



ADJUDICATOR HANDBOOK

A comprehensive guide for
Concern Debates Adjudicators



UPDATED 2025

Introduction:

The Concern Debates have been running since 1984. They are a core element of Concern's Active Citizenship programme which seeks to encourage further learning and debate about issues of global justice and human development.

Concern would like to thank you for agreeing to volunteer your time and expertise as an adjudicator, the debates simply could not happen without you.

The aims of the Concern Debates are:

- To promote a deeper awareness and understanding of the global issues affecting the lives of millions of people particularly in the developing world.
- To provide students with a public forum to develop skills in research, critical thinking, and debating.
- To encourage students and teachers to become lifelong advocates on issues relating to development, poverty, justice and human rights.



Concern Debates All-Island Final 2024-2025 Adjudicators Panel L.R Martin Farrell, Sarah Butler, Eimer Trainor, Joyce Bourne, Finbarr O'Sullivan.



ADJUDICATOR

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I become an adjudicator?

Adjudicators are regular people from all over Ireland with a wide variety of backgrounds, from farmers to lawyers, teachers to 3rd level students and everything in-between! If you have an interest in current affairs and global development issues and you enjoy engaging with talented young people, then the Concern Debates are for you. As an adjudicator you will remain neutral and impartial. You will assign marks in accordance with the categories on the marking sheet and not because you personally agree or disagree with a particular side of the argument. **It is important also for adjudicators that this is an educational programme and not just a public speaking competition.**

To sign up, email the Debates Team and fill in our online registration form here <https://www.concern.net/schools-and-youth/debates/adjudicators/sign-up>. Our team will then be in touch and provide details of the competition.

What are the skills needed?

- An open mind is essential to see both sides of an argument
- Good listener and ability to evaluate
- Be able to give constructive criticism and feedback

Do I need to be Garda Vetted?

As of 2019 all adjudicators must be Garda Vetted as per Concern's Safeguarding Guidelines.

Once you have registered, Concern staff members will arrange a time to meet you in-person as part of the identification process for Garda Vetting.

Garda Vetting will last for three years with Concern Worldwide.

Does Concern provide training?

Yes. We provide online training for volunteers. Training Sessions are primarily scheduled to take place in August, September and October, but we do also provide one to one training if a volunteer is unable to attend during this period. Please feel free to contact our Concern Debates team at any point for guidance. We also have a training video located here: <https://www.concern.net/schools-and-youth/debates/adjudicators>

How do I know when a debate is on?

When a debate is confirmed we contact adjudicators to see who is available on the date of the debate. We aim to give about 5-7 days notice. In the case that we ask you to adjudicate a virtual debate, the notification process is the same as for face to face debates. Debates take place in schools during school hours and get recorded. The recorded debate gets uploaded to the debates platform for the volunteer adjudicator to judge.

What happens when I agree to adjudicate a debate?

We will send you all details by email, outlining the schools, the motion and any additional information you may need, such as penalty points that may need to be added to the final score.

We will also send you a copy of the marking sheet and feedback form.

What happens when I adjudicate debates online?

For the League Phase Oct- Dec and Knockout stage debates Jan-Feb, adjudicators will only be asked to judge debates online with no travel involved.

Adjudicators will fill in the marks and feedback to offer to schools and send the 2 documents to their debates contact person. To ensure legibility we ask adjudicators to fill in the marking sheet and feedback sheet electronically, the 2 forms are fully editable online. The debates team will then share this feedback and results with the 2 schools involved.

How many debates do I have to adjudicate?

As few or as many as you like! The Concern Debates relies solely on our wonderful volunteers, and we appreciate any time you can give to the competition.

What happens when I agree to adjudicate a debate in-person in the latter stages of the programme?

NOTE (The following information only applies from the Quarter Final Rounds onwards. The League Phase and Knockout Stage Debates will take place on a virtual platform and volunteer adjudicators will watch the recorded debates from the comfort of their homes)

Most in-person debates begin at 7pm and you should aim to arrive 15 minutes early. The Concern Debates team will inform you of the venue the debate is taking place in along with the details of the two schools debating that night.

You will also receive the details of your colleague adjudicators on the panel. All in-person debates have a panel of three independent volunteer adjudicators; one Chief Adjudicator and two Assistant Adjudicators.

Once on the debate venue premises, adjudicators and audience members are subject to both the School's Child Safeguarding policies and Concern Worldwide's Child Safeguarding policies. If the debate is taking place at a school, visitors should be met at the entrance to the school by a teacher or Concern staff member and brought to the room where the debate will be held. (See our safeguarding guidelines on p3). Once you are directed to the debate, you will be introduced to the other adjudicators and can take your place at the tables situated at the back of the room. You then can fill in the title of the motion and the school on the marking sheet and feedback form.

Concern provides the phone numbers of the participating schools and adjudicator panel. If a debate team or an adjudicator has not shown up after 15 minutes they should be called. If a debate team has not shown up and you are unable to contact them after 30 minutes the debate will be forfeited. If there is one adjudicator present and the second has not shown up or is not in contact, the debate should proceed with one adjudicator after 15 minutes past the scheduled start time.

How many adjudicators are needed at each debate? What is the role of the Chief Adjudicator?

For the League Phase Debates between October-December, One debates Volunteer Adjudicator will be asked to mark each debate, unless you are new to the programme and wish to avail of the adjudicator buddy system where the Concern Debates team will put you in contact with a more experienced volunteer adjudicator to help you with your first and 2nd debate adjudication.

