WSDC 2023 Vietnam

Judge Training

Structure

Judges' Briefing

1. Characteristics of the Model Judge
2. WSDC Judging Criteria
3. WSDC Judging Process
4. WSDC Marking Range
5. Effective Feedback

THE MODEL JUDGE

THE MODEL JUDGE

- **Hypothetical 'ordinary intelligent voter' ('average reasonable person')**
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.

THE MODEL JUDGE

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.

THE MODEL JUDGE

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.

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.

WSDC JUDGING 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 is **NOT** about immutable characteristics of an individual's voice - perceived to be a harsh vocal tone or pitch.
- 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.

BP Judging Criteria

- In BP debating, analysis and style are not separate criteria on which an argument is assessed.
- Style and analysis thus do not independently generate persuasiveness, but describe the necessary collective elements that make an argument persuasive.
- Being persuasive is also not just about making arguments that are, considered entirely on their own, persuasive. Persuasion in debating also rests on detailed engagement with other teams, and comparatively demonstrating why one's own arguments are better than, defeat, and should be preferred over other arguments.

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.

EVALUATING 2ND SPEAKERS

- Some Second Speakers may choose to make an entirely new, independent, argument. Some may choose to provide an 'extension' (e.g. new framing, advanced stakeholder analyses, flipping of claims, etc.)

CAP Clarification: No approach, it itself, is better than the other. However, **the Second Speaker Speech should not be a mere repetition of the First Speaker.**
- This is a question of strategy: If a team adds a new argument that reinforces existing, undefeated premises, then it may be new but not strategic. Similarly, if a team adds new defences to a premise that was taken out, then it may not be new, but it might be strategic.
- Second Speakers should introduce 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 a new argument.
- **If the decision is made to forward a new argument, that argument should be given enough time to be properly and fully analysed** (i.e. it should not be a token 1-minute argument).

Please consider Second Speaker substantives (if any) in your assessment of the debate. Do not wave them off or, worse, pretend that they don't exist.

EVALUATING 3RD SPEAKERS

- Unlike BP whips, 3rd speeches in WSDC style may include a small part of their teams substantive case, IF flagged in the case division announced by the 1st speaker. However, they are not required to include new arguments in their case

- The role of the 3rd speaker is to respond to the other team's case. "Responding" is a broad term covering direct rebuttal, weighing of arguments, new examples, etc. all forms of responsiveness often involve new ideas, logic, examples, components of arguments or new lines of rebuttal. It is acceptable for third speakers to bring these new aspects into their speeches.

- "Newness" in a third speech is not sufficient justification to discredit material at third. However, newness is not permissible if third speakers introduce an independent and entirely new concept or argument in the debate that didn't exist earlier.

What is new material?

For 3rd Speeches: Balancing Act

- Extreme 1: Nothing that even sounds remotely new, makes 3rd speech obsolete

- Extreme 2: So much new analysis barely allowing Prop room to respond

- HAPPY MEDIUM: New material can be introduced in the form of some lines of analysis, new examples, new ways of balancing/comparative. Has to meet the standard of responsiveness. Even then, less time for the other side to respond = less engagement = bad strategic choice to bring so late.

ASSESSING LATE MATERIAL

However, even if a material is not new, it could be *late*
- E.g. if Prop 1 brings up a piece of substantive analysis, but it is only engaged with in Opp 3, who defeats the material. While this material may not be new, the engagement is late since there were at least two prior speeches that could have responded.

Late material could be marked in the following ways:
- If successful in responding, upwards pressure on content
- However, poor prioritisation across the team, means downward pressure on strategy.

Guide: *EPIPHANIES ARE GREAT, BUT YOU SHOULD HAVE THEM EARLIER*

ASSESSING EVOLUTION

Evolution of material refers to the progressive development of a piece of material down the bench, with the material changing to respond to new aspects of the debate.

E.g. P1 makes argument X, P2 extends from argument X to respond to Opp's argument Y, P3 builds on P2's discussion of X and extends it with even-if analysis.

Distinct from *late* material as the material has been consistently engaged with throughout the debate.

