GAVEL CLUBS
AN AFFILIATE OF TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL

OMAN GAVEL CHAMPIONSHIP OF PUBLIC SPEAKING 2027

SPEECH CONTEST RULE BOOK



OGCPS 2027

OMAN GAVEL CHAMPIONSHIP OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

CONTEST RULES & OFFICIALS' QUICK GUIDE

Semi-Finals and Grand Finals | January 2027

Based on the Toastmasters International Speech Contest Rulebook, July 1, 2026–June 30, 2027 (Item 1171).

1 Purpose and scope

OGCPS provides Gaveliers from participating Gavel Clubs across Oman an opportunity to demonstrate prepared speaking, impromptu speaking, speech evaluation and humour on a larger platform. This handbook summarises key contest procedures and provides practical scripts for officials.

OGCPS is a Gavel championship, not an official Toastmasters Area/Division/District contest. The Toastmasters rulebook is the reference for contest mechanics; the club-to-Semi-Final-to-Grand-Final progression below is an OGCPS arrangement. In case of uncertainty, the Organising Committee must publish a written clarification before the relevant contest.

2 Contest categories

- International Speech — an original, structured speech developing and presenting ideas clearly.
- Humorous Speech — a thematic, substantially original speech with an opening, body and close; humour should be appropriate.
- Speech Evaluation — an oral evaluation of a common test speech.
- Table Topics — an impromptu response to the same general topic, disclosed only when each contestant is introduced.

3 Eligibility and advancement

1. Eligible contestants are Gaveliers who belong to participating Gavel Clubs, subject to OGCPS registration and eligibility requirements. All OGCPS contests are conducted in English.
2. At each Gavel Club contest, the first- and second-place winners in each category qualify for the OGCPS Semi-Finals.
3. The first-place winner in each category from each Semi-Final group advances to the Grand Finals.
4. A Gavelier may compete in more than one category, subject to the published OGCPS eligibility and scheduling rules.
5. If a qualified contestant withdraws or is unable to attend, any replacement must be authorised by the Organising Committee under a consistently applied, pre-announced policy.

4 Essential principles

- All contestants must receive the same briefing and a fair opportunity to compete. Speaking order is determined by draw.
- Speeches must be substantially original; no more than 25% may quote, paraphrase or reference another person's content, which must be acknowledged in the speech.
- Contestants must not refer to another contestant or that contestant's speech in the same contest.
- Judging ballots and results remain confidential until officially announced. Judges should be impartial and avoid conflicts of interest.

5 Timing at a glance

Category	Target time	Green	Yellow	Red	Disqualification if
International Speech	5–7 min	5:00	6:00	7:00	Under 4:30 or over 7:30
Humorous Speech	5–7 min	5:00	6:00	7:00	Under 4:30 or over 7:30
Speech Evaluation	2–3 min	2:00	2:30	3:00	Under 1:30 or over 3:30
Table Topics	1–2 min	1:00	1:30	2:00	Under 1:00 or over 2:30

Time is recorded in whole seconds, without fractions. The red signal remains displayed until the speech ends. No additional overtime signal is given. In the source rulebook, the contestant is not disqualified until the first whole second beyond the upper limit (e.g., 7:31).

6 Rules specific to each category

International Speech

- Contestant selects the topic and delivers a substantially original speech that clearly develops ideas.
- The speech has a title; the Contest Chair announces name, title, title, name.

Humorous Speech

- Contestant selects the subject. The speech must have a theme and structure, not merely a string of one-liners.
- Avoid potentially objectionable language, anecdotes or material. Introduction: name, title, title, name.

Speech Evaluation

- A common test speaker delivers a 5–7-minute speech. The test speaker's project/objectives are not disclosed.
- Contestants may take notes on the designated Evaluation Contestant Notes sheet.
- After the test speech, contestants are supervised for five minutes of preparation, then hand in their notes. Notes are returned individually when each contestant is introduced.
- Introduce each evaluator by announcing the contestant's name twice; evaluation speeches have no titles.

Table Topics

- Every contestant receives the same general topic, which should not require specialist knowledge and should invite an opinion or conclusion.
- The topic is not disclosed in advance. Contestants except the first remain outside under supervision and enter one at a time.
- Introduce each contestant: name, topic, topic, name. No digital or other unfair assistance.

7 Contest organisation and judging

Officials and preparation

- Appoint a Contest Chair, Chief Judge, voting judges, confidential tiebreaking judge, two timers, ballot counters and a Sergeant at Arms.
- Use experienced Toastmasters as judges; the Chief Judge conducts a separate briefing for judges, timers and counters.
- For a robust local arrangement, use at least five voting judges, one tiebreaking judge, two timers and two counters per contest where practicable; the OGCPS committee must confirm the required staffing for each venue.
- The Contest Chair briefs contestants on the speaking area, rules, timing, props and speaking-order draw before the contest.
- A lectern is optional. Any intended props or electronic equipment must be declared beforehand and comply with venue restrictions.

Judging and result handling

6. Voting judges use the relevant Toastmasters contest ballot and independently select first, second and third place.
7. The Chief Judge is responsible for judging integrity and does not act as a voting judge.
8. After the final speech, collect ballots and the official timer's record in silence. Ballots are tabulated privately.
9. For standard Toastmasters ballot tabulation: first place earns 3 points, second 2 and third 1; the confidential tiebreaking ballot resolves ties.
10. The Chief Judge checks timing disqualifications and verifies the result before submitting it to the Contest Chair.
11. Announce any number of timing disqualifications without naming contestants, then announce winners in reverse order (third, second, first, where applicable).