For the Knockout Stages of the Concern Debates Programme in Jan-Feb the Concern Debates team will be recruiting two volunteer adjudicators to judge each debate remotely.

For the latter stages of the programme from Quarter Final rounds onwards: we make every effort to assign a minimum of three adjudicators for each debate, a Chief and two

assistants. This is subject to availability. Concern will assign the role of Chief Adjudicator prior to the debate.

The chief and assistants will mark the debate using the same marking sheet but the chief has the following extra duties:

- After each speaker there will be a 30 second (or so) pause to allow the adjudicators time to assign their marks. The chief will check with the other adjudicator prior to signalling the Chairperson to continue the debate.
- At the conclusion of the debate the adjudicators will be brought into another room or virtual breakout room to add up their marks and discuss the debate. Once the decision is agreed the Chief will ask the assistant adjudicators for comments and advice that will be included in their feedback.
- The Chief Adjudicator will deliver succinct feedback to teams prior to announcing the result. We ask adjudicators to use our feedback template at the back of this handbook.
- The Chief Adjudicator is responsible for collecting the marking sheets from the assistants and sending the sheets along with the results/feedback sheets back to Concern. Remember these sheets should not be shown to the students or teachers after the debate. Any issues or complaints should be referred to Concern.
- It would be appreciated if the Volunteer Adjudication panel could stay around for a cup of tea after the debate, as students will often ask for a bit of additional comment or advice for future debates

What do I need to bring?

Pen, calculator (to add up scores), scrap paper to take notes and an open mind.

What about Data Protection?

Once you have registered as a Concern Debates adjudicator we will contact you based on the communication preferences you completed on the registration form in relation to this role. If you interact with Concern in other ways, for example you donate to Concern, and you have indicated that we can communicate with you about our work in other ways, these preferences will not change unless you instruct us to do so.

In relation to the adjudication role, Concern will retain your details for one year. Approximately eleven months after initial registration Concern will contact you to determine if you would like to remain on for another year. If you are



unavailable or do not wish to act as an adjudicator Concern will remove your contact and any other details about you in relation to the adjudication role.

In order for the debates to run smoothly and to ensure that adjudicators assigned to a particular debate can contact one another as well as the host school, it is necessary to share mobile phone numbers. Reasons for this range from difficulties in finding the host school or debate venue, if an adjudicator is running late or to communicate any changes to venue or debate start times'. If you would like more information about this please contact us.

Adjudicators commit to maintaining the utmost confidentiality in relation to phone numbers or any other personal data shared with them and to delete any such information at the end of the debate unless they have prior consent from the individual in question.

You have rights under data protection legislation. Please find more information regarding data protection and Concern, your rights and how to exercise those via Concern Worldwide's privacy statement on <https://www.concern.net/about/privacy>, or please contact us for any additional information you may require.



TOO SEE OUR PRIVACY STATEMENT PLEASE SCAN THE QR CODE.



Concern's Schools Team L.R Maeve Mooney, Eoghan Connolly, Lauren Wright, Olga Brodescu-Kavanagh, Ruth Lynam, Áine Keating, Georgina Eastaugh

Adjudicator Code of Conduct - Child Safeguarding

Concern Worldwide is committed to the protection of children and young people with whom we work and to upholding good practice across the organisation. This Code of Conduct for Debates Adjudicators arises out of our adherence to the Children First Act 2015 and the Children First National Guidance 2017.

The Concern Designated Liaison Persons (DLPs) are:

Ms. Georgina Eastaugh

georgina.eastaugh@concern.net
School Programmes Manager
(Acting Head of Global Citizenship)
Level 0, Camden Street, Dublin

Ms. Niamh Cooney

niamh.cooney@concern.net
Safeguarding Adviser
Level 1, Camden Street, Dublin

Or simply email safeguarding@concern.net for any safeguarding concerns.

Any person serving as a Concern Debates Adjudicator must fully comply with the following:

DO

- Pre In-Person Debate: Upon arrival at the school wait in the foyer where you will be brought to the Debate location by a teacher or students. If the debate is taking place at a midway venue like a hotel, please enquire of the location of the debate at reception.
- Debate: Ensure that a teacher from any of the schools remains in the room as per the child safeguarding procedures.
- Post Debate refreshments: Remain in the same area with other adjudicators, audience members and school or Concern staff while giving feedback and advice to the debate participants.
- Incident Report: Should a student make you aware of a situation where they are experiencing harm, contact the Concern Designated Liaison Person (DLP) immediately. Should you happen to witness a child being harmed while in the course of the Debate, pre or post, contact the Gardaí immediately.
- Returning Home: It is best if a teacher or other school representative bring you to the school door if you are adjudicating a debate on the school premises.



DO NOT

- Pre Debate: Do not wander the halls on your own looking for the debates room or leave the foyer unless accompanied by two students or a teacher (in the case that you are adjudicating a debate and the venue is one of the schools)
- Debate: Do not remain in the room if there are no other adults present or in any situation where you may find yourself alone with a student.



- Post Debate refreshments: Do not leave the area where the refreshments are being served to talk to students. Never create, or remain in a situation, where you are in unsupervised contact (alone) with a student.
- Incident Report: Do not dismiss or ignore what you are being told. Do not fail to contact the Concern Designated Liaison Persons. Do not ignore an incident by failing to report to the Gardaí, a teacher and one of the Concern DLPs.
- Returning Home: Do not wander the halls alone if you are at the debate and the venue is one of the schools. Do not leave with a student. Do not offer a student(s) a lift home.

