

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SINGING



## Student Auditions Regulations

NSA Committee

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## Preface

This document is more easily understood with the following definitions of NATS constituencies and acronyms:

**SA** = Student Auditions held by districts and chapters

**NSA** = National Student Auditions held at regions and at a national conference or summer workshop

**NMTC** = National Music Theater Competition

**NATSAA** = NATS Artist Awards Competition

Annual Student Auditions (SA) are separate from the biennial national NATS Artist Awards (NATSAA) directed by the national Vice President for Auditions, and the National Music Theater Competition (NMTC). The Coordinators of the National Music Theater Competition and the National Student Auditions report to the Board of Directors through the Vice President for Auditions.

Former NATS President Roy Delp believed that "the idea of constructive criticism along with encouragement" is at the heart of our student adjudications. *"Perhaps one of the greatest ties that binds us together as NATS members is the care we have for the students of our colleagues, as demonstrated at our student auditions."* **Journal of Singing, Vol.57, No.1 p.2**

## Mission Statement

**As an expression of the goals of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, the NATS Student Auditions:**

- ✦ Inspire and encourage students and teachers to continue their dedication to, and growth in, the art of singing
- ✦ Create a collegial and supportive atmosphere that encourages excellent artistic singing
- ✦ Provide constructive, written feedback from a panel of experienced and impartial adjudicators
- ✦ Recognize and honor outstanding performances

**The Student Audition Regulations emanate from the Mission Statement and are designed to:**

- ✦ Standardize registration processes, categories, and repertoire based on research into NATS chapter, district, and region Student Auditions, creating ease, uniformity, and fluidity across all NATS auditions
- ✦ Bring NATS auditions to parity with other national organizations that have standardized requirements among their constituencies for local, regional, and national auditions
- ✦ Make audition scoring data comparisons possible across all NATS auditions
- ✦ Create a common understanding of repertoire definitions in vocal music as they relate to the auditions
- ✦ Create common language, definitions, and scoring systems across all NATS auditions so both students and teachers can cross chapter and regional boundaries with knowledge and understanding of a NATS audition as a singer or adjudicator
- ✦ Include regulations for audition categories not presently represented in the National Student Auditions such as those for Children and Adults and for other styles (CCM, etc.) as best serves the membership

# NATS Constituencies: Set-up and Operation

Student Auditions (SA) operate with the endorsement of the National Association of Teachers of Singing and, as such, they are expected to adhere to national bylaws and policies, including, but not limited to:

- ◆ NATS Code of Ethics
- ◆ NATS Policy on Copyright Laws
- ◆ NATS Auditions Regulations

These regulations are available to the governing bodies of Chapters, Districts and Regions on the NATS web site ([www.nats.org](http://www.nats.org)). For the purpose of this document, the term “NATS entities” or “sponsoring entities” will be used when referring to a NATS chapter, district, or region holding the Auditions. Student Auditions are sponsored and managed by the appropriate officers of a chapter, district, region, or combination of such NATS entities. Student Auditions are self-sustaining, funded through the budgets of the sponsoring NATS entities. NATS Discretionary Funds cannot be used for auditions themselves, but may help fund master classes and other appropriate activities associated with an event that includes auditions. Appropriate officers, boards, and/or memberships of NATS entities are responsible for implementing these regulations effectively.

Clarifying the responsibilities of those who prepare, coordinate, implement, and adjudicate NATS Student Auditions is of utmost importance in ensuring a successful event. Since the structures of NATS chapters, districts and regions vary, the officer designation for the operation of the Student Auditions may vary. For example, some chapters, districts, and regions combine duties of the Auditions Chair with another office while others separate those duties into several designated offices or committee assignments. It is expected that each entity will assign duties as best fits the size, location and resources of their respective Student Auditions. For the purpose of this document, the title “Auditions Chair” will be used.

## National Student Auditions Coordinator

The National Student Auditions (NSA) Coordinator reports to the NATS Vice President for Auditions. In coordination with the VP for Auditions, s/he assembles a committee to organize and implement the NATS Audition Regulations in order to fulfill the mission of the Student Auditions. The NSA Coordinator may choose to delegate various tasks to Committee members, but it is the Coordinator's responsibility to ensure they are completed. The NSA Coordinator serves as Auditions Chair of the national preliminary round, semifinal and final rounds.

## Regional Governor

Regional Governors will employ and enforce the Student Auditions Regulations at all levels within their region, and organize as well as execute Regional Auditions that advance singers to the National Student Auditions. The expectation is that there will be live regional auditions in each region. In the event that live auditions are not possible, the region will develop a mechanism in consultation and with the approval of the NSA Coordinator. Regional Governors may choose to delegate various tasks to District Governors and other leaders, but it is their responsibility to ensure they are completed in accordance with Regulations.

## Auditions Chair

The Auditions Chair, or officer to whom this task is assigned, will enforce the regulations in order to fulfill the Mission of the Student Auditions. The Auditions Chair may choose to delegate various tasks to NATS members, but it is the Chair's responsibility to ensure they are completed. The Auditions Chair may solicit advice from the Regional Governor or the NSA Coordinator, but shall be the final authority regarding the rules and regulations.

## On-site Coordinator

The On-site Coordinator will assist the Auditions Chair with all details regarding the physical location at which the Student Auditions are being held. The Coordinator may choose to delegate various tasks to NATS members, but it is the Coordinator's responsibility to ensure that they are completed.

## Adjudicators

Adjudicators will be expected to review NATS Adjudicator training materials and be familiar with adjudication rubrics (see p. 14-16). Adjudicators will hear the performance, write comments, and score each singer. During the auditions there must be no consultation, spoken or written, between adjudicators concerning the evaluation or performance of students. Adjudicators are not required to assign a high rating if, in their opinion, no student has earned it. No adjudicator will be asked to change a student's score or ranking. While it is expected that all panels are made of NATS members, occasions may exist where non-NATS member industry professionals serve as adjudicators.

## Collaborative Pianists

Collaborative pianists are valued and respected colleagues in ensuring successful auditions. Some entities may provide staff collaborative pianists for a fee to provide accompaniment for singers. So that they are able to concentrate fully on providing the best support and partnership for singing artists in the auditions, collaborative pianists SHOULD NOT be required to serve as the arbiter of correct adherence to the NATS Copyright Policy. It is the singer's and teacher's responsibility to provide all necessary documentation for legally obtained sheet music and communicate effectively in auditions settings.

## The NATS Membership and/or Board

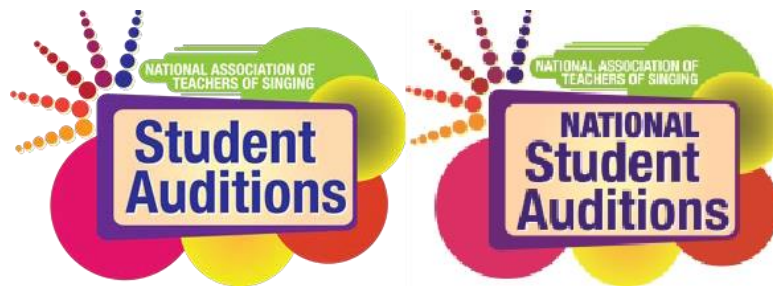
The NATS Membership and/or Board of a Chapter or Region will implement and support the regulations of NATS Student Auditions. They will serve as adjudicators and will be available to assist the Auditions Chair and On-Site Coordinator upon request.

