

Rotary **YOUTH** **SPEAKS** COMPETITION



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Rotary 
Great Britain & Ireland

Information Pack for 2024-25

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Information Pack for 2024–25

Introduction

The Rotary Youth Speaks Competition is organised and promoted by Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland. For this public speaking competition, Rotary Youth Speaks, a team of three young people take on the roles of the Chairperson, Speaker and the third person gives a Vote of Thanks. Participants are free to choose the topic they want to talk about. A pre-selected member of the audience will also ask a question after the speaker has presented.

This is one of two public speaking competitions designed to encourage young people to develop their creative and presentation skills essential to the art of public speaking. Details for the other competition, “Rotary Youth Speaks – A Debate”, can be found [HERE](#).

There are three stages possible for this competition, each designed to support and encourage the development of effective communication skills. Some stages may have more than one round.

Aims and Objectives

This competition aims to offer young people:

- experience in speaking on a public platform as a member of a team
- an incentive to formulate ideas on topical subjects and to present these to an audience
- discipline in dealing with a topic in a limited time
- the opportunity of learning and practising high standards of expression, presentation and appearance
- impartial feedback and assessment of performance by experienced adjudicators

Who can take part?

This competition is open to teams of three young people in the age groups shown below on 31st August 2024. They may be a team that simply decides to enter themselves or they may be from any group or community organisation including schools and colleges, home educated, other young peoples’ community organisations, for example, community RotaKids, community Interact, Scout Groups, Girl Guides, etc. It should be noted that some intermediate entrants may be 14 and some senior entrants may be 18 at the time of some or all the stages of the competitions e.g., a competitor who may be 17 on 31st August but turns 18 on 1st September is allowed to enter.

Each team will comprise three students in education, apprenticeships, work or volunteering in two age groups:

Intermediate	11 to 13 years old
Senior	14 to 17 years old

Teams should enter the competition organised by the local Rotary club through their respective group, or community organisation or privately, as detailed above.

Local Rotary clubs can be found by using the club finder facility in the top left-hand corner of the Home Page of the Rotary GB&I website www.rotarygbi.org.

Teams may participate in a competition held by a Rotary club outside of their geographical boundary but may compete in only one club event.

The Three Stages of the Competition

Entrants need to complete an entry form, available from their local Rotary club and submit it to the local organiser, by the date and time specified by them.

Local Heats

These are organised by local Rotary clubs and are generally between September and December. The winning team in each age group is entered into a Rotary district competition.

Local Rotary clubs can be found by using the club finder facility in the top left-hand corner of the Home Page of the Rotary GB&I website www.rotarygbi.org.

District Competitions

These are organised by each Rotary District for the winning teams in each age group from the local heats for each category. They are generally completed by mid-February. In the case of a high number of entrants, it may be necessary to hold preliminary rounds prior to a District Final. Any preliminary rounds must be completed within the same guidelines. The **winning team** in each age group in the District Finals is then entered into the Cluster Final if one is taking place in your area.

Cluster Finals

The Cluster Finals are organised by several Rotary Districts together and are generally completed by end March.

Clubs sponsoring competitors are responsible for assisting competitors with travel costs to the Cluster Final venue.

The dates for local heats, district and cluster finals competitions will be determined locally. Entrants should check dates with their local Rotary club in the first instance. Any entries submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.

Competition Guidelines

Task

Each team member takes on one of three roles: chairperson, speaker and vote of thanks. They have a total of 15 minutes to address the audience and should allocate time between themselves appropriately with the time allocated to the speaker likely to be the longest. An indication of what is expected of each of the roles can be seen in the Judges Score Sheet in this document. Teams should note that Rotary is a non-religious and non-political organisation, and this should be respected by competitors. The subject chosen should not set out deliberately to cause offence to others. Teams may choose to change the topic at any subsequent level of the competition.

The team should remain the same throughout each stage of the competition. In exceptional circumstances substitutions may be made, subject to the approval of the organiser.

Each team member is allocated a time in which to perform their role. The role of each team member is detailed in the procedure section below.

Judges

The judges will be people with appropriate skills appointed by the organisers at the club, district and cluster levels accordingly.

The judging criteria is as set out below.

Judging Criteria

The judging criteria and scoresheet can be found at the back of this Information Pack.

Judges will deduct one point for:

- each complete 15 seconds over the allocated time of 15 minutes
- each complete 30 seconds under the allocated time of 15 minutes.

