

ESU SCHOOLS' MACE

Volunteer
Judge Handbook
2023-24



ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
discovering voices



Principles of Judging

The ESU Schools' Mace is a competition that is first and foremost aimed at providing young debaters around England the opportunity to grow and develop as speakers, and to build the key skills, such as analytical reasoning and the ability to use and apply relevant evidence, that debating can bring. In order to allow this to occur it is of the greatest importance that judging is carried out on a consistent basis. We therefore ask all judges to weight the elements of debating and persuasion based upon the mark scheme provided, and the guidance in this booklet.

Judges for the Schools' Mace are asked to act as a neutral, well informed global citizen. We recognise that our judges often have specific areas of expertise, whether that comes from academic work, or professional experience. We also realise it can be sometimes difficult for us to put aside personal opinions. However, in marking teams, we ask you to credit teams only in relation to their ability to build persuasive arguments and by comparison to the other team in the debate, rather than your external knowledge and understanding. The skills that we are testing and building are not those of specialist knowledge, or current affairs, but rather of their ability to take the evidence they have accumulated and build logical, rigorous and persuasive arguments.

This approach to debating reflects the fact that teams are judged both in isolation but also comparatively. Teams are judged in isolation in that skills such as reasoning and evidence, and style should be considered in relation to the mark scheme descriptors. However, the extent to which reasoning is demonstrated, and particularly in the case of listening and response, can only really be understood by comparison to other teams. It is in this we see the difference between public speaking and debating.

Finally, as part of the emphasis on providing speakers with the opportunity to grow and improve the emphasis throughout is upon providing the clearest and highest quality feedback. Whilst this is discussed later, it is worth remembering that whenever you are judging, this should be first and foremost in your mind.



Rules of the ESU Schools' Mace Format

The ESU Schools' Mace Format has a simplicity that is aimed at getting as many students and schools involved in debating as possible.

Structure of the Debate

Each debate consists of two teams, a proposition and an opposition, of three speakers. The debate begins with the first proposition speech, before moving to the first speaker of the opposition, back to the second speaker of the proposition, and finally to the second speaker of the opposition.

After the main four speeches have been completed, we move to the floor debate. This is moderated either by the chair of the debate, if one is provided by the host school, or the chair of the judging panel. In this time two or three questions to each side should be looked for from the audience to raise issues that had not been previously considered in the debate, or to ask for clarity or remove confusion from the arguments made by either side.

The floor debate is then followed by the summary speeches. This is delivered by the third member of each team. These begin with the opposition summary speech, and is followed by the proposition summary speech.

Timings and Points of Information

Each of the main four speeches is seven minutes in length. The first and last minute of each of these speeches is referred to as protected time, during which points of information from the opposing bench are not allowed. A knock on the table should be given to indicate that one minute and six minutes has passed, as well as a double knock at seven minutes. This should be done either by the chair for the debate, or the chair of the judging panel.

A point of information is a short, ten to fifteen seconds, interjection into a speech of the opposing bench. In a point of information, a speaker should concisely raise an objection to an argument being made, ask a question or make another pertinent remark. This may be a criticism of the factual accuracy, a logical leap, or an assumption that is made in their argument.

To offer a point of information, a member of the opposing bench should seek to alert the speaker to their desire to offer a point of information, without disrupting the flow of their speech. This can be done either by standing up, raising an arm or simply saying 'Point of Information'. It is the speaker's choice whether to accept a point of information or not, and a refusal can either be signalled verbally, or by 'waving a speaker down'. Speakers are expected to accept one or two points of information in their speech. Speakers who accept more should not be penalised, although it is likely that they will have less time to develop their reasoning and argumentation. Furthermore, those who accept less should not be actively deducted marks, although it is likely their listening and response will be worse, as they have not engaged as much with the ideas of others.

Summary speeches are five minutes in length, and points of information are not allowed.



Role Fulfilment

Each speaker in the debate is asked to play a specific role in the debate, something that is reflected in the mark scheme.

The first speaker for the proposition is expected to provide a definition and a mechanism for the debate. The definition should provide a clear idea of the key terms of the debate. For example, in 'This House Would Legalise All Drugs', what do we mean by 'all drugs'? Do we include all currently illegal drugs? Do we include prescription only, but currently available drugs? The mechanism is the means by which the policy will be carried out. If the debate was 'This House Would Invade Syria', who will be invading? What means will be used for the invasion? This should then be followed by the most important two or three arguments for the proposition.