Debates Running Order

1. Chairperson opens the debate by calling the House to order, introducing the participants, the timekeeper(s) the adjudicators and welcoming the audience. (The adjudicators are only mentioned during in-person debates where the debaters and the adjudication panel are all in the same space)
2. The chairperson will then call on the captain of the proposition to open the debate.
3. Once the captain has concluded their 'speech' there will be a pause (20-30 seconds) while the adjudicators write down their marks.
4. The chairperson will then call on the captain of the opposition to speak...followed by a pause at the conclusion of his/her remarks.
5. The debate will then alternate between speakers from the proposition and opposition.
6. Opposition Captain: When the 4th speaker from the opposition has finished and the pause for the adjudicators to write down their marks has taken place the chairperson will invite the captain of the opposition to summarise their teams arguments and refute those of the proposition.
7. Proposition Captain: The chairperson will then call on the captain of the proposition to summarise on behalf of his/her team and refute the arguments of the opposition.
8. The chairperson will then thank the debaters and invite the timekeepers to announce if there are any time penalties to be deducted. (for online debates, both proposition and opposition have a timekeeper, this is to avoid discrepancies on time penalties during intermittent Wi-Fi connection in schools)
9. Once the time penalties have been announced, the chairperson will thank all and end the call recording and announce that the results will be back with the schools within one week.
11. The Adjudicator logs onto the debates platform on www.debates.concern.net and adjudicate the assigned debate.

Timing is vital! 4:30



The time allotted for each speech, including the captains' summations is 4 minutes and 30 seconds. Debaters should speak for no less than four minutes and no more than four and a half.

- Those speaking for between 4.31 and 5.00 will be docked 1 mark
- Those speaking for between 5.01 and 5.30 will be docked 2 marks
- Those speaking for between 5.31 and 6.00 will be docked 3 marks
- Those speaking for over 6.01 will be docked 4 marks

After the second bell has sounded debaters have 15 seconds to conclude their remarks. No points should be awarded after the 4 minutes and 30 seconds have elapsed. Marks are not deducted for debaters who fail to use the full time allotted. However instances where a debater concludes well under the allotted time may mean they were insufficiently prepared or spoke too quickly.

The Adjudicator, without mentioning the individual 'culprit' may want to encourage students to learn the 'discipline' of speaking to time.



The following tips are here to help you to fill out the marking sheet.

MARKS

When 10 is the maximum mark:

- Excellent: 9 or 10
- Very Good: 8 or 7
- Good 5 or 6
- Need for improvement: 4 or less

When 5 is the maximum mark:

- Excellent: 5
- Very Good: 3 or 4
- Need for improvement: 2 or 1

Adjudicators are advised to make notes on a separate piece of paper as each student speaks, noting how many instances of refutation have been used, number and type of sources quoted, memorable lines used, or use of eye contact and body language, etc

Feedback Tips for the Adjudicators

- **Use the Feedback form at the back of this handbook. We ask Adjudicators to use this form in order to keep feedback constructive and succinct**
- Be positive and constructive
- Recognise the fact that this is an extra-curricular activity for students. Their preparation and participation is in addition to their regular school work
- **Do not select one student for particular praise and never single out an individual student for criticism...rather refer to the teams as a whole**
- Highlight particular areas of strength such as the amount of research, the rebuttal, the clarity of argument and persuasion skills such as body language, use of voice and eye contact
- Give one or two suggestions for improvement such as "try to avoid reading your speeches and over-reliance on notes" or "make sure you let us know where you got your information from by quoting your sources", or "make sure you listen to your opponents and directly address their points by rebutting them" or if there have been time penalties to "make sure you stick within the time limit (4 minutes and 30 seconds)"
- When adjudicating debates in the latter stages of the programme from Quarter Final onwards, the result should be announced in terms of the motion is carried (result in favour of proposition) OR the motion has been defeated (result in favour of the opposition)... rather than simply saying the debate has been 'won' or 'lost'
- Make sure to announce the result clearly. New schools in particular might be unfamiliar with the terms 'carried' or 'defeated'. **It is imperative to say the motion was carried or defeated and clarify which team won! For example "St John's team congratulations on winning this round!"**
- **Remember, do not show the marking sheet to the debaters but be available to them after the debate if they seek out further advice. If there are any issues please refer them to Concern Head Office**

What about props?

Props are not permitted.

Mobile Phones

Students are not permitted to use mobile phones for their notes or for timing purposes.





Everything you need to know about the Concern Debates in 9 EASY STEPS...

1. Eligibility and Registration:

- The Concern Debates is open to Senior Cycle Students from TY to sixth year in the ROI and GCSE and A Level in NI.

2. Debates Team Panel:

- A Concern Debates team is made up of four students, however we recommend having a panel of six or more to help with research, preparation and substitutions.

3. Debates Format:

- The Concern Debates is made up of an Online League Phase
- The Online League Phase is made up of three rounds that run from October to December where all participating schools have three debates.
- The Knockout Phase begins in January and runs through to the All Island Final in May.
- Only the Top 64 schools will progress into the Knockout Phase after December.
- Each speaker is given **4 minutes and 30 seconds to speak**. The team captain speaks twice, once to introduce his or her team and the arguments they will be making and again at the end to sum up the points that have been made and to refute those of their opponents.

