



Training Manual
- Teachers -

Rules of Contest for Polokwane Debating Society: Adjudicators

A. 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. Please study the evaluation sheet provided.
3. Once a team submits itself as an entrant for the tournament, it is honour-bound to fulfil its commitments.
4. In the interests of certainty, postponements and cancellations cannot be granted. However, a school may replace team members or the entire team if it so wishes.
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 or after 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 2 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 -10 members, 5 points will be deducted for each one less than 8. When there is no floor -50 points.

B. 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.

C. Team 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 |

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.

D. Structure of Speeches

1. **The First Proposition Speaker**

Defines the motion and states the team's line of argument, announces the case division, and presents her or his case.

3. **The Second Proposition Speaker** defends the proposition definition if necessary and rebuts the opposition case for no more than 2 minutes. The speaker then proceeds with her or his part of the proposition case.

6. **The Third Proposition Speaker** spends a lot of his her/his time attacking the other side. 2 minutes at most can be used to present his or her own case, but the speaker should mainly rebut. This speaker should also deal with the floor.

9. **The Proposition Reply Speaker** deals only with the main issues of the case and proves why their argument is stronger. Deals with the definition if it needs clarity, and explains the important differences between the two team's cases. He/She outlines the opposition's case, and presents his or her part of the case.

2. **The First Opposition Speaker** defines the motion and states the team's line of argument, announces the case division, and presents her or his case and explains the important differences between the two teams' cases. He/she outlines the opposition case, and presents he/her part of the case.

4. **The Second Opposition Speaker** must reinforce the clash as laid out by the first opposition speaker by attacking the proposition for 2 minutes and then presenting new matter to support their case.

5. **Floor debate** Proposition and opposition 1 minute per speaker maximum.

Total time 7 minutes.

7. **The Third Opposition Speaker** also spends most of his/her time attacking the other side. New arguments should largely be used to destroy the proposition's case. Significant points raised by the floor should be dealt with.

8. **The Opposition Reply Speaker** follows immediately on the opposition third speaker and gives a broad overview of the debate. He/she should summarise their own case while proving conclusively that the proposition's arguments are weak.

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 first speaker of each team greets the audience and officials on behalf of the team when the debate starts. All other speakers address the Chair.**

E. Defining the motion

The proposition must define the topic so that the definition

1. is reasonably close to the plain meaning of the topic,
2. allows the opposition team reasonable room to debate and
3. is a reasonable definition.

The onus is on the first opposition speaker to challenge explicitly the proposition's definition of the motion if it doesn't comply with the above requirements and to offer an alternative more reasonable definition. **NB: The challenging of a definition is seldom necessary.**

F. 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.
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.

G. Scoring

1. Each speaker's speech is marked out of 100, with 40 for content, 40 for style and 20 for strategy.
 - 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.

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 components and sufficient time being given to the important

points. Going over time is a critical error as assigning too little time to the explanation of a particular point and thus causing confusion due to a lack of development of the argument.

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 cited 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 and 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.