

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SINGING



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National Association of Teachers of Singing

NATS National Student Auditions Regulations

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Preface

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

NSA = term for all student auditions held by a NATS entity – chapter, district, region, or nation.

NMTC = National Musical Theatre Competition

NATSAA = NATS Artist Awards Competition

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

Former NATS President Roy Delp believed "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**

NATS Student Auditions Mission Statement

As an expression of the goals of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, the NATS National 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 National Student Auditions 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 National Student Auditions
- ✦ Bring NSA 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 National Student 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 National Student Auditions so both students and teachers can cross chapter and region 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 (CM, *etc.*) as best serves the membership

NATS Constituencies

Set-up and Operation of Student Auditions

NATS National Student Auditions 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
- ◆ NSA Regulations

These regulations are available to the governing bodies of Chapters, Districts, and Regions on the NATS website (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. NATS National 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 Regions, Districts, and Chapters 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 purposes of this document, the title “Auditions Chair” will be used for the NATS member preparing, coordinating, and implementing the auditions.

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, the NSA Coordinator assembles a committee to organize and implement the NATS Audition Regulations to fulfill the mission of the Student Auditions. The NSA Coordinator may choose to delegate various tasks to committee members, but it is the NSA Coordinator's responsibility to ensure they are completed. The NSA Coordinator serves as Auditions Chair of the national preliminary, semifinal, and final rounds.

Region Governor

Region Governors will employ and enforce the Student Auditions Regulations at all levels within their regions 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. Whenever 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 NSA Regulations.

Auditions Chair

The Auditions Chair will uphold the regulations to fulfill the Mission of the National 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 on-site coordinator may choose to delegate various tasks to NATS members, but it is this coordinator's responsibility to ensure that all tasks are completed.

Adjudicators

Adjudicators will be expected to review NATS Adjudicator training materials and be familiar with adjudication rubrics (see pages 11, 14, and 23). 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 National Student Auditions. They will serve as adjudicators and will be available to assist the Auditions Chair and On-Site Coordinator upon request.

NATS National Student Auditions Structure and Practices

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

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

- ◆ Implements and supports the regulations of the National Student Auditions within the framework of the NSA Audition Regulations.
- ◆ Determines the appropriate registration or application fees for participation in their entity's level of NSA. NATS Discretionary Fund grants may not be utilized for National 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 National Student Auditions align with the National Student Audition deadlines. (The NSA national application deadline is the second Friday in April. Therefore, regions should schedule their auditions to allow enough time for their qualified singers to complete and submit their application materials prior to the national deadline.)
- ◆ Selects subcategories and non-NSA categories for auditions within the National Student Auditions Regulations.
- ◆ Establishes the amount and type of awards given to winners of their entity's auditions.
- ◆ 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 National Student Auditions: _____ Chapter"
 - **Region auditions shall be known as:**
"NATS National Student Auditions: _____ Region"
 - **National auditions shall be known as:**
"NSA National _____ Round"
- ◆ The official NATS NSA logo below is available in downloadable formats for use in auditions:



Auditions Chair

All of the following 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. 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 24.
- ◆ 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. (see p. 27).
- ◆ Ensures final results of chapter and district auditions are reported as required to the NATS Executive Office.
- ◆ Region 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 region level, ensures that categories and all eligible singers align with the appropriate NSA *Categories* (see p. 10 for classical, p. 13 for musical theatre, pp. 17 & 18 for spirituals, p. 22 for commercial music, p. 20 for others).
- ◆ 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/Region 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 pp. 11, 14, and 23).

- ◆ 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 NSA 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/Teachers Entering Students in NATS Student Auditions

NATS National Student Auditions: Chapter and District Auditions

NATS member teachers may enter students currently studying with them as their student's primary teacher as long as they are members of these entities and follow the audition procedures of that entity. If auditions are held online, teachers may enter any of their students in the chapter(s) or district(s) in which they are members.

NATS National Student Auditions: Region Auditions

The region of a NATS member is determined by the physical address in their NATS membership file. Typically, NATS members may only belong to the region of their membership-address. They may only enter their students in that one region's auditions in accordance with the audition procedures of that region. Exceptions to this regulation may be made with the approval of the Vice President for Auditions, the NATS Competitions and Auditions Coordinator, or the National Student Auditions Coordinator.

NATS National Student Auditions: National Auditions

For students of a NATS teacher to enter the National Student Audition, the NATS teacher must enter their students in their regional audition because National Student Audition begins at the regional level and progress to the national preliminary round, semifinal round and final round. Regions may only advance singers to NSA audition 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.

NATS National Student Auditions: ALL AUDITIONS

NATS Member-Teachers meeting the requirements of a student audition category in terms of their 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 in addition to auditioning. Post high school categories are open to students who meet age eligibility and study with a NATS member in an independent studio or in a college/university program.

Additional Considerations

- When entering students in the NSA Auditions, Full and Associate NATS members may enter only those students currently studying with them and may not enter students of other NATS members.
- Those teachers 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 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 may enter only those students currently studying with them in the audition and may not enter students of other members.
- Members shall complete and submit required application forms in a timely manner.
- Members shall ensure that all requirements are met and will support the NATS Copyright Policy.
- Members shall serve as adjudicators and/or act in other capacities as requested.
- Members who meet the requirements of a student audition category—age and years of study—may enter the 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.

- Members may NOT accompany their own students at any stage of the event including awards concerts with the following exception:

COVID-19 POLICY: Due to the unprecedented nature of the times in which we find ourselves with a global pandemic, growing travel restrictions, school closings (and/or transitions to online instruction), and wide-spread health concerns—we know it will be nearly impossible for many to meet and record videos with live accompanists during this time. During this crisis NATS will allow students to record audition videos using pre-recorded tracks such as tracks found on Appcompanionist, Hal Leonard’s Virtual Library, or other similar sources that offer piano-only accompaniments. YouTube Karaoke Tracks are also acceptable as long as they are piano only. NO orchestrated tracks or tracks with other instruments or voices will be acceptable and would result in disqualification. It will also be acceptable to use tracks that are recorded by your teacher or your collaborative pianist (who both would know you and your interpretation). Additionally in this extreme circumstance, should student and teacher be in the same location, a teacher may accompany a singer in the recording, but the teacher should not be visible in the recording directly or on any reflected surface (mirror, piano surface, *etc.*). Please note that this will not be an accepted precedent for future auditions but is rather an isolated exception necessitated by a highly unusual global crisis. Because of pandemic circumstances, videos will not be required to show the pianist. All other guidelines will apply and must be followed as outlined in the video submission guidelines found online at <https://www.nats.org/NSA - You Tube Round Video Submissions.html>

- **NATS Student Auditions Guidance for the 2021–2022 Audition Season**

In preparations for the upcoming season of NATS student Auditions, Chapter and Region officers are strongly encouraged to review and keep in mind the following joint statement on vaccinations and best health practices:

Joint Statement on SARS-CoV-2 Vaccinations and Best Health Practices

The National Association of Teachers of Singing Voice Science Advisory Committee, the American Choral Directors Association, Chorus America, the Barbershop Harmony Society, the Performing Arts Medicine Association, the Pan American Vocology Association, Opera America, and National Collegiate Choral Organization strongly recommend that all singing teachers, choral conductors, collaborative pianist, and singers eligible to receive an FDA authorized vaccine follow CDC guidance and become fully vaccinated as soon as possible.

We collectively support public health education efforts at the local, state, and national level that offer accurate information about vaccine efficacy and safety and that encourage all persons to become vaccinated.

We recommend that unvaccinated teachers, conductors, collaborative pianists, and singers continue to follow COVID-19 prevention and mitigation practices that have been effective in reducing the spread of the disease in indoor public areas. These include but are not limited to the use of masks, physical distancing, increased ventilation, reduced contact time, regular cleaning of common surfaces, and vigorous hand washing.