The first speaker on opposition then follows with rebuttal to the proposition in which they should aim to highlight issues with the case made by the leader of proposition. This is then followed by their main two or three arguments.

This is the pattern followed by the second speaker for proposition and opposition.

Each summary speech is five minutes, and is given by the third speaker on each side. The summary speaker plays two roles. Firstly, they must respond to the floor questions. This can either be done directly, or through reference to the rest of their arguments in the debate. Secondly, speakers should seek to provide a summary of the debate under two or three main 'points of clash', which seek to both clarify the debate, and demonstrate why their side won.



ESU Schools' Mace Judging Criteria

The criteria for the ESU Schools' Mace are weighted in the following ways:

Position	Reasoning and Evidence	Organisation and Prioritisation	Listening and Response	Expression and Delivery
First Proposition Speaker	15	10	5	10
First Opposition Speaker	10	10	10	10
Second Proposition Speaker	10	10	10	10
Second Opposition Speaker	10	10	10	10
Opposition Summary Speaker	10	10	10	10
Proposition Summary Speaker	10	10	10	10

The judging criteria for the ESU Schools' Mace seeks to explicitly develop the constituent elements of persuasive speaking. Whilst in some formats, such as British Parliamentary, there may be a more holistic approach, this does not necessarily lead to the conscious awareness and development of a complete range of speaking skills that are required.



Reasoning and Evidence

Features: *Relevancy of arguments, relevant empirical evidence to support ideas, analysed arguments from premise to conclusions.*

Speeches that score highly for reasoning and evidence are highly relevant and well-constructed, providing logical and persuasive arguments for their side. They work through from basic assertions, to well justified conclusions, making use of evidence that supports their case. Arguments are not only relevant and well analysed, but also must have their importance demonstrated, and a weight given in reference to other material in the debate.

Organisation and Prioritisation

Features: *Marked out arguments, signposted ideas, internal structure, ranking of most relevant ideas, preference best ideas.*

Speeches that show strong organisation and prioritisation are exceptionally clear in communicating ideas. They introduce the most relevant ideas and make use of them, without rushing through or introducing every possible relevant argument. Arguments are signposted well, and it is clear when a speech moves from one idea to the next.





Listening and Response

Features: *Rebuttal and points of information, relevance to arguments, level of response given, prioritization.*

Speeches that score well in terms of listening and response show an incisive ability to engage with the very roots of the case presented by the opposing bench. Rather than tackling simply examples or evidence, they undermine the principles or concepts on top of which arguments are built. Speakers will aim to undermine the most important material in both rebuttal, points of information, and also their main constructive material. They will be flexible in their approach to the debate, and will weight their own ideas in reference to the opposing bench.

Expression and Delivery

Features: *Eye contact, hand gestures, stance, emotive language, rhetorical devices and questions, pacing.*

Speeches that score highly on expression and delivery demonstrate a clear awareness of rhetoric and attempt to engage an audience. They make use of tools such as eye contact, hand gestures, and some emotive language to engage with the judges. They may make use of notes, but as a prompt, rather than to rehearse or read the speech.



JUDGES' FEEDBACK

It is imperative criticism is delivered in a constructive manner. Judges are to be professional, courteous, and focus on the positive aspects of what a student did during the debate.

Volunteer Judges should remember that the majority of the competitors do not progress beyond the Regional Final. It is therefore essential that judging is of as high a quality as possible at this stage in the competition to give all participants a sense of achievement and the awareness of having learned valuable skills from their experience. The students and their teachers will want to know what criteria they were marked on.

Feedback is of two types: general and individual. The **first must happen**, the second **can and should** occur if time allows.

General Feedback happens after you have deliberated on your decisions and returned to the auditorium and BEFORE you announce the winners. This is your chance to offer constructive feedback and advice to all of the participants. This is often done by dividing up the feedback areas between the judges, a division of labour that should be sorted out before the performances start.

