that was ‘unresponded to by the other side? Did the existing responses adequately take down the core of a point a team made?
- **Decide the importance of each of the issues to the debate.**
  - In many debates, it is possible that one team has clearly resolved all the issues in a way that is favourable to their side. However, in some debates that are particularly close, different teams may have won different issues.
  - Use metrics that Teams often provide in the debate to decide which issues are relatively more important than others. In the absence of this, use implicit metrics, e.g.: time spent, extent of strength of the argumentation in each issue, intuitive metrics that an average intelligent voter would use, etc.
- **Determine a winner.**
  - The team that wins a majority of the important issues in the round wins the debate. Please note that winners aren’t determined by the aggregate of individual speaker scores, but rather by the issues they won. Scores then reflect the quality of the debate and speakers.



## 2. CONFER WITH PANEL & MAKE FINAL DECISION

- **Use the opportunity to clarify any questions you may have about the debate**
  - *Clarifications around the WSDC rules:*
    - Point X was made for the first time by the third speaker. Are we allowed to credit it?
    - Can Team Opposition raise a definition challenge in their second speech?
  - *Clarifications about more subjective elements of the debate round:*
    - Questions attempting to ascertain or clarify ‘what happened’. These may attempt to double check tracking, confirm that a judge understood a point correctly, etc. - “Proposition set up 3 levers to the principle - A, B, and C. Is that correct?”
    - Questions attempting to ascertain ‘how to evaluate’. In particularly close debates, these may attempt to understand how to compare contributions, or weigh up engagement. “Third Opposition has responded in X manner - how can we evaluate if Proposition has built implicit defences in their case to deal with this?”
- **Participate in identifying and tracking issues as a panel**
  - Chairs will facilitate the discussion to arrive at the crucial issues within the round and an understanding of the quality and closeness of the round through questions like: “I thought there were X important questions/issues in the round. Does anyone have additions to these?” “How close was this round? Did you think it was average, above average, or below average overall?”
  - Wings will contribute to the discussion by articulating how their view of a clash each, This may differ based on whether a split exists or not. Where a split exists, the judge splitting will briefly go through their perspective across clashes
- **Reevaluate your decision based on the new information and perspective you receive**
  - Take into account the discussion, recheck your notes, and make your final decision. Inform the Chair judge in the room of this decision.
- **Brief discussion on scores and range**
  - Was this an average, above average, or below average round? What general range is used?





## 3. FILL IN BALLOT INDEPENDENTLY

- **Scores and categories (Content, Style, Strategy) become most relevant at this point:**
  - Content, Style and Strategy are the criteria used to review the performance of each team and assess scores to each speaker. Rather than rigidly seeing them as discrete elements, these are three mutually reinforcing areas that help a judge score a particular speaker within a debate
- **The speaker scores are a mathematical expression of your decision and your view of the debate/speaker quality and not the other way around**
  - Because speaker scores are a mathematical expression of your decision, they have to reflect your win loss decision - low point wins are not allowed, where one team scores higher than another, but loses the issues in the debate-= repetitive
  - If you write down your speakers' scores and when calculating the totals they indicate that team A won but you honestly think team B should win because they were overall more convincing and did a better job, then you should review the scores you've awarded as your decision and the final scores should not contradict themselves.
  - At the same time, since the scores are also an expression of your perspective on quality, you can award the highest speaker score to someone on the losing team to reflect the quality of their speech should it stand out
- **The theoretical full range is 0-100 for a constructive speech and 0-50 for a Reply, but this is restricted by rules to 60-80 (30-40 for replies), and speakers realistically score between 64-76 (and 32-38 in replies)**
  - Style: 40% (40 points) → Limited to 24 – 32 pts; Content: 40% (40 points) → Limited to 24 – 32 pts; Strategy: 20% (20 points) → Limited to 12 – 16 pts. Marks for reply speeches are halved.
  - Points of Information – a modifier of up to +/- 2. This is done to account for instances where the POIs offered by the speaker are significantly different in quality to the speech given This cannot push the Total Score outside the 60-80 points range
  - Half marks are the lowest fraction allowed.
  - Average speech is 70 (28, 28, 14)



## 4. ORAL ADJUDICATION PREPARATION

- **Only one member of the panel will deliver an OA reflecting opinions from all the judges**
  - In most cases, the Chair judge will deliver the OA to the Teams.
  - Where there is a split with the Chair in the minority, the Chair may request a member of the majority to deliver the OA.
- **Make sure your OAs factor in dissenting opinions in their OA**
  - Take notes as the conferral decision is shaping up the win/loss.
  - Request judges on your panel to provide you key points of divergence, and frame the OA to cover those.