# Audition Structure and Practices

The purpose of this section is to define the best audition practices for all who are involved in the preparation, coordination, implementation, and adjudication of NATS Student Auditions.

## NATS Entity: Membership or Board of a Chapter, District or Region

- ◆ Implements and supports the regulations of the Student Auditions within the framework of the NATS Audition Regulations.
- ◆ Determines the appropriate registration or application fees for participation in the Student Auditions. NATS Discretionary Fund grants may not be utilized for Student Auditions expenses.
- ◆ Selects the audition site preferably at least one year in advance. The site should have adequate facilities (e.g. performance venues, audition rooms, practice rooms, pianos, and restrooms) to accommodate the auditions.
- ◆ Participating teachers are expected to serve as adjudicators and be available to assist the Auditions Chair and On-Site Coordinator upon request. Each entity may develop an absentee policy and will communicate clearly such policy. Contact the NSA Coordinator with questions.
- ◆ Ensures that times selected for regional Student Auditions align with the National Student Audition deadlines.
- ◆ Selects subdivided categories and non-NSA categories for auditions within the NATS Auditions Regulations.
- ◆ Establishes the amount and type of awards given to winners.
- ◆ Standardizing the name of auditions organization-wide will assist in the branding, name recognition, and consistency of auditions and will assist singers and teachers when they relocate.
  - **Chapter and District auditions shall be known as:**
  - "NATS Student Auditions: \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter" or "NATS Student Auditions: \_\_\_\_\_ District"
  - **Region and National auditions shall be known as:**
  - "NATS National Student Auditions: \_\_\_\_ Region" or "NATS National Student Auditions"
- ◆ Official logos below are available in downloadable formats for use in auditions:



## Auditions Chair

All of these tasks may be completed by the Auditions Chair or delegated to various NATS members or officers; however, it is the chair's responsibility to ensure that they are completed:

- ◆ Secures date, time, and facility (at least a year in advance is strongly encouraged) and gives sufficient notice to the membership of the sponsoring entity.
- ◆ Submits event details at <http://www.nats.org/events.html> to ensure that the event is included in the NATS Event Calendar.
- ◆ Ensures that liability insurance is provided for the site of the Student Auditions where required by the host facility. NATS offers an umbrella policy that can be activated by filling out an online form at [http://www.nats.org/cgi/page.cgi/chapter/request\\_insurance.html](http://www.nats.org/cgi/page.cgi/chapter/request_insurance.html). Many universities or buildings are already covered, but coverage must be verified in case of accidents. You must allow adequate time for this task to be processed by our insurer so it is highly recommended that you complete this task early in the planning process once a site is secured.
- ◆ Provides entry forms to the membership by electronic or non-electronic means.
- ◆ Designates a member or members to receive applications, formulate the schedule, and notify NATS members of aforementioned schedule in a timely manner. All efforts should be made to avoid regulation violations or bias.
- ◆ Verifies the active membership of all teachers who register students through the respective officer with access to the entity's membership records.
- ◆ Maintains communication with other appropriate officers to address financial, membership or absenteeism issues pertaining to the auditions as they arise.
- ◆ Designates a member or members as needed to enforce the regulations while the auditions are in progress.
- ◆ Ensures that qualified adjudicators are assigned to all rounds of the auditions in a timely manner.
- ◆ Engages and educates adjudicators on matters regarding scoring, conduct, copyright, and repertoire regulations.
- ◆ Tabulates scores accurately and in a timely manner. The scoring method is on page nine.
- ◆ Posts results in a timely manner.
- ◆ At the chapter, district, and regional level ensures that comment sheets are made available in a timely manner.
- ◆ When there is a suspected regulations violation, one adjudicator will notify the Auditions Chair who will make a ruling on the matter. The decision of the Auditions Chair is final.
- ◆ Ensures teacher, student and collaborative pianist compliance with NATS policy on copyright laws, and adjudicator compliance with resolution of a copyright or repertoire violation (see p. 17).
- ◆ Ensures final results of chapter and district auditions are reported as required to the NATS Executive Office.
- ◆ Regional auditions chair MUST complete and submit a COMPLETE spreadsheet in the format provided by the NATS Executive Office immediately following the auditions.
- ◆ Designates a Tally Room and assembles a group of volunteers to tabulate scores.
- ◆ Ensures that two volunteers tabulate and double-check the calculations for each category before results are posted and posts the results on paper and electronically, if possible.
- ◆ At the regional level, ensures that categories and all eligible singers align with the appropriate NSA Categories (see p. 7).
- ◆ Coordinates staff accompanists if provided.

## On-Site Coordinator/Auditions Host

- ◆ Reserves the site with a sufficient number of rooms for performances, tabulations and Chapter/District/Regional meetings.
- ◆ Prepares and provides information about directions, housing, and parking for posting and dissemination to attendees.
- ◆ Coordinates tuning of all pianos when necessary.
- ◆ Engages a sufficient number of door monitors and timers.
- ◆ Reserves a hospitality room for NATS members and coordinates catering, if needed.
- ◆ Posts signage throughout facilities
- ◆ Communicates with guest adjudicators and/or performers about logistical arrangements.



## Adjudicators

- ◆ NATS members who register students to audition are expected to serve as adjudicators as necessary.
- ◆ Adjudicators will be expected to review NATS Adjudicator training materials and be familiar with adjudication rubrics (see p. 15-16).
- ◆ Adjudicators will write comments that reinforce a spirit of cooperation and mutual concern. The comments should motivate the student in the pursuit of vocal artistry and technique through hearing and being heard, and being adjudicated in a supportive climate.
- ◆ All comments should be consistent with the NATS Audition Regulations.
- ◆ While it is expected that all panels are made of NATS members, occasions may exist where non-NATS member industry professionals serve as adjudicators.

## NATS Member Sponsoring Students

- Those registering students for auditions must be members in good standing at the national level of NATS at the time of registration as well as all rounds of the event. In addition, Chapter level events require chapter membership in good standing at the time of registration as well as all rounds of the event. Exceptions to this requirement will be granted by the NATS National Office only to Canadian chapters that are a Registered Charitable Organization with the Canadian government.
- If a student has been studying with a sponsoring teacher fewer than eight (8) months, acknowledgment must be made of the former teacher both on the application and in any public announcements. Members will disclose at NATS events the name of a student's previous voice teacher if the student has studied with the current teacher fewer than eight months.
- Members shall complete and submit required application forms in a timely manner.
- Members shall ensure that all requirements are met.
- Members shall serve as adjudicators and/or act in other capacities as requested.
- Members shall ensure that students and collaborative pianists adhere to the NATS Copyright Policy located at [http://www.nats.org/\\_Library/docs/copyright\\_policy\\_revision1-2012.pdf](http://www.nats.org/_Library/docs/copyright_policy_revision1-2012.pdf).
- Members may not accompany their own students at any stage of the event including awards concerts, etc

## Chapter, District, Region, and National Student Auditions

The National Student Auditions begin at the regional level and progress to the national preliminary round, semifinal round and final round. Regional auditions should offer all of the categories contained in the "Category, Repertoire, Age, and Time Requirements" section of this document. In order to ensure across the board fairness and appropriate rigor to the National Student Auditions, Regions may only advance singers to NSA categories from a regional audition. Exceptions to this regulation must be approved by the NSA Coordinator, VP of Auditions, and NATS Executive Office staff. Winners of Chapter or District auditions may not be automatically advanced to the National Student Auditions.