NEW v. LATE v. EVOLUTION

New Material	Brought up in prep, not discussed in 1st/2nd, not flagged as an argument in 1st, brought up for 1st time in 3rd
Late Material	Brought up in 1st, dropped in 2nd, brought back in 3rd
Evolution (of material)	Brought up in 1st, extended in 2nd to respond to other side, extended in 3rd to respond to other side

EVALUATING REPLY SPEECHES

- The reply speaker may be either the first or second speaker of the team, but not the third.
- Neither reply speaker may introduce a new part of the team case.
- A reply speaker may not introduce a new argument.

- Reply speeches are a crucial part of the debate - they can definitely swing the result of a debate

- 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 weighing of arguments, framing, contextual observations, or examples can all serve this function and are permitted and credited in replies – however, t**hese need to be clearly derivative of the existing events in the debate**

- Newness in Reply Speeches: Significantly stricter

  - Even if derivative of previous material, should be considered very late.
  - Some leeway: if 3rd Opp brings substantially new material, prop should have opportunity to note this for the judge.
  - **EPIPHANIES ARE GREAT, BUT THEY SHOULD HAVE HAD THEM EARLIER**

POI'S

- Speeches are 8 minutes!

- POIs after 1st and before the last minute.

- Judges should track who offered POIs, how many POIs were accepted, and the content of POIs and responses to POIs

- Point of Information adjustment columns are used at WSDC to reflect the impact of POIs in the round.

- Use the Point of Information adjustment column to reflect the impact of POIs in the round

- Track them: how many offered and how many accepted and what was said

- Everything that happens outside the 8-minute speech is marked within POI adjustment column (if necessary)

- Can grant or take away up to 2 further points

- Remember that you cannot add two points where a speech is already excellent, and you cannot subtract to points where the speech is already below average.

WSDC JUDGING PROCESS

TRACKING DEBATES

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

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.

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 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?
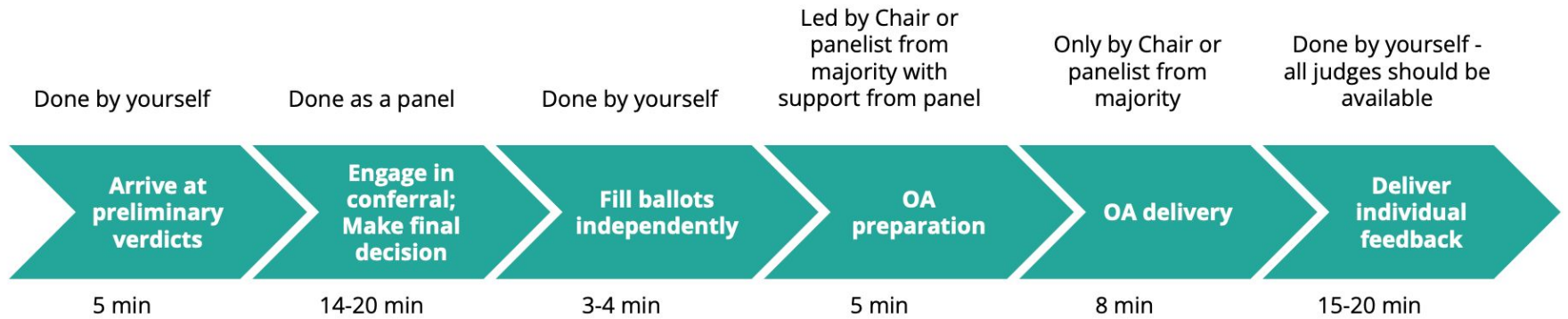
WSDC JUDGING PROCESS

WSDC

- 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.

BP

- Debate ends, debaters leave the room

- Judges take a few minutes to review notes and come up with initial call

- Chair asks panelists for their call and mediates the discussion

- Panel reaches a decision by consensus/vote

- Judges can dissent from the majority

- The chair fills in 1 ballot after consulting the panel.

- Chair delivers OA, if in majority.

- If the chair is dissenting, a panelist gives the OA.