For example: *'We felt that teams were generally good at constructing strongly evidenced arguments, but at times needed to be more forthcoming with points of information. Whilst we judge on the basis of all four criteria, we felt that the difference between teams could be most keenly seen in the quality of listening and response'.*

The Sandwich Method:

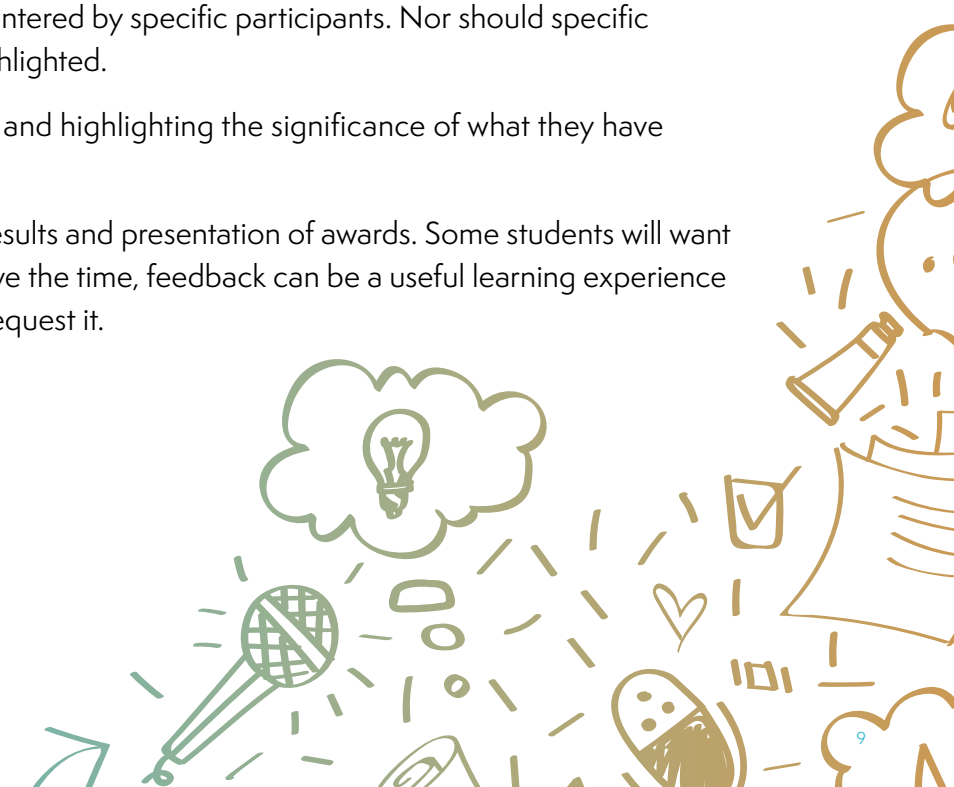
Before you provide feedback, try to have a clear idea of what you would like to convey to the students; be positive and critically encouraging.

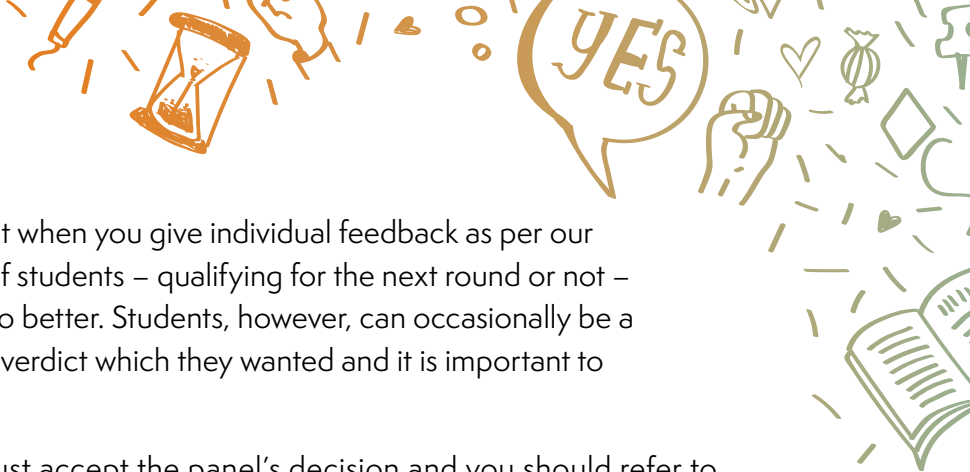
Start by illustrating the key aspect(s) you were looking for.

Then mix in a couple of things that were particularly challenging about the role and suggest ways to improve, without giving the feeling that you are telling anybody off. Do not make specific references to the competencies or difficulties encountered by specific participants. Nor should specific examples of strong performances be highlighted.

Finish by returning to give further praise and highlighting the significance of what they have just achieved.