4. Debates Dates:

- Concern will assign your debates once you kindly agree to adjudicate a round. You will be sent the motion and names of both debating schools (and the venue if taking place from March onwards).
- During the Online league phase stage, Teachers are asked to submit their teams debate recording onto the debates platform for the Adjudicator to judge
- Time: All Online League Phase and the First Three Knockout Stage Debates will take place during a time that works well for both debating schools and be recorded, this recording will then be uploaded to the debates platform for the recruited volunteer adjudicator to watch and mark

For in-person or face to face debates that will take place after the League Phase stage and the First Three Knockout Stage debates, the time will revert to the original 7pm and the debates will take place in midway venues around the Island of Ireland, depending on the location of the remaining schools in the Debates Programme.

5. Debates Adjudicators:

- The Concern Debates Adjudicators are volunteers from the local community.

For the Online League Phase rounds Oct-Dec there will be one volunteer adjudicator to mark each debate, unless the volunteer wishes to avail of the guidance and advice of a more experienced volunteer adjudicator via the buddy system, where the very experienced adjudicators are paired with new adjudicators and offer guidance, tips on how to mark the first few debates.

For the Online Knockout Phase first three rounds Jan-Feb there will be two adjudicators per debate.

For the in-Person debates in the Quarter Final Rounds and Semi Final Rounds in March and April the panels will be made up of Three independent adjudicators One Chief Adjudicator and Two Assistant Adjudicators.

For the All-Island Debates Final in May, the panel will be made up of Five independent Volunteer Adjudicators, One Chief Adjudicator and Four Assistant Adjudicators.

- For information about the [marking sheet](#) used by the adjudicators go to page 7.

6. Debates Motions:

- All three motions for each round of the Concern Debates, will be assigned at the beginning of the League Phase.
- The motions will cover topics related to [international development](#) (hunger, poverty, overseas aid, gender, conflict, the United Nations, etc.) and the **Sustainable Development Goals**.
- The motions are set by Concern and always aim to be balanced, fair, topical and (occasionally) fun.
- Schools who are asked to propose the motion in each round, will be responsible to recording and uploading the debate onto the online platform for the adjudicators to mark.

7. Debates Points

- Unanimous plus win 6 points When the team wins by over 20 marks on the marking sheet
- Unanimous win 5 points When the team wins by 11-19 marks on the marking sheet

- Majority win 4 points When the team wins by 1-10 marks on the marking sheet
- Bye win 3 points When the debate cannot take place due to the other school forfeiting
- Minority loss 2 point When the team loses by less than 10 marks on the marking sheet
- Unanimous loss 1 points This means the team lost by more than 11 marks on the marking sheet

8. Awards and Prizes

- All Concern Debates Team members whether researchers, debaters, practice partners or all round helpers will receive a **Certificate of Participation** from Concern

9. Contact Concern

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

Here you'll find all the relevant forms and resources along with research tips and the league table.

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

Concern Debates NI
47 Frederick Street,
Belfast, BT1 2LW
028 90 261524
debatesni@concern.net

Phone: 01 417 77 33

Mobile: 087 2555177, 085 2540574-Maeve,
085 8031801-Olga (office hours)



Make things easy on yourself and keep in touch with us by email at debates@concern.net



Sandford Park School-Debates Runners Up 2024-2025

1. The Marking Sheet

The marking sheet has four sections:

A. Content B. Debating Skills C. Captain's Duties D. Team Work

Content:

Speakers are assigned marks under three headings:

- Knowledge and Understanding of the subject (10 marks)
- Relevance to the motion (5 marks)
- Use and variety of sources (5 marks)

TOTALS					A. Content					TOTALS				
10	10	10	10	40	Knowledge and Understanding of the subject	10	10	10	10	40				
5	5	5	5	20	Relevance to the motion	5	5	5	5	20				
5	5	5	5	20	Use and variety of sources	5	5	5	5	20				

Knowledge and understanding of the subject

Adjudicators should look for evidence that the speaker knows what the debate is about, that they understand the motion and have researched all aspects of the topic. Speakers should express their arguments in their 'own' language and explain any acronyms or technical terms.

A speaker may show their understanding of the topic, from both sides, by pre-empting points their opponents may raise.

Knowledge and understanding can also be gauged by how the speaker delivers their contribution to the debate; are they reading it word for word? Is there a suspicion that they have 'cut and paste' their speech from the internet? Are they using language appropriate to their age and skill level?

Knowledge and understanding are important components of the Concern Debates because knowledge must be the basis for any action they will undertake to create a more equal world.

Relevance to the motion

Marks are awarded for staying on topic. Stories, quotes, and humour are absolutely welcome in a debate as long as they enhance the overall argument. If there is any doubt about the relevance of a particular point the onus is on the speaker to prove how their argument links back to the motion.

Use and variety of sources

Students will have done a good deal of research in preparing their arguments so it is important that they tell us where they found a particular fact, example or quote. Using facts from long established and 'trusted' organisations (United Nations, NGOs, Governments, media etc) will add strength to an argument.

2. Marks for debating skills

You get marks for debating skills under three headings:

- Refutation and rebuttal (10 marks) (except for the captains who get marks for this in their closing speech which has a separate section on the marking sheet)
- Ability to persuade, communicate and engage (10 marks)
- Logical and well constructed argument (5 marks)

B. Debating Skills

	10	10	10	30		10	10	10	30
					Refutation and Rebuttal				
10	10	10	10	40		10	10	10	40
					Ability to persuade, communicate and engage				
5	5	5	5	20		5	5	5	20
					Logical and well constructed argument				

Refutation and rebuttal (R&R)

See 'The art of debate' on page 9 for definitions and examples of refutation and rebuttal.

