

- 4.1.1 Whether the speaker understands what are the issues of the debate,
 - 4.1.2 The selection and prioritisation of the issues in the debate, and
 - 4.1.3 The structure and timing of the speaker's speech.
- 4.2 A speaker who answers the critical issues with weak responses should get poor marks for content but good marks for strategy.
- 4.3 A speaker who attempts to avoid responding to critical claims by employing inaccurate and unnecessary uncharitable rhetoric to attempt to get the judge to disregard the other side's claims should receive lower marks for strategy as well as content. This may include but would not be limited to things such as using derogatory or demeaning terms about the opposing team's arguments, or claiming that the opposing team had no reasoning whatsoever for their arguments when they actually did.

B. Definitions and Cases

5.1 The Proposition must present a reasonable definition of the motion. This means:

5.1.1 On receiving a motion, both teams should ask: 'What is the issue that the two teams are expected to debate? What would an ordinary intelligent person reading the motion think that it is about?'

5.1.2 If the motion poses a clear issue for debate (i.e. it has an obvious meaning), the Proposition must define the motion accordingly. When the motion has an obvious meaning (one which the ordinary intelligent person would realise), any other definition would not be reasonable.

5.1.3 If there is no obvious meaning to the motion, the range of possible meanings is limited to those that allow for a reasonable debate. Choosing a meaning that does not allow the Opposition room for debate would not be a reasonable definition. Truisms and tautologies leave the Opposition no room for debate and are clearly illegitimate. Defining absolute words literally may prevent a reasonable debate, and they can therefore be read down.

5.1.4 When defining the words in the motion so as (i) to allow the obvious meaning to be debated or (ii) (when there is no obvious meaning) to give effect to a possible meaning which would allow for a reasonable debate, the Proposition must ensure that the definition is one the ordinary intelligent person would accept.

5.2 The definition must match the level of abstraction (or specificity) of the motion, so that the debate is as specific or general as the motion itself. Specific motions should be defined specifically and general motions generally.

5.3 Motions expressed as general principles must be proven true as general principles. A single example will neither prove nor disprove a general principle. Finding arguments that explain the majority of relevant examples will be more important.

5.4 When suggesting parameters to the debate, or proposing particular models or criteria to judge it by, the Proposition must ensure such parameters, models or criteria are themselves reasonable. They must be ones that the ordinary intelligent person would accept as applicable to the debate.