



Training Manual
- Learners -

Rules of Contest for Polokwane Debating Society

General Rules

1. The occasion of the debate is traditionally a formal one. The conduct of all participants should at all times be regulated accordingly. Reference by any speaker to any other must pertain only to presented arguments. Any comments of a personal nature ought strictly to be avoided.
2. It is essential that teams prepare with the requirements of these rules and those of the evaluation standards in mind.
3. Once a team submits itself as an entrant for the tournament, it is honour-bound to fulfil its commitments. Team A + Team B from the same school shall function as two separate entities and no interchange of debaters is allowed.
4. Once a fixture is out, postponements and cancellations cannot be granted.
5. No adjudicator is to be approached with the request for marks to be divulged.
6. The adjudicator is responsible for any problem areas or disputes before a debate.
7. Any school arriving more than 30 minutes after the due starting time, should expect to forfeit the debate. Strive to be at the venue at least 15 minutes before the time.
8. The co-ordinator will do her best to supply an odd number of adjudicators for each debate. However, one adjudicator should be deemed sufficient to proceed with a debate.
9. The chairperson for the debate must have a stopwatch in order to fulfil function 4 & 6 of the Chairperson' responsibilities below.
10. The floor and the audience of the schools to be separated. No interaction between the floor and the audience or coach allowed during the debate.
11. The Floor should consist of 8 - 12 members, 5 points will be deducted for each one less than 8. When there is no floor -50 points.

LEARNER DEBATE MANUAL

The Chairperson

1. The proposing team is required to appoint a learner to preside as speaker of the house, chairperson. **He/she should be fully acquainted with the rules of the contest and competent to apply them.**
2. The duties of the chairperson are as follows: To...
 1. Open and close the proceedings formally.
 2. Introduce the motion in full and exactly, the members of the teams and adjudicator(s); such names should be ascertained before the time.
3. Bring relevant rules of debate, chiefly those pertaining to time limits to the attention of the audience.
4. Ensure that all points from the floor are directed through the chairperson and thus prevent cross debating.
5. Carefully time all contributions from the floor and stop any floor speaker who exceeds the time limit of one minute.
6. Allow the adjudicator(s) sufficient time between speeches to assess the previous speaker and complete his/her marking. The adjudicator(s) will give a pre-arranged signal to the chairperson.
7. Look at the adjudicator at frequent intervals so as to ensure that any message from the adjudicator(s) is transmitted immediately.

Speakers - Order of Speakers and Time Limits

1. First Speaker Proposition	7 mins	2. First Speaker Opposition	7 mins
3. Second Speaker Proposition	7 mins	4. Second Speaker Opposition	7 mins
5. Floor Debate	Proposition and opposition	1 minute per speaker maximum	Total time: 7mins
6. Third Speaker Proposition	7 mins	7. Third Speaker Opposition	7 mins

Reply Speech delivered by first or second speaker of each team – check the order:

8. Opposition	3 mins	9. Proposition	3 mins
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- NOTE**
1. There should be 2 time keepers - one from each school.
30 seconds before time elapses: 1 tap
15 seconds before time elapses: 2 taps (audible to chair and adjudicators)
Time up: indicate end to Chairperson
 2. The chair should announce that the time is up, but not cut the speaker short. The speaker runs the risk of losing more points for exceeding the time limit, but should have the opportunity to finish/cut short the speech in his/her chosen manner.

Structure of Speeches

1. The First Proposition Speaker

- Intro/context
- Definitions and setting up the debate
- Team line of argument or team policy or model
- Team Case split
- Positive matter/speech
- Conclusion

2. The Second Proposition Speaker

- Introduction/contextualize
- Clash
- State speaker case split
- Rebuttals (defensive rebuttals mostly)
- Positive matter/speech
- Conclusion

3. The Third Proposition Speaker

- Introduction/contextualize
- List the main issues of the debate by opposition
- Rebut each issue
- Conclusion

4. The Proposition Reply Speaker

- Contextualize
- List the main questions of the debate
- Discussing the issues as to show how their team responded to the issues and why the issues fall to their side
- Conclusion

5. The First Opposition Speaker

- Contextualize
- Clash (what is it that as opposition you disagree with prop case)
- Rebuttals
- Set up debate in opp view
- Team case split
- Positive matter
- Conclusion

6. The Second Opposition Speaker

SAME AS SECOND PROPOSITION

7. The Third Opposition Speaker

SAME AS THIRD PROPOSITION

8. The Opposition Reply Speaker

SAME AS PROPOSITION REPLY

All Speakers should

- Avoid excessive use of quotation and example as well as the excessive citing of figures. Neither of these is an argument.
- Render the motion in full and exactly.
- Address the chair as “Madam Chair” or “Mr Chairperson, Ladies and Gentlemen” Greeting: THE CHAIRPERSON GREETES EVERYONE AT THE START OF THE DEBATE SO IT'S UNNECESSARY FOR THE SPEAKERS TO BE GREETING EVERYTIME BEFORE THEY START DEBATING. IT'S NOT ONLY TIME CONSUMING AND BORING BUT ALSO SLOWS DOWN THE MOMENTUM OF THE DEBATE AND MAKES A SPEAKER TO HAVE A BAD OR WEAK INTRO.