A Rotarian with no interest in the participating teams will review the scores to ensure accuracy before the results are announced.

After the judges have determined the result of the competition one or more judges will comment on their observations of the competition before announcing the result.

The judges will not enter any discussion or correspondence regarding their decision; the decision of the judges will be final and not subject to any appeal.

Questioner

The questioner, who shall not be one of the judges, will be appointed by the competition organiser to ask a question of the Speaker. To remove any potential bias the questioner needs to be an independent person. They may be a Rotarian or partner of a Rotarian not involved in any of the clubs in that round of the competition.

Recognition

At all stages of the competition, competitors will receive a certificate of participation.

How to enter

To enter a local heat, contact your local Rotary club which can be found by using the club finder facility in the top left-hand corner of the Home Page of the Rotary GB&I website www.rotarygbi.org. In case of difficulty, contact the Rotary Youth Speaks and Rotary Youth Speaks: A Debate team youth-speaks@rotarygbi.org for assistance.

Entrant teams are required to complete an entry form listing each member of the team and submit it, to the stage organiser by the time specified. Should the team need to change any of its members between stages due to lack of availability, then an updated entry form/s need to be submitted to the event organiser prior to the start of that round.

Competition Procedure

Arrival

Before each competition, the organiser will conduct a ballot to determine the order in which each team will participate which will be notified to teams on their arrival. Organisers have the right to adjust the order should teams arrive late.

Prior to the start of the competition the organiser will confirm that all the teams are fully aware of the competition procedure as described below.

Arrangements

A master of ceremonies will invite each team in the order of the ballot to come to the front or to the stage to make their presentation.

The team should be led to their positions by the Chairperson who should sit with the Speaker on their right and the person delivering the vote of thanks on their left. This is a team competition and each member must conduct themselves appropriately by being attentive to the others when they are speaking.

The team **MAY NOT** use any props, including PowerPoint or similar presentations. Nor may they enter a dramatic performance as this is a public speaking competition.

Notes may be used, however, their use should not be too obvious. If electronic media is used for this purpose, it must be used only as a reminder of the content of the speech and not as a prop or as a live means of presenting or sourcing information.

Where a venue would benefit from amplification, static microphones will be provided for team members to use. A sound test will be arranged prior to the competition. If any team member fails to use any provided static microphones and their words are inaudible, the judges will deduct marks.

The team members will perform their roles in the following order:

Chairperson

When the team is ready and has been given the signal they are able to start, the Chairperson will stand. The Chairperson should control the team's performance. They should open the meeting and welcome the audience, introduce the Speaker and their chosen topic.

The chairperson welcomes the audience and introduces the speaker. The introduction should include the relevance or expertise of the speaker to the subject of their speech.

Speaker

The Speaker then delivers on their chosen subject. They may choose any subject, subject to the approval of the organisers. Considerable discretion should be used in choosing is and sensitive subjects such as party politics, race or religion should be avoided. The subject may change between stages.

Chairperson

When the Speaker has finished the Chairperson should invite a question from the audience. At this point the time clock will be paused.

Speaker

Before answering the question, the Speaker may seek clarification of the question via the Chairperson. The Speaker, who is the subject expert, may not consult about the question with other team members.

An amber light will indicate when two minutes are drawing to a close and after the amber light the speaker should bring their response to a conclusion.

Speakers are advised to respond spontaneously, without prepared sections, to obtain high marks from the judges.

Chairperson

When the Speaker has finished answering the question, the clock is restarted and the Chairperson will introduce the proposer of the vote of thanks.

Vote of Thanks

The vote of thanks is delivered, including remarks on both the content of the speech and the response to the question. The audience should then be invited to show its appreciation of the speaker.

The speaker giving the vote of thanks is advised to respond spontaneously to the response to the question, without prepared sections, to obtain high marks from the judges.

Chairperson

The chairperson will then close the proceedings.

Timings

The Team will be allocated a total of **15 minutes** to present their topic. Timing of each part will not be monitored but it is recommended that Speaker takes 10 minutes with the Chairperson and Proposer taking up the remaining 5 minutes for the introductions and vote of thanks.

Answering the question from the audience **will not be included in the timing of 15 minutes** but any answer should be **limited to two minutes and this will be timed separately**. A reply to the question which exceeds the stipulated time will be taken into consideration by the judges.