- Teams are welcome to ask the panel for individual feedback.

CONFERRAL JUDGING

Done by yourself	Done as a panel	Done by yourself	Led by Chair or panelist from majority with support from panel	Only by Chair or panelist from majority	Done by yourself - all judges should be available
Arrive at preliminary verdicts	**Engage in conferral; Make final decision**	**Fill ballots independently**	**OA preparation**	**OA delivery**	**Deliver individual feedback**
5 min	14-20 min	3-4 min	5 min	8 min	15-20 min

This entire process should not take more than one 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.

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
  - 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 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

- **Only one member of the panel will deliver an OA reflecting opinions from all the judges**
    - In most cases, this is the Chair judge will deliver the OA to the Teams
    - Where there is a split, the Chair may request a member of the majority to deliver the OA

- **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 are 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.
    - When explaining the decision, stick to what happened in the round. Offer suggestions for improvement later.

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 through Discord.

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:**
  - 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.
- **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.

OTHER GUIDELINES ON CONFERRAL

- **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.

CONFERRAL v. OTHER FORMATS

Area	Independent (AP)	Independent (ex-WSDC, Australs)	Consensus (BP)	Conferral (WSDC 2022)
Timing and purpose of discussion	**Low (0-2 min):** After ballots are submitted if at all as a formality	**Medium (5-10 min):** After ballots are submitted to improve OAs	**High (~15-20 min):** Before ballots are submitted to reach consensus	**Medium-High (12-18 min)** Before ballots are submitted to expand information available to judges
Importance of discussion	**Low:** Does not feature strongly as each judge delivers a separate OA to the teams that is evaluated	**Medium:** Only matters to the extent that the person delivering the OA collects opinions	**High:** The discussion is the primary method of evaluating who won the debate	**Medium-High:** The discussion can increase information, and change the minds of judges, as it is done prior to ballot submission. However, it is not the method of evaluating who won
Approach to divergence	Only **matters to the teams** and not to judges themselves	Matters in as much as the **person delivering the OA should fold dissenting opinions in**	**Triggers in depth discussion** to attempt to resolve this divergence, where judges may try to convince the other judge to move towards a common way of viewing the debate	Room acknowledges the alternative ways to view the debate, and the **explanations** of these **by judges may influence judges to independently change** their decision or not
Likelihood of dissents	Relatively high	Relatively high	Relatively low	Unclear - not wedded to the final decision
No. of OAs	Three separate	One OA	One OA	One OA

WSDC MARKING RANGE

SCORING CRITERIA

- 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 when determining speaker scores/which team won, these three areas should help a judge understand what team did a best job during the debate overall, i.e. which team won the debate

  - Content (40%) → **WHAT** you say in the debate (e.g. as if ChatGPT is judging)
  - Style (40%) → **HOW** you say something in the debate (Note: **NOT** accent, use of cue cards, immutable characteristics e.g. pitch, tone; about word choice, pace, volume, speed, etc.);
  - Strategy (20%) → **WHY** you say something in the debate (e.g. motion interpretation, time allocation, consistency, POIs, dealing with the issues in the debate, etc.)

- 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.

SPEAKER SCALE

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

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

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.

WSDC SCALE CONVERSION TO BP, AUSTRALS & AP

WSDC						WUDC	Australs	AP
Standard	*Overall*	*Style*	*Content*	*Strategy*	*Reply*			
Exceptional	80	32	32	16	40	90-100	80	83
Excellent	76.5-79.5	30.5-31.5	31-31.5	15.5	38.5-39.5	85-89	79	81-82
Extremely Good	74-76	30	29.5-30.5	15	37-38	81-84	77-78	78-80
Very Good	70.5-73.5	28.5-29.5	28.5-29	14.5	35.5-36.5	76-80	76	76-77
Good (Average)	**70**	**28**	**28**	**14**	**35**	**75**	**75**	**75**
Satisfactory	66.5-69.5	27-27.5	27-27.5	13.5	33.5-34.5	70-74	74	73-74
Competent	64-66	25.5-26.5	25.5-26.5	13	32-33	66-69	72-73	70-72
Pass	60.5-63.5	24.5.-25	24.5-25	12.5	30.5-31.5	61-65	71	68-69
Improvement Needed	60	24	24	12	30	50-60	70	67

