

Concern Debates Adjudicator Procedural Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for members of the public volunteering as Concern Debates Adjudicators.

The Concern Debates team (Schools and Youth Programme Coordinators and Schools and Youth Programme Manager) are responsible for ensuring that these guidelines are implemented efficiently and effectively.

The Concern Debates run on an annual basis between October and May. The Debates take place in approximately 140 Secondary Schools across the island of Ireland, are open to students 15 to 18 years, and generally begin at 8pm.

Recruitment of Adjudicators

Concern Worldwide will consider all applications from people over the age of 18 years, living on the island of Ireland, wishing to volunteer as a Concern Debates Adjudicator.

Individuals applying as an adjudicator:

- Should agree with the broader aims, values and purpose of Concern Worldwide
- Should be available to travel within their local area
- Should be available to adjudicate up to three times over the course of the Debates year
- Should accept that Concern Debate Adjudicators are volunteers and as such will not receive a payment for their services
- Must be available to adjudicate in the evening, as most Debates start at 8pm
- Must be fluent in the English language
- Must comply with Concern's Child Safeguarding policy -- including being Garda Vetted (ROI) or Access NI (NI)
- Must be able to act in a fair and impartial manner at a debate, despite any personally held views on a given issue.

Child Safeguarding

Adjudicators will have limited access to minors in their role as volunteers. All of the Concern Debates will be supervised by the host school teachers and at no time should an adjudicator find themselves alone with a student.

Debates Adjudicators are required to read the Concern Debates Adjudicator handbook and to strictly adhere to Concern's Child Safeguarding policy.

All Concern Debates Adjudicators are required to undergo Garda Vetting (ROI) and Access NI (NI). Concern will accept and comply with any findings, arising from the vetting process, that deem a person unsuitable to serve as an adjudicator.

Concern Debates Adjudicators are required to treat minors with respect and dignity and to deliver feedback from the debate in a constructive and positive manner, as detailed in the Concern Debates Adjudicators handbook.

Debates Dates

Concern Debates staff will inform the Debates Adjudicators, by phone, email, text or post, at least 10 days (if possible) prior to a debate of the date, time and venue for a given debate.

Once an adjudicator has agreed to attend a debate relevant information on the Debate venue, time and motion will be sent.

The mobile phone numbers of the two other adjudicators and the two teachers from the participating schools, will also be included so that contact can be made on the night should an adjudicator be running late, lost or unable to attend.

Within 7 days prior to a debate, if an adjudicator is no longer in a position to attend the debate they should inform Concern Debates staff immediately, so that alternative arrangements can be made.

GDPR

All Concern Debates Adjudicators will be added to Concern Worldwide's general database. Information gathered by the Concern Debates staff members will only be used for the purpose of contacting individuals in relation to the Concern Debates.

In keeping with GDPR best practice, all adjudicators will be asked for permission for Concern to share their mobile phone numbers with their fellow adjudicators on the night of a debate. After the debate has concluded adjudicators are asked to delete the contact numbers.

All Concern Debates Adjudicators will be asked to register online on a yearly basis.

Insurance

While adjudicating on a school premises adjudicators will be covered by the school's insurance policy.

In the latter rounds, where the Concern Debates are held in off-school venues such as hotels, halls or theatres, Concern will ensure appropriate public liability insurance is in place.

Insurance for transport to and from venues is the responsibility of the individual volunteer and will not be covered by Concern.

Expenses

Concern Debates Adjudicators serve in a voluntary capacity and as such will not receive a payment for their services. Occasionally however we may need to ask an adjudicator to travel greater distances for a given debate, or we may be forced to rely on an adjudicator more frequently than intended. In these and a select number of other instances Concern will offer to pay expenses to cover the cost of petrol at an agreed rate per km/mile.

Registering as a Concern Debates Adjudicator

Anyone interested in applying to serve as a Concern Debates Adjudicators can fill in the registration form here: <https://www.concern.net/concern-debates-volunteer-adjudicator-sign-form>

After receiving the online application a member of the Concern Debates staff will in contact by phone/email to go over the application form and make enquiries about suitability and availability.

Concern reserves the right to reject an application should any of the criteria listed in the Recruitment of Adjudicators section above, not be met

Training

Concern provides annual training for adjudicators in different regions of the country, depending on numbers and demand. Training dates will be posted on the Concern website in August and a communication email will be sent also.

The Concern Debates Adjudicators handbook is a comprehensive guide to all aspects of the debates including the marking sheets, room layout, constructive feedback, child safeguarding etc. All adjudicators are asked to familiarise themselves with the handbook.

A number of online videos and resources are also available on the Concern website to assist adjudicators in their task.

Concern Debates staff are available to speak with any adjudicator looking for clarification, advice or information.

Complaints, Disciplinary Procedures and Dismissal

In the event of a complaint being made about the conduct of an adjudicator while at a Concern Debate, Concern will follow up with all parties concerned.

Should an adjudicator be found to have caused upset, or in any way brought the reputation of Concern into question, Concern will take all necessary actions up to and including the dismissal of an adjudicator

Should a serious breach of discipline occur, Concern may be required to contact the necessary authorities.

Recognition

Concern greatly appreciates the time and effort given by all of our adjudicators. We endeavour to thank them through recognition awards, adjudicator appreciation evenings, articles in local media and letters of thanks.