NATS encourages chapters and regions to resume live events and in-person auditions whenever possible, taking into consideration and abiding by requirements of host institutions relative to the use of masks, physical distancing, and other protocols. State and local mandates as well as host institution’s policies may necessitate flexibility with scheduling of auditions.

Regions and chapters with large numbers of participants and/or space limitations or capacity limits imposed by host institutions may find it necessary to host auditions in a hybrid format (some combination of in-person and online auditions). For example, conducting preliminary rounds in an online format and subsequently hosting in-person semi-final/final rounds will provide the structure for equitable evaluation of all students and reduce the number of in-person auditions at a site. Another acceptable alternative, when necessary, might be to conduct an entire category or multiple categories online while holding others in-person. Conversely, evaluating part of a single category of singers online while the remainder are adjudicated in person would not be equitable for the students in that category and this construct should not be used.

More detailed information with links to public resources can be found here:

<https://www.nats.org/Library/NSA Files/NATS Student Auditions Guidance Fall 2021.pdf>

Questions about Student Auditions should be directed to the NATS Competitions Coordinator Mark McQuade, NSA Coordinator Dan Johnson-Wilmot, and Vice President for Auditions Robert Wells.

National Student Audition Categories in NSA, Regions, Districts, and Chapters

The National Student Auditions begin at the region-level and progress to the national preliminary, semifinal, and final rounds. Region auditions should offer all of the categories contained in the “Category, Repertoire, Age, and Time Requirements” section of this document on pp 9 & 15. Singers may only advance to the National Student Audition 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.

Audition Category Terminology

CATEGORY	Categories are defined by voice type. Treble: Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Contralto, Countertenor Voices 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 1 TBB: Tenor, Baritone, Bass Voices 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
CATEGORY NUMBERS	Categories numbers also reflect the student’s level of study. Children–Middle School 1 & 2 , High School (HS) 3 & 4 , Lower: one–two years post-HS 5 & 6 , Upper: three–five years post-HS 7 & 8 , Advanced: post-undergraduate 9 & 10 , Other Adults 11 & 12
LENGTH OF STUDY	Length of Study in Selection of Appropriate Category of Entry Total voice study with a voice teacher (NATS Member or Non NATS Member) either in an independent studio or collegiate/conservatory program or in any combination of them is a determining factor in post-high school categories only. Post-High School Study: Lower: any one or two years of post-high school study, all as an undergraduate. Upper: any three to five years of post-high school study, all as an undergraduate. Counting years of study begins with the first day of post-high school study—meaning the first year of study is in progress. For example, a student in an undergraduate program in their fifth semester of voice study is in their third year of study. Any reasonable portion of a year will be counted as one year—even if the singer stops taking weekly lessons during a portion of that year, excepting if the singer is ill and unable or forbidden to sing during that time for medical reasons.
AGE LIMIT	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.
REPERTOIRE	High school aged 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 in all High School Categories.
AUDITIONING TEACHER-MEMBERS	NATS teacher-members who meet the requirements of a student audition category in terms of their 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 in addition to auditioning.

NSA Annual Audition Categories

Classical Audition Terminology

Aria	An aria is a solo from an opera, oratorio, mass, cantata, zarzuela, operetta, or works titled “concert aria.” Oxford Online definitions will be used for the purposes of NATS student auditions. For example, Purcell’s selections from the semi-operas and masques are considered songs.
24/26/28 Italian Art Songs and Arias	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 classical categories. For the singers in the upper and advanced categories, these pieces may ONLY count as an art song, regardless of origin. Any repertoire found outside of these collections will be considered only as the composer intended as an art song OR aria.
Memorization	All repertoire must be performed from memory with the exception of Oratorio, Mass, Requiem, and Cantata Arias. Singers may hold music scores for these types of arias as is traditional performance practice.
Original Languages	All selections should be sung in original language or in translation, if warranted by common performance practice.
Transposition	Published transpositions are permitted. Singers are expected to retain the composer’s intended style of music and to convey the essence of the character portrayed in the larger work. Performances not fulfilling these requirements may result in lower scores from adjudicators.
Art Song in English	English must be the original language of the art song.
Repertoire/Categories	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. No musical theatre, pop, soul, jazz, rhythm and blues, <i>etc.</i> may be entered in the Classical Category. 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.
Judicious Cuts	Judicious cuts in piano introductions, piano interludes, piano music after the vocal solo is completed as well as internal cuts of opera arias are allowed as is 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.
Comments Only	Any registered student may elect to sing for comments only and participate exclusively in a preliminary audition. Adjudicators will not score auditions entered for comments only.
Double-Dipping	Singers entering more than one category (Classical, Musical Theatre, Spiritual) in NATS auditions are allowed to sing the same selection in two categories provided that the repertoire requirements of both categories are met. If singers advance in NATS Auditions (chapter, regional, national rounds) in more than one category, they may not sing the same selection in multiple final auditions. See specific examples in the MT Terminology.

NSA Classical (CL) Categories

TREBLE: Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Contralto, Countertenor Voices

TBB: Tenor, Baritone, Bass Voices

CATEGORY		LENGTH OF STUDY	AGE LIMIT	MINIMUM TIME LIMIT	REPERTOIRE: all repertoire is performed from memory
CL 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 language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 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 language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 5	Lower Classical Treble Voice	0–2 years post-high school	22	10 minutes	THREE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English.* One art song in a language other than English. One aria or art song.
CL 6	Lower Classical TBB Voice	0–2 years post-high school	22	10 minutes	THREE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English.* One art song in a language other than English. One aria or art song.
CL 7	Upper Classical Treble Voice	3–5 years post-high school all as an undergraduate	25	12 minutes	FOUR contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English.* One art song in a language other than English. One aria. One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.
CL 8	Upper Classical TBB Voice	3–5 years post-high school all as an undergraduate	25	12 minutes	FOUR contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English.* One art song in a language other than English. One aria. One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.
CL 9	Advanced Classical Treble Voice	4+ years post-high school	22–30	15 minutes	FIVE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English.* One art song in a language other than English. One operatic aria. One oratorio/cantata aria.† One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.
CL 10	Advanced Classical TBB Voice	4+ years post-high school	22–30	15 minutes	FIVE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in a language other than English. One art song in English.* One operatic aria. One oratorio/cantata aria.† One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.

* English must be the original language of the required one art song in English.

† Singers may hold the music score for oratorio/cantata aria, in exception to the memorization requirement.

NATS NSA Classical Subcategories

Repertoire requirements are the same as the corresponding numbered category above.

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

Chapters, Districts, and Regions may subdivide the categories to accommodate a larger number of entries.
Subdivided categories may be designated as CL 4A–1, CL 5A–2, for example.
 Repertoire requirements and time limits must remain the same among subdivisions of any category of auditions.



NATS Audition Rubric

CLASSICAL CATEGORIES

Each singer's performance is adjudicated in comparison to the following standards as applied to the category of entry.