SCORING SUBSTANTIVE SPEECHES

Mark	Explanation
60	• Content is not relevant to the motion and what the team needs to prove. • All points made are claims, with no analysis, and are confusing. • The speech is hard to follow throughout, so it is hard to give it any credit.
61-63	• A few marginally relevant claims. • No analysis provided in the claims, which are mainly lines without explanation. • Parts of the speech are clear, but significant parts are still hard to follow.
64 - 66	• Some of the points made are relevant to the debate. • Arguments / rebuttals are made with some explanation and analysis, but with significant logical gaps in the explanation. • Sometimes the speech is difficult to follow.
67 - 69	• Most of the points made are relevant to the debate. • All arguments / rebuttals have some explanation, but it still has logical and analytical gaps in important parts of the argument and lacks evidence. • Mostly easy to follow, but some sections may still be hard to understand.
70	• No major shortfalls, nor any strong moments. • Arguments are almost exclusively relevant, although may fail to address one or more core issues sufficiently. • All arguments have sufficient explanation without major logical gaps and some examples, but are simplistic and easy to attack. • Easy to follow throughout which makes the speech understandable, though style does not necessarily serve to make the speech more persuasive.

SCORING SUBSTANTIVE SPEECHES

Mark	Explanation
71 - 72	• Arguments are all relevant, and address the core issues in the debate. • 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. • Easy to follow throughout. On occasion the style may even serve to make the speech more engaging and persuasive.
73 - 76	• Arguments are relevant and engage with the most important issues. Arguments have sufficient explanation without major logical gaps. • Occasionally, the speaker provides more sophisticated and nuanced analysis, making their arguments hard to attack. • Easy to follow throughout. On occasion the style may even serve to make the speech more engaging and persuasive.
77 - 79	• 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 • Easy to follow throughout. The style serves to make the speech's content more engaging.
80	• Plausibly one of the best debating speeches ever given in a schools competition. • It is incredibly difficult to think up satisfactory responses to any of the arguments made. • Flawless and compelling arguments, made with outstanding delivery.

SCORING REPLY SPEECHES

Mark	Standard
30	The speaker did not describe the debate as it happened. They misunderstood or misrepresented central arguments and responses.
31-34	Instead of actually identifying or analysing points of clash, speaker mostly just retold the debate as it happened or attempted to keep arguing for their side.
35	Speaker identified the major points of clash between two teams and was able to provide some basic justification for awarding the win to speaker's team.
36-39	Almost perfect overview of the debate. Particular interactions from the debate were analysed and used as evidence for awarding the win to the speaker's team.
40	Flawless analysis of the debate that just occurred. Speaker was able to accurately identify turning points in the debate (including the strongest arguments and rebuttal of their opponents) and why they their side wins on balance

A TL;DR OF THE SCALE

Standard	Overall	Explanation
Exceptional	80	• Plausibly one of the best schools' debating speeches ever given; • Flawless and compelling arguments, made with outstanding delivery.
Excellent	76.5-79.5	• Sophisticated arguments that are exclusively relevant, very well-explained with no logical gaps, and are very difficult to respond to. • Style is very engaging and persuasive,
Extremely Good	74-76	• Arguments have minimal logical gaps, and engage comprehensively with core issues of the debate, but are susceptible to strong responses. • Speech is very easy to follow, style is engaging.
Very Good	70.5-73.5	• Arguments engage with core issues of the debate, but may have some logical gaps. • Speech is easy to follow, style is often engaging.
Good (Average)	**70**	**• Arguments are almost exclusively relevant, but not all sufficiently explained and are prone to responses. • Speech is always clear, and mostly easy to follow**
Satisfactory	66.5-69.5	• Arguments are often relevant, and partially explained. • Speech is nearly always clear, but sometimes difficult to follow.
Competent	64-66	• Arguments are sometimes relevant, but little explanation provided • Speech is sometimes clear, but often difficult to follow.
Pass	60.5-63.5	• Arguments are occasionally relevant, but very minimal explanation provided. • Speech is rarely clear, and very difficult to follow.
Improvement Needed	60	• Content is not relevant nor explained; • Speech is not clear and impossible to follow in its entirety.