# 5. ORAL ADJUDICATION DELIVERY

- **Deliver the OA**
  - Announce the decision first. With the possible exception of late outrounds or the Grand Final, there is no need to be suspenseful.
  - Keep the OA within 8 minutes, and do not reveal any speaker scores
  - In these 8 minutes, walk teams through the tracking of the debate and its interactions, rather than giving them lists of what arguments they made:
    - Why are specific issues important in the context of this particular debate? Why?
    - Are these issues equally important, or are some more important than others? Why?
    - Which teams won on specific issues and why?
- **Be comparative:**
  - What points (e.g. points of argumentation, points of style or strategy) were more persuasive on the winning side
  - Explanation of strengths and weaknesses of teams has to always be comparative
  - Be specific: Do not stop at generic phrases like "provided more analysis", "were more persuasive", etc. Instead, give specific points of reference where that was observable.
  - Try to spend an equal amount of time on both teams, balancing positive and constructive
  - Choose your language carefully - no offensive comments, do not make fun of speakers, be respectful at all times=  
repetitive with *be nice*
  - When explaining the decision, stick to what happened in the round. Offer suggestions for improvement later. -Repetitive



## 6. CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK FOR TEAMS/SPEAKERS

- In this role, you are an educator and not just an unbiased judge.
- If asked, you may provide suggestions for how you would have approached the motion or specific arguments or responses you might have run. While useful, THIS IS NOT A NECESSITY and coaches/teams should not expect this from judges.
- Suggest to teams how to prioritise their material.
- Provide more in-depth feedback per speaker (what they did well, what they can do better in the next round)
- Adjust your feedback to the speakers (don't overload novices with complex comments, etc.)
- Do not single out speakers for doing poorly.
- Provide teams with an opportunity to ask any questions they may have.
- Be nice and compliment speakers when you can!
- Time has been scheduled for feedback immediately after the round. Barring exceptional circumstances, please provide feedback during the scheduled time, rather than doing it over lunch or other avenues.



# IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR CONFERRAL JUDGING

- **Enter the discussion with openness:**
  - Avoid being obstinate or unwilling to listen to what other judges are saying. There is no shame in changing your decision if you feel that additional information or perspective changes the way you view the debate.
- **Be specific in your questions:**
  - As much as is possible, any clarifications should be targeted and specific, rather than open ended. Judges are expected to avoid asking ‘What did X say in their second argument?’, and instead play back their understanding of the second argument and ask for additions if there are any.
- **Use language that makes space for, and facilitates discussion:**
  - Phrase sentences that indicate that you are sharing opinions, rather than sharing objective fact. Avoid statements such as: “This clash clearly went to X”, or “This is such an obvious win to Y”.
- **Spend more time on (i.e. prioritise) contentious, important areas- summarize 1 headline.**
  - Owing to time constraints, all participants are expected to spend a majority of the discussion on clear and specific areas that are more difficult to evaluate and matter more to the overall decision of the debate, rather than areas that the judges broadly agree on, or may have contention, but do not contribute as much to deciding the round’s winner.



# IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR CONFERRAL JUDGING

- **Avoid arguments/heated back and forths:**
  - Be consistently aware that you are in a ‘conferral’ rather than a ‘consensus’ discussion. Receiving information to enhance your decision making process is more important than the end state of the decision itself.
- **Chairs please lead the discussion**
  - E.g. specifying what you want discussed, and how long the discussion should be.
  - As a guide, each panellist should spend no more than 2 minutes each when contributing to a discussion. If something has already been mentioned, just add that it has been covered and move on to another part of that discussion. *It is ok if your contribution has already been discussed and you have nothing else to say.*
  - Chairs should scaffold the discussion as necessary e.g. “we will first discuss the question of morality, before we move on to the question on practical impacts since Opposition’s strategy largely focused on morality”.
- **While trainees do not submit ballots, they should be involved in the conferral discussion nevertheless**
  - Chairs and Panellists, please do not disregard judges just because they are trainees. They are an essential part of the tournament, and their contribution (and feedback) is considered for judge evaluations.
- **Remember to be comparative**
  - Debates are not won or loss in a vacuum. Always compare the contributions of both teams.