STANDARD	DEVELOPING 70 – 79	ADVANCING 80 – 89	MASTERING 90 – 100
STONE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resonance and timbre are appropriate to the style with balanced chiaroscuro and ring throughout range. Transitions through passaggi are smooth and efficient. Onsets and offsets are clean, clear, and balanced allowing for uniform vibrancy and clarity. Dynamic flexibility is present. The singer engages the ability to make subtle changes in timbre appropriate to the style and character of the selection. 	<p>The singer is beginning to develop vocal resonance and balanced chiaroscuro timbre. Onsets and offsets delay or press the tone and cause extra noise or air. Transitions through passaggi are difficult or uneven. Dynamic flexibility is missing in much of the performance. Vocal colors do not enhance the style and character of the selection.</p>	<p>The singer is advancing in resonance and balanced chiaroscuro through some of the range. Onsets and offsets are mostly immediate, but some pressing or breathiness is present. Passaggi transitions are inconsistent. Dynamic flexibility is evident much of the time. Vocal colors mostly enhance the style and character of the selection.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering resonance. A balanced chiaroscuro tone rings throughout range. Onsets and offsets are immediate and promote clarity. Passaggi transitions are smooth and efficient. Dynamic flexibility is consistently evident in the performance. Vocal colors consistently enhance the style and character of the selection.</p>
BREATH & ALIGNMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inhalation is easy, full, silent, and efficient. Exhalation provides stability, support, vibrancy, buoyancy, loft, and vocal energy. The alignment, coordination, and release of the head, neck, larynx, jaw, ribs, back, abdomen, legs, and feet assist a dynamic engagement of the vocal instrument. 	<p>The singer is developing appropriate respiration. Inhalation is often noisy or insufficient. During exhalation, the singer tenses or collapses requiring extra breaths to complete phrases. Buoyancy and loft are inconsistent. The lack of coordination and alignment of the body hinders a dynamic engagement of the vocal instrument.</p>	<p>The singer is advancing toward appropriate respiration. Inhalation is mostly easy and sufficient. Exhalation often provides stability, support, and vocal energy with some collapsing and tension. Buoyancy and loft are often present. The coordination and alignment of the body are mostly assisting a dynamic engagement of the vocal instrument.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering respiration. Inhalation is easy and sufficient. Exhalation provides support, balanced stability, and energy. Buoyancy and loft are consistently present. The coordination and alignment of the body consistently assist a dynamic engagement of the vocal instrument.</p>
TEXT & DICTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Languages are sung with accurate pronunciation and effective articulation with idiomatic inflection beyond basic phonetics. The singer displays a thorough understanding in communicating the text. Phrasing and flow respect the nuance of each language. 	<p>The singer is developing some language proficiency but is often inaccurate in pronunciation and articulation. Idiomatic characteristics of the language are not present. The meaning of the text is ambiguous and poorly communicated. Phrasing and flow do not respect the nuance of each language.</p>	<p>The singer is advancing in language proficiency with accurate pronunciation and articulation. Idiomatic characteristics of the language are inconsistently present. The singer often communicates the meaning of the text. Phrasing and flow respect the nuance of each language inconsistently.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering languages with accurate pronunciation and effective articulation. Idiomatic inflection beyond basic phonetics is consistently present. The singer understands and communicates the meaning of the text. Phrasing and flow consistently respect the nuance of each language.</p>
MUSICIANSHIP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pitches and rhythms are accurate. Tuning is accurate throughout range. The markings of the composer, editor, or arranger are observed and present in the performance. Selections are accurately performed from memory. 	<p>The singer's musicianship is beginning to develop with many accurate pitches and rhythms. Some errors are present. Tuning is often problematic. The markings in the score are rarely observed or present in the performance. Memorization is incomplete.</p>	<p>The singer's musicianship is advancing with pitch and rhythmic accuracy most of the time. Tuning is mostly accurate and complete with some errors. Many of the markings in the score are observed and present in the performance. Memorization is mostly complete.</p>	<p>The singer's musicianship is refined. All pitches and rhythms are accurate. Tuning is consistently accurate. The markings in the score are observed and present in the performance. Memorization is accurate.</p>
ARTISTRY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The performance synthesizes vocal and physical communication to embody and express the character and story/poetry. The performance embodies clear musical intent and embraces the uniqueness of the singer. The listeners are engaged in a believable and fulfilling aesthetic performance. 	<p>The singer's performance does not embody a thorough understanding of the text and music. Physical, musical, and vocal choices are not contributing to effective communication. The performance is self-conscious and insecure.</p>	<p>Physical, musical, and vocal choices coordinate to create believable moments. An authenticity that embraces the uniqueness of the singer is emerging. The singer is inconsistent in engaging the listeners in a fulfilling aesthetic performance.</p>	<p>Physical, musical, and vocal choices allow the singer to communicate effectively. An authentic performance embraces the uniqueness of the singer. The singer consistently engages the listeners in a believable and fulfilling aesthetic performance.</p>
ENSEMBLE (comments only) The singer and pianist coordinate their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance.	<p>The singer and pianist seem unsynchronized. The artistic goals of the performance were unclear.</p>	<p>The singer and pianist are often coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance.</p>	<p>The singer and pianist are consistently coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the entire performance.</p>

Musical Theatre Audition Terminology

Musical Theatre Selections	Repertoire is selected from musicals including film musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles, and stand-alone musical theatre songs. Only <i>one</i> of the required selections may be an operetta aria <i>or</i> a stand-alone musical theatre song.
Musical Theatre Styles	The singer is expected to select musical theatre songs from varied styles of music including bluegrass, blues, calypso, country, electro-pop, folk, gospel, jazz, legit, operetta, pop, pop-opera, rap, rhythm and blues (R&B), rock, soul, <i>etc.</i> The selected repertoire will engage the singer's ability to access a variety of vocal colors to communicate character and story (<i>see musical theatre rubric</i>). The audition will showcase the full spectrum of each singer's vocal and dramatic abilities.
Transpositions	Published transpositions are permitted, but singers are expected to retain the composer's intended style of music and to convey the essence of the character portrayed in the larger work.
Judicious Cuts	As found in common professional performance practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judicious cuts in piano introductions, piano interludes, piano music after the vocal solo is completed, and dance breaks in musical theatre selections are allowed. • In the case of numerous verses, some verses may be cut.
Original Languages	Selections must be sung in the original language or in translation as warranted by common professional performance practice.
Memorization	All selections must be performed from memory.
Comments Only	Any registered student may elect to sing for comments only and participate exclusively in a preliminary audition. Adjudicators will not score auditions entered for comments only.
Double-Dipping	Singers entering more than one category (Classical, Musical Theatre, Spiritual) in NATS auditions are allowed to sing the same piece in two categories provided that the repertoire requirements of both categories are met. Crossover repertoire in MT and classical categories can be used during the same audition—for example, "Lonely House" from <i>Street Scene</i> may be used as an aria in the classical and a selection in MT categories...or the same spiritual from Hall Johnson or American Negro Spiritual Categories can be used both as an art song in the classical and a selection in the spiritual categories. If a singer advances in NATS Auditions (chapter, regional, national rounds) in more than one category, they may not sing the same selection in multiple finals.
Authentic Performance	A genuine tone unique to each singer for the purpose of sincere communication with no elements of vocal impersonation.

NSA Musical Theatre Categories

CATEGORY		LENGTH OF STUDY	AGE LIMIT	MINIMUM TIME LIMIT	REPERTOIRE: all repertoire is performed from memory
MT 3	High School Musical Theatre Treble Voice	No limit	14–19	8 minutes	THREE contrasting musical theatre selections from musicals including film musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles, or musical theatre song literature. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from an operetta <u>or</u> musical theatre song literature.
MT 4	High School Musical Theatre TBB Voice	No limit	14–19	8 minutes	THREE contrasting musical theatre selections from musicals including film musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles, or musical theatre song literature. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from an operetta <u>or</u> musical theatre song literature.
MT 5	Lower Musical Theatre Treble Voice	0–2 years Post-high school	22	10 minutes	THREE contrasting musical theatre selections from musicals including film musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles, or musical theatre song literature. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from an operetta <u>or</u> musical theatre song literature.
MT 6	Lower Musical Theatre TBB Voice	0–2 years post-high school	22	10 minutes	THREE contrasting musical theatre selections from musicals including film musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles, or musical theatre song literature. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from an operetta <u>or</u> musical theatre song literature.
MT 7	Upper Musical Theatre Treble Voice	3–5 years post-high school all as an undergraduate	25	12 minutes	FOUR contrasting musical theatre selections from musicals including film musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles, or musical theatre song literature. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from an operetta <u>or</u> musical theatre song literature.
MT 8	Upper Musical Theatre TBB Voice	3–5 years post-high school all as an undergraduate	25	12 minutes	FOUR contrasting musical theatre selections from musicals including film musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles, or musical theatre song literature. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from an operetta <u>or</u> musical theatre song literature.