There are 10 marks available for R&R for speakers two, three and four. The captain receives marks for R&R in their closing speech.

When assigning the marks allocated for R&R some adjudicators like to opt for a system that allocates a maximum of three marks for each example of R&R used by each speaker. If it is a particularly good refutation or rebuttal the speaker is given three marks. If on the other hand it is more of a contradiction than a refutation or rebuttal, then only one or two marks are given. A speaker who makes around four good uses of refutation or rebuttal can then expect the maximum marks.

Other adjudicators however, prefer a less rigid structure, preferring to look for quality of R&R, ease of inclusion in the speech, or forcefulness without recourse to sarcasm or disdain.

Quality is the key, rather than quantity. A really good point well delivered, that demolishes the main point of a previous speaker is more significant than a number of throwaway criticisms.

In the main there is an expectation that there will be more rebuttals from the third and fourth speakers than from the second, as they have heard more of the opponents' speeches and so one could apply a graded standard to speakers two, three and four.

Ability to persuade, communicate and engage

- Persuade – debaters should leave the audience in no doubt that their side of the motion is the right one, they should be passionate and assured.
- Communicate – students should be articulate, speak slowly, clearly and audibly. They should know their speech backwards so they are not stumbling over it!
- Engage – debaters should use body language, eye contact and vary their tone to keep the audience captivated.

Passion, humour, and emotion will be rewarded in this category!

Humour is welcome and can lighten the mood particularly if the motion is 'heavy'. However, humour should be appropriate, not made at the expense of the opponents and on topic. Speakers using sarcasm and off coloured humour should lose marks in this section.

Logical and well constructed argument

Like an essay or exam answer it helps if the speaker has a beginning, a middle and an end to their argument. As the age old advice goes... "say what you are going to say, say it and then tell them what you just said." Advice to students is that they make three or four well developed points rather than touching on many more. There is only so much information an adjudicator can absorb after all.

The art of debate: Refutation and rebuttal explained

What separates debating from public speaking is the art of refutation and rebuttal. Essentially a debate is a conversation between two groups that disagree, with each group trying to convince the adjudicators of the correctness of their own position as well as the absurdity or irrationality of their opponents'.

To refute an argument is to produce evidence (facts and figures) in order to prove it untrue (e.g. 'our opponents claim that child labour affects only a few thousand children around the world, well according to the latest ILO report, that figure stands at 218 million')

To rebut an argument is to disprove or discredit it by offering an alternative and stronger argument (e.g. 'our opponents have argued that it is the fault of the people, the everyday consumer. But I disagree, it is the responsibility of government and big business to solve this problem, and I will tell you why....')

Examples of refutation and rebuttal (good and bad)

A

'Speaker 2, you said that multinational corporations working in the developing world such as Nestlé haven't cleaned up their act, and I think you're wrong for thinking they have. Now for my first point...'

This is an example of very weak refutation, there's no evidence given and it's bolted on before the prepared speech rather than woven in.

B

'Speaker 2, you said that multinational corporations working in the developing world such as Nestlé haven't cleaned up their act, but according to the Nestlé website they are dedicated to a long term strategy putting business development above short term returns, ensuring they have become a source of stability and economic growth in the developing world'

This is a much better example of refutation.

C

'Speaker 2, you said that multinational corporations working in the developing world such as Nestlé haven't cleaned up their act. I believe that it is not the responsibility of the multinationals but the governments, to legislate and enforce human rights and environmental sustainability within their countries, to protect their own nations.'

This too is a good example, of rebuttal this time.

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

Rob, Sandford Park School

3. Marks for captains' duties

The captain gets marked in the same way as all the other team members under content and debating skills (except for refutation and rebuttal).

But the captain also receives marks for their special captains' duties. There are 35 marks in total going here, so it is important to get it right!

Opening Speech:

- Definition of the motion or response to the motion (10 marks)
- Outline of team's arguments (5 marks)

Closing Speech:

- Summary and defence of team's arguments (10 marks)
- Rebuttal of other team's arguments (10 marks)

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

Opening Speeches

The proposing captain is marked on his/her definition of the motion and outlining his/her team's arguments.

The captain of the opposing team is marked for responding to the motion defined by the proposition (and suggesting an alternative definition if they have one!), outlining his/her team's arguments and for presenting an argument of his/her own.

Closing Speeches

In their closing speeches, each captain is marked on their summation of their team's arguments and rebuttals, and refutation or rebuttal of their own.

No new material should be introduced in the summation, even if it shows brilliant research or understanding! Adjudicators should disregard any new information or argument introduced by the captains in their summations unless it is clearly in the form of a refutation or rebuttal.

'What kind of rationality says to free born people cut your population growth or we will cut you off, that we will allow you all to starve - the cold colonial logic of a master to his slave'

Sandford Park Captain

4. Marks for team work

- Display of team work during the debate (10 marks).

D. Team Work			
10	10	Display of team work during the debate	10

There are 10 marks awarded for evidence of team work. This can be shown in various ways on the night.

Debaters need to show that they worked as a team in preparing for the debate. It should be obvious to the adjudicators how you divided up the subject, and it may be an idea to use a ‘team line’. Debaters should also be familiar with each other’s speeches, share research and useful statistics and refer to each others’ speeches if relevant.

