

ESU-CHURCHILL PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION



THE INTERNATIONAL
CHURCHILL SOCIETY
—UNITED KINGDOM—

Volunteer
Judge
Handbook
2023-24



ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
discovering voices

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMPETITION

Welcome to the English-Speaking Union's Public Speaking Competition!

Dear Volunteer Judges,

Thank you so much for offering your time and expertise to judge this event. The ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition is now in its sixty-fourth year and is once more being generously sponsored by the International Churchill Society. Without your support in generously giving up your time to volunteer, this competition could not continue to run and help so many young people discover their voice.

In this document you will find the format of the competition, the timings of the speeches and the weighting of the marks. It also includes a guide as to the standard of speech with respect to the approximate number of marks to be awarded.

It is essential that our judges adhere to the criteria for judging. Teams have been coached to these criteria and will be expecting feedback relating to them. Please do not ever refer to a student's dress sense, hairstyle, or any physical characteristic, including voice. Such remarks are at best inappropriate and at worst hurtful.

Also, you may come across unfamiliar names; please give the student the respect of your best attempt at pronunciation!

It is important that all judges, no matter how experienced, have read the Judge Role Description, read the ESU Volunteer Agreement and have completed our online training. This is because the ESU, as an educational charity, and you as volunteers, both have a duty of care to the young people who take part in our programmes. The training not only covers the rules and judging, but also covers our safeguarding policy.

Full information about the competition can be found at www.esu.org/competitions/ and the Role Description, Volunteer Agreement and Online Training can all

be found at www.esu.org/volunteer/.

This year Round One will take place via Zoom while all subsequent rounds will be held in person.

You will be briefed on the procedures relevant to the format of the particular heat you are judging. You will need these guidelines as reference and should have this handbook with you when doing so.

When you get together as a panel, on Zoom for Round One or in person thereafter, one judge will be appointed Chair of the panel.

Usually there are 3 Chair Judges but should there be an even number, 2 or 4, the Chair Judge will have a casting vote on any controversial decision. If the Chair Judge is unable to steer the panel to a final decision, then the ESU Competition Lead shall step in and make the final decision. The ESU Competition Lead will take you through the mechanics of the marking sheets and the deliberation (decision-making).

At the end of this document is a page on the art of giving feedback. There is a very reasonable expectation from students and teachers that they will learn something about the skill of public speaking. The most important thing to remember is to keep an overwhelmingly positive tone and to make sure that points for improvement are given constructively. We want every child to come away from the event with a feeling that they have gained something from the experience, win or not.

We hope that you enjoy the competition and, certainly, most judges to whom we speak are surprised and delighted by the quality of what they hear.

Thank you once more for giving so freely your time and expertise; good luck!

Yours faithfully,

Tom Kirkham,
Senior Branch and Volunteering Officer
volunteering@esu.org



FORMAT

Each presentation involves three participants. The Chairperson and Questioner of one school are partnered up with the Speaker from another.

(NB this is different from the Rotary Club “Youth Speaks” format where the Chair, Speaker and Vote of Thanks all present as an integral team)

20-30 minutes before the first presentation, the **Chairperson and Questioner of each school team are told with which Speaker they will be working.** They are then given time to prepare by asking the Speaker questions about their personal connection to the topic, and the approach they intend to take in their speech.

Each presentation lasts for fourteen minutes. The time breakdown for the presentation is:

Duration	Guest Speaker	Chairperson	Questioner
1 minute		Introduction	
5 minutes	Speech		
4 minutes	Questioner's Questions		Questioner's Questions
2 minutes	Audience Questions		
2 minutes		Summary	

A Timekeeper will give an audible signal when the Speaker's five minutes have elapsed, and after 14 minutes when the presentation should have finished. It is, however, the responsibility of the Chairperson to ensure that the presentation runs according to time and fits within the 14 minutes allocated.

Judges need not worry about time infringements during the presentations since the timekeeper will inform them of any serious infringements after the end of the presentations.



INTRODUCTION TO THE MARKING CRITERIA

In 2023-24, ESU competitions are being run with a hybrid model. During Round One, on Zoom, rounds may be affected by connection problems, technical issues and unfamiliarity with equipment from participants and/or judges. Our aim is that no participant should be disadvantaged by these.

If you have any concerns in advance please do get in touch with the competitions team at competition@esu.org. Should any issues arise during a heat, as far as possible be accommodating and supportive. Report any issues which do occur to the competitions team.

Whilst the three roles are marked separately, it is worth noting throughout that the Public Speaking Competition is very much a team effort, and should be marked accordingly. The best teams will be those that show strength in all three roles, rather than relying on a single member who covers up for deficiencies in the other two roles.

Adjudication is given on the basis of three main criteria;

1. Content
2. Effectiveness in role
3. Style

These criteria are weighted in the following manner:

	Content	Effectiveness in Role	Style
Chairperson (30)	15	10	5
Speaker (40)	20	10	10
Questioner (30)	15	10	5

Numerical scores are only a guideline for discussions and so the panel should talk about the strengths and weaknesses of each participant and try and reach agreement.

Following the Covid-19 pandemic, the ESU has listened carefully to feedback on hybrid models. This year we are going to mark a slightly clearer difference between online and in-person events.

In general, we will expect cameras on when speaking, as this enables speakers to engage their audience with passion and panache, and is vital for variations in body language including eye contact and hand gesture.





As a general guide, the marks should be distributed in the following way.