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

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

BALLOT SUBMISSION

Judges will submit **TWO** ballots at WSDC
- A paper ballot wherein you have to fill in all information
- An electronic e-ballot via Tabbycat

Procedure:
1. Complete the e-ballot first
2. Complete the paper ballot, ensuring that it matches the e-ballot. Once done, hand over to your chair.
3. Once everyone has completed their ballots, Chair to pass the paper ballot to a runner.

PAPER BALLOT SAMPLE

Adjudicator's Ballot

Round: _____ Date: _____

Motion: _____

PROPOSITION: _____

Speaker Name	Style	Content	Strategy	POI Adjustment (+/- 2)	Total
First Speaker					
	/40	/40	/20		/100
Second Speaker					
	/40	/40	/20		/100
Third Speaker					
	/40	/40	/20		/100
Reply Speaker					
	/20	/20	/10		/50

TOTAL TEAM SCORE: /350

OPPOSITION: _____

Speaker Name	Style	Content	Strategy	POI Adjustment (+/- 2)	Total
First Speaker					
	/40	/40	/20		/100
Second Speaker					
	/40	/40	/20		/100
Third Speaker					
	/40	/40	/20		/100
Reply Speaker					
	/20	/20	/10		/50

TOTAL TEAM SCORE: /350

Reminders:
1. Please ensure you have the correct speaking order for the team.
2. No low-point wins – winning team must have more speaker points than losing team.
3. Total Score per speech must be between 60 and 80, including points given in the POI Adjustment Column.

Winning Team _____

Adjudicator's Name _____ Adjudicator's Signature _____

WSDC Marking Scale (with Conversion Table)

Standard	WSDC Overall	Style	Content	Strategy	Reply	WUDC	Australs	AP	Explanation
Exceptional	80	32	32	16	40	90-100	80	83	• Plausibly one of the best schools' debating speeches ever given; • Flawless and compelling arguments, made with outstanding delivery.
Excellent	76.5-79.5	30.5-31.5	31-31.5	15.5	38.5-39.5	85-89	79	81-82	• Sophisticated arguments that are exclusively relevant, very well-explained with no logical gaps, and are very difficult to respond to. • Style is very engaging and persuasive.
Extremely Good	74-76	30	29.5-30.5	15	37-38	81-84	77-78	78-80	• Arguments have minimal logical gaps, and engage comprehensively with core issues of the debate, but are susceptible to strong responses. • Speech is very easy to follow, style is engaging.
Very Good	70.5-73.5	28.5-29.5	28.5-29	14.5	35.5-36.5	76-80	76	76-77	• Arguments engage with core issues of the debate, but may have some logical gaps. • Speech is easy to follow, style is often engaging.
Good (Average)	70	28	28	14	35	75	75	75	• Arguments are almost exclusively relevant, but not all sufficiently explained and are prone to responses. • Speech is always clear, and mostly easy to follow
Satisfactory	66.5-69.5	27-27.5	27-27.5	13.5	33.5-34.5	70-74	74	73-74	• Arguments are often relevant, and partially explained. • Speech is nearly always clear, but sometimes difficult to follow.
Competent	64-66	25.5-26.5	25.5-26.5	13	32-33	66-69	72-73	70-72	• Arguments are sometimes relevant, but little explanation provided • Speech is sometimes clear, but often difficult to follow.
Pass	60.5-63.5	24.5-25	24.5-25	12.5	30.5-31.5	61-65	71	68-69	• Arguments are occasionally relevant, but very minimal explanation provided. • Speech is rarely clear, and very difficult to follow.
Improvement Needed	60	24	24	12	30	50-60	70	67	• Content is not relevant nor explained; • Speech is not clear and impossible to follow in its entirety.

