

International Independent Schools Public Speaking Competition 2026 Cross-Examination Debating

Directions: Please write comments if there is sufficient time. These sheets will be returned to the students at the end of the tournament. When the round is over, please give your ballots to the moderator.

Contestant's Name: _____ Code: _____ Room: _____ Round: _____

Resolution: _____

SCORING GUIDELINES

<u>70 - 74</u> Very Poor	<u>75-79</u> Weak	<u>80</u> Some Strength	<u>81 - 84</u> Good	<u>85- 89</u> Very Good	<u>90 - 94</u> Excellent	<u>95</u> Outstanding
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Category	Score
Analysis	/25
Organization	/15
Logic	/15
Evidence	/20
Delivery	/10
Refutation	/15
Total	/100

Note: If the sum of the categories doesn't equal the total score, we will assume that we should use the overall total.

Comments:

Judge: _____

Number of Judges in the Room: _____

International Independent Schools Public Speaking Competition 2026

Cross-Examination Debating Summary Sheet

Note: The scores entered on this sheet are the scores that will be used in calculating results.
Please ensure that you copy them accurately from the individual ballots!
Please note that there must be an odd number of judges in the room.

Round: _____ Room: _____

Affirmative	Name	Code	Score
First affirmative			/100
Second affirmative			/100
Total			/200
Negative			
First negative			/100
Second negative			/100
Total			/200

I award this debate to the _____ team.

The TEAM with the higher total points MUST win the debate.

Judge: _____

Number of Judges in the Room: _____

CROSS EXAMINATION EVENT RULES

1. There are two, two-person teams, each from the same school, designated respectively “Affirmative” and “Negative.” All teams will debate both sides of the topic in different rounds.
2. The Chairman will open the debate and call upon each speaker in turn. The Chairman may be addressed as Mr. or Madame Chairman in an opening salutation, but need not be addressed otherwise. No salutation is required, but it is customary for each speaker to begin with some polite form of address such as “Mr. Speaker, honourable judges, worthy opponents, ladies and gentlemen...” etc.
3. Speeches are addressed to an audience consisting of the judges and all other persons in the room. Other debaters are customarily referred to in the third person during speeches, in the second person during cross-examinations.
4. Each speaker delivers a constructive speech, cross examines one member of the opposing team, and delivers a rebuttal.
5. Following a constructive speech, a speaker must submit (“I now stand open for cross-examination.”) to a cross-examination by the member of the opposing team who is NOT speaking next.
6. All speakers are allotted equal times for their constructive, cross-examinations, and rebuttals. (See #13)
7. **Constructive Speeches**

Each team must present its main lines of argument (its “case”) and the principal evidence supporting the case in the course of its two constructive speeches, which are prepared from a topic announced previously.

The members of each team may divide between them the labour of presenting the case in any way they see fit.

Any constructive speech (except the first affirmative) may also include explicit attacks upon the case of the opposing team and explicit replies to attacks made by their opponents.
8. **Cross-Examination**

The purpose of cross-examination is to allow each team the opportunity to elicit damaging admissions from its opponents regarding their case. The admissions may then be used against them in subsequent speeches.

Each speaker seeks to elicit these admissions by asking questions of the opposing speaker whom the student is assigned to cross-examine. The respondent is required to respond to these questions in some way. Both questioner and respondent should avoid speech-making. Questions may be based on statements made earlier in the debate, on arguments, which the questioner expects their partner to present, or on any topic, which the questioner thinks, may bring their side advantage, regardless of its apparent relevance to the debate. Questions, however, may NOT be personal (e.g., “Do you do drugs?”)

The questioner may not demand simple “yes/no” answers. The subject has the right to explain any answer briefly, but is forbidden to stall or filibuster. If the respondent is answering at inordinate length, the questioner may interrupt (as courteously as possible) in order to continue the line of questioning.

CROSS EXAMINATION EVENT RULES

9. Rebuttal

The purpose of rebuttal speeches is to give both teams the opportunity to summarize their case, defend them from attacks by opponents, and press attacks upon their opponents.

New lines of argument may not be introduced in rebuttals. Exception: in the first affirmative rebuttal, which follows two negative speeches, the speaker may deal with new issues raised in either of these negative speeches, even if this requires a new line of argument.

In general, the introduction of substantial items of new evidence should be avoided in rebuttals. **Exception:** If the second negative constructive or the first negative rebuttal speaker has demanded additional evidence on any point in the affirmative case, the first affirmative rebuttal speaker may respond accordingly.

10. Evidence

Both teams are expected to support the lines of argument with sufficient evidence to make them logically persuasive.

