



# Introduction & Self-Improvement

setting expectations for the upcoming year

# Who are we?

**LUCIE**

- EUDC breaking speaker: ESL finalist and open PDQ-finalist
- studying Masters in sociology at UoM
- used to be Warwick scum



**JACKLIN**

- EUDC breaking judge (and at LEAST as good as Lucie at speaking)
- studying to be a journalist
- was in UoM as a Physics student



# what to expect

- every **Monday at 6pm** - workshop & a debate
- using **zoom** for both workshops and debates, links will be posted on the event & on discord
- join **MDU discord server** here (even external debaters): <https://discord.gg/Q5gPkx2>
- **sign-up form** for post-workshop debate: <https://forms.gle/4v8eFcoKR22MqMu97>
- workshops will be **recorded** - links and slides can be found in our database document
- **no requirements** to join, but more advanced workshops, focus on long term improvement
- **private feedback trackers** to help you see your progress



# schedule

**Week 1:** Introduction & Self-Improvement

**Week 2:** Structuring Arguments: Linear Flow

**Week 3:** Prep Time Efficiency

**Week 4:** Characterisations and Framing

**Week 5:** Engagement and Rebuttal

**Week 6:** Positions: First/Second Speeches

**Week 7:** Actor Analysis I: Individuals, psychology and narratives

**Week 8:** Actor Analysis II: Social Movements

**Week 9:** Actor Analysis III: States and International Actors

**Week 10:** Advanced Judging



A large audience of people is seated in a lecture hall, facing towards the front. The image is overlaid with a purple gradient. The text "SELF-IMPROVEMENT" is written in large, bold, white capital letters across the middle of the image. Below it, the text "what to do beyond trainings" is written in a smaller, white, lowercase font.

# SELF-IMPROVEMENT

what to do beyond trainings

# progress in debating

- usually **not linear**, but more like this:



- people who progress quicker in debating are better in recognising when they are plateauing, **identifying the weakness** that is keeping them in the plateau and **consciously working on it**



# identifying what to improve

- **self-reflection** - think of when you usually realise you lost a debate

- when seeing the motion → content knowledge

- after your speech → analysis

- when other teams rebutt you → prep time issues/preemptiveness

- when the call gets announced → self-judging/strategy

- **track your performance** - which positions/topics are you weakest or strongest in?

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1cMk5ZzF6k7CtP35ToI0CrQh2UXpYNr6khkilKVD0Y\\_w/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1cMk5ZzF6k7CtP35ToI0CrQh2UXpYNr6khkilKVD0Y_w/edit?usp=sharing)

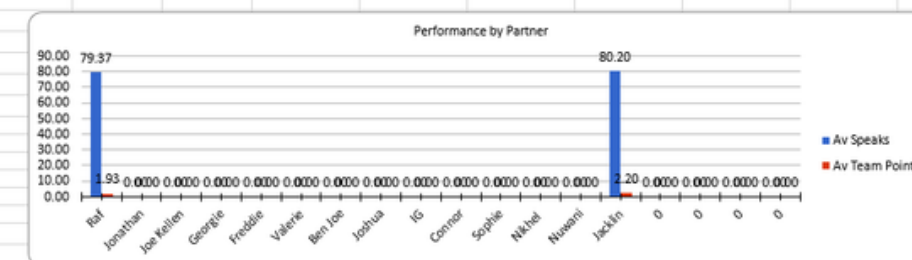
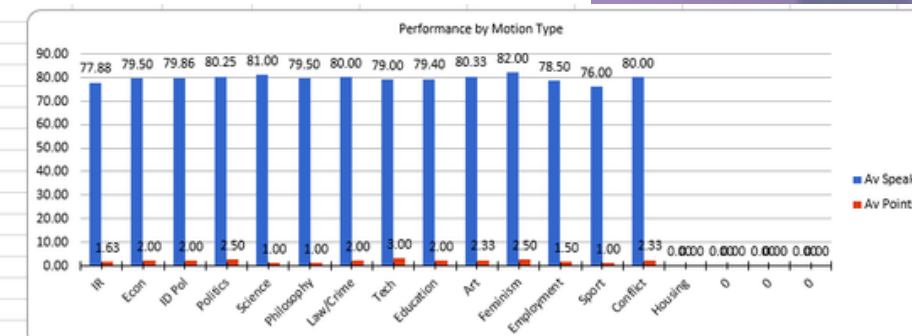


This will show your full stats, and can do so over a specific period of time.  
If you don't wish to use a particular cut-off, just leave it blank. Enter dates in the format mm/dd/yyyy