Individual Feedback is given after the results and presentation of awards. Some students will want to make a swift exit but for those who have the time, feedback can be a useful learning experience and students should be encouraged to request it.





There must be teacher or parent present when you give individual feedback as per our safeguarding policy. The vast majority of students – qualifying for the next round or not – are just keen to find out how they can do better. Students, however, can occasionally be a little tense if they have not received the verdict which they wanted and it is important to remember to be encouraging.

The students, teachers and parents must accept the panel's decision and you should refer to your mark sheets for detailed comments, but the students have no right to see them. If you have a queue, move swiftly remembering these young people often have a long journey home. If a school or students have to leave before receiving feedback but they have requested it, please do type up and send any feedback or notes to the ESU Competitions Team to share.

When providing feedback, consider:

- How well has this student fulfilled the role?
- In which areas did they do well?
- What other techniques could they have used to make their performance stronger?

If appropriate, give examples of how skills they demonstrated can be helpful in future careers, education etc. and give real-life examples.





FEEDBACK TEMPLATE

Use the this page to jot down notes using the below format and support you when delivering individual feedback:

MY FEEDBACK: the role of...

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What I was looking for; how my expectations were fulfilled:

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What other techniques could have made the role even better:

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Conclusion

How can the skills they have learned doing this competition benefit them in their future lives? If you have relevant experience in your job/career/life where public speaking has been a useful/important skill to you, do say so.





ESU COMPETITION LEAD

What is an ESU Competition Lead?

The competition lead is a designated ESU paid member of staff who will attend and oversee the running of each competition heat, online and in person. The competition lead will also be on the judging panel with you. Unless there is a full judging panel of volunteers. Then the ESU Competition Lead will support with facilitation of the heat.

What will they do?

- Support and promote the charitable objectives of the ESU, acting as an ambassador for the organisation and promoting education programmes and opportunities to support our work.
- Assist the ESU Competitions Team in ensuring competition heats run smoothly, act as point of contact for schools and volunteer judges on the day of heats.
- Sit on judging panels at ESU competition heats (which may include acting as chair judge) offering fair, positive, constructive and unbiased feedback based in our judging criteria.
- Provide accurate heat results in a timely manner to the ESU Competitions Team.
- MC Zoom and in-person heats, engaging both students and audience whilst following ESU scripts.
- Support volunteer judges and ensure they have a positive and rewarding experience.
- Provide oversight of safeguarding requirements, in line with ESU policies.
- Signpost teachers and volunteers to resources and additional support, such as through the ESU website.
- Undertake training sessions for continual professional development.
- Follow and promote the ESU's safeguarding and equity policies.

Can I still take up specific roles on the panel?

Yes! This role is not designed to take away from any role that our volunteers may wish to fulfil, and neither will they act as Chair of Judges (unless appropriate within a particular panel). This role is there to enable our volunteer judges to focus on what they love to do - judging and MC'ing. If you request to be a volunteer judge, then you may act as Chair Judge and have the casting vote on split decisions. This must be agreed with the ESU Competitions Team or the ESU Competition Lead prior to the heat date. You will be unable to take on this role on the day unless previously agreed.

Who will provide feedback?

The competition lead will send the results of the heat to the competition team at the ESU. Volunteers are still more than welcome to provide individual feedback to students if the requests to hear how well they did but should do so following the sandwich method as stated above.

SCHOOLS' MACE GLOSSARY



- **Speech:** An oral presentation given on a particular motion.
- **Motion:** The subject or issue to be debated, usually beginning with 'This House Believes', 'This House Would' or variations thereof.
- **Debate:** A formal contest in which the affirmative and negative sides of a motion are advocated by speakers on opposing sides.
- **Adjudicator/Judge:** An observer of a debate who is responsible for deciding which team has won. Where there is more than one adjudicator, they sit as an adjudication panel.
- **Chair(person):** The person who is responsible for introducing speakers, inviting them to the podium to give their speech, inviting them to resume their seat at the end of their speech, ensuring that the rules of the competition are observed and generally keeping order.
- **Timekeeper:** The timekeeper assists the chairperson in the running of the debate by timing each speech and providing signals to the speakers indicating how much of their time has elapsed.
- **House:** The chamber or auditorium where the debate takes place.
- **Floor:** The members of the audience.
- **Prepared Motion (Long Prep):** The motion is released in advance of the competition to allow for research into the subject or issue to be conducted.
- **Proposition:** The team that argues in favour of the motion.
- **Opposition:** The team that argues against the motion.
- **Point of Information (POI):** A formal interjection which may be made during an opposing speaker's speech. A POI is offered when a speaker on the opposite team clearly indicates that they wish to raise a point of information. POIs may be accepted or declined by the current speaker. If declined, the speaker offering the POI cannot make a point, and must wait for a polite amount of time (at least 15 seconds, approximately) before offering another POI. If accepted, the speaker offering the POI may make a brief point of no more than ten seconds, after which they must sit down and allow the current speaker to continue with their speech.
- **Protected Time:** The period of time during which POIs may not be offered, usually the first and last minute of the speech.
- **Unprotected Time:** The period of time during which POIs may be offered.
- **Rebuttal:** The term given to an argument made in direct response to a contrary argument put forward by an opposing speaker.
- **Case:** A set of arguments supporting one side of the motion or resolution.