NATS NSA Musical Theatre (MT) Subcategories

Repertoire requirements are the same as the corresponding numbered category above.

Number	Category	Length of Study	Age Range Limit	Minimum Time Limit
MT 3A	Lower High School Musical Theatre Treble Voice	No limit—all HS	14–16 9th or 10th Grade	8 minutes
MT 4A	Lower High School Musical Theatre TBB	No limit—all HS	14–16 9 th or 10th Grade	8 minutes
MT 3B	Upper High School Musical Theatre Treble Voice	No limit—all HS	16–19 11th or 12th Grade	8 minutes
MT 4B	Upper High School Musical Theatre TBB	No limit—all HS	16–19 11th or 12th Grade	8 minutes
MT 5A	First Year Musical Theatre Treble Voice	1 year post-HS	20	10 minutes
MT 6A	First Year Musical Theatre TBB	1 year post-HS	20	10 minutes
MT 5B	Second Year Musical Theatre Treble Voice	2 years post-HS	22	10 minutes
MT 6B	Second Year Musical Theatre TBB	2 years post-HS	22	10 minutes
MT 7A	Third Year Musical Theatre Treble Voice	3 years post-HS	23	12 minutes
MT 8A	Third Year Musical Theatre TBB	3 years post-HS	23	12 minutes
MT 7B	Fourth/Fifth Year Musical Theatre Treble Voice	4-5 years post-HS (all as an undergraduate)	25	12 minutes
MT 8B	Fourth/Fifth Year Musical Theatre TBB	4-5 years post-HS (all as an undergraduate)	25	12 minutes

Chapters, Districts, and Regions may subdivide the categories to accommodate a larger number of entries. Subdivided categories may be designated as MT 3A–1, MT 3A–2, for example. Repertoire requirements and time limits must remain the same among subdivisions of any category of auditions.



NATS Audition Rubric

MUSICAL THEATRE CATEGORIES

Each singer's performance is adjudicated in comparison to the following standards as applied to the category of entry.

REMINDER: All vowels in MUSICAL THEATRE are some form of a MIX of Mode I (Chest/TA) and Mode II (Head/CT).

Speech Mix: Based on the closed vowels of vernacular speech. A Mode I (Chest/TA) dominant quality.

Belt Mix: An acoustic strategy. A Mode I (Chest/TA) dominant call between G4 and D5. Resonance is achieved on American open vowels as in "hat," "met," and "shot." Above D5 in Mode I (Chest/TA) dominant resonance, high belt is achieved on American closed vowels as in "hoot" and "feet." A belt is used to express moments of soaring emotion. Belt is dynamically balanced with energized airflow. It may be vibrant or retain a straight tone.

Legit Mix: An acoustic strategy. Mode II (Head/CT) dominant. Legit refers to a more spacious resonance *similar* to classical singing but retains speech-like articulation.

To hear examples of varied mixes, visit <https://www.nats.org/nsaresources.html#audio-examples>

STANDARDS	DEVELOPING 70 – 79	ADVANCING 80 – 89	MASTERING 90 – 100
TONE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The singer shows mastery of the vocal techniques required for the repertoire selected. (See above) The singer makes subtle or dramatic vocal adjustments appropriate to the style and character. The singer produces a wide variety of vocal colors throughout the song in the service of character, story, and style. Resonance is speech-like; intelligibility is a priority. 	<p>The singer is beginning to show ability in vocal techniques and is able to make some appropriate choices in keeping with the character, story, and style. Singer needs to explore more control of registration/resonance shifts and adjustments to serve character, story, and style.</p>	<p>The singer shows advancing skill in vocal techniques and is making some appropriate choices in keeping with the character, story, and style. The singer shows some control of registration/resonance shifts and makes some adjustments to serve character, story, and style.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering vocal techniques and makes appropriate choices in keeping with the character, story, and style. Singer shows intentional control of registration/resonance shifts and makes adjustments to serve character, story, and style.</p>
BREATH & ALIGNMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inhalation is easy, full, and efficient. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy. Alignment is dynamic and free to express the physical life of the character. 	<p>The singer is beginning to show easy, full, and efficient inhalation. Exhalation needs to provide more stability, support, and vocal energy. Breath needs to flow more evenly without being pressed. Alignment needs to become more dynamic and free to express the physical life of the character.</p>	<p>The singer shows easy, full, and efficient inhalation with increasing consistency. Exhalation often provides stability, support, and vocal energy. Breath often flows evenly without being pressed. Alignment is often dynamic and free to express the physical life of the character.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering easy, full, and efficient inhalation. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy. Breath flows evenly without being pressed. Alignment is consistently dynamic and free to express the physical life of the character.</p>
LANGUAGE & DICTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lyrics are sung with accurate pronunciation and effective articulation in the style <i>and</i> vernacular appropriate to the character. The singer embodies a thorough understanding and communication of the lyrics. 	<p>The singer needs more accurate pronunciation and more effective articulation in the style <i>and</i> vernacular appropriate to the character. The singer needs to understand and communicate the lyrics more effectively.</p>	<p>The singer is often using accurate pronunciation and effective articulation in the style <i>and</i> vernacular appropriate to the character. The singer often embodies an understanding and communication of the lyrics.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering accurate pronunciation and effective articulation in the style <i>and</i> vernacular appropriate to the character. The singer embodies a thorough understanding and communication of the lyrics.</p>
MUSICIANSHIP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the composer are observed and performed in idiomatic style. Memorization is organic and accurate. 	<p>Pitches and rhythms need to be more accurate. More markings of the composer need to be observed. The style requires further study. Memorization is incomplete.</p>	<p>Most pitches and rhythms are accurate. Most of the markings of the composer are observed and performed in idiomatic style. Memorization is organic and mostly accurate.</p>	<p>All pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the composer are observed and performed in idiomatic style. Memorization is organic and accurate.</p>
ARTISTRY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The performance synthesizes vocal and physical communication to embody a specific character and story. The listeners are engaged in an honest and believable performance. 	<p>The synthesis of vocal and physical communication needs to embody the character and story more clearly. Performance skills and artistry are emerging. The performance is superficial or artificial.</p>	<p>The singer is advancing in the ability to synthesize vocal and physical communication to embody the character and story. The performance is mostly honest and believable.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering the ability to synthesize vocal and physical communication to embody the character and story. The performance is honest and believable.</p>
ENSEMBLE (comments only) The singer and pianist coordinate their efforts toward the same artistic goals in performance.	<p>The singer and pianist need to coordinate toward the same artistic goals in performance.</p>	<p>The singer and pianist are often coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in performance.</p>	<p>The singer and pianist are fully coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in performance.</p>

All Subcategories for Chapter, District, and Region Auditions

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

Chapters, Districts, and Regions may subdivide the categories to accommodate a larger number of entries. Subdivided categories may be designated as CL 3A–1, CL 3A–2, for example. Repertoire requirements and time limits must remain the same among subdivisions of any category of auditions