During face to face/in-person debates, teams passing notes during the debate are also good examples of team work. This will not be possible in the virtual league phase stage, however, teams will not lose any marks and we will be marked for their team effort as a whole.



Laurel Hill FCJ Debates Champions 2024-2025

MARKING SHEET



Motion: _____

Venue: _____ Date: _____

Proposing team: _____

Opposing team: _____

Speaker One	Speaker Two	Speaker Three	Speaker Four	TOTALS
10	10	10	10	40
5	5	5	5	20
5	5	5	5	20

A. Content

Knowledge and Understanding of the subject
Relevance to the motion
Use and variety of sources

Speaker One	Speaker Two	Speaker Three	Speaker Four	TOTALS
10	10	10	10	40
5	5	5	5	20
5	5	5	5	20

Speaker Two	Speaker Three	Speaker Four	TOTALS
10	10	10	30
10	10	10	40
5	5	5	20

B. Debating Skills

Refutation and Rebuttal
Ability to persuade, communicate and engage
Logical and well constructed argument

Speaker Two	Speaker Three	Speaker Four	TOTALS
10	10	10	30
10	10	10	40
5	5	5	20

Opening Speech

10	10
5	5

C. Captains' Duties

Definition of the motion or response to definition
Outline of team's arguments

Opening Speech

10	10
5	5

Closing Speech

10	10
10	10

Summary and defense of team's arguments
Rebuttal of other team's arguments

Closing Speech

10	10
10	10

D. Team Work

10	10
----	----

Display of team work during the debate
--

10	10
----	----

-

Subtotal
Less time penalties
TOTAL

-

Adjudicator's signature: _____

MARKING SHEETS ARE CONFIDENTIAL. THE CHIEF ADJUDICATOR SHOULD EMAIL THEM DIRECTLY TO DEBATES@CONCERN.NET (ROI) OR DEBATESNI@CONCERN.NET (NI) AND THE DEBATES TEAM WILL DEAL WITH ANY QUERIES ABOUT THE RESULT.

Adjudicator Feedback and Results Form (PAGE 1 OF 2)



This form is to be filled out by the Chief Adjudicator after the debate. This form should be kept confidential and returned to Concern along with the marking sheets.

Date:	Motion:	Adjudicators:
Proposing Team:		
Opposing Team:		

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

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

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

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

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

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

Adjudicator Feedback and Results Form (PAGE 2 OF 2)



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

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

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

RESULT

Please tick box and announce the result and the score

Result Please tick below to indicate who won the debate
☐ The motion was carried (proposing team win)
☐ The motion was defeated (opposing team win)

Additional Comments/Observation on the Debate

--

Adjudicator Name: _____



Guiding Principles and Safeguarding of Children Procedures May 2018

Concern has developed the following procedures that staff and volunteers are obliged to follow when coming into contact with children (any person under the age of 18 years) in the course of their work or volunteer activity.

By adhering to these procedures children will be safe from abuse by employees and volunteers of Concern and the possibility of misunderstanding, or the potential for allegations of misconduct will be minimised.

All employees and volunteers coming into contact with children **MUST**;

- interact with children in a respectful and appropriate manner;
- safeguard children and avoid situations that could be misinterpreted or lead to false allegations of child abuse;
- report any known or suspected cases of child abuse to the Designated Liaison Officer (see below for details) in Concern;
- respect a child's right to personal privacy;
- behave in a way that sets a good example for children;
- challenge inappropriate behaviour among children such as bullying;
- create an environment which encourages children to raise any issues regarding poor behaviours or attitudes in others;
- plan and organise any events involving children so that risks are minimised;
- avoid working alone with a child - staff or volunteers should remain in general view, not hidden away behind closed doors;
- choose materials and resources carefully to make sure they are suitable for children;
- avoid inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children;
- be mindful that caution is required in one-to-one situations, even in sensitive situations such as dealing with an upset child;
- avoid being drawn in to inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour, such as tantrums or crushes;
- avoid showing favouritism to any individual.
- All employees and volunteers coming into contact with children **MUST NEVER**:
 - act in a way that may be abusive or may place a child at risk;
 - spend excessive time alone with children away from others;
 - take children to their own home;
 - take children alone in a car, even for short journeys.
 - hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children;
 - develop sexual relationships with children;
 - do things of a personal nature that children could do for themselves;
 - contact children other than as required by their participation in the activity;
 - make suggestive remarks or gestures, even in fun;
 - trivialise or exaggerate child abuse issues;
 - use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive;
 - behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative;
 - condone, or participate in behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive;
 - act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade;
 - discriminate against, show different treatment or favour particular children to the exclusion of others;
 - buy drugs, alcohol or cigarettes for, or offer them to any children participating in Concern activities.

The Concern Designated Liaison Persons (DLPs) are:

Ms. Georgina Eastaugh

georgina.eastaugh@concern.net
School Programmes Manager
(Acting Head of Global Citizenship)
Level 0, Camden Street, Dublin

Ms. Niamh Cooney

niamh.cooney@concern.net
Safeguarding Adviser
Level 1, Camden Street, Dublin

Volunteer Agreement

We appreciate your commitment to the Concern Debates Programme and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding. We want to assure you that we appreciate your contribution to Concern Worldwide. We are dedicated to ensuring that you have a quality volunteer experience which is both productive and rewarding.