### Conference Year Only – Hall Johnson Spiritual Category

Due to the generosity of the Hall Johnson Estate, a \$2000 award will be given in each national conference year (even-numbered years) to the best performance of a Hall Johnson Spiritual for the conferences from 2016--2036. All interested performers will apply for this category as part of regional student auditions with the top five regional singers advancing to the NSA rounds, as with all other categories. Chapters are also eligible and encouraged to add this competition to chapter auditions. Where applicable, Chapter auditions serve as qualifying rounds for advancement into region auditions.

Category	Length Of Study	Age limit	Time	Repertoire
Hall Johnson	Undergraduate age All voice types	17-23	10-12 minutes	Three contrasting selections from Hall Johnson spiritual repertoire.

## Student Auditions Categories

### Length of Study, Repertoire, Age, and Time Requirements

* CATEGORY Treble: Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Contralto, Countertenor TBB: Tenor, Baritone, Bass		LENGTH OF STUDY	AGE LIMIT	TIME	* REPERTOIRE: all repertoire is sung from memory
1	High School Music Theater Treble Voice	No limit	14--19	8 minutes	*Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> music theater song literature.
2	High School Music Theater TBB Voice	No limit	14--19	8 minutes	*Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> music theater song literature.
3	High School Classical Treble Voice	No limit	14--19	8 minutes	*Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English*. One art song in a foreign language. One additional art song or aria.
4	High School Classical TBB Voice	No limit	14--19	8 minutes	*Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English*. One art song in a foreign language. One additional art song or aria.
5	Lower Music Theater Treble Voice	0--2 post high school	22	10 minutes	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> music theater song literature.
6	Lower Music Theater TBB Voice	0--2 years post high school	22	10 minutes	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> music theater song literature.
7	Lower Classical Treble Voice	0--2 years post high school	22	10 minutes	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One aria or art song. One art song in English*. One foreign language art song.
8	Lower Classical TBB Voice	0--2 years post high school	22	10 minutes	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One aria or art song. One art song in English*. One foreign language art song.
9	Upper Music Theater Treble Voice	3--5 post high school all as undergraduate	25	12 minutes	Four contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> music theater song literature.
10	Upper Music Theater TBB Voice	3--5 post high school all as undergraduate	25	12 minutes	Four contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> music theater song literature.
11	Upper Classical Treble Voice	3--5 post high school all as undergraduate	25	12 minutes	Four contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One aria. One art song in English*. One foreign language art song. One additional selection. At least three languages must be represented.
12	Upper Classical TBB Voice	3--5 post high school all as undergraduate	25	12 minutes	Four contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One aria. One art song in English*. One foreign language art song. One additional selection. At least three languages must be represented.
13	Advanced Classical Treble Voice	4+ post high school	22--30	15 minutes	Five contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One operatic aria. One oratorio/cantata aria. One foreign language art song. One art song in English*. One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.
14	Advanced Classical TBB Voice	4+ post high school	22--30	15 minutes	Five contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One operatic aria. One oratorio/cantata aria. One foreign language art song. One art song in English*. One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.

One art song in English\*. English must be the original language of the art song.

## Asterisk Clarifications

<b>*CATEGORY</b>	<p>Categories are defined by voice type.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Treble:</b> Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Contralto, Countertenor</li> <li>• <b>TBB:</b> Tenor, Baritone, Bass</li> </ul>
<b>*LENGTH OF STUDY</b>	<p><b>Length of Study in Singer Category Selection for NATS Auditions</b>            Voice study with a voice teacher (NATS Member or Non NATS Member) either in an independent studio or collegiate/conservatory program or any combination of them is a determining factor in post high school categories only.</p> <p><b>Post-High School Study:</b>  <b>Lower:</b> any one or two years of post-high school study; all as undergraduate.  <b>Upper:</b> any three to five years of post-high school study; all as undergraduate.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Counting years of study begins with the first day of post high school study; meaning we are now in the first year of study. Any reasonable portion of a year would be counted as one year. For example, a student in in an undergraduate program in their fifth semester of voice study is in their third year of study.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Each reasonable portion of a year of study counts as a full year, even if the singer stops taking weekly lessons during a portion of that year, unless the singer is ill and unable or forbidden to sing during that time for medical reasons.</p>
<b>AGE LIMIT</b>	<p>Age limits are determined at the time of registration for singers in NATS auditions. Singers above the age limit of a category may not compete in that category. If an appropriate category is not available for a singer above the age limit, the singer may sing in that category for comments only. The age and years of study for NSA categories are determined at the regional audition and remain the same during that audition season.</p>
<b>*REPERTOIRE</b>	<p>High school age categories and younger in Chapter and District auditions may require two or three selections as best serves the needs and tradition of the Chapter or District. Regional and National Auditions will require three selections from High School Categories.</p>
<b>Teacher members in NATS student auditions</b>	<p>NATS teacher members who meet the requirements of a student audition category--age and years of study--- may enter student auditions through the NATS member with whom they are currently studying, but they may not enter themselves in the audition. If they enter their students in the audition, they must be available to adjudicate a category as well.</p>

### Site Procedures for a NATS Audition

Each singer in the same category is allotted the same amount of time to perform. Singers select their first piece to perform and the adjudication panel selects subsequent pieces. Time begins when the singer announces their first piece.

Time continues to run between selections.

Therefore, in preliminary and semi-final rounds, each adjudication panel chair should expedite a rotation cycle among the panel members for subsequent repertoire selections. Repertoire selections should be made immediately because time continues to run between selections.

During the audition, selections are to be sung in their entirety as prepared by the student, WITHOUT suggested edits from adjudicators. For example:

requesting a singer start at the B section or suggesting a student skip a prepared recitative and start with the aria or stopping a student in the middle of a piece to move on to the next piece

Repertoire is heard as the time allotment allows. It is possible that not all repertoire will be heard, and/or that the time allotment will end in the middle of a selection. Singers should be made aware of this possibility by their teachers.

The audition is completed when the adjudication panel or the timer calls/signals “stop”.



