

SMFA Adjudicator Requirements

It isn't simple to pinpoint exactly what it takes to be an adjudicator, but the essentials are as follows.

1. **Education:** at a minimum an Associate diploma or certificate in music, such as the ARCT from RCM, Conservatory Canada, or CNCM, for example. It is also an asset if there is ongoing professional development such as participation in workshops, conferences, or presentation of workshops or clinics.
2. **Experience:** While performing is advantageous, teaching experience is more important. It is helpful to have taught all levels of students (from beginners to seniors) at one time or another in an adjudicator's career; however, many experienced professionals teach primarily at a certain level – for example some only teach at the senior levels (university professors, for example), while in other studios the majority of students are at the junior/intermediate levels. It is also an asset if the teacher enters students in music festivals because they will be familiar with the system. This should be indicated to SMFA to aid in the proper placement at a festival.
3. **Professionalism:** Adjudicators do not only represent themselves as professional educators and performers, but also the SMFA. They should treat all participants fairly and respectfully and be prepared to offer suggestions and constructive criticism for technical and/or artistic aspects of the performance. Students and teachers enter music festivals to learn something, not merely to be praised for their achievements (though that too is important).
4. **Preparation:** Adjudicators should be familiar with the regulations that govern the competition and become familiar with the repertoire they will be judging.
5. **Versatility:** Often, especially for some smaller festivals, we require one adjudicator who is knowledgeable about more than one discipline, even if the adjudicator can only comment on the musicality of a performance rather than the technicality.
6. **Communication:** Adjudicators must be able to clearly communicate their written comments, either verbally or through a demonstration done either by themselves or with the entrant.

How to Become an Adjudicator

- Fill out the [Adjudicator Application](#)
- Attend an SMFA adjudicator professional development session (held every January, either virtually or in-person)
- If you're new to adjudicating, consider gaining experience by:
 - Volunteering at your local festival as an adjudicator assistant
 - Request an adjudicator shadowing assignment where you get to learn from an adjudicator at work