CATEGORIES ADVANCING

1st – 5th Place Region-Award Winners

to the NSA National Preliminary Round

Number	Category	Length of Study	Age Range Limit	Time Limit
MT 3A	Lower High School Musical Theatre Treble Voices	No limit—all HS	14–16 9th or 10th Grade	8 minutes
MT 4A	Lower High School Musical Theatre TBB Voices	No limit—all HS	14–16 9 th or 10th Grade	8 minutes
MT 3B	Upper High School Musical Theatre Treble Voices	No limit—all HS	16–19 11th or 12th Grade	8 minutes
MT 4B	Upper High School Musical Theatre TBB Voices	No limit—all HS	16–19 11th or 12th Grade	8 minutes
CL 3A	Lower High School Classical Treble Voices	No limit—all HS	14–16 9th or 10th Grade	8 minutes
CL 4A	Lower High School Classical TBB Voices	No limit—all HS	14–16 9th or 10th Grade	8 minutes
CL 3B	Upper High School Classical Treble Voices	No limit—all HS	16–19 11th or 12th Grade	8 minutes
CL 4B	Upper High School Classical TBB Voices	No limit—all HS	16–19 11th or 12th Grade	8 minutes
MT 5	Lower Musical Theatre Treble Voices	0–2 years post-HS	22	10 minutes
MT 6	Lower Musical Theatre TBB Voices	0–2 years post-HS	22	10 minutes
CL 5	Lower Classical Treble Voices	0–2 years post-HS	22	10 minutes
CL 6	Lower Classical TBB Voices	0–2 years post-HS	22	10 minutes
MT 7	Upper Musical Theatre Treble Voices	3-5 years post-HS (all as an under graduate)	25	12 minutes
MT 8	Upper Musical Theatre TBB Voices	3-5 years post-HS (all as an under graduate)	25	12 minutes
CL 7	Upper Classical Treble Voices	3-5 years post-HS (all as an under graduate)	25	12 minutes
CL 8	Upper Classical TBB Voices	3-5 years post-HS (all as an under graduate)	25	12 minutes
CL 9	Advanced Classical Treble Voices	4 or more years post-High School	22–30	15 minutes
CL 10	Advanced Classical TBB Voices	4 or more years post-High School	22–30	15 minutes
HJ alternating BIENNIALY with AS				
HJ 7	Hall Johnson Spirituals Competition All Voice Types	post-High School	17–23	10 minutes
AS 3	American Negro Spiritual Category All Voice Types	no limit	14–19	8 minutes
AS 5	American Negro Spiritual Category All Voice Types	0–3 years post-High School	23	10 minutes
AS 9	American Negro Spiritual Category All Voice Types	4 or more years post-High School	30	12 minutes

Chapters, Districts, and Regions may subdivide the categories to accommodate a larger number of entries.
Subdivided categories may be designated as CL 3A–1, CL 3A–2, for example.
 Repertoire requirements and time limits must remain the same among subdivisions of any category of auditions.

NSA Biennial Auditions

Hall Johnson Spirituals Competition

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 NSA categories. Chapters are also eligible and encouraged to add this competition to chapter auditions. Whenever applicable, Chapter auditions may serve as qualifying rounds for advancement to region auditions.

Biennial Hall Johnson Spirituals Competition

(National rounds in this category will be held in even-numbered years)

Category	Length of Study	Age Limit	Time Limit	Repertoire performed from memory
HJ 7	Post-High School Ages All voice types	17–23	10 minutes	THREE contrasting selections from approved Hall Johnson spirituals repertoire See approved spirituals repertoire below.

For more information about the Biennial Hall Johnson Spirituals Competition, visit:

https://www.nats.org/Hall_Johnson_Spirituals_Competition.html

All approved Hall Johnson spirituals repertoire listed below is available in the following publications

- The Carl Fischer “Hall Johnson Collection” (CF)
- The Hal Leonard Digital Series, “Hall Johnson Concert Spirituals” (HL)
- The G. Schirmer “30 Spirituals” arranged by Hall Johnson (GS)

ONLY REPERTOIRE SELECTED FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST MAY BE SUNG IN THIS CATEGORY

Other selections in the collections listed above are not eligible repertoire in this category.

Ain’t Got Time to Die - HL
City Called Heaven - HL
Crucifixion - CF
Ev’ry Time I Feel de Spirit - HL, GS
Fix Me, Jesus - HL
Give Me Jesus - CF
His Name So Sweet - CF
Honor! Honor! - CF
I Been in de Storm So Long - HL
I Got To Lie Down - CF
I’m Gon’ter Tell God All o’ my Troubles - CF
Le’s Have a Union - HL
My God is So High - HL
My Good Lord Done Been Here - CF
Oh, Glory! - CF
Po’ Mo’ner Got a Home at Las’ - HL, GS
Ride On, King Jesus!- CF, GS
Roll Jerd’n, Roll - HL
Take My Mother Home - CF
Wade in de Water - HL
Witness - CF

All selections listed above are annotated and analyzed in
The Concert Spirituals of Hall Johnson: An Annotated Guide to Interpretation and Performance
by Eugene Thamon Simpson.

American Negro Spiritual Category

Nationally, the American Spiritual Category is offered in odd numbered years and the Hall Johnson Spirituals Competition is offered in even numbered years. The American Negro Spiritual Category is added to annual region-student auditions with the top five region-winners advancing to the NSA rounds. Chapters are also encouraged to add this competition to chapter auditions. Where applicable, chapter-auditions may serve as qualifying rounds for advancing to region-auditions.

American Negro Spiritual Audition Terminology

Spiritual Definition	Arrangements in classical style of the North American Negro Spirituals by composers similar in style to the spirituals of Hall Johnson, R. Nathaniel Dett, Florence Price, Moses Hogan, Edward Boatner, Undine Smith Moore, James Weldon and J. Rosamond Johnson, Margaret Bonds and others. The classical style excludes Gospel, Blues and Jazz music. A more extensive definition is found in NATS FAQ-Student Auditions.
Memorization	All audition selections must be performed from memory.
Diction	Because of the idiomatic nature of the spiritual, diction restrictions will be relaxed. Standard English pronunciations may be observed, <i>i.e.</i> “de” or “duh” may be replaced with “the.”
Transposition	Published transpositions consistent with the NATS Copyright Policy are allowed.
Spirituals in English	English must be the original language of the selection.
Spiritual Classical Performance Style	The word “classical” in this context refers to singing spirituals in the classical style with only mild deviations and interpolation to what is written in the music and without musical theatre, pop, gospel, contemporary Christian, soul, jazz, rhythm and blues expressions or vocal technique. See the NATS FAQ-Student Auditions for the difference between Spirituals and Gospel Songs
Judicious Cuts	Piano introductions, piano interludes, piano music after the vocal solo is completed, and internal cuts of spiritual selections are allowed as in common performance practice. Cuts of a verse or verses of selections are not allowed. In the case of strophic pieces, all verses should remain that are traditionally included.
Comments Only	Any registered student may elect to sing for comments only and participate exclusively in a preliminary audition. Adjudicators will not score auditions entered for comments only.

Biennial American Negro Spiritual Categories

(National rounds in this category will be held in odd-numbered years)

Category	Length of Study	Age Limit	Time Limit	Voice Type	Repertoire performed from memory
AS 3 High School American Negro Spiritual	no limit	14–19	8 minutes	All	THREE American Negro Spirituals contrasting by composer, tempo, and text. See approved spirituals repertoire, p.17
AS 7 First–Third Years post-High School American Negro Spiritual	0–3 years post-high school	23	10 minutes	All	THREE American Negro Spirituals contrasting by composer, tempo, and text. See approved spirituals repertoire, p.17
AS 9 Fourth–Fifth Years post-High School Ages and Graduate Ages American Negro Spiritual	4+ year post-high school	30	12 minutes	All	FOUR American Negro Spirituals contrasting by composer, tempo, and text. See approved spirituals repertoire, p.17

For more information about the Biennial American Negro Spiritual Category, visit:

https://www.nats.org/American_Negro_Spiritual_Competition.html

Spirituals not found in the Approved Repertoire List

may be vetted/approved by contacting one of the following NATS members:

Alexis Davis-Hazell adavishazell@ua.edu
Barbara Hill-Moore bhmoore@mail.smu.edu
Everett McCorvey everett.mccorvey@uky.edu
Marcia Porter MPorter@admin.fsu.edu

Clarification from NSA Student Auditions NATS Website FAQ

What is the NATS' Definition and Terminology of American Negro Spirituals?