## Classical Audition Terminology

<b>Aria</b>	An aria is a solo taken from an opera, oratorio, mass, cantata, zarzuela, operetta, or works titled “concert aria”. Oxford Online definitions will be used for the purposes of this audition. For example, Purcell’s selections from the semi-- operas and masques are considered songs.
<b>24/26/28 Italian Art Songs and Arias</b>	The repertoire found in the 24/26/28 Italian Art Songs and Arias collections may be counted as an aria or an art song in the high school and lower college classical categories. For the singers in the upper college categories and beyond, these pieces may count as an art song ONLY, regardless of origin. Any repertoire found outside of these collections will be considered only as the composer intended, as an art song OR aria.
<b>Memorization</b>	All repertoire, including oratorio, must be sung from memory.
<b>Original Languages</b>	Selections should be sung in original language or in translation if warranted by common performance practice.
<b>Transposition</b>	All arias from opera, oratorio, mass, cantata, operetta, works titled “concert aria,” or music theater selections must be sung in the original or standard published key.
<b>Art Song in English</b>	English must be the original language of the art song.
<b>Repertoire/Categories</b>	The word “classical” in this context refers to art songs and arias from the “classical” genre, not limited to the “Classical” period of Mozart and Haydn. In other words, no music theater, pop, soul, jazz, rhythm and blues, etc. Published arrangements of folk songs, spirituals, and traditional hymn tunes in English are widely accepted as a part of the classical genre. Students in classical categories may present one selection of this type to fulfill the English art song requirement.
<b>Judicious Cuts</b>	Piano introductions, piano interludes, piano music after the vocal solo is completed, and internal cuts of opera arias and music theater selections are allowed as in common performance practice. Cuts of verse or verses of selections are not allowed. In the case of strophic pieces, all verses should remain that are traditionally included.
<b>Comment Only</b>	Any student may register to sing for comments only and participate in the preliminary audition round.

## Music Theater Audition Terminology

Memorization	All repertoire must be sung from memory.
Original Languages	Selections must be sung in original language or in translation if warranted by common performance practice.
Transposition	Music Theater selections in college categories and older must be sung in the original or standard published key. High school singers and younger may use published transposed keys to accommodate voice change issues only. Any published transposition must retain the composer's intention and style of music, and preserve the character being portrayed in the story and lyrics.
Judicious Cuts	Piano introductions, piano interludes, piano music after the vocal solo is completed, and internal cuts of music theater selections are allowed as in common performance practice. Cuts of verse or verses of selections are not allowed. In the case of strophic pieces, all verses should remain that are traditionally included.
Music Theater Selections	Repertoire is chosen from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas or music theater song cycles all of which are written or intended for a fully realized musical production; <u>and</u> music theater song literature. Only <u>one</u> of the required selections may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> music theater song literature.
Fully Realized Production	A fully realized production includes blocking/acting, dance, costumes, sets, pit orchestra or piano, lighting, sound, or a combination of the aforementioned elements.
Revues	Revues should thread back to the original production.
Music Theater Styles	Repertoire should ensure that selections represent the spectrum of their vocal and dramatic abilities. This should be exhibited by selecting pieces of varying style periods: pop/rock, contemporary, and golden age, employing a multiplicity of vocal styles (belt, mix, legit).
Comment Only	Any student may register to sing for comments only and participate in the preliminary audition round.

## Subcategories for Chapter, District, and Region Auditions

Number	Category	Length of Study	Age Range/Limit	Time
1 A	Lower High School Music Theater Treble Voice	No limit--- all HS	14---16 9th and 10th Grade	8---10 minutes
2 A	Lower High School Music Theater TBB	No limit--- all HS	14---16 9th and 10th Grade	8---10 minutes
1 B	Upper High School Music Theater Treble Voice	No limit--- all HS	16---19 11th and 12th Grade	8---10 minutes
2 B	Upper High School Music Theater TBB	No limit--- all HS	16---19 11th and 12th Grade	8---10 minutes
3 A	Lower High School Classical Treble Voice	No limit--- all HS	14---16 9th and 10th Grade	8---10 minutes
4 A	Lower High School Classical TBB	No limit--- all HS	14---16 9th and 10th Grade	8---10 minutes
3 B	Upper High School Classical Treble Voice	No limit--- all HS	16---19 11th and 12th Grade	8---10 minutes
4 B	Upper High School Classical TBB	No limit--- all HS	16---19 11th and 12th Grade	8---10 minutes
5 A	First Year Music Theater Treble Voice	1 year post high school	20	10 minutes
6 A	First Year Music Theater TBB	1 year post high school	20	10 minutes
7 A	First Year Classical Treble Voice	1 year post high school	20	10 minutes
8 A	First Year Classical TBB	1 year post high school	20	10 minutes
5 B	Second Year Music Theater Treble Voice	2 years post high school	22	10 minutes
6 B	Second Year Music Theater TBB	2 years post high school	22	10 minutes
7 B	Second Year Classical Treble Voice	2 years post high school	22	10 minutes
8 B	Second Year Classical TBB	2 years post high school	22	10 minutes
9 A	Third Year Music Theater Treble Voice	3 years post high school	23	12 minutes
10 A	Third Year Music Theater TBB	3 years post high school	23	12 minutes
11 A	Third Year Classical Treble Voice	3 years post high school	23	12 minutes
12 A	Third Year Classical TBB	3 years post high school	23	12 minutes
9 B	Fourth/Fifth Year Music Theater Treble Voice	4-5 years post high school (all as under graduate)	25	12 minutes
10 B	Fourth/Fifth Year Music Theater TBB	4-5 years post high school (all as under graduate)	25	12 minutes
11 B	Fourth/Fifth Year Classical Treble Voice	4-5 years post high school (all as under graduate)	25	12 minutes
12 B	Fourth/Fifth Year Classical TBB	4-5 years post high school (all as under graduate)	25	12 minutes
13 A	Lower Advanced Classical Treble Voice	4-7 years post high school	22-26	15 minutes
14 A	Lower Advanced Classical TBB	4-7 years post high school	22-26	15 minutes
13 B	Upper Advanced Classical Treble Voice	7+ years post high school	25---30	15 minutes
14 B	Upper Advanced Classical TBB	7+ post high school	25---30	15 minutes

Chapters, Districts, and Regions may subdivide the categories above in the following ways. Repertoire and time limits must remain the same. Categories can be divided again because of high numbers of students as IA--1, IA--2 etc.

## Region and District and Chapter Subdivided Category Numbering System

Number	High School Categories	Number	Lower Post High School Categories	Number	Upper Post High School Categories	Number	Upper Advanced Categories
1A	Lower High School Music Theater Treble Voice	5A	First Year Music Theater Treble Voice	9A	Third Year Music Theater Treble Voice	13A	Lower Advanced Classical Treble Voice
2A	Lower High School Music Theater TBB	6A	First Year Music Theater TBB	10A	Third Year Music Theater TBB	14A	Lower Advanced Classical TBB
1B	Upper High School Music Theater Treble Voice	5B	Second Year Music Theater Treble Voice	9B	Fourth/Fifth Music Theater Treble Voice	13B	Upper Advanced Classical Treble Voice
2B	Upper High School Music Theater TBB	6B	Second Year Music Theater TBB	10B	Fourth/Fifth Year Music Theater TBB	14B	Upper Advanced Classical TBB
3A	Lower High School Classical Treble Voice	7A	First Year Classical Treble Voice	11A	Third Year Classical Treble Voice		
4A	Lower High School Classical TBB	8A	First Year Classical TBB	12A	Third Year Classical TBB		
3B	Upper High School Classical Treble Voice	7B	Second Year Classical Treble Voice	11B	Fourth/Fifth Year Classical Treble Voice		
4B	Upper High School Classical TBB	8B	Second Year Classical TBB	12B	Fourth/Fifth Year Classical TBB		

Categories can be divided again because of high numbers of students as IA--1, IA--2 etc.