Protests, fairness and disqualification

- Under the Toastmasters reference rules, eligible protests concern eligibility, originality, or reference to another contestant/speech in the same contest.
- A protest must be submitted by a contestant or voting judge to the Contest Chair/Chief Judge before adjournment; audience protests are not considered.
- Before an originality-related disqualification, the contestant must have an opportunity to respond and a majority of voting judges must concur.
- Timing disqualification is determined from the official timer's record. Decisions and result announcements follow the adopted contest procedure.

Important: The official Toastmasters rulebook has detailed requirements for officials at its own club, Area, Division and District levels. Those administrative levels and member eligibility rules are not automatically applicable to OGCPS.

8 Contest Chair's ready-to-use script

The following is an adaptable OGCPS script, not verbatim text from Toastmasters International. Replace bracketed items and use only the portions applicable to the category.

Opening

"Good [morning/afternoon], distinguished guests, Gaveliers, mentors and fellow Toastmasters. Welcome to the OGCPS 2027 [Semi-Finals / Grand Finals] — [category] Contest. Today, our Gaveliers will share their skills and celebrate the spirit of learning through healthy competition."

Ground rules

"All contestants have been briefed on the rules, timing and speaking area. The speaking order was determined by draw. We request everyone to keep mobile phones silent and avoid movement or interruption during speeches. Please refrain from photography using flash."

Timing announcement

"Our timers will display green, yellow and red signals. For this contest, green appears at [time], yellow at [time], and red at [time]. The official timing and disqualification limits have been explained to the contestants."

Introducing prepared speeches

"Our next contestant is [Gavelier name]. The speech title is '[Title]'. '[Title]' — [Gavelier name]."

Introducing Speech Evaluation

"Our next contestant is [Gavelier name] … [Gavelier name]."

Introducing Table Topics

"Our next contestant is [Gavelier name]. The topic is '[Topic]'. '[Topic]' — [Gavelier name]."

Between speeches

"We will now observe one minute of silence for the judges to complete their ballots."

After the final speech

"May I request complete silence while the judges complete their ballots and the ballot counters collect them. We will resume when the Chief Judge confirms that all ballots have been collected."

Results

"The Chief Judge has confirmed the results. There were [number] timing disqualifications." [If appropriate: "We now announce the winners, beginning with third place."] "Third place: [name]. Second place: [name]. First place: [name]. Congratulations to all our Gaveliers."

9 Category-specific Contest Chair cues

Evaluation Contest sequence

12. Introduce the test speaker using name–title–title–name.
13. After the test speech, instruct all evaluation contestants to move to the designated supervised preparation area.
14. Announce that the five-minute preparation period begins under the Sergeant at Arms.
15. After five minutes, ensure all notes are collected. Bring evaluators back one by one and return each contestant's notes when introduced.
16. Introduce each evaluator by name twice; observe the one-minute judging silence between evaluations.

Suggested wording: "The test speech has concluded. Evaluation contestants will now proceed with the Sergeant at Arms for five minutes of supervised preparation. Please hand in your notes at the end of the preparation period."

Table Topics sequence

17. Before starting, have all contestants except the first wait in the supervised holding area.
18. Ensure no contestant receives the topic before introduction.
19. Read the identical topic to each contestant using name–topic–topic–name.
20. After each response, allow one minute for judging, then invite the next contestant.

Suggested wording: "For fairness, each Gavelier will respond to the same topic, which is revealed only at the moment of introduction. Contestants waiting outside must remain under the supervision of the Sergeant at Arms."

International and Humorous sequence

21. Confirm titles and pronunciation of names before the contest.
22. Call each speaker using name–title–title–name.
23. Observe one minute of silence after each speech.
24. Do not offer evaluative comments or reveal results before official verification.

10 Short briefing script for contestants

"Please confirm your eligibility and speaking title, if applicable. The speaking order is [order]. The speaking area is [describe]. Timing begins with your first definite verbal or nonverbal communication after the microphone check. Please check your equipment and declare props now. Follow the official timing signals. No contestant may receive unfair assistance during the contest. Please direct any procedural concern to the Contest Chair or Chief Judge before the contest is adjourned."

11 Quick checklists

Contest Chair

- Confirm contest schedule, contestant list, category, venue and speaking order.
- Conduct contestant briefing and draw; check names, titles, microphones, props and speaking area.
- Confirm timers, judges, counters and Sergeant at Arms are ready.
- Use the correct introduction format for each category.
- Observe judging silence, collect ballots and announce verified results.

Chief Judge

- Brief voting judges, timers and ballot counters; distribute the correct ballots.
- Select and brief a confidential tiebreaking judge.
- Check judging independence, ballots, time records and any eligible protests.
- Supervise private tallying and certify the results for announcement.

Contestant

- Check eligibility and category-specific rules; attend the briefing on time.
- Prepare original content and acknowledge referenced material.
- Observe timing, equipment and props requirements.
- For Evaluation and Table Topics, comply with supervised preparation/holding procedures.

12 Decisions to confirm before publication

- Final January 2027 contest dates, venues, reporting times and group assignments.
- The final written policy for withdrawals, replacements, ties in advancement, and multiple-category scheduling conflicts.
- Minimum judge/official numbers for OGCPS Semi-Finals and Grand Finals.
- Registration procedure, deadlines, consent/safeguarding, audience access and recording permissions.
- Whether any additional OGCPS local rules are adopted and how they will be communicated consistently.

Reference and interpretation

Primary reference: Toastmasters International, Speech Contest Rulebook, July 1, 2026–June 30, 2027, Item 1171, particularly General Rules, Timing, Evaluation, Humorous Speech, Table Topics and Contest Checklists. This is an independently prepared OGCPS summary and does not reproduce or replace the official Toastmasters rulebook. The Organising Committee should review and approve it before publication.


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