Start Date:	May 2020
End Date:	01/09/2023

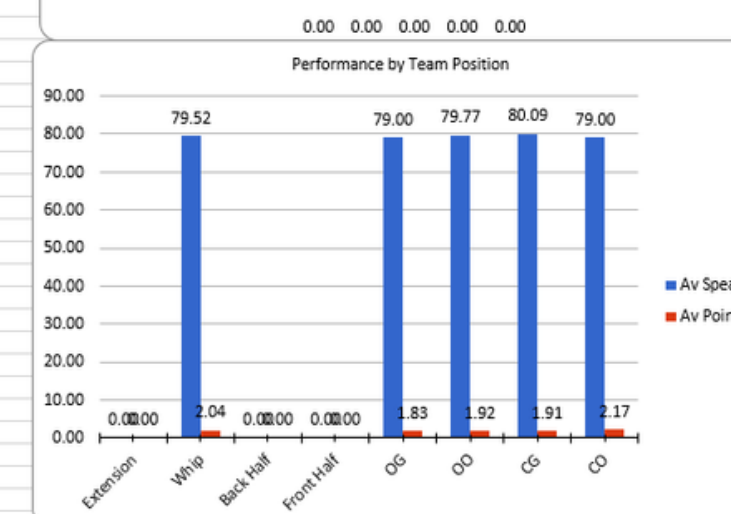
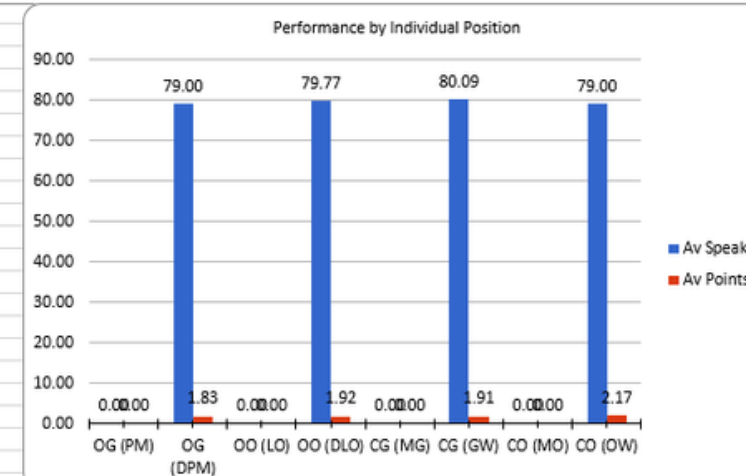
You can also exclude specific tournaments from the stats:

Tournament Exclusions	Motion Type	Rounds	Av Speaks	Av Points	Partner	Rounds	Av Speaks	Av Team Points
	IR	8	77.88	1.63	Raf	43	79.37	1.93
	Econ	6	79.50	2.00	Jonathan	0		
	ID Pol	7	79.86	2.00	Joe Kellen	0		
	Politics	4	80.25	2.50	Georgie	0		
	Science	1	81.00	1.00	Freddie	0		
	Philosophy	2	79.50	1.00	Valerie	0		
	Law/Crime	3	80.00	2.00	Ben Joe	0		
	Tech	1	79.00	3.00	Joshua	0		
	Education	5	79.40	2.00	IG	0		
	Art	3	80.33	2.33	Connor	0		
	Feminism	2	82.00	2.50	Sophie	0		
	Employment	2	78.50	1.50	Nikhel	0		
	Sport	1	76.00	1.00	Nuwani	0		
	Conflict	3	80.00	2.33	Jacklin	5	80.20	2.20
	Housing	0	0			0	0	
		0	0			0	0	
		0	0			0	0	



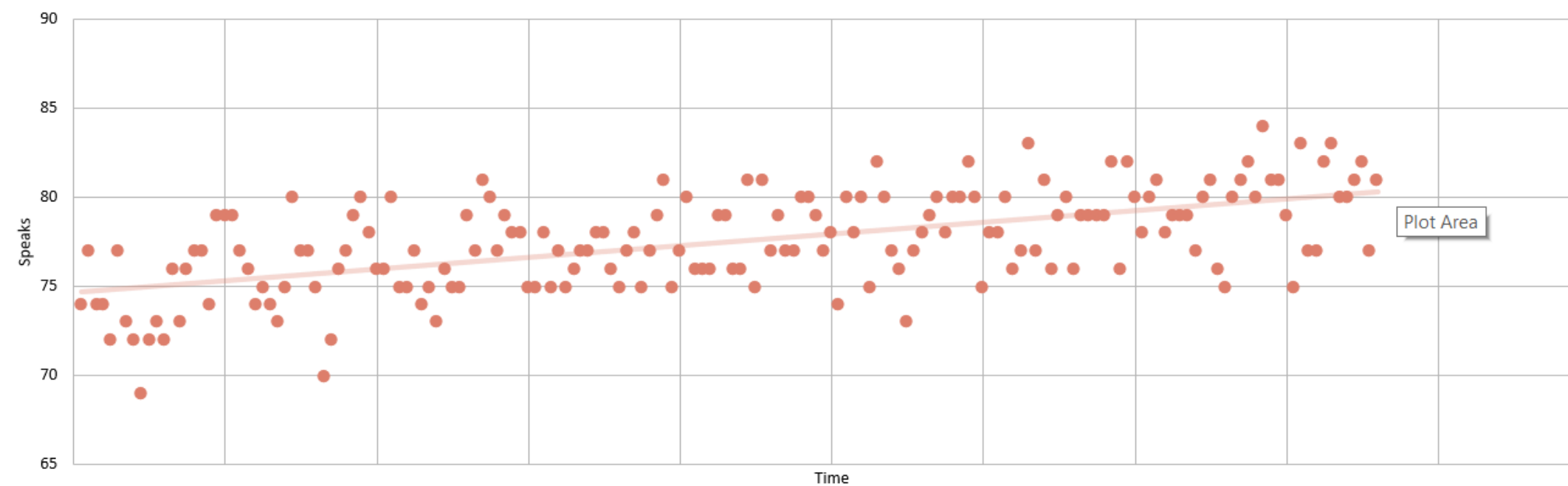
By Room Points	Av Speaks	Av Points
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Position	Rounds	Av Speaks	Av Points
OG (PM)	0		
OG (DPM)	12	79.00	1.83
OO (LO)	0		
OO (DLO)	13	79.77	1.92
CG (MG)	0		
CG (GW)	11	80.09	1.91
CO (MO)	0		
CO (OW)	12	79.00	2.17



