

Adjudicator Briefing

General Information

- You will receive a Report Form by the end of January providing the festival contact information. **The District Festival will be your point of contact from this point forward.** They will provide you with a program, accommodation information, and time and place of the briefing.

Travel, Local Accommodation, Expenses:

- The District Festival will confirm your arrival/departure dates, arrange your accommodation, and meals or provide a cash diem.
- Review your contract for details on reimbursable expenses and the Code of Conduct.
- Submit an invoice (<http://smfa.ca/adjudicators/>) with receipts to the District Festival for payment at the conclusion of your assignment.

Adjudicating:

- Be prepared: arrive early, stay on schedule, and review the program and any unfamiliar repertoire in advance.
- A *verbal* and *written* adjudication is given at the conclusion of each class. Write legibly, with comments that are positive and constructive. Be honest but NEVER destroy confidence. Create a relaxed and encouraging atmosphere with your opening comments. Speak so you are heard and refrain from making inappropriate comments. Your adjudication is also for the benefit of everyone in the audience. Ask for a microphone if your voice does not carry. Keep in mind that the spotlight must ALWAYS be on the performer and NOT on the adjudicator. If you have extra time due to a generous schedule or cancellations, do make use of the time you are given.
- *Refrain from* criticizing a teacher or adjudicating an accompanist (unless of course, that is part of the class you are judging).
- At some point near the end of the festival, be sure to thank everyone involved, including sponsors/donors.

Marking:

- Familiarize yourself with the marking standard.
- A province-wide marking standard is used for all district and provincial festivals. **Marks lower than 80 (A minus) are not to be assigned.**

TABLE OF MARKING OR RATING OF PERFORMANCE:			
RATING	MARK	PERFORMANCE STANDARD	
A+	or 90 and above	Superior	
A	or 85 to 89	Distinction	
A-	or 80 to 84	Honours	

- While numerical marks *may* be used for all competitors in order to choose the winner, only those of winner and runner-up of each class may be announced and written on the adjudication sheets. Other performers are given a letter rating on the adjudication sheets and public postings. The rubric for this conversion can be found at the bottom of each adjudication sheet.
- *Avoid all ties in Provincial and Canada West classes, and in classes where scholarships are involved.*

Special Classes, Substitutions:

- When a student has entered the wrong class, or is performing an unauthorized selection, these selections will be for adjudication only and will not be eligible for any scholarships.
- Keep the current syllabus with you to provide you with class requirements, regulations, etc. Be aware of all [syllabus changes and corrections](#).
- At times, the committee may create a new or special class. The adjudicator assistant will advise you if these classes are for adjudication only.

Scholarships/Awards

- All awards, including scholarships, trophies, prizes, etc., and the naming of Canada West candidates to Provincials, are the **responsibility of the adjudicator**. Do not let the festival committee influence your decisions.

IMPORTANT REGULATIONS TO NOTE – for a complete listing, see “Regulations” in the [SMFA syllabus](#).

Please direct questions regarding SMFA rules and regulations to the SMFA office in advance, rather than expecting the district festival committee to be knowledgeable about them.

Provincial Regulations

- To be eligible for Provincials, competitors must:
 - have entered and competed in the appropriate Provincial class at the District level. Provincial classes are found listed at the beginning of each discipline in the 2025 SMFA Syllabus and are marked with a (P). No other classes are eligible for advancement to Provincial Finals.
 - enter and compete in at least two solo classes in the same discipline at their District Festival. Instrumentalists must compete on the same instrument, with the exception of percussion, where performers play more than one percussion instrument. This rule does not apply to the pianist in the lieder class. Musical Theatre and Voice are considered separate disciplines.
 - obtain **a mark of 87 or higher and place first or second in any Provincial class**. In classes where two selections are performed, the combined mark must average 87 or higher. **It's important to note others in the class with a qualifying mark to the festival committee.** Alternates with qualifying marks will be contacted by Provincial Office. In Provincial Scholarship classes which are fed by multiple Provincial classes, a competitor may only advance from **one of** the Provincial classes. Example: **Musical Theatre Ballad Classic/Modern (28 years & under) Scholarship Class** is fed by Provincial classes 40010 and 40110. A competitor who places first or second (with a mark of 87 or higher) in both classes may advance to Provincials from **either** 40010 or 40110, but not both. **“Adjudicator recommendations” are no longer required. A mark of 87 or higher is the recommendation.**
- The Canada West Competition is a separate competition from other Provincial classes. Competitors may enter a Canada West Class without entering another class. Repertoire performed in any class may be repeated in Canada West Classes.
- **A mark of 87 or higher is required in the Canada West Classes** to be eligible to advance to the Provincial level.
- At the conclusion of your assignment, sign the “District Winners Chart” the festival committee has been filling in.

Memory

- Memory work is encouraged in District Festivals and is mandatory at the Provincial level, with the exception of the Choral, Brass, Woodwind, and Percussion classes, and the pianist in the Lieder class. Memory work is mandatory **in all levels** of Canada West competitions with the exception of Chamber and Choral.

Pronouns

- Default to gender-neutral terms of address when possible (address students by name instead of using terms like “young lady” or “sir”, for example) and avoid using gender-specific pronouns unless you’ve been made aware of preferences.

Accompaniment

- Any acoustic instrument or digital piano may be used for accompaniment. Entries in School classes may purchase and use professionally recorded accompaniment tracks. Recorded digital audio for percussion is acceptable when published in the score. Beyond these exceptions, recorded accompaniment is not permitted.
- Accompaniment is not required for participation.

Miscellaneous

- Any person may enter a festival “for adjudication only”.
- A change of selection from the printed program is not allowed unless authorized by the committee.
- Copyright rules must be followed. If you believe that copyright has been violated (for example, a participant hands you sheet music that was clearly printed off, with no accompanying receipt), please discreetly alert the adjudicator assistant or a festival representative so that they can investigate the matter. Music from IMSLP is permitted.
- Festival programs are thoroughly checked over by district festival committees to ensure that entries adhere to syllabus requirements and are entered in appropriate classes. **If you notice an error in the program**, alert the district festival as soon as possible so that the necessary steps can be taken. If an error is only noticed at the time of performance, the student will be allowed to perform **for adjudication only**. Be careful to ensure that first and second place awards are only handed out for eligible entries.