## Other Audition Categories Defined (not in National Student Auditions)

Category	Study	Age Limit	*Time	Repertoire: all repertoire is sung from memory
Children	No limit	11 and under/below 6th grade	8 minutes	Two or three contrasting age appropriate selections from classical repertoire.
Children's Music Theater	No limit	11 and under/below 6th grade	8 minutes	Two or three contrasting age appropriate music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> music theater song literature.
Youth	No limit	11---14 6th - 8th grade	8 minutes	Two or three contrasting age appropriate selections from classical repertoire.
Youth Music Theater	No limit	11---14 6th - 8th grade	8 minutes	Two or three contrasting age appropriate music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> music theater song literature.
*Adult Treble	No limit	22+	10---12 minutes	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English. One art song in a foreign language. One additional art song or aria.
*Adult TBB	No limit	22+	10---12 minutes	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English. One art song in a foreign language. One additional art song or aria.
*Adult Music Theater Treble	No limit	22+	10---12 minutes	Three contrasting age appropriate music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> music theater song literature.
*Adult Music Theater TBB	No limit	22+	10---12 minutes	Three contrasting age appropriate music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> music theater song literature.
CCM Treble	No limit	18+	10---12 minutes	Three contrasting selections from jazz, pop, rock, or other repertoire. Singers may specialize in a particular genre and have contrasting selections within the chosen genre OR may select repertoire from more than one genre.
CCM TBB	No limit	18+	10---12 minutes	Three contrasting selections from jazz, pop, rock, or other repertoire. Singers may specialize in a particular genre and have contrasting selections within the chosen genre OR may select repertoire from more than one genre.

**\*Adult categories are intended for serious adult avocational musicians.**

**NATS regions, Chapters and Districts are encouraged to create new categories that do not advance to the National Student Auditions that suit their students' needs.**



# NATS Auditions Rating/Scoring System

All Student Auditions and National Student Auditions must use the same scoring system, enabling scoring data comparisons across all NATS Regions. Scoring is based on a national standard.

Most Student Auditions have preliminary and final rounds. Larger enrollments may require semifinal rounds or split categories. Live auditions with a large number of singers in a category may be divided into two or more groups for the preliminary round.

**OPTIONS:** Depending on the structure and size of the auditions the following options are possible:

- ❖ **Preliminary round:** All singers will be scored with comments. (Scoring will not be used in comments-only categories)
- ❖ **Semifinals (where necessary):** All singers will be either (A) scored with comments OR (B) ranked numerically with or without comments.
- ❖ **Finals:** All singers will be ranked numerically without comments.
- ❖ **No Semi-final Round:** Occasions may occur where scoring indicates that no semifinal round is necessary in some categories (small numbers of entrants, small numbers advancing to the next round).

## Preliminary Round

1. Singers in all classifications will sing one song of their choice and then songs selected by the adjudicators within the time limits per the standard NATS site procedures.
2. During the preliminary round, adjudicators, using the NATS rubrics, will write constructive comments and a score between 70 and 100 on their scoring sheets. These sheets will be made available prior to the start of the next round, if possible, in order that the singers may benefit from the written comments.
3. Chapters and Districts holding only a Preliminary and Final Round may forward the agreed upon number of singers based on scores to the final round. In the event of ties, the semifinal round procedure will be used as a run-off to determine the finalists.
4. Entities with only one round of auditions should follow the process for the Preliminary Round with highest average scores receiving awards.
5. Entities may choose to organize the Final Round as a plenary event with all participants in attendance, or present all winners or a subset of winners (ex. 1st place in each category) in a winners or honors recital as a culminating event. The construct of these events is often determined by space and time constraints.
6. Monetary prizes and other awards will be developed at the discretion of the entity holding auditions.

## Semifinal Round

1. Only students who have received 2 scores of 90 or above, or an average score of 90 or above, in the preliminary round will enter the semifinal round.
2. There is no limit on the number of semifinalists.
3. Each student will sing one selection of his/her choice in its entirety. This selection must be one of the numbers submitted in the preliminary round entry. (Entities may opt to allow more than one selection in this round)
4. Each adjudicator will give only one score between 70 and 100 OR rank the singers numerically on a ranking sheet provided. If comments are written in this round they will be made available prior to the final round, if possible. If there are no written comments, the rating sheets will not be made available. If using scores, highest average scores advance. If ranking numerically, the lowest total scores advance.
5. Final tabulations will be made by the Auditions Chair and assistants.
6. The adjudicators are not to confer until after their rating sheets have been delivered to the Auditions Office/Tally Room.
7. A maximum of 5 singers will enter the finals unless there is a tie. Some entities may choose to advance a maximum of 3 to the finals due the size of the auditions.

## Final Round

1. Final Round Each student will sing one song of his/her choice in its entirety. This selection must be one of the numbers submitted in the preliminary round entry. Note that some auditions may place a time limit on the final round selection, so repertoire chosen should take into consideration such constraints.
2. The adjudicators will not confer. Each adjudicator ranks the finalists from 1 (highest) to 5 (lowest). Results are returned to the Auditions Office/Tally Room and tabulated. Lowest total scores are awarded appropriate prizes/recognition.
3. All awards are presented during the Finals.
4. **Ties:** Should there be more than one first place winner, the awards for the first and second places will be pooled and divided equally among the winners. All will be called First Place Winners. This regulation holds for ties in all the places. In the event that there are more than five finalists, a certificate of "Honorable Mention" will be awarded to other finalists. See [Recognition and Awards](#)

## Scoring System

The scoring system is developed to allow for objective as well as subjective measures of a singer's performance. Further, it is structured to provide more detailed guidance to adjudicators as they seek to provide appropriate and constructive feedback to singers. All auditions should use the official NATS Student Auditions Adjudication Form available as appendix A and also available online.

### Adjudicators shall:

- Provide scoring for each singer in comparison to a standard developed specifically for these auditions. Adjudicating relative to a common standard (see adjudication rubric) will provide a better overall result than comparing singers in a given category to one another when scoring.
- Place an **X** in the following areas on the adjudication sheet to indicate a general level of accomplishment. Note that while a specific numerical score is not listed in each area, the Low to High range is divided into three sections corresponding with the 70-100 overall scoring range. Note that the Ensemble marking should not factor into the final scoring due to the fact that some singers may be using a staff accompanist with whom they have had little rehearsal.

	<i>low</i>		<i>high</i>
<i>Tone</i>	-----/-----/-----		
<i>Breathing/Alignment</i>	-----/-----/-----		
<i>Language/Diction</i>	-----/-----/-----		
<i>Musicianship/Accuracy</i>	-----/-----/-----		
<i>Artistry/Expression</i>	-----/-----/-----		
<i>Ensemble (comment only)</i>	-----/-----/-----		

- In the preliminary round, provide constructive comments on the performance that correspond with the ratings provided above. The adjudication rubrics for classical and music theater provide guidance to the adjudicator in constructing comments in agreement with their ratings. Entities may elect to also provide comments in semifinal rounds where appropriate.
- Assign a final overall score between 70-100 that generally corresponds to a compilation of markings given in #2. For example, if all the markings are in the highest 1/3 of the line a score in the 90-100 range is appropriate.

