



# ESU SKILLS GUIDE



If declined, the speaker offering the POI must resume their seat. 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.

## NEXT STEPS

### Preparation

Each team should consider the likely arguments that will be put forward by the other side to think of ways to rebut them. Sometimes, debates come down to the more nuanced arguments, so it's good to be prepared. Group the initial thoughts into areas and allocate students to do further research into each area.

### Research

For the Festival of Speaking, groups who want to record a debate have as long as they need to prepare in advance to allow teams to be well researched and confident in their arguments.

#esufestivalofspeaking [www.esu.org/festivalofspeaking](http://www.esu.org/festivalofspeaking) E: festival@esu.org

# ESU SKILLS GUIDE



The internet is a fantastic resource for students, offering them up to date information from a wide range of sources. However, do remind them that (reputable) newspapers and other political or economic publications (e.g. The Economist, The Week) can also be valuable for research.

Sources should be reliable - websites with editable information, such as Wikipedia, should only be used as a first port of call, and should not be relied upon exclusively.

Get students to consider whether there might be any bias in the sources they are using (particularly relevant for newspaper or online articles). The difference between fact and opinion is also an important distinction to make.

Statistics can be misleading; it is always worth considering the source, motive and sample size.

Make sure students keep a record of where their research comes from and that they also try to remember arguments they are not using. The other side might make use of some of these pieces of research and knowing where the information comes from can be the first step to challenging it.

After research has been completed, gather your students again remotely and encourage them to list the arguments they have researched, including any weaker ones. Some arguments that were initially dismissed may turn out to be valuable main points, sub-points or rebuttal.

The first arguments students come up with often provoke questions about what the motion means. These are useful in determining possible definitions, so encourage students to pay attention to these.

## Key Skills that students should work on

There are four oracy skill sets and it is really worth getting the students to think about these and to critique each other's speeches constructively when preparing. IF this was a competition - and it is not - these are the areas that the judges would consider! This can easily be done remotely with platforms like Zoom, Teams etc.

### Oracy Skill Set 1: Reasoning and Evidence

Reasoning is about the content of the individual arguments each speaker makes and how well they are explained.

- **Clarity and logic:**  
Are the arguments explained clearly and logically?

#esufestivalofspeaking [www.esu.org/festivalofspeaking](http://www.esu.org/festivalofspeaking) E: festival@esu.org



Do the last speakers on each side focus major areas of clash in the debate in a clear and logical way?

- **Examples and analogies:**

Are the arguments supported by a sufficient number of examples and analogies? Facts, statistics, case studies, news stories, historical or scientific references and other evidence should be relevant and have a credible source.

- **Links to the motion:**

Are the arguments relevant to the motion?

The First Proposition speaker needs to set up a strong Proposition case to enable a clear debate to follow. Definitions of the motion need to be sensible, concise and comprehensive.

## Oracy Skill Set 2: Organisation and Prioritisation

- **Team structure:**

Did the team's speeches complement each other?

Did the first speaker outline a clear case which the team followed?

Were the arguments in the case arranged such that the most important arguments were given appropriate emphasis?

Summary speakers (if more than person per side) should concentrate on the main points of contention that are key to winning over the audience.

- **Individual structure:**

Was each individual speech well-structured and easy to follow?

Were individual arguments grouped into a logical and coherent speech? Were the most important arguments emphasised?

- **Adaptability:**

Did the speakers show that they were able to reorganise their material if developments in the debate necessitated it?

## Oracy Skill Set 3: Expression and Delivery

Expression and delivery focuses not on what is said, but how it is said. It is all about how speakers engage their audience, including

- **Use of notes:**

How effective is the speaker's use of notes? Speakers should have some notes from which they speak fluently. It is rarely effective when speakers read speeches which they have written out in full beforehand or recite memorised speeches, which have been learnt by rote.

#esufestivalofspeaking [www.esu.org/festivalofspeaking](http://www.esu.org/festivalofspeaking) E: [festival@esu.org](mailto:festival@esu.org)