A signal will be given to indicate that the Team can start the performance with a further signal being given at 14 minutes and a final one at 15 minutes.

A system of lights or coloured cards will be used to indicate times:

Green – start; Amber – one minute to go (14 minutes); Red – end of allocated time (15 minutes).

The Team should not stop suddenly at the final signal but should be aware that time over the limit will be penalised by 1 point for each complete 15 seconds over the allocated time of 15 minutes and 1 point for each complete 30 seconds under the allocated time of 15 minutes.

Results

After the judges have determined the results of the competition a judge will comment on their observations before announcing the result.

Rotary Youth Competitions and other opportunities for young people

Rotary Youth Speaks and Rotary Youth Speaks: A Debate are competitions for young people that Rotary districts and clusters may deliver in your area.

Other Rotary Youth competitions for young people organised by Rotary GB&I include Rotary Artist; Rotary Young Chef; Rotary Young Musician; Rotary Young Photographer; and Rotary Young Writer. There are also annual Rotary Young Citizen Awards, a number of clubs organise Technology Tournaments and there are several Rotary specific programmes including RotaKids, Interact, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, Rotary - Developing Future Leaders and more. To find out more about these competitions and other opportunities please contact your local Rotary club in the first instance for what is happening locally and also take a look at <https://www.rotarygbi.org/projects/young-people/>.

Working with Children

Rotary GB&I has adopted this statement of policy in working with children, vulnerable adults and those with disability:

The needs and rights of the child, the elderly, the vulnerable and those with disability take priority. It is the duty of every Rotarian to safeguard to the best of their ability, the welfare of and prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse and neglect of all children, the elderly, persons with disability or otherwise vulnerable persons with whom they come into contact during their Rotarian duties.

Rotary Youth Speaks - Judges' Score Sheet

Team:		Topic:			Judge	
Member	Aspect	Mark	Points to be considered	Comments	Score	
Chairperson Manages the meeting	Delivery	10	Effective use of voice, clear enunciation, audibility, easy manner, natural gestures, expression of personality, humour in the right context. Use of notes.			
	Control	5	Business-like, yet courteous handling of the meeting. Maintain a good atmosphere with a calm & courteous manner.			
	Process	10	Welcome audience. Introduce the team & the subject. Inform audience of relevance / expertise of Speaker to subject of speech. Act as a conduit for the question & seek clarification if required. Conclude the meeting.			
Speaker Presents and develops a topic and answers a question	Delivery	10	Effective use of voice, clear enunciation, audibility, easy manner, natural gestures, expression of personality, humour in the right context. Impact on and ability to involve the audience. Use of notes.			
	Subject	10	Content of the speech and logic.			
	Construction	15	Introduction: Get the audience to want to listen to the talk. Body of Talk: Develop the topic and demonstrate clear thinking. Use of, e.g. illustrations & rhetorical questions. Conclusion: Draw threads together, summarise, give final idea, thank audience for listening, sit down.			
	Answer	15	Clear, courteous answer to the question. Full but not unduly wordy. Spontaneity.			
Vote of Thanks Expresses appreciation of the audience to the Speaker	Delivery & Process	10	Effective use of voice, clear enunciation, audibility, easy manner, natural gestures, expression of personality, humour in the right context. Give positive comments; give a clear signal for applause. Use of notes.			
	Content & reference to question	15	Refer to content of speech, picking out specific items. Comment on Speaker's answer to question; include originality. Spontaneity Invite the audience to express their appreciation of the Speaker.			
Teamwork	General	15	Team members show appropriate attention to the team member speaking. Supportive comments or links between speeches. Posture, stance, mannerisms, general appearance, observance of formalities.			
	Timing		Marks to be deducted in this section of mismanagement of time (maximum of 3 points)			
Possible Score: 115 Points				Total Score:		



Rotary Youth Speaks - Time Sheet

Lights: **Green** – start; **Amber** – one minute to go (14 minutes); **Red** – end of allocated time (15 minutes).

- **For The Question Pause the Clock – AND – Resume the Clock After The Question Has Been Answered**
 - The time for answering the question should be no more than 2 minutes and this should be timed separately
- Deduct one point for each complete **15 seconds over** the allocated time of 15 minutes
- Deduct one point for each complete **30 seconds under** the allocated time of 15 minutes.

Team Name	Intermediate/ Seniors	Time Speaking (Reference only)			Total Time	Points Deduction
		Chair	Proposer	Vote of Thanks		