Chairperson and Questioner

Standard	Content	Style	Effectiveness in Role	Overall
Exceptional	13 – 15	5	9 – 10	26 – 30
Very Good	10 – 12	4	8 – 9	21 – 25
Good	7 – 9	3	7 – 8	16 – 20
Satisfactory	4 – 6	2	5 – 6	11 – 15
Poor	0 – 3	0 – 1	0 – 4	0 – 10

Speaker

Standard	Content	Style	Effectiveness in Role	Overall
Exceptional	17 – 20	9 – 10	9 – 10	33 – 40
Very Good	13 – 16	8 – 9	8 – 9	25 – 32
Good	9 – 12	7 – 8	7 – 8	17 – 24
Satisfactory	5 – 8	5 – 6	5 – 6	9 – 16
Poor	0 – 4	0 – 4	0 – 4	0 – 8

Below is a description of the expected performance per role. Team members will vary in their ability to execute that role (see marking table above).

Should one of the presentations touch on a topic which a judge has specialist knowledge, they should try to put aside personal biases and assess how well the speaker meets the judging criteria, not whether they are always correct. While factual accuracy is important, judges should remember the age of the participants and temper expectations.

Judges' personal preferences for style should not have a bearing on marking a speech. Various styles and tone are part of a presentation and what matters is how well suited they are to the topic and content.

Chairperson

Content

- Makes a relevant introduction demonstrating interest in the topic
- Effectively links the Speaker and topic
- Summarises key themes of the presentation at the end

Effectiveness in Role

- Creates a warm and friendly atmosphere
- Introduces Speaker and Questioner
- Manages the audience questions, asking for re-phrasing or repetition, or re-asking the question directly where appropriate
- Effectively manages time, ensuring presentations do not over run or spend too much time on any one section of the presentation

Style

- Ensures Speakers feel welcome and appreciated and lead applause
- Interrupts firmly but politely to keep participants to time

Speaker

Content

- Shows evidence of careful consideration of topic and delivers a logical case
- Gives arguments supported by evidence, and relevant analogies
- Considers alternative viewpoints to their own

Effectiveness in Role

- Employs a clear structure that is easy to follow
- Spontaneous comments where appropriate to be rewarded
- Answers questions comprehensively yet succinctly, demonstrating a greater knowledge of the topic over and above that displayed in the speech

Style

- Use of sheets or notes appropriate, but does not over rely on them
- Does not appear to have memorised the speech
- Natural fluid style that makes use of carefully chosen language and rhetoric
- Seeks to draw an audience in with tools such as good eye contact, and appropriate body language





Questioner

Content

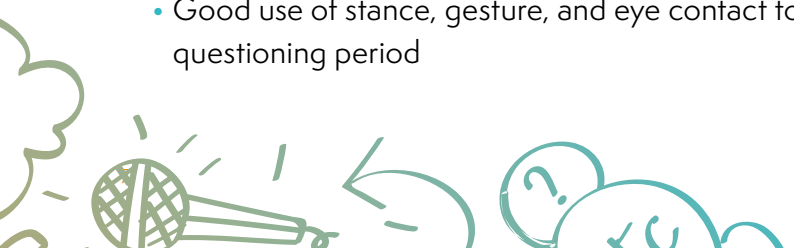
- Asks relevant questions that show they have listened to the speech as given, not merely pre-prepared questions
- Shows evidence of understanding of the topic by introducing other aspects where appropriate

Effectiveness in Role

- Attempts to deepen understanding of the topic, and add clarity where necessary
- Suggestions of alternative lines of argumentation or views
- Offers clear and succinct questions
- Willingness to ask follow up questions where appropriate

Style

- Employs a non-combative style, being courteous but probing
- Engages in a friendly dialogue with the Speaker in the questioning period
- Good use of stance, gesture, and eye contact to include the audience in the questioning period



JUDGES' FEEDBACK

It is imperative points for improvement are delivered in a constructive manner. Judges are to be professional, courteous, and focus on the positive aspects of what a student did while speaking.

Volunteer Judges should remember that the majority of the competitors do not progress beyond the Regional Final. It is therefore essential that judging is 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.

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.



For example: *I liked the carefully crafted argument that you presented and the effective way in which you handled other potential viewpoints. You might push yourself even further by bringing spontaneous comments in to aid the fluidity of your speech. Though, you very effectively drew the audience in with good eye contact and open body language. Well done.*

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. Some 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:

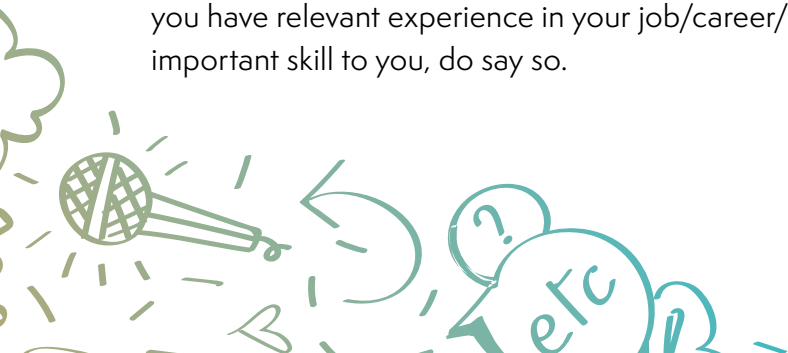
MY FEEDBACK: the role of...

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

What other techniques could have made the role even better:

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 on 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.

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 and well-being is threatened, that 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 helping people realise their potential through giving them the skills and confidence in communication to articulate their ideas and share them with others.

For more information about the ESU and to view our other educational opportunities, please speak to a member of staff or visit our website at www.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/@ESUdebate

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