The American Negro Spirituals are the folk songs created by the enslaved Africans after their arrival in North America between 1619 and 1860. Although slavery ended with Abraham Lincoln's signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, which went into effect January 1, 1863, the enslaved people in Texas did not receive the notice until June 19, 1865, hence the Juneteenth Celebration.

The songs created and sung by enslaved women, men, and children were born in North America and recant with dignity, resolve, and sometimes joy, their stories of life, death, faith, hope, escape, and survival. These melodies and stories have been passed down orally from generation to generation in the plantation fields, in churches, and in camp meetings and have presently taken their places on concert hall stages and recital series around the world. Although most of the composers of the spirituals we now sing are unknown, the melodies and lyrics have been arranged by hundreds of arrangers in many different styles. The spirituals approved for performance in NATS auditions are the classical arrangements of the North American Negro Spirituals and arranged by classical North American composers. The terminology for singing in the American Negro Spiritual category is outlined and defined in the classical Audition Terminology. While the American Negro Spirituals' geneses are of and by African Americans, they tell the stories in music of the history of our country. NATS encourages *all* singers to explore, study and perform these beautiful songs.

What is the difference between a Spiritual and a Gospel selection?

The American Negro Spirituals category is only for classical renditions of American Negro Spirituals in the classical art song tradition. Gospel, Contemporary Christian, Jazz, and Blues selections are not allowed in this category. In addition, students should sing what is written in their select arrangement—with only mild deviations from what is written in the music. The goal is to celebrate the music and the meaning of the text without a focus on interpolated histrionics not notated in the music. For a more in-depth discussion of the Gospel music genre, please refer to the Oxford Online Dictionary entry on Gospel music (37.2.5).

Other Audition Categories

Categories Not Yet Advancing to National Student Auditions

Category Number Title	Length of Study	Age Limit	*Time Limit	Repertoire: all repertoire is sung from memory
CL 1 Children	No limit	11 and Younger Below 6 th grade	8 minutes	TWO or THREE contrasting age-appropriate selections from classical repertoire.
MT 1 Children's Musical Theatre	No limit	11 and Younger Below 6 th grade	8 minutes	TWO or THREE contrasting age-appropriate musical theatre selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles or musical theatre song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> musical theatre song literature.
CL 2 Youth	No limit	11–14 6 th –8 th grades	8 minutes	TWO or THREE contrasting age-appropriate selections from classical repertoire.
MT 2 Youth Musical Theatre	No limit	11–14 6 th –8 th grades	8 minutes	TWO or THREE contrasting age-appropriate musical theatre selections from musicals including film musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles or musical theatre song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> musical theatre song literature.
CM 1	No limit	11 Below 6 th grade	8 minutes	TWO or THREE contrasting age-appropriate selections from commercial music repertoire.
CM 2	No limit	11–14 6 th –8 th grades	8 minutes	TWO or THREE contrasting age-appropriate selections from commercial music repertoire.
CL 11 *Adult Treble	No limit	22+	10–12 minutes	THREE contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English. One art song in language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 12 *Adult TBB	No limit	22+	10–12 minutes	THREE contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English. One art song in language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
MT 11 *Adult Musical Theatre Treble	No limit	22+	10–12 minutes	THREE contrasting age-appropriate musical theatre selections from musicals including film musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles or musical theatre song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> musical theatre song literature.
MT 12 *Adult Musical Theatre TBB	No limit	22+	10–12 minutes	THREE contrasting age-appropriate musical theatre selections from musicals including film musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles or musical theatre song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> musical theatre song literature.

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

NATS Regions, Chapters, and Districts are encouraged to create additional categories that do not yet advance to the National Student Auditions to address the needs of their students.

COMMERCIAL MUSIC TERMINOLOGY

Arrangements	Original or published arrangements of songs created for musical theatre productions are not accepted in CM categories in NATS Student Auditions but may be entered in the Musical Theatre Categories.
Commercial Music	Commercial music includes all genres of vocal music performed by recording artists, not included in the classical and musical theatre NATS Student Auditions categories. Commercial music includes bluegrass, blues, contemporary Christian, country, folk, gospel, jazz, pop, rap, rock, rhythm and blues (R&B), soul, and all ethnic music, <i>etc.</i>
Cover Song	A cover song is a selection performed by someone other than the composer or original recording artist. Performing a cover does not imply an imitation of the original recording artist.
Diva Microphone	A smaller microphone worn on the singer's head.
Microphone Technique	When using a microphone, the singer needs to make intentional choices of the microphone's placement (handheld, on a stationary stand, diva microphone, off-camera), which influences interpretation. When choosing to use a handheld microphone, the singer will make intentional choices in the distance of the microphone from their mouth to create stylized effects.
Rhythmic Groove	An organic embodiment of the beat that goes beyond specific notation or time signature, often referred to as the feel of a song.
Vocal Stylisms*	<p>Commercial music's genre-specific elements of vocal interpretation. Vocal stylisms are often not notated in the music.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate onsets vary among fry, slide, yodel, growl, breathy, cry, creak, flip, scream, <i>etc.</i> • Appropriate releases vary among abrupt glottal stops, breathy, fall-off, fall-up, shadow vowels, fry, creaky, gaspy, <i>etc.</i> • Appropriate nuances/embellishments including riffs/runs, licks, flip, pop-appoggiatura, yodel/register shifts, bends/scoops, <i>etc.</i> <p>Visit NSA resources online at www.nats.org to hear specific examples.</p>
Memorization	All selections must be performed from memory.
Comments Only	Any registered student may elect to sing for comments only and participate in the preliminary audition. The judges will not score auditions entered for comments only.
Off-Camera	Not visible on video, placed beyond the edge of the camera's frame.
Full Song	An entire song, no internal cuts. Intros and outros may be abbreviated to accommodate audition's time limits.
Authentic Performance	A genuine tone unique to each singer for the purpose of sincere communication with no elements of vocal impersonation.

**Edrie Means Weekly coined the term Vocal Stylisms in her teaching of Commercial Music and Musical Theatre.*

Commerical Music Categories

(not yet advancing to national levels of NSA auditions)

Each audition may include one or more commercial music style(s).

Microphone Requirements for All Commercial Music categories

Auditions are to be performed with amplification. In live auditions, all singers are required to use the amplification equipment provided. In video auditions, the use of a microphone off-camera or on-camera (on a stationary stand, diva microphone, and/or handheld microphone) is an artistic choice influencing interpretation.

Accompaniment Requirements for All Commercial Music categories

Singers may perform with any or any combination of the following accompaniment options:

- a pre-recorded instrumental track without backing vocals
- a live collaborative pianist
- in a limited capacity (see below), accompany themselves on an acoustic instrument

Commerical Music Categories

Category		Length of Study	Age Limit	Time Limit	Voice Type	Repertoire performed from memory with amplification
CM 3	High School Commercial Music	No limit	14–19	8 minutes	All	TWO contrasting full songs: one ballad + one uptempo <i>Only one song may be an original song, instead of a cover. Only one song may be self-accompanied on an acoustic instrument, instead of performing with an instrumental track or live collaborative pianist.</i>
CM 5	Lower Commercial Music	1–2 years Post-HS	22	10 minutes	All	THREE contrasting full songs <i>Only one song may be an original song, instead of a cover. Only one song may be self-accompanied on an acoustic instrument, instead of performing with an instrumental track or live collaborative pianist.</i>
CM 7	Upper Commercial Music	3-5 years Post-HS	25	12 minutes	All	FOUR contrasting full songs <i>Up to 2 songs may be original songs, instead of a cover. Up to 2 songs may be self-accompanied on an acoustic instrument, instead of performing with an instrumental track or live collaborative pianist.</i>

Chapters, Districts, and Regions with a larger number of entries

may add categories to allow TREBLE & TBB VOICES separate categories as follows:

HIGH SCHOOL CM

CM 3 would become for Treble voices
adding **CM 4** for HS TBB voices

LOWER CM

CM 5 would become for Treble voices
adding **CM 6** for Lower TBB voices

UPPER CM

CM 7 would become for Treble voices
adding **CM 8** for Upper TBB voices

Repertoire requirements and time limits must remain the same in categories added to separate voice types.