Concern Worldwide is committed to the following:

- Providing adequate information and training so you may meet the expectations as described in your volunteer role description
- To explain what is required of you and to support and provide encouragement to adjudicate the Concern Debates to the highest standard
- To assign you with a named Concern staff member who will provide you with regular support and act as a 'go to' person

- To treat you with respect and courtesy at all times
- To be receptive to any comments and feedback from all our volunteers
- To value and recognise our volunteers as a significant resource in achieving the goals of our organisation

The Concern Debates Volunteer Adjudicator is committed to the following:

- To fulfill my role as outlined in the volunteer role description
- To perform my volunteer role to the best of my ability
- To follow Concern Worldwide's policies and procedures
- To be timely and meet required tasks
- To act in a way that is in line with the aims and objectives of Concern Worldwide

Concern Debates Adjudicator: Volunteer Policy

Concern Debates Adjudicators:

The Concern Debates programme is the flagship activity of the Global Citizenship Unit in Concern Worldwide for over 40 years. The Concern Debates programme is open to post primary schools across the island of Ireland and has had over 85,000 students take part since its creation. The Global Citizenship Unit in Concern Worldwide organises debates between schools that are registered in the programme and sets motions for debate regarding development issues and global events.

Concern Debates Adjudicators can expect:

- To be valued as an individual
- To be respected and valued for their individual knowledge and skills
- To have support, feedback and encouragement and appreciation from the Concern Debates team
- To have opportunities for training
- To learn about global development issues
- To be given clear instructions regarding the role they have been recruited for

Concern expects Debates Adjudicators to:

- Treat fellow volunteers, students and Concern staff with respect
- To carry out tasks, as outlined in the role description, to the best of their abilities
- To be committed, reliable and punctual
- To ask for help or support when needed
- To follow and adhere to the rules and procedures of the Concern

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 Debates Programme Officer and Schools 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 160 Secondary Schools across the island of Ireland and are open to students 15 to 18 years. The debates will be split over 2 styles: online during the first half of the school year and face to face in the latter stages of the programme.

Only people over the age of 18 are permitted to act as a Concern Debates Adjudicator.

What is expected of a Concern Debates Adjudicator

Individuals acting as an adjudicator:

- Should agree with the broader aims, values and purpose of Concern Worldwide
- Should be available to travel within their local area from the latter stages of the debates programme
- 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 some debates will be scheduled for the evening time from 7pm in the latter part of the debates year
- 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 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 location for a given debate. (Either Virtual platform or face to face format)

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

The mobile phone number/s of the other adjudicator/s will also be included so that contact can be made on the day of the debate for the volunteers to agree on the feedback to be sent to the participating schools and the results to be awarded in the case of 2 adjudicator panel.

This will also apply for a face to face debate in the latter stages of the programme from March onwards, 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 or day 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 once every year and undergo Garda Vetting (ROI) and Access NI (NI) once every 3 years.

The Debates team will contact adjudicators each summer to confirm if they still wish to be part of the programme.

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 Adjudicator 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 be 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 communicated to all adjudicators via email by the end of August and all training sessions will take place on a virtual platform.

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 involved.

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.

Concern Primary Debates

Are you interested in adjudicating for the Concern Primary Debates programme? This is Concern's fun, educational debates programme for children in primary schools and is run in conjunction with Education Support Centres.

This is a hybrid programme with debates taking place live over Zoom during school hours. Towards the end of the year, debates take place in-person in front of live audiences. Primary school students debate global issues and motions set by Concern. Last year, almost 250 primary school students all across the island of Ireland took part in the programme.

In the Concern Primary Debates, there are three students per team; Captain, Speaker 2 and Speaker 3. Each has 3 minutes for their speech with the Captain speaking twice (once at the beginning and once at the end).

As a Primary Debates Adjudicator;

- You will be asked to adjudicate LIVE debates over Zoom between the months of October and January by Concern's partner Education Support Centres
- Debates will take place during school hours 9am-3pm
- You will need access to a PC/Laptop and a Zoom account
- Delivery of constructive and positive feedback to both schools takes place live on the call at the end of the debate

Primary Debates Marking Sheet

As an adjudicator it is your job to be completely neutral and impartial. You must be careful to assign marks according to the marking sheet and not because you personally agree or disagree with a particular side of the argument. The following tips are here to help you to fill out the marking sheet.

MARKS for Captain, Speaker 2 and Speaker 3:

We recommend the following guide for assigning marks

- Excellent 5
- Good/Very Good 3 or 4
- Need for improvement 1 or 2

Marks for Captain's Summation:

- Excellent 9 or 10
- Very Good 7 or 8
- Good 5 or 6
- Need for improvement 4 or less

For more information, you can email primarydebates@concern.net or watch the training video for Concern Primary Debates Adjudicators here - [Concern Primary Debates Adjudicator Training](#)