E-BALLOT SAMPLE

Scoresheet

The Voice USA — AFF

1st	Christina Aguilera
1st Total	70
1st Content	28
1st Style	28
1st Strategy	14
1st POI Adjustment	0
2nd	Kelly Clarkson
2nd Total	70
2nd Content	28
2nd Style	28
2nd Strategy	14
2nd POI Adjustment	0
3rd	Jennifer Hudson
3rd Total	70
3rd Content	28
3rd Style	28
3rd Strategy	14
3rd POI Adjustment	0
Reply	Kelly Clarkson
Reply Total	35.5
Reply Content	14.5
Reply Style	14
Reply Strategy	7

Result	Won	Margin	+0.5	245.5

The Voice UK — NEG

1st	Jessie J
1st Total	70
1st Content	28
1st Style	28
1st Strategy	14
1st POI Adjustment	0
2nd	Rita Ora
2nd Total	70
2nd Content	28
2nd Style	28
2nd Strategy	14
2nd POI Adjustment	0
3rd	Will Jones
3rd Total	70
3rd Content	28
3rd Style	28
3rd Strategy	14
3rd POI Adjustment	0
Reply	Jessie J
Reply Total	35
Reply Content	14
Reply Style	14
Reply Strategy	7

Result	Lost	Margin	-0.5	245

Winner

The Voice USA (proposition)

EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

ORAL ADJUDICATION / REASON FOR DECISION (RFD)

WSDC

- 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.

BP

- Judges have to rank teams from 1st to 4th

- Judges announce result first

- Judges explain the decision, comparatively

- Why did 1st beat 2nd, why second beat 3rd …

- Judges explain what would have improved the debate

- What would the team that came 4th needed to have done in the debate to beat 3rd?

- What would 3rd needed to have done to beat 2nd ? etc.

In both cases, the OA/RFD should be clear, concise and comparative

EFFECTIVE OA/RFD

Content
- Were the arguments well explained?
- Were they merely stating a consequence vs. explaining why it is a consequence and its impact

Strategy
- Did they dilute the importance of their arguments?
- Did they spend too much or little time on rebuttals?

Style
- Were speakers clear?
- Were they disruptive during the debate?
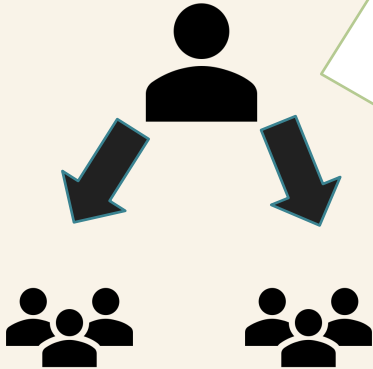- How did their style impact their speech?

✓ 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

General Feedback

- Are issues in the debate equally important, or are some more important than others? Why?
- Which teams won on specific issues and why?

.

Individual Feedback

- Provide more in-depth feedback per speaker (what they did well, what they can do better in the next round - better responses/additional arguments they could have run)
- Responses to any questions they may have!

- Do not single out speakers for doing poorly.

- Keep it friendly and constructive

FEEDBACK

Please note that at this tournament, feedback is mandatory, via Tabbycat.

Feedback from Teams
- All teams should submit feedback on all their judges, including Trainees.

Feedback from Judges
- Chairs, please give feedback on panel (including trainees).
- Panel, please submit feedback on chairs, other panellists, and trainees.
- Trainees, please submit feedback on your chairs and other panellists.

How to Submit Feedback
- Feedback can be submitted through your personalized URL link.
- Feedback will be considered by CAP in selecting judges to adjudicate the out-rounds.
- Please use the Feedback Scales.

The judge break is:
- Competitive - we will break judges to recognise strong performance at the tournament
- Representative - we will try to break judges to ensure out rounds have a balance of representation

REMINDERS

- Make sure you have the names and speaker positions of the speakers who spoke for the round.
- 20 minutes conferral time!
- Submit your ballots promptly to avoid delays!