National Association of Teachers of Singing

NATS Audition Rubric

COMMERCIAL MUSIC CATEGORIES

Each singer's performance is adjudicated in comparison to the following standards as applied to the category of entry.

STANDARDS	DEVELOPING 70 – 79	ADVANCING 80 – 89	MASTERING 90 – 100
STONE Singer shows mastery of the vocal demands of songs selected and makes subtle or dramatic adjustments appropriate to the style and emotional expression. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each commercial style requires a variety of authentic vocal colors and sounds. • Vocal tone may include some form of a mix of Mode I (Chest/TA) and Mode II (Head/CT) as well as varied organic, primal sounds born of raw emotion. • Interpretive vocal stylisms may include varied vocal onsets, releases, nuances, and embellishments, which stylistically color the vocal tone with fry, cry, growl, breathiness, etc. (See <i>CM Terminology</i>) • All CM styles are reliant on amplification. The microphone is used dynamically to facilitate vocal stylisms as well as projection. 	The singer is beginning to show ability in meeting the demands of each song and to make some appropriate choices in keeping with the specific style of each song.	The singer shows advancing ability in meeting the demands of each song and is often able to make appropriate choices in keeping with the specific style of each song.	The singer is mastering the ability to meet the demands of each song and makes appropriate choices in keeping with the specific style of each song.
BREATHING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inhalation is efficient to the style and may be noisy or silent in response to raw emotion. • Exhalation provides stability and vocal energy. The appearance of effort may be intrinsic to style. 	The singer is beginning to inhale efficiently to meet the demands of each style. Exhalation needs to provide more stability and vocal energy.	The singer inconsistently inhales efficiently to meet the demands of each style. Exhalation inconsistently provides stability and vocal energy.	The singer is mastering efficient inhalation to meet the demands of each style. Exhalation provides stability and vocal energy.
LYRICS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lyrics are articulated in the style appropriate to the selected style of commercial music. • Vocal tract shaping and diction enhance the individuality of the performance. 	Articulation is incompatible with the style of the song. The singer is beginning to engage the lyrics to embody the essence of each style.	Articulation is often compatible with the style of each song. The singer is often engaging the lyrics to embody the essence of each style.	Articulation is compatible with the style of each song. The singer is consistently engaging the lyrics to embody the essence of each style.
VOCAL STYLISMS* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The song's artistic interpretation includes expressive vocal stylisms characteristic of the selected style. • Vocal stylisms may include varied vocal onsets, releases, nuances, and embellishments such as fry, riffs, cry, growl, etc. (See <i>CM Terminology</i>) 	Vocal interpretations lack the vocal stylisms characteristic of each genre. The singer is beginning to develop a facility with vocal stylisms.	Vocal interpretations include some vocal stylisms characteristic of each selection's style. The singer is developing a facility with artistic vocal stylisms.	Vocal interpretations include vocal stylisms characteristic of each genre. The singer has proficient facility with artistically effective vocal stylisms.
MUSICIANSHIP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance is in tune. • Rhythmic groove enhances the performance. • Memorization is secure and accurate. 	Pitches need to be more accurate. The style and rhythmic groove require further study. Memorization is incomplete.	Most pitches are accurate. The style and rhythmic groove are developing. Memorization is organic and mostly accurate.	All pitches are accurate. The style and rhythmic groove enhance the performance. Memorization is organic and accurate.
ARTISTIC INTERPRETATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The performance is authentic. • The performance offers a unique, stylized interpretation of the music. • The performance is specific to the selected style of commercial music. 	The singer needs an increased understanding of the stylistic elements of each selection. The interpretation lacks authenticity and is not unique to the singer.	The singer is advancing in the ability to communicate the stylistic elements of each selection. The interpretation has moments of authenticity unique to the singer.	The singer is mastering the ability to communicate the stylistic elements of each selection. The interpretation is authentic and unique to the singer.
ENSEMBLE (comments only) The singer coordinates with the accompaniment effectively to accomplish artistic goals.	The singer needs to coordinate more effectively with the accompaniment to accomplish artistic goals.	The singer is advancing in the ability to coordinate with the accompaniment to accomplish artistic goals.	The singer is mastering effective coordination with the accompaniment to accomplish artistic goals.

*Edrie Means Weekly coined the term vocal stylism in her teaching of Commercial Music and Musical Theatre.

Audition Site Procedures for all NSA

- Each singer entered in the same category is allotted the same amount of time to perform. Singers select their first song or aria to perform. The adjudication panel requests subsequent selections until the audition reaches the time limit or the singers performs all repertoire entered. Time begins when the singer begins to announce their first selection.
- Time continues to run between selections. In preliminary rounds, each adjudication panel chair should expedite a rotation cycle among the panel members for subsequent repertoire selections. Repertoire selections should be made without delay because time continues to run between selections.
- During the audition, selections are to be sung in their entirety as prepared by the student and required by the NSA regulations, **WITHOUT** edits from adjudicators. Examples of prohibited edits are 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 selection.
- Repertoire is heard as the time limit allows. If exceeding the audition's time limit, all repertoire will not be heard. An audition reaching the time limit will end when the time limit is reached even if a selection is in progress. Teachers should inform their students of this possibility.
- When an adjudicator or time-keeper calls or signals "stop," the audition is completed and will end.

Rating and Scoring Systems

All NATS 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 National Student Auditions have preliminary and final rounds. Larger enrollments may require semifinal rounds. Live auditions with a larger number of singers in a category may be subdivided into two or more groups for the preliminary round.

The following **OPTIONS** are possible to accommodate the structure and size of the auditions:

- **Preliminary Round:** All singers will be scored with comments. (Students entering for comments only will not be scored.)
- **Semifinals (when 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 (smaller number of entrants or smaller number advancing to the next round).

Preliminary Round

1. Singers in all categories will sing one song of their choice followed by songs selected by their adjudicators until the category's time limit is reached or the student has performed all selections entered.
2. During the preliminary round, adjudicators will use the NATS rubrics to write constructive comments and a score between 70 and 100 on their adjudication form. If possible, these adjudication forms will be made available prior to the next round of auditions to allow singers to benefit from the adjudicators' written comments.
3. Chapters and Districts holding only a Preliminary and Final Round may use audition scores to advance an agreed upon number of singers 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, *i.e.* 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 receiving 2 scores of 90 or above OR an average score of 90 or above in the preliminary round will advance to 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 a song or aria entered in the preliminary round. Entities may opt to allow more than one selection in the Semifinal 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, those comments will be made available prior to the final round when possible. If adjudicators write no comments, the rating sheets will not be made available to teachers or students. If using scores, the 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. Each student will sing one song of his/her choice in its entirety. This selection must be one of a song or aria entered in the preliminary round. Some auditions may place a time limit on the selection performed in the final round. Selections chosen should take any required time limits into consideration.
2. The adjudicators will not confer. Each adjudicator independently 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 and/or recognitions.
3. All awards are presented after the Final Round is completed.
4. **Ties:** If two or more students tie for first place, the awards for the first and second places will be pooled and divided equally among the winners. All will be awarded as 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 additional finalists. See Recognition and Awards on page 26.

Scoring System

The scoring system is developed to allow objective as well as subjective measures of a singer's performance. The scoring system is structured to provide more detailed guidance to adjudicators as they seek to provide appropriate and constructive feedback to students. All auditions will use the official NATS National Student Auditions Adjudication Form available on pp 25-26 as well as available online.