## Adjudicating Standard

**The national standard is stated in the first column of the adjudication rubric. The language describes the qualities an ideal singer will have. As adjudicators hear singers, they should compare the singer's performance against the general standard for the category they are adjudicating. One way this could be addressed would be to add the clause "...for a xxx category singer" to each standard.**

# Recognition and Awards

Recognitions and awards are important to students and collaborative pianists. Often, monetary awards are important to students, both as an incentive and as a means of defraying expenses. Each NATS entity establishes the best means by which to recognize and award its students. Please see examples below:

## Public Announcements

An announcement of order of placement of finalists for each classification allows for individual recognition of particularly outstanding singers. Additionally, a round of applause to recognize the efforts and artistry of collaborative pianists has been deemed quite appropriate. Teachers of finalists may be announced at the audition during an award ceremony or posted on a web site with the list of winners and their collaborative pianists. A moment to recognize semifinalists and or finalists as a group with applause may be deemed appropriate. This can be an effective way to recognize the efforts and contributions of a larger group of people.

## Finalist Certificates

Certificates may be given for first, second, and third place winners, or more as deemed appropriate.

## Monetary Awards

While monetary awards are most often given to students in first, second and third places, several NATS entities have been known to acknowledge 4 or 5 places per classification. Some NATS entities utilize a graduated scale of monetary awards based on length of study, in recognition of the greater preparation and expense involved for Upper and Advanced Categories, and as incentive for these students to participate. Typically, awards are paid from the total pool of student entrance fees.

## Honors Concert

Performance on an honors concert at the conclusion of the auditions or at a later NATS event allows many members and students to acknowledge and hear the exceptional work of outstanding students of singing.

## Special Awards

Special Awards may include such titles as: Most Promising Professional Voice, Singer of the Year, Collaborative Pianist of the Year, etc. Certificates and/or monetary awards have been awarded as deemed appropriate.

## NATS Policy on Copyright Laws

Click on this link to review the policy:

[https://www.nats.org/Copyright\\_Resources.html](https://www.nats.org/Copyright_Resources.html)

## Resolution of a Copyright or Repertoire Violation

If legal photocopies or unbound music are being used by the collaborative pianist, it is suggested that the singer address the adjudicators upon entering the room and provide proper copyright approval prior to their performance in the form of a CD Sheet music approval form or other accepted documentation (e.g., publisher approval letter, public domain notice) prior to announcing their first selection.

If the student DOES NOT provide the proper documentation, an adjudicator has the right and responsibility, at the conclusion of the audition, to request the student to provide such if they notice that copies or unbound music are used and the following list of steps should be taken. These steps also apply to potential repertoire discrepancies:

- Adjudicators should not disrupt the audition process to question the student.
- Nothing should be written on a comment sheet by adjudicators regarding any suspected violation. Please write a note on a separate sheet of paper.
- Write comments and score the student as if there were no violation.
- Rank or score the student as if there were no violation.
- When the auditions are completed, all adjudicators should consult the Auditions Chair and discuss the potential violation.
- The Auditions Chair may need to research the issue or consult others before making a final ruling.
- If it is determined that a violation exists, the Auditions Chair makes every effort to discuss the violation with the student's teacher prior to notifying the student. This is to be done by the Auditions Chair and not the adjudicators.
- The singer is disqualified if, in fact, a violation has occurred.

# National Student Auditions (NSA) Regulations and Organization

## Regional Rounds

The National Student Auditions begin at the regional level and progress to the national preliminary round, semifinal round and final round. Regional auditions should include all of the categories contained in the “Categories, Repertoire, Age, and Time Requirements” section of this document. In order to ensure across the board fairness and appropriate rigor to the National Student Auditions, regions may only advance singers to NSA categories from a regional audition. Exceptions to this regulation must be approved by the NSA Coordinator, VP of Auditions, and the NATS Executive Office staff. Winners of Chapter or District auditions may not be automatically advanced to the National Student Auditions.

Each Region advances the top five singers in each category to the National Preliminary Round - YouTube Screening (i.e., five each from Lower College Men, Lower College Women, etc.). In the event of ties, all singers with top five outcomes may advance.

In Regions where audition categories are subdivided according to the regulations above, the top five singers from each eligible regional category will advance to the National Preliminary Round - YouTube Screening (i.e., five each from regional Freshman Women, five each from regional Sophomore Women for a total of ten to compete in Lower College/ Independent Studio Women at the National Preliminary Round - YouTube Screening).

At the time of application for the National Student Auditions, the Regional Governor or Regional Auditions Chair should forward the repertoire list of the singers and certify that the repertoire submitted was the same repertoire that the singer submitted at the regional level.

Music Theater students who exceed the age limits for the College/Independent Studio Music Theater categories are encouraged to enter the National Music Theater Competition.

## National Preliminary Round - YouTube Screening

The national rounds of the competition will begin with eligible singers from each region completing online registration for the national auditions and submitting YouTube videos for initial judging and comments. If regions use the subdivided categories, all of the repertoire selections for the applicable audition category as set forth in the requirements for the National Student Auditions must be included on the YouTube videos, and the footage of the videos must not be edited. Fourteen singers from each audition category will be invited to the live National Semifinal Round.

## National Semifinal Round

The National Semifinal round will take place during a National Conference or Summer Workshop. Each singer participating in the national semifinal round will begin with a selection of his or her choice and continue with selections chosen by the Adjudicators according to the national repertoire requirements and within the prescribed time limits for each audition category. Three singers from each audition category will advance to the National Final Round.

## National Final Round

The National Final Round will take place during a National Conference or Summer Workshop. Each participating singer will sing one selection of his or her choice. This selection must be one of the pieces submitted in the semifinal round of the competition. Award certificates will be presented to all three finalists with monetary awards for the First, Second and Third Place Winners in each audition category.

## Number of Contestants

Regions submit the top five singers from each of their various regional categories. Normally fourteen singers per category will advance to the National Semifinal round. Three singers per category will advance to the National Final round.

## National Rounds Schedule

**Immediately following Regional Auditions** - Deadline for Regional Governor to submit a list of eligible singers and the repertoire for each to the National Student Auditions Chair.

**End of April** - Deadline for YouTube submissions

**Beginning of May** - Deadline for judging results from YouTube submissions

**Middle of May** - Date to notify semifinalists (Approximately 6 weeks prior to semifinals)

**Late June/Early July** - National Student Auditions Finals at the NATS National Conference or the NATS Summer Workshop

## Audition Fees

**Registration Fee:** \$75

This is a registration fee for the national rounds of the National Student Auditions: National Preliminary Round - YouTube Screening, Semifinals and Finals. This fee provides for a pianist at the Semifinal and Final rounds of the competition, should the singer so desire, and includes national conference/summer workshop registration for all sessions. This is separate from any Chapter, District, and/or Regional audition fees. **A separate registration fee is paid for each category entered.**

## Collaborative Pianists

Collaborative pianists are valued partners in auditions. Each singer may collaborate with his or her own pianist at all levels of the competition. For those singers who elect to use a Staff Collaborative Pianist, one will be provided at the National Semifinal and Final rounds at no extra cost to the singer. While no rehearsals will be possible with the Staff Collaborative Pianists prior to or during the Semifinal round, singers who advance to the Final round and are using a Staff Collaborative Pianist will be allotted a ten-minute rehearsal with the pianist preceding the finals audition.