PRIMARY DEBATES		Adjudicator Marking Sheet					
Venue: _____		Date: _____					
Proposing School: _____							
Opposing School: _____							
Debate Motion: _____							
PROPOSITION MARKS Captain Introduction of team's arguments/ Definition of the motion ☐ /5 Organisation and Clarity ☐ /5 Use of facts ☐ /5 Relevance of arguments ☐ /5 Persuasiveness ☐ /5 Total Prop. Captain ☐ /25 Speaker 2 Organisation and Clarity ☐ /5 Relevance of arguments ☐ /5 Use of facts ☐ /5 Use of rebuttal ☐ /5 Persuasiveness ☐ /5 Total Prop. Speaker 2 ☐ /25 Speaker 3 Organisation and Clarity ☐ /5 Relevance of arguments ☐ /5 Use of facts ☐ /5 Use of rebuttal ☐ /5 Persuasiveness ☐ /5 Total Prop. Speaker 3 ☐ /25		OPPOSITION MARKS Captain Introduction of team's arguments/ Definition of the motion ☐ /5 Organisation and Clarity ☐ /5 Use of facts ☐ /5 Relevance of arguments ☐ /5 Persuasiveness ☐ /5 Total Prop. Captain ☐ /25 Speaker 2 Organisation and Clarity ☐ /5 Relevance of arguments ☐ /5 Use of facts ☐ /5 Use of rebuttal ☐ /5 Persuasiveness ☐ /5 Total Prop. Speaker 2 ☐ /25 Speaker 3 Organisation and Clarity ☐ /5 Relevance of arguments ☐ /5 Use of facts ☐ /5 Use of rebuttal ☐ /5 Persuasiveness ☐ /5 Total Prop. Speaker 3 ☐ /25		PROPOSITION MARKS Captain's Summation Recap of team's arguments ☐ /10 Rebutting Opposition's arguments ☐ /10 Total Captain's Summation ☐ /20 Points for teamwork ☐ /5 TEAM TOTAL ☐ /100 Deduct Time Penalties (deduct 1 point per minute over the 3 minute limit) ☐ - PROP. FINAL TOTAL ☐		OPPOSITION MARKS Captain's Summation Recap of team's arguments ☐ /10 Rebutting Opposition's arguments ☐ /10 Total Captain's Summation ☐ /20 Points for teamwork ☐ /5 TEAM TOTAL ☐ /100 Deduct Time Penalties (deduct 1 point per minute over the 3 minute limit) ☐ - OPP. FINAL TOTAL ☐	
The motion was: ☐ Carried (proposition accumulated the most points) ☐ Defeated (opposition accumulated the most points)							
Adjudicator Feedback to students: ☒ Be positive and constructive ☒ Do not select one student for particular praise and never single out an individual student for criticism, rather refer to teams as a whole in a constructive way ☒ Highlight particular areas of strength such as the amount of research, the rebuttal, the clarity of argument and persuasion skills such as body language, use of voice and eye contact ☒ Give one or two suggestions for improvement such as "try to avoid reading your speeches and over-reliance on notes" or "make sure you let us know where you got your information from by quoting your sources", or "make sure you listen to your opponents and directly address their points by rebutting them" or if there have been time penalties to "make sure you stick within the three minute limit" ☒ Do not show the marking sheet to the debaters but be available to them after the debate if they seek out further advice.							
On behalf of Concern Worldwide, your local Education Centre and the Association of Teacher Education Centres Ireland; 				Page 2 of 2			

40 Years of Concern Debates Motions



1984

Irish politicians don't really care about Third World development as it never was and never will be an election issue

1985

The gap between the rich and poor in our society is getting wider all the time and there is no political will to narrow it

1986

Charity and development are incompatible

1987

The liberator of today is nearly always the oppressor of tomorrow

1988

Feeding the world is increasingly beyond humanity's reach

1989

Irish people are doing their fair share to help solve world hunger

1990

Super-power policies are the major cause of hunger in the Third World

1991

Poverty is as oppressive to the poor in Ireland as it is to the poor in the third world

1992

Famine is an inevitable reality for the Third World

1993

International Aid is tackling the real causes of world poverty

1994

Developing countries should have the right to exploit their wildlife as they see fit

1995

Worldwide, the advantages of economic growth outweigh its costs

1996

The world is solving its food problem

1997

The Celtic Tiger has a strong global conscience

1998

Human rights hinder economic development

1999

The voices of women are making an impact on world development

2000

Students today don't care about the third world

2001

Development NGOs do more harm than good

2002

Aid to the developing world is doing more harm than good

2003

Multinational corporations are cleaning up their act

2004

Tomorrow's children will inherit a better world

2005

Ireland is committed to fair trade

2006

The BEBO generation cares little for the developing world

2007

Celebrity led campaigns do more harm than good for the developing world

2008

Genetically Modified Food is essential in the fight against world hunger

2009

The Irish Media has a stereotyped and unfair view of Africa

2010

Overseas aid works

2011

Aid to the developing world is a luxury Ireland cannot afford



2012 International commitments to tackling climate change are a load of hot air

2013 Social media improves our understanding of major world events

2014 China is good for Africa

2015 Young people should be trusted to vote at sixteen

2016 Ending world hunger by 2030 is an impossible dream

2017 There should be limits to free speech on social media

2018 Globalisation is a force for good

2019 The EU needs an army

2020 Climate change activists must give up eating meat

2021 Except for valid medical conditions, vaccines should be made compulsory

2022 Boycotts are an effective tool for social change

2023 Big business is indifferent to the Sustainable Development Goals

2024 Achieving world peace is the defining task of the 21st century

A note on language: The language used in motions has changed over time to be more respectful and accurate. For example, we don't say "third world" anymore because it's outdated and offensive - we use terms like "low income nations" instead. It's all about keeping debates inclusive and informed.



DEBATE IT!

CONCERN Debates

Concern Debates

Global Citizenship Unit
Concern Worldwide
52 Camden Street
Dublin 2

www.concern.net/debates

twitter.com/concerndebates

Email: debates@concern.net

Tel: 353 1 417 7733



Irish Aid

An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs

Concern gratefully acknowledges
support from Irish Aid.

CONCERN
worldwide

ENDING
EXTREME POVERTY
WHATEVER
IT TAKES