# PART 04

## Scoring & Feedback

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# TRIPARTITE MARKING STANDARD

Debaters at WSDC are marked according to the tripartite standards of Content, Style, and Strategy.

- The three marking schemes are not discrete categories that are marked independently, but the **three categories work together to** areas should help a judge understand what team did a best job during the debate overall, i.e. which team won the debate.

Speeches are marked holistically, with a consideration of these three categories.

- Content (40%) → **WHAT** you say in the debate
  - Covers the content of the material provided, whether that be substantive arguments, rebuttals, responses to POIs, and so on.
  - Evaluates quality of the material being presented in terms of: analytical rigour, and the use of examples/illustrations.
- Style (40%) → **HOW** you say something in the debate
  - Appropriate word choice, Eye contact, Body movement and hand gestures, Voice projection and control, Articulation and Enunciation, Speed of delivery, Variation in delivery, and Effective use of humor to make a point.
  - Style is credited to the extent that it value-adds or value-diminishes to the persuasiveness of the speech given.
- Strategy (20%) → **WHY** you say something in the debate
  - Motion interpretation (Definition, Approach/Direction), Time allocation, Prioritization, and Structuring of materials in a speech, Consistency within and between speeches, Weighing and Framing.



# SPEAKER SCORE

Standard	Overall (/100)	Style (/40)	Content (/40)	Strategy (/20)
<i>Exceptional</i>	80	32	32	16
<i>Excellent</i>	76-79	31	31	15-16
<i>Extremely Good</i>	74-75	30	30	15
<i>Very Good</i>	71-73	29	29	14-15
<i>Good</i>	70	28	28	14
<i>Satisfactory</i>	67-69	27	27	13-14
<i>Competent</i>	65-66	26	26	13
<i>Pass</i>	61-64	25	25	12-13
<i>Improvement Needed</i>	60	24	24	12

Standard	Overall (/50)	Style (/20)	Content (/20)	Strategy (/10)
<i>Exceptional</i>	40	16	16	8
<i>V Good to Excellent</i>	36-39	15	15	7.5
<i>Good</i>	35	14	14	7
<i>Pass to satisfactory</i>	31-34	13	13	6.5
<i>Improvement Needed</i>	30	12	12	6

The speaker scores are a mathematical expression of your decision and they help you evaluate individual performance of speaker

- For example, if you write down your speakers' scores and when calculating the totals they indicate that team A won but you honestly think team B should win because they were overall more convincing and did a better job, then you should review the scores you've awarded as your decision and the final scores should not contradict themselves.

## WSDC

- In WSDC debating, main speeches are marked out of 100%
- Judges are expected to fill in scores for each category
- The WSDC speaker scale is between 60-80
- The average speech is **70 (28, 28, 14)**
- Half marks (0.5) are the lowest fraction allowed.
- Reply speeches are marked out of 50%.
- An average reply speech is 35.
- Please use the range.



# Accurate Use of the WSDC Scoring Range

There has been a historic tendency for adjudicators in WSDC to infrequently give scores outside 1 or 2 points from the average, leading to a clustering of all scores around the 68 - 72 mark despite the significant variety in the quality of speeches. The Serbia WSDC 2024 CAP wants to place emphasis on the use of the full 60-80 score range.

- The scores of the whole WSDC tournament should fall along a rough bell curve distribution, such that there may be speeches at Serbia WSDC 2024 that score a 62 or 78.
  - So while the majority of the scores will fall within the average, scores of 65 and 75 are common, and you are quite likely to see them... not all the speeches you see will be 70s.
  - Remember that the speaker range is not the range of speaker scores you see in a tournament, but the range of possible speaker scores that exist in debating. Don't base your scores on debates you have seen so far in your judging career but instead refer to the marking guide throughout the competition - it is the most accurate reflection of what each score corresponds to.
- Speeches within a debate will also vary in quality. It may be the case that some speakers in the debate receive average scores (68-72) and some are significantly stronger or weaker (receiving scores closer to 65 or 75).
  - Even if the difference between speakers is very small, it should still be represented by slight differences in scoring i.e. half points.
- It is important to remember the connection between scoring substantive speeches and the win/loss margin between the two teams in a debate.
  - If one team clearly wins the debate (margin of around 10) then there will be a difference in speaker quality i.e. some speakers will be either below or above average.
  - If the debate is very close (margin of 2 or less) then teams will be of a similar quality, but speaker scores may not necessarily be all average (68-72). The whole debate could be of a low/high quality and thus all speaker scores are below average or above average.



