

Key Elements of Judging

Association of Speakers Clubs

1. Judging is not evaluating. Judging involves comparing the performances of contestants on a single occasion and measuring those performances against the criteria laid out in the competition marking sheets.
2. Review all the competition rules and mark sheets well ahead of the contest. These documents should not be new to any judge by the time the contest day arrives. Far too many judges fail to prepare and by so doing devalue the whole idea of competition!
3. Be honest and swift. Being less than honest makes a mockery of competition and diminishes the achievements of all the contestants. Being swift allows the contest to flow smoothly without delays while a judge arrives at a decision.
4. Listen closely to the first third of the presentation then begin to apply marks to the marking sheet while simultaneously listening to the rest of the performance. Copious notes are not necessary: your task is to measure this performance against the previous one(s) and gauge an appropriate mark.
5. The initial mark should be around 50% – 75% unless the performance was outstanding. This mark range will permit the following performances to be marked higher or lower as each case permits.

Bonus tip – Your judgement matters so do not second guess how other judges might be scoring the performance. Our system has safeguards built in (chief judge and 9th judge) so you can focus on fulfilling your role as one of the team of competition judges.