Defining the motion

The first task of the first proposition speaker is to clearly set out the affirmative's interpretation of the topic and specifying the important issue(s) are that in contention in the debate. The **definition should treat the topic as a phrase, rather than just a collection of individual words.** Key words however may need to be individually defined.

The Floor

This takes place after the second opposition speaker.

1. Only the members of the floor of each team may speak in the floor debate. No other members of the audience should speak or feed information to these speakers.
2. Floor speakers should support their own team's points, and should not confuse matters by introducing prepared or divergent arguments. Floor members should play an active part in preparing the presentation of the argument, this will empower them to make valuable impromptu input as they follow the arguments of the first 4 speakers.
3. All points must be addressed through the chairperson in order to prevent cross debate.
Example of offering a point from the floor: “Madam Chair” or “Mr Chairperson”
4. Preferably only one argument is raised per point. Each speaker should raise only one argument.
5. The chairperson will stop any speaker who continues after 1 minute.
6. The floor should consist of at least eight members.
7. A floor of fewer than eight loses 5 points for each one lacking, and no floor 50 points.

Scoring

1. Each speaker's speech is marked out of 100, with 40 for content, 40 for style and 20 for strategy. **THE MARKING RANGE IS BETWEEN 60 AND 80.** Where a child comes, greets the house and sits down or vomits before starting his speech they get a 60 and the best speech you've ever heard would get an 80. The best speaker at the 2014 World Schools Debating Championships got an average of 74.

THIS IS IMPORTANT SO THAT ALL ADJUDICATORS FOLLOW THE SAME MARKING STANDARD.

- 1.1. **Content** comprises the arguments used by the speaker, divorced from the speaking style. It should show evidence of research and be relevant. Examples should be analysed and not just mentioned.
- 1.2. **Strategy** covers three concepts.

- a. The structure and timing of a speech
- b. Speaker and team role fulfilment
- c. Whether the speaker understood the issues of the debate.
- d. Engagement with the opposition speakers if it's from first opposition

A good speech has a clear **structure** (i.e. a clear introduction with signposting, a logical body which adheres to that signposting, and finally a definite conclusion.)

Timing is primarily focused with the way in which a speaker allocated the time of the speech to its various component and sufficient time being given to the important points. Going over time is a critical error as assigning to little time to the explanation of a particular point and thus causing confusion due to a lack of development.

Team role fulfilment is critical as each team member has a specific series of tasks that must be performed and to mishandle or omit these harms a team's overall performance.

Finally, and most importantly, there is the question of the awareness of the team to the **critical issues of the debate and how they went about addressing these issues.**

- i. The structure of the team's policy, the particular points that were chosen for emphasis.
- ii. The points of the other team which were singled out for particular rebuttal.
- iii. Critical points sited in the Reply speech are all evidence of strategic thinking and issue awareness.

Remember that strategy is concerned with one's own team's argument as well as the discrediting of the opposing team's.

Differences between content and strategy:

In a debate a speaker answers critical issues with poor rebuttal. The content of the poor rebuttal means a poor content mark but the fact that the critical issues were recognised and addressed means a good strategy mark.

In a debate if a speaker manages to state the points of his or her particular argument well but fails to rebut the opposing side in any convincing way, means a good content for one's own points and a good strategy mark for solid stance but this will be modified for poor rebuttal (content) as well as a lack of consistent and insightful rebuttal (strategy) of the other team.

- 1.3 **Style** is concerned with how the speaker speaks. Audibility, clarity of speech are essential, but accents are irrelevant. Eye-contact, confidence and good body language make a speaker convincing. Wit and spontaneity add spice to the presentation. Speakers should project sincerity and maintain their own individuality.
- 1.4 **The floor and reply speeches** are each marked out of fifty as indicated on the adjudicator's score sheet. The floor is given a team mark for content, strategy, participation and spontaneity.

REBUTTALS

Types of rebuttals

Thematic

- Thematic rebuttals involve grouping similar ideas, from your opponent, into a few specific themes. Once grouped, you can address each theme independently and at greater length. Effective thematic rebuttals allow you to address multiple points simultaneously. Avoid oversimplifying your opponent's themes. Make sure to explain the logic behind your groupings and how the theme is universal within each of the points developed by your opponent.

Logic

- Logical rebuttals show that your opponent's plan or statement fails to address the topic of your debate, or that individual points do not logically lead to the solution that he promised. For example, if he contends that a federally run recycling program would decrease global pollution, you can argue that his plan fails to logically address the problem, because it does not provide adequate incentive for private citizens to actively recycle.

Targeted

- A targeted rebuttal focuses on a few specific points within your opponent's case. Note: This can be a dangerous technique, because if you choose points that are less significant, you might find that the overall case may still be strong. Focus instead on fundamental points, specific areas of your opponent's case that are required for consideration. An

argument supporting the testing of medicines on animals, for example, might be weak in a rebuttal centered on alternate testing techniques that can yield higher quality test results. However, if you can show that the alternate methods have accuracy results that are at least as high as the animal results; your rebuttal could eliminate the rest of your opponent's case.

Alternate Outcome

- An alternate outcome rebuttal centers on the possible ramifications of your opponent's case and suggests that there are multiple outcome possibilities other than the ones your opponent suggests. To support your rebuttal, you will need to show a logical connection between the outcomes you are suggesting and their specific methodologies. In a debate about providing sex education to teenagers, for example, you could show that a lack of such education can lead to an increase in teen pregnancy.