# SCORING AND MARGIN

## Simple checks

- What would an average score sound in a debate speech? Move up and down accordingly for speakers who are below or above average.
- To score reply speeches, assess it like a regular speech and divide it by 2
- Half marks are the lowest fraction allowed.
- After tallying the scores, the total score of the winning team must be higher than the total score of the losing team.

## Margins between teams

- 0-2 pts – very close debate
- 3-5 pts – close but rather clear
- 5-10 pts – one team clearly better, but not dominating
- 10-20 pts – winning team dominated the debate
- 20+ pts – winning team “shredded” the losing team

# SCORING SUBSTANTIVE SPEECHES

<i>Mark</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content is not relevant to the motion and what the team needs to prove.</li> <li>• All points made are claims, with no analysis, and are confusing.</li> <li>• The speech is hard to follow throughout, so it is hard to give it any credit.</li> </ul>
61-63	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A few marginally relevant claims.</li> <li>• No analysis provided in the claims, which are mainly lines without explanation.</li> <li>• Parts of the speech are clear, but significant parts are still hard to follow.</li> </ul>
64 - 66	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some of the points made are relevant to the debate.</li> <li>• Arguments / rebuttals are made with some explanation and analysis, but with significant logical gaps in the explanation.</li> <li>• Sometimes the speech is difficult to follow.</li> </ul>
67 - 69	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most of the points made are relevant to the debate.</li> <li>• All arguments / rebuttals have some explanation, but it still has logical and analytical gaps in important parts of the argument and lacks evidence.</li> <li>• Mostly easy to follow, but some sections may still be hard to understand.</li> </ul>
70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No major shortfalls, nor any strong moments.</li> <li>• Arguments are almost exclusively relevant, although may fail to address one or more core issues sufficiently.</li> <li>• All arguments have sufficient explanation without major logical gaps and some examples, but are simplistic and easy to attack.</li> <li>• Easy to follow throughout which makes the speech understandable, though style does not necessarily serve to make the speech more persuasive.</li> </ul>

## SCORING SUBSTANTIVE SPEECHES

<i>Mark</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
71 - 72	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arguments are all relevant, and address the core issues in the debate.</li> <li>All arguments have sufficient explanation without major logical gaps and most have credible evidence. Some points raised may have minor logical gaps or deficits in explanation.</li> <li>Easy to follow throughout. On occasion the style may even serve to make the speech more engaging and persuasive.</li> </ul>
73 - 76	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arguments are relevant and engage with the most important issues. Arguments have sufficient explanation without major logical gaps.</li> <li>Occasionally, the speaker provides more sophisticated and nuanced analysis, making their arguments hard to attack.</li> <li>Easy to follow throughout. On occasion the style may even serve to make the speech more engaging and persuasive.</li> </ul>
77 - 79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arguments are all relevant and well-illustrated, and address the core issues in the debate, with thorough explanations, no logical gaps, and credible examples, making them hard to attack</li> <li>Easy to follow throughout. The style serves to make the speech's content more engaging.</li> </ul>
80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plausibly one of the best debating speeches ever given in a schools competition.</li> <li>It is incredibly difficult to think up satisfactory responses to any of the arguments made.</li> <li>Flawless and compelling arguments, made with outstanding delivery.</li> </ul>

# TLDRČ MARKING SCALE

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Overall</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
Exceptional	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plausibly one of the best schools' debating speeches ever given;</li> <li>• Flawless and compelling arguments, made with outstanding delivery.</li> </ul>
Excellent	76.5-79.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sophisticated arguments that are exclusively relevant, very well-explained with no logical gaps, and are very difficult to respond to.</li> <li>• Style is very engaging and persuasive,</li> </ul>
Extremely Good	74-76	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arguments have minimal logical gaps, and engage comprehensively with core issues of the debate, but are susceptible to strong responses.</li> <li>• Speech is very easy to follow, style is engaging.</li> </ul>
Very Good	70.5-73.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arguments engage with core issues of the debate, but may have some logical gaps.</li> <li>• Speech is easy to follow, style is often engaging.</li> </ul>
<b>Good (Average)</b>	<b>70</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Arguments are almost exclusively relevant, but not all sufficiently explained and are prone to responses.</b></li> <li>• <b>Speech is always clear, and mostly easy to follow</b></li> </ul>
Satisfactory	66.5-69.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arguments are often relevant, and partially explained.</li> <li>• Speech is nearly always clear, but sometimes difficult to follow.</li> </ul>
Competent	64-66	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arguments are sometimes relevant, but little explanation provided</li> <li>• Speech is sometimes clear, but often difficult to follow.</li> </ul>
Pass	60.5-63.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arguments are occasionally relevant, but very minimal explanation provided.</li> <li>• Speech is rarely clear, and very difficult to follow.</li> </ul>
Improvement Needed	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content is not relevant nor explained;</li> <li>• Speech is not clear and impossible to follow in its entirety.</li> </ul>