All of these graphs are drawn using the exclusions you have set on the breakdown page.

## Average Speaks over Time





# identifying what to improve

- ask your judges for feedback **every time**
  - helps with incremental improvements round-by-round
  - often there will be a piece of feedback a judge will incidentally give you which will make you improve massively
  - you don't know when this tipping point will happen, so get feedback every time!
  - ask concrete questions - e.g. what was the worst thing I have done this round? (harsh but useful to identify your weaknesses)

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# how to improve

## - **prep time exercises**

- *unlimited prep time*: a lot of motions use similar mechanisms or talk about issues that require similar framing - take note of this and prep as many motions as you can in depth
- *shorter/no-notes prep time*: practice prepping under higher pressure than during actual competitions

## - **PM/LO practice speeches**

- use to experiment - incorporate new aspects (e.g. style, structure) that you admire about other speakers
- record and listen back

## - **spar a lot**

- exploit the fact that much of debating has moved online → debating against high quality institutions is now extremely accessible (e.g. Klaudia's spar group, NA spar group)



# how to improve

- even if you do not want to spar, other people's criticisms of your case are valuable - speak with debaters who you believe are very good, and ask them for points of improvement
- **record your speeches**
  - record your speeches during trainings, spars or tournaments  
→ go back and analyse the mistakes you made, try to re-deliver
- **pro-ams**
  - both as the pro and as the am
  - choose the skill gap between you and your pro-am partner to optimise your progress



# casefiling

- be strategic with the **kind of information** you casefile - not all facts are going to be useful!

- do not casefile purely historical content - it is important to focus on how different actors were compelled by different incentives and external restrictions

- e.g. do not purely casefile what the One Belt One Road project is and relatively unnecessary details like the amount China has spent. Instead, casefile op-eds that analyse WHY China has so heavily invested in OBOR, and WHY developing countries accept the deal*

- **resources to use**

- online resources (resources list on the next slide)
  - debate videos - many high quality rounds have been recorded and old videos often contain very well analysed basic motions that can be reused
  - steal cases from teams you judged/teams who have beaten you





# casefiling

- *International Relations*

- **Council on Foreign Relations:** <https://www.cfr.org/> (useful explainers on many topics, analytic language)

- **NowThisWorld - short explainer videos:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/c/NowThisWorld/videos>

- *principles*

- **Michael Sandel's Harvard Lectures - well explained intro to moral philosophy:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBdfcR-8hEY&list=PL30C13C91CFFFEFA6>

- **Philosophise This Podcast:**  
<https://www.philosophizethis.org/podcast>

- *economics*

- **Investopedia:** <https://www.investopedia.com/>

- **Simple Whiteboard finance explainers:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLA33D9F40D19C5320>

- **Planet Money Podcast:**  
<https://www.npr.org/podcasts/510289/planet-money?t=1600207325389>



# casefiling

- *social justice*

- **LGBTQ+/Feminism related analysis:**

- <https://www.youtube.com/c/RowanEllisVideos>

- **Media/narrative analysis:** <https://www.youtube.com/c/LindsayEllisVids>

- general

- **the Economist:** (also in video form:

- <https://www.youtube.com/c/TheEconomist>)

- **AJ+:** <https://www.youtube.com/user/AljazeeraEnglish/>

- <https://www.youtube.com/c/ajplus/videos>

- (beware of bias in both of these sources)

- **debating workshops**

- the European Training Platform

- Astana EUDC Training Videos

- Korea WUDC Training Series

- ask for recommendations on which ones are worth watching!