Adjudicators' Responsibilities

- Provide scoring for each singer in comparison to standards developed specifically for these auditions. Adjudicating relative to a common standard (see adjudication rubrics on pp. 11, 14, and 23) will provide a fairer overall result than comparing singers in a given category to one another to determine scores merited.
- Place an **X** on the tick lines for each standard on the adjudication form to indicate a general level of accomplishment. Note that while a specific numerical score is not listed for each standard, the range of developing to mastering artistry is divided into three sections corresponding with the 70-100 range of possible scores. The Ensemble marking will not factor into an audition's score because some singers may be using a staff or unfamiliar accompanist with whom they have had little opportunity to rehearse.

	<i>DEVELOPING</i>		<i>ADVANCING</i>		<i>MASTERING</i>
Tone	-----		-----		-----
Breathing/Alignment	-----		-----		-----
Language / Diction	-----		-----		-----
Musicianship / Accuracy	-----		-----		-----
Artistry / Expression	-----		-----		-----
Ensemble (<i>comments only</i>)	-----		-----		-----
TICKS REFLECT SCORES	70	-----	79 80	-----	89 90
		-----		-----	100

- In the preliminary round, provide constructive comments on the performance that correspond with the ratings provided on the tick lines for each standard. The audition rubrics provide guidance to the adjudicator in constructing comments in agreement with their ratings. Entities may elect to also provide comments in semifinal rounds whenever possible.
- Assign a final overall score between 70-100 that generally corresponds to a compilation of markings given on the standards' tick lines. If all the markings are in the mastering third of the tick lines, then a score in the 90-100 range is appropriate. If all the markings are in the advancing/middle third of the tick lines, then a score in the 80-89 range is appropriate. If all the markers are in the developing third of the tick lines, then a score in the 70-79 range is appropriate. Averaging marks that fall in varied thirds of the tick line may also indicate an appropriate score.

Adjudicating Standards

Detailed national standards are listed in the left column of the adjudication rubrics found on pages 11, 14, and 23. Each standard describes the qualities an ideal singer will have. Each student-singer's performance is adjudicated in comparison to the standards as applied to the category of entry.

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 students. Examples of options:

Public Announcements

An announcement in order of placement of finalists for each category allows individual recognition of outstanding singers. Teachers of finalists may be announced 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 as an effective way to recognize the efforts and contributions of a larger group of people. A round of applause to recognize the efforts and artistry of collaborative pianists is also appropriate.

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 category. In recognition of the greater preparation and expense involved for Upper and Advanced Categories entries and as incentive for these students to participate, some NATS entities employ a graduated scale of monetary awards based on length of study. Typically, awards are paid from the total pool of student-entry 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 hear and acknowledge the exceptional work of outstanding students of singing.

Special Awards

Special Awards may include: Most Promising Professional Voice, Singer of the Year, Collaborative Pianist of the Year, *etc.* Certificates and/or monetary prizes for special may be awarded as deemed appropriate and financially feasible.

NATS Copyright Policy

NATS encourages its members, their students, collaborative pianists, and the general populations to become educated about and to comply with all applicable copyright laws.

Reproduction of a copyrighted work constitutes copyright infringement unless:

- a license to reproduce such work has been obtained
- the use is considered fair use
- the work is in the public domain

OR

- a valid exception to copyright infringement exists

NATS requires students, teachers, and other participants in NATS affiliated events, auditions, and competitions to affirm compliance with the NATS Copyright Policy, and to use only authorized reproductions of copyrighted works.

NATS Policy on Copyright Laws

Click on the link below to review the policy in detail:

https://www.nats.org/Copyright_Resources.html

NSA Regulations and Organization

NATS National Student Auditions Region-Rounds

The NATS National Student Auditions begin at the regional level and progress to the national preliminary round, semifinal round and final round. Region-auditions should include all of the categories contained in the “Categories, Repertoire, Age, and Time Requirements” section of this document. 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 Classical TBB, Lower Classical Treble, *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 region-category will advance to the National Preliminary Round/YouTube Screening, *i.e.* five each from region **Lower Treble CL 5-A** and five each from region **Lower Treble CL 5-B** for a total of ten to compete in **Lower Treble CL 5** in the National Preliminary Round/YouTube Screening.

At the time of application for the National Student Auditions, the Region-Governor or Region-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 region-level.

Musical theatre students who exceed the age limits for the Upper Musical Theatre categories are encouraged to enter the National Musical Theatre 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 Region-Auditions - Deadline for Region-Governor to submit a list of eligible singers and the repertoire for each to the National Student Auditions Chair.

Second Friday of April - Deadline for YouTube submissions

Beginning of May - Deadline for adjudication and scoring results from YouTube submissions

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

Late June/Early July - National Student Audition 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 for a fee and for Final rounds at no extra cost to the singer. Rehearsals with the Staff Collaborative Pianists will be provided prior to the Semifinal Round. Singers who advance to the Final round with 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 and Lower Categories*

First Place	\$120
Second Place	\$600
Third Place	\$450

Upper and Advanced Categories*

First Place	\$160
Second Place	\$900
Third Place	\$500

** Should adjudication result in a tie, the corresponding awards will be pooled and divided evenly between the singers. Both winners in a tie will be awarded the same place. Not all prizes must be awarded in all categories, depending on enrollment and/or scoring.*



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SINGING NSA Adjudication Form



SINGER'S NAME or # _____

CATEGORY _____

← Check, if singing for **comments only**

ADJUDICATION

Using the NATS rubric as appropriate to the category of the singer, place an X along the tick line following each of the rubric's standards listed below. Align your ticks with your overall score of 70–100. A numerical score should only appear in the score box at the bottom of the adjudication form. Support your ticks below with constructive criticism in your comments.

STANDARD	DEVELOPING	ADVANCING	MASTERING
Tone	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
Breathing/Alignment	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
Language / Diction	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
Musicianship / Accuracy	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
Artistry / Expression	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
REFLECTING SCORES	70-----79	80-----89	90-----100
Ensemble (comments only)	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----

COMMENTS

ADJUDICATOR'S SIGNATURE _____

PRINT NAME _____ DATE _____

SCORE

*If singing for
comments only,
mark an X in the
score box.*



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SINGING NSA Adjudication Form



SINGER'S NAME or # _____ CATEGORY _____

← Check, if singing for **comments only**

REPERTOIRE

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

ADJUDICATION

Using the NATS rubric as appropriate to the category of the singer, place an X along the tick line following each of the rubric's standards listed below. Align your ticks with your overall score of 70–100. A numerical score should only appear in the score box at the bottom of the adjudication form. Support your ticks below with constructive criticism in your comments.

STANDARD	DEVELOPING	ADVANCING	MASTERING
Tone	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
Breathing/Alignment	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
Language / Diction	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
Musicianship / Accuracy	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
Artistry / Expression	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
REFLECTING SCORES	70-----79	80-----89	90-----100
Ensemble (comments only)	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----

COMMENTS

SCORE

ADJUDICATOR'S SIGNATURE _____

PRINT NAME _____ DATE _____

If singing for
comments only,
mark an X in the
score box.

History of NATS Student 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. In 1993, a 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 16 years.

In 2007, another survey of the policies of chapters, districts, and regions was conducted to assess the 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. This committee 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 progress from the regional level to culminate at a national level by gathering information from NATS 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. This proposal was passed by NATS National Board of Directors.

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 53rd 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. The national model's goal was to be workable for region, district, and chapter auditions across the fourteen regions of NATS. This revised structure of NATS Student Auditions was necessitated by many factors that have a far-reaching impact on the work of NATS members. 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 consider their performance in the context of other student performances in their immediate locale, while also being able to consider their performance in the context of other singers their age at their level of study throughout the country. With over 10,000 auditions being heard every year, the ability to consider this valuable context gives both teachers and students additional feedback on their progress in the study of vocal performance.

At regular intervals, NATS National Student Audition Regulations continue to be reviewed and revised by the National NATS Audition Regulations Committee with input gathered from region-auditions chairs.