- **Model:** The framework of a Proposition. Where a motion or resolution requires a Proposition team to propose a policy which changes the status quo, the first Proposition speaker must specify the parameters within which that policy change will operate. For example, a team proposing the motion 'This House Would ban the teaching of religion in schools' would need to specify the jurisdiction within which the ban is proposed to operate, as well as any exclusions or exceptions to the ban.
- **Summary Speech:** The final speeches on each side of the debate. Summary speeches should summarise the debate including any floor debate or questions from the audience and should not contain any new material. POIs cannot be offered during summary speeches.
- **Status Quo:** The state of affairs which currently exists, the course of action currently pursued or the present system.
- **Manner/Style:** The collective term for a range of mechanisms employed by a speaker in the course of a speech including but not limited to emotion, humour, vocabulary, tone of voice and body language.
- **Matter/Content:** The substance of a speaker's case, including the strength of the individual arguments and the extent to which those arguments are supported by empirical evidence, logical analogies and reasoned analysis.
- **Tuism:** Something which is so obvious or self-evidently true that it does not require proof or argument. To define a motion in a truistic way is to effectively make it self-serving and undebatable.
- **Squirrel:** Defining a motion in a manner contrary to the spirit of the motion and the intended debate. Both a verb ('he squirrelled that motion') and a noun ('that definition was a squirrel'), an example of a squirrel would be taking the motion "This House Believes that China should go green" and proposing that China should give the green light and grant independence to Taiwan (thus turning a debate which should have been about environmentalism into a debate about Taiwanese independence).
- **Barracking:** Offering too many Points of Information to the other side, thereby taking time away from their main speeches.



EQUITY POLICY

The English-Speaking Union is committed to providing opportunities for individuals of all backgrounds to access and develop communication skills. We expect all ESU events to be welcoming, inclusive, and to foster a safe and supportive atmosphere in which all individuals feel that they are able and encouraged to express themselves.

In such a safe space, individuals should feel that:

- They are afforded the same high level of respect that is due to all
- They are never in a position where they feel under physical or psychological threat
- They will never be judged on things they cannot change
- Their opinions and beliefs can be challenged, but will always be respected
- If their safety or well-being is threatened, others will listen and support them

The responsibility is placed on all individuals (students, school staff, ESU staff and members, judges etc.) to ensure that such a safe space is created and maintained. Any person who is found to breach these rules may be excluded from this or future events.

If any individual feels that these guidelines have been violated, whether the incident was directed against them or not, they should:

- Approach any member of ESU staff at the event
- Contact a member of staff at the ESU if an issue is not, or cannot, be resolved satisfactorily at the event
- If an issue remains unresolved, direct any complaints towards the ESU Safeguarding Lead, Gavin Illsley (gavin.illsley@esu.org) or to the deputy: **Cait Lees** (cait.lees@esu.org) or **Tom Kirkham** (thomas.kirkham@esu.org)



ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION

The ESU is a unique educational charity and membership organisation dedicated to giving young people the speaking and listening skills and cross-cultural understanding they need to thrive.

For more information about the ESU and our other educational opportunities, please email a member of the team at volunteering@esu.org or visit our website at esu.org.

You can also find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/the.esu
www.instagram.com/theenglishspeakingunion
www.linkedin.com/company/the-english-speaking-union
or on Twitter [@theESU](https://twitter.com/theESU)/[@ESUdebate](https://twitter.com/ESUdebate)

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