# POI ADJUSTMENT COLUMN

- **Track POIs asked, and reward speakers who ask good POIs in the POI column**
  - Everything that happens within the 8 minutes of a speech is marked within the 3 categories of Style, Content and Strategy. Therefore, answers to POIs will be factored into one of these three categories.
  - Content that happens outside the speaker holding the floor's speech is marked within POI adjustment column (if necessary).
  - Can grant or take away up to 2 further points
- **POI adjustments can only punish or reward speakers based on whether they're already very below average or highly above average respectively**
  - You cannot add two points where a speech is already excellent, and you cannot subtract to points where the speech is already below average



# ORAL ADJUDICATOR/REASON FOR DECISION

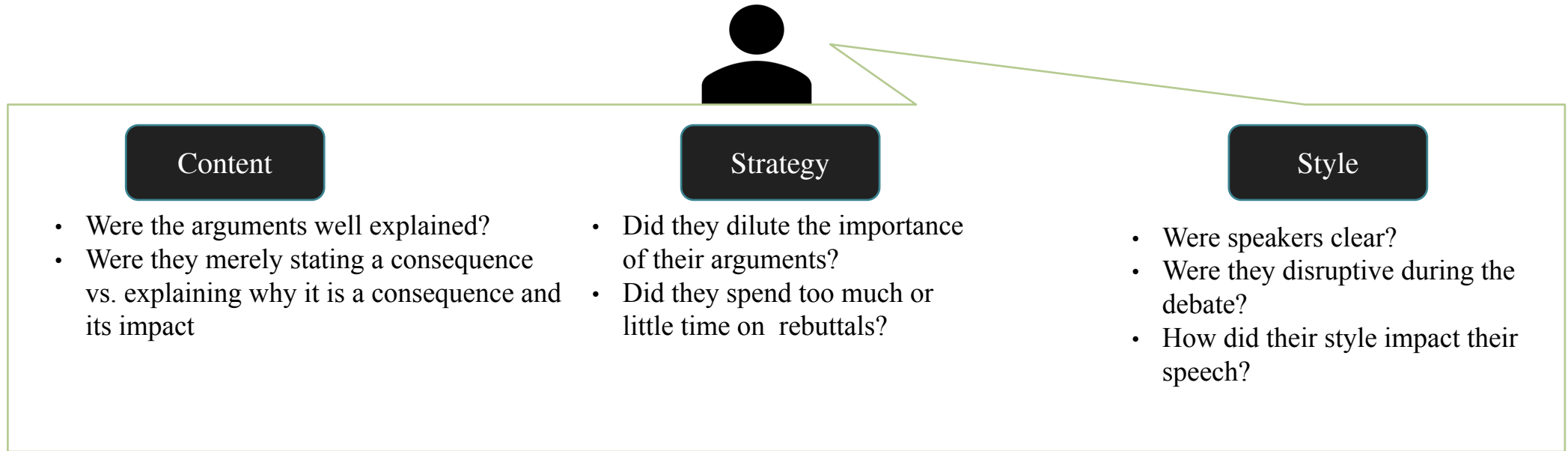
- Judges need to decide a winner between the 2 teams
- Judges announce results first
- Judges use the three categories of Style, Content, and Strategy in their RFD.
- When discussing content, Judges should focus on issues in the debate – which ones were important, which team won which issues and why. Be specific, making close reference to the relevant speeches.
- Judges should be comparative when discussing content, style and strategy, and the relative strengths and weakness of each team.
- Judges should spend an equal amount of time on both teams
- Judges should try to balance positive and critical comments
- Keep it short - at most 10 minutes (preferably 8 minutes or so)
- Tell teams they may approach for individual feedback.