## Adjudication

Adjudication panels for the National Preliminary Round - YouTube Screening, the National Semifinals, and the National Finals will be selected by the National Student Auditions Coordinator in consultation with the National Vice President for Auditions. Sources for eligible adjudicators may include:

- Any teacher with a singer who is competing may be invited to adjudicate a category in which his or her student is not competing.
- NATS members attending the Conference or Workshop may indicate on the registration form a willingness to serve as an adjudicator.
- NATS members who reside in the area of the Conference or Workshop may be contacted to serve as adjudicators.

The adjudication panel ranks the singers from one through the number of entrants in their category (or portion of a category) and the singers with the lowest total scores are chosen to advance to the semifinal round.

## Awards (2015 Award Amounts: Future year awards may be adjusted)

High School, Lower College Categories\*

First Place	\$1200
Second Place	\$600
Third Place	\$450

Upper College and Graduate Categories\*

First Place	\$1600
Second Place	\$900
Third Place	\$500

\*Should there be a tie, an award will be pooled and divided evenly between the singers. Both winners will be named Place Winners. Not all prizes must be awarded in all categories, depending on enrollment and/or judging.





## NATS Audition Rubric - Classical Categories

As adjudicators hear singers they should compare the singer's performance against the general standard for the category they are adjudicating.

STANDARD	Developing 70-79	Advancing 80-89	Accomplished 90-100
<b>Tone:</b> Resonance and timbre are appropriate to the style, with balanced chiaroscuro throughout range. Onset and offset are clean, clear and balanced allowing for vibrancy. Tuning is accurate throughout range. Dynamic flexibility is present; singer has the ability to make subtle changes appropriate to style and character.	Resonance is incomplete, chiaroscuro not evident in vocal range. Onsets are often delayed and with extra noise or air much of the time. Offsets have extra air or extraneous noise much of the time. Tuning is often problematic. The flexibility and warmth of the voice is not fully evident in the performance.	Resonance is developing, chiaroscuro through some of the range. Onsets are immediate most of the time but occasionally either tighten the tone or allow excess breath in the sound. Offsets have occasional extra air or extraneous noise. Tuning is mostly accurate. The flexibility and warmth of the voice is sometimes evident in the performance.	Resonance is complete, ringing chiaroscuro throughout range. Onsets are immediate and promote clear, complete timbre at all times. Offsets are silent and allow rebound in the breath system. Tuning is always accurate. The flexibility and warmth of the voice is fully evident in the performance.
<b>Breathing/Alignment:</b> Inhalation is easy, full and efficient. Exhalation provides stability, support, vibrancy, and vocal energy. Buoyant alignment assists a balanced engagement of the tone.	Inhalation is often noisy or insufficient. Exhalation does not provide stability, and the singer tenses or collapses in the body. The singer requires extra breaths to complete phrases. Buoyancy is occasional.	Inhalation is mostly easy and sufficient. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy some of the time, with some collapsing in the body at the ends of phrases. Buoyancy is developing.	Inhalation is silent, easy and sufficient all of the time. Exhalation provides support, balanced stability, and energized phrasing. Alignment is buoyant.
<b>Language/Diction:</b> Languages are sung with accurate pronunciation and effective articulation, with idiomatic inflection beyond basic phonetics. The singer displays thorough understanding and communication of the text.	Languages are often inaccurate in pronunciation and articulation, and lack idiomatic characteristics. The singer often does not communicate the meaning of the text.	Some languages are accurate in pronunciation and articulation, and demonstrate idiomatic characteristics. The singer communicates the meaning of much of the text.	All languages are accurate in pronunciation and articulation, and demonstrate idiomatic characteristics. The singer communicates the meaning of all text.
<b>Musicianship:</b> Pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the composer, editor, or arranger are observed and presented with idiomatic style. Performance is easily sung from memory.	Many pitches and rhythms are inaccurate. Attention to the score is unclear or lacks understanding. The style requires further study. Memorization is incomplete with several errors.	Pitches and rhythms are accurate most of the time. Most of the markings in the music are observed, and much of the style presented is idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete with some errors.	All pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the music are observed, and the style presented is idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete.
<b>Artistry / Expression:</b> The physical life, musicality, and vocalism of the singer fully express the music and story, and engage the listeners in a fulfilling aesthetic experience.	The singer has difficulty making physical, musical and vocal choices, and their individual artistry does not engage the listeners in the entire performance. The performance is expressive and meaningful some of the time.	The physical, musical and vocal choices made by the singer allow their individual artistry to engage the listeners in part of the performance. The performance is personally expressive and meaningful most of the time.	The physical, musical and vocal choices made by the singer allow their individual artistry to engage the listeners in the entire performance. The performance is personally expressive and meaningful all of the time.
<b>Ensemble: COMMENT ONLY</b> The singer and pianist are well rehearsed, and coordinate their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance.	The singer and pianist seem unsynchronized, and the artistic goals of the performance were unclear.	The singer and pianist are coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance some of the time.	The singer and pianist are fully coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the entire performance.