Evidence may consist of facts, statistics and/or authoritative opinions drawn from published or publicly accessible sources (NOT private conversations, personal letters, or similar sources.) Debaters may assert that some facts are “general knowledge,” but judges must decide for themselves what value, if any, to attribute to such assertions.

Debaters should always be prepared to document the source of any evidence. It is customary, but not mandatory, to cite the source of most evidence when it is introduced in a speech.

Evidence may never be fabricated or deliberately misrepresented. A debater who is shown to have done so may be disqualified from further competition.

11. Definitions

It is the duty and privilege of the affirmative team to make clear at the beginning of the debate as precisely as possible how it construes the resolution. This may be done by defining each key term individually, by paraphrasing the resolution as a whole, and/or by presenting the plan, which the affirmative proposes to implement the resolution.

In prepared cross-examination debates, definitions should embody the standard meanings of the terms of the resolution in contemporary public discourse. Creative, novel, or whimsical definitions are not appropriate. The affirmative must construe the resolution in such a way as to make it debatable. They may not construe it as a tautology or a truism.

The negative may challenge the definitions offered by the affirmative only at the beginning of the first negative speech and only on the grounds that the definition does not meet the requirements set out in the previous rule. The judges must decide at the end of the debate whether such a challenge is warranted. Meanwhile the negative may either attempt under protest to make its case under the definitions offered by the affirmative, or make its case under the challenged and revised definitions. However, a prolonged wrangle over definitions

is not advisable, as it leads to avoiding the intent of the debate. The negative is better advised to challenge, if need be, but to proceed with an attempt to argue under the original definitions. The affirmative should make every effort to define in a manner that will be acceptable by both sides.

A non-challenge by the negative in the first negative speech is deemed explicit acceptance of the affirmative's definitions.

CROSS EXAMINATION EVENT RULES

12. Other Duties and Privileges of the Affirmative and Negative

Affirmative. The affirmative has the burden of proof and the compensating privileges of presenting the opening and closing speeches. The affirmative is not required to offer a plan, but, since it is required to show that the resolution is feasible and does not entail significant disadvantages, the affirmative usually chooses to offer a plan – a reasonably detailed description of the way in which the resolution should be implemented – as the most efficient and persuasive way to accomplish these tasks.

Negative. The negative enjoys the benefit of presumption. Therefore, debates in which the speaker scores produce a tie are awarded to the negative. Strictly speaking, the negative is not required to “make a case” in order to win, but may confine itself merely to attacks upon the affirmative case. In theory, the negative wins if it mounts a completely successful attack on one major element of the affirmative case. In practice, completely successful attacks are extremely rare. The negative may introduce a counter plan, an alternative proposal. A counter plan must solve the same problem, attain the same goals, or bring about the same advantages as the affirmative claims will be done by its solution, but by means entirely different from those stated or implied in the resolution. If a counter plan is introduced, it **MUST** be in the first negative speech. If the negative introduces a counter plan, it assumes the burden of proof comparable to that borne by the affirmative.

13. Speaking times

Constructive Speeches. 6 minutes each. Each constructive speaker is granted a 30 second grace period to finish their speech after the allotted time has expired. Judges will disregard anything said after the expiration of the grace period.

Cross-examinations. 3 minutes each. The cross-examiner must stop speaking as soon as the time expires. If a question has been asked, but the time allotted expires before the respondent is able to answer it, or to complete an answer, the respondent may choose whether to answer it. If an answer is attempted, it may continue briefly beyond the time.

Rebuttals. 3 minutes each. These speeches must end when times expires. There is no grace period. Judges will disregard anything said after time expires.

Order of speaking:

Constructive speeches and cross-examinations

1 st Affirmative	Cross-ex by 2 nd Negative
1 st Negative	Cross-ex by 1 st Affirmative
2 nd Affirmative	Cross-ex by 1 st Negative
2 nd Negative	Cross-ex by 2 nd Affirmative

Intermission (3 minutes)

Rebuttals

1st Negative

1st Affirmative

2nd Negative

2nd Affirmative

CROSS EXAMINATION EVENT RULES

14. Other matters

Speeches in cross-examination debates may not be interrupted. There are no points of order, personal privilege, or information. Heckling is prohibited. Courtesy is expected.

Violations of rules, misquotations of opponents, and similar matters may be called to the judges' attention in constructive or rebuttal speeches, and occasionally in cross-examination. Judges will rule on these matters at the end of the debate and should consider them as they decide the outcome of the debate. The chairperson has no role in such rulings.

If there is no chairperson, a judge will begin the debate by recognizing the 1st Affirmative speaker. Thereafter, debaters should speak in turn without formal recognition.

The team with the highest total number of speaker points must always be the team which wins the debate. If the two teams' total speaker points are tied, the negative team must win the debate.