**The OA/RFD should be clear, concise and comparative**

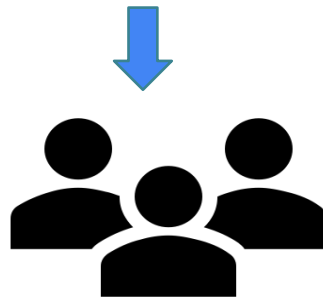




# EFFECTIVE OA/RFD



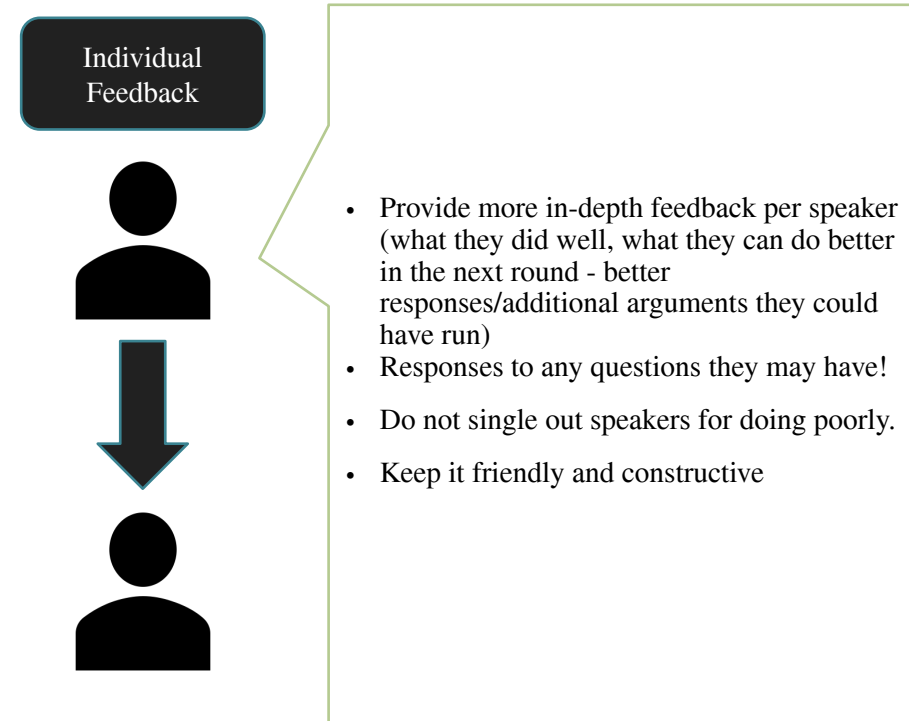
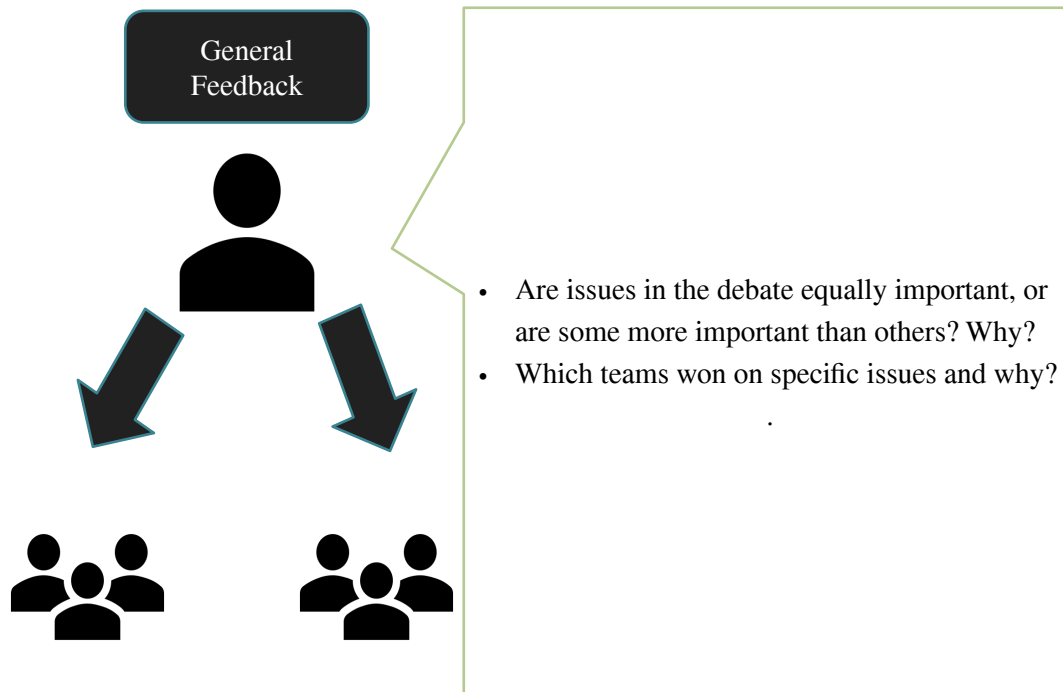
- ✓ Use their words and examples
- ✓ Be comparative
- ✓ Show confidence in your decision