# NATS Audition Rubric

## Music Theater Categories

STANDARD		As adjudicators hear singers they should compare the singer’s performance against the general standard for the category they are adjudicating	
<p><b>Tone:</b> Singer shows mastery of the vocal technique required for the repertoire chosen (mix, belt, and/or legit), and has the ability to make subtle changes appropriate to the style and character. Changes in registration balance are relatively smooth and even. (Refer to the FAQ for additional explanation.)</p> <p><b>Mix:</b> All sounds in music theater are some form of mixed registration. The resonance is “speech-like” and intelligibility is a priority. Choosing a head-dominant or chest-dominant mix depends on character, style, and story. Most contemporary music theater songs take advantage of a variable registration/resonance, crossing the spectrum from light to heavy</p> <p><b>Belt:</b> An acoustic strategy, belt is sometimes referred to as the “calling voice.” It is a bright chest- dominant mix accessible on open vowels, and occurs between F4 and D5. Above D5, it becomes the “high belt” chest dominant resonance popular in contemporary styles. A belt is frequently used to express moments of soaring emotion. It can be vibrant or retain a straight tone.</p> <p><b>Legit:</b> This sound is often described as “lyrical” and “lofty.” It shares a resonance similar to classical singing, but retains a more speech-like articulation.</p> <p><b>For audio examples of each style, refer to: <a href="https://www.nats.org/nsaresources.html#audio-examples">https://www.nats.org/nsaresources.html#audio-examples</a></b></p>			
	Developing 70-79	Advancing 80-89	Accomplished 90-100
Tone (above)	The singer shows little mastery of the vocal technique required for their chosen selections (belt, mix, and/or legit), and makes few appropriate choices in keeping with the style and character. Changes in registration are abrupt or uneven much of the time.	The singer shows mastery of the vocal technique required for some of their chosen selections (belt, mix, and/or legit), and makes some appropriate choices in keeping with the style and character. Changes in registration are smooth and even some of the time.	The singer shows mastery of the vocal technique required for all of their chosen selections (belt, mix, and/or legit), and makes appropriate choices in keeping with the style and character. Changes in registration are smooth and even.
Breathing/Alignment:	Inhalation is often insufficient. Exhalation does not provide stability, and the singer tenses or collapses in the body. The singer requires extra breaths to complete phrases. Buoyancy is occasional or may not be appropriate for the character.	Inhalation is mostly easy and sufficient. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy some of the time, with some collapsing in the body at the ends of phrases. Buoyancy is developing or somewhat appropriate for the character.	Inhalation is easy and sufficient all of the time. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy. Alignment is buoyant and appropriate for the character.
Language/Diction:	The text is pronounced inaccurately or with articulation inappropriate to the character. The singer communicates little of the meaning of the lyric.	The text is pronounced well and articulated easily as appropriate to the character some of the time. The singer communicates the meaning of the lyric some of the time.	The text is pronounced well and articulated easily as appropriate to the character all of the time. The singer fully communicates the meaning of the lyric.
Musicianship:	Many pitches and rhythms are inaccurate. Attention to the score is unclear or lacks understanding. The style requires further study. Memorization is incomplete.	Pitches and rhythms are accurate most of the time. Most of the markings in the music are observed, and much of the style presented is idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete with some errors.	All pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the music are observed, and the style presented is idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete.
Artistry/Expression:	The physical life, musical and vocal choices made by the singer often do not communicate the intentions of the character, and do not engage the listeners in the entire performance; gestures are missing or resemble mannerisms and are unrelated to the character and situation.	The physical life, musical and vocal choices made by the singer communicate the intentions of the character some of the time, and engage the listeners in part of the performance; gestures are sometimes genuine and integral to the character and situation.	The physical life, musical and vocal choices made by the singer clearly communicate the intentions of the character, and engage the listeners in the entire performance; gestures are genuine and integral to the character and situation.
Ensemble: COMMENT ONLY	The singer and pianist seem unsynchronized, and the artistic goals of the performance are unclear.	The singer and pianist are coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance some of the time.	The singer and pianist are fully coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the entire performance.

# History of NATS Auditions

Inclusive national guidelines for Student Auditions (SA) were first formulated in 1977. In 1992-93, a national survey of chapters and regions was undertaken to research the changes that had occurred in Student Auditions across NATS. A 1993 revision committee comprised of Richard Berry, Myra Brand, Jerry Daniels, Edward Deckard and Judith Nicosia Civitano, Chair, drafted the excellent 1993 revision of the Guidelines for Student Auditions, which has served the Association well for the last 16 years.

In 2007 another survey of the policies of chapters, districts and regions was conducted to assess current trends in Student Auditions. The 2008 and 2009 Student Audition Guidelines committee included Kathleen Arcchi, Elaine Case, Roma Prindle, Connie Roberts and Anne Christopherson, and provided a mission statement for Student Auditions; outlined the responsibilities of NATS Members who coordinate and facilitate Student Auditions; and provided examples of “best practices” to fulfill the mission and responsibilities of the Student Auditions.

In 2010-2011 a committee chaired by Norman Spivey was charged with investigating the possibility of a student audition process that would be progressive from the regional level and culminate at the national level by gathering information from the 14 regions regarding their current audition practices and beginning discussion of a national model for auditions. In 2011-2012 a committee chaired by Deborah Williamson completed the National Student Auditions (NSA) Guidelines document to present to the NATS Board of Directors. Deborah represented the NSA committee at the NATS Board of Directors meeting in Orlando, Florida in July 2012 and presented the proposal where it was passed.

In 2012-2014 a committee chaired by Deborah Williamson implemented the audition categories, repertoire requirements, and audition fees based upon recommendations from the Board of Directors and redesigned the National Student Auditions (NSA) Guidelines document into a format that was posted on the NATS website. In 2013, the NATS Board of Directors approved the launch of National Student Auditions. The first national semifinal and final rounds were held in Boston in July 2014 as part of the NATS 53<sup>rd</sup> National Conference. More than 150 singers from across all NATS Regions participated in the semifinal round of the first annual National Student Auditions at The Boston Conservatory. Thirty-seven students advanced to the final round and 24 students won a combined \$30,000 in awards.

In July 2014, a committee chaired by Dan Johnson-Wilmot (NSA Coordinator), with Karen Brunssen, Mark McQuade, Robert Wells, and Melanie Williams developed a national model for Student Auditions (SA) based on the National Student Audition (NSA) Audition Guidelines that is workable for region, district, and chapter auditions across the fourteen regions of NATS. This revised structure of NATS Student Auditions is necessitated by many factors that have a far-reaching impact on the work of NATS members. In order to have a system that facilitates the flow of auditions to a national level a wider level of consistency in several areas is required. The result is a structure that will ultimately allow singers and their teachers to compare their performance with those in their immediate locale, while also being able to compare it to singers at their level throughout the country. With over 10,000 auditions being heard every year, the ability to make this comparison gives both teachers and students additional feedback on their progress.



National Association of Teachers of  
Singing Student Auditions  
Adjudication Form



Singer Name or # \_\_\_\_\_ Category \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if singing for comments only

Using the NATS rubric and the criteria below as appropriate to the category of the singer, place an X in each of the standard headings below (Tone, etc.) that align with your overall score of 70--100. A numerical score should only appear in the score box at the bottom of the adjudication form. Comments should offer constructive criticism.

	<i>developing</i>	<i>accomplished</i>
Tone	-----/-----/-----	
Breathing/ Alignment	-----/-----/-----	
Language / Diction	-----/-----/-----	
Musicianship / Accuracy	-----/-----/-----	
Artistry / Expression	-----/-----/-----	
<hr/>		
Ensemble (comment only)	-----/-----/-----	

COMMENTS

Adjudicator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

SCORE

If singing for comments  
only place an X in the  
score box



National Association of Teachers of  
Singing Student Auditions  
Adjudication Form



Singer Name or # \_\_\_\_\_ Category \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if singing for comments only

**REPERTOIRE**

Title	Larger Work	Composer
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____

**ADJUDICATION**

Using the NATS rubric and the criteria below as appropriate to the category of the singer, place an X in each of the standard headings below (Tone, etc.) that align with your overall score of 70--100. A numerical score should only appear in the score box at the bottom of the adjudication form. Comments should offer constructive criticism.

	<i>developing</i>	<i>accomplished</i>
Tone	-----/-----/-----	
Breathing/ Alignment	-----/-----/-----	
Language / Diction	-----/-----/-----	
Musicianship / Accuracy	-----/-----/-----	
Artistry / Expression	-----/-----/-----	
<hr/>		
Ensemble (comment only)	-----/-----/-----	

**COMMENTS**

Adjudicator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

**SCORE**

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