- ✗ Don't be vague
- ✗ Don't be too harsh or overemphasize the winning (or losing) team



# OA/RFD VS INDIVIDUAL FEEDBACK





# Feedback - Judge to Judge (All)

## Question 1: How would you rank this adjudicator overall? [1 to 10]

**1- Very Poor:** Demonstrates a severe lack of understanding of debate rules and principles. Frequently misinterprets arguments and struggles to follow the debate flow. Unable to provide coherent feedback. Contributions are irrelevant, confusing, or lacks any meaningful analysis of the debate

**2- Poor:** Has difficulty applying debate rules consistently. Frequently makes errors in reasoning and struggles to articulate reasons for decisions clearly. Does not effectively communicate reasons for decisions or provide valuable contributions.

**3- Below Average:** Shows some understanding of debate rules but often misapplies them. Decision-making is inconsistent and may not align well with debate outcomes. Provides contributions that are somewhat relevant but lacks clarity and specificity.

**4- Average:** Understands basic debate rules but occasionally misinterprets or overlooks key aspects. Decision-making is generally reasonable but lacks consistency. Contributions are generally relevant but may lack depth or specific examples. Communication of engagement is adequate but not particularly insightful.

**5- Satisfactory:** Demonstrates a solid understanding of debate rules and principles. Makes generally sound judgments but may lack depth in analysis or consistency in applying rules. Contributions are clear and they are able to identify key strengths and weaknesses. Communication is generally effective but may lack nuance.



## Feedback - Judge to Judge (All)

**6- Above Average:** Shows a good understanding of debate mechanics and consistently applies rules appropriately. Decision-making is generally fair and well-supported by debate evidence. Offers insightful contributions. Communication is clear, and engagement is constructive.

**7- Good:** Exhibits a strong grasp of debate rules and principles. Makes well-reasoned decisions based on a balanced assessment of arguments and adherence to rules. Provides detailed contributions that are insightful and identifies nuanced aspects of the debate. Communication is effective and comprehensive.

**8- Very Good:** Demonstrates a high level of proficiency in understanding and applying debate rules. Decision-making is highly objective and well-supported by evidence from the debate. Offers highly constructive contributions that are detailed and comprehensive. Communication is effective, clear, and insightful.

**9- Excellent:** Shows exceptional understanding and application of debate rules. Decision-making is thorough, fair, and reflects a deep understanding of debate mechanics and comprehensive flow of the debate as it happened. Provides exceptionally detailed and insightful contributions. Communication is precise, effective, clear, and comprehensive.

**10- Outstanding:** Exemplifies flawless understanding and application of debate rules. Decision-making is impeccable and thorough, demonstrating outstanding impartiality and expertise. Exemplifies flawless communication that is comprehensive, precise, effective, clear, and insightful.



# Feedback - Judge to Judge (All)

## **Question 2: How would you rank this adjudicator in their ability to fulfill their designated role? [1-10]**

- For Chairs: Manage the conferral discussion effectively, is inclusive of all panelists and trainees, and does not dominate the discussion or hinder others from contributing their viewpoints?
- For Panelists/Trainees: Contributes meaningfully to conferral discussions, respects the other members of the panel, and does not take up an excessive amount of time or hinder others from contributing their viewpoints?

## **Question 3: Do you agree with the Judge's call?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

## **Question 4: Was this judge in the majority decision?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

## **Question 5: Do you believe they should move from the role they fulfilled (for example be moved from panellist to chair or some other movement)?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

## **Question 6: Please provide a detailed justified explanation for the scores given above (mandatory)**

[Comment here]

THANK YOU !