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**RULES FOR THE YOUTH DIVISION CONTEST
WIND BAND / BRASS BAND**



General

Every four years, the World Music Contest is the stage on which Wind Bands, Fanfare Bands, Brass Bands and Percussion Ensembles can compete with the world's best. This is wind & percussion music of the highest quality, performed by participants from all over the world. In fact, the WMC has the most international field of participants in the world.

Inspiring young talent in an intercultural setting is and will always be an important goal for WMC. The exchange between young musicians from different countries has been successful and motivating in the past, and it will play an even bigger role in our WMC Academy and concert contests at WMC 2026.

WMC will introduce a new youth division for the Brass Band and Wind Band sector in 2026. Participating bands in this contest can be existing youth bands, school band, regional bands or project bands made up of players specially selected to form a band for the contest.

Wind Bands and Brass Bands in the Youth Divisions will perform an Own Choice Program within the set time. The total program therefore consists of a Test Piece (Grade 3) and an Own Choice Program.

In addition to competing in the contest, bands will be able to take part in the Fringe Festival, attending concerts during WMC Line-up and visit other contests.

Contest schedule 2026

Brass Band

Youth Division | max. 10 bands, Friday July 10

Location: Roda Hall.

Wind Band

Youth Division | max. 20 bands, Thursday July 30 and Friday July 31

Location: Roda Hall or Kerkrade Theater (will be decided November 2025)

The contest venues are the Roda Hall and Kerkrade Theater in the City of Kerkrade, The Netherlands.

Article 1: Sections and age limit

Participation in the Youth Division of WMC 2026 is open to bands in the sections:

- Wind Band
For musicians aged 21 and below (i.e. born in or after 2005)
- Brass Band
For musicians aged 18 and below (i.e. born in or after 2008)

10% of the total number of musicians may be older than the maximum age. This is to allow for the possible use of larger instruments.

Passport control will be carried out randomly, with possible disqualification from the contest as a result.

Application is possible for those bands that qualify for the division of their choice based on their general playing standard. Participating bands/ensembles must submit a Curriculum Vitae online, via the My WMC portal, demonstrating that the quality and history of the band is such that they are eligible for participation in the Concert Contests.

Application for WMC 2026 opens on April 1, 2025 and closes on November 1, 2025. The assessment of the Curriculum Vitae by the Artistic Manager of WMC will take place as soon as possible after completion of application.

Article 2: Contest schedule and possible changes, prize ceremony and draw

WMC reserves the right to cancel contest days based on the number of registrations.

Each cluster of divisions will end with a prize ceremony in which all the results are announced simultaneously. Besides the conductor a band/ensemble shall appoint a representative to attend the ceremony on stage.

In January 2026 there will be a drawing of lots for all participants in the Concert Contests to determine who is playing at what time. This drawing is supervised by a notary and will be broadcast through live stream. Results are binding.

Article 3: Duration of the program

Wind Bands and Brass Bands Youth Division:

- 3.1 The maximum duration of the Own Choice Program depends on the length of the Test Piece.
- 3.2 The total program consists of a Test Piece and an Own Choice Program within the set time.
- 3.3 Participants are entirely free to determine the order in which they wish to perform their music.
- 3.4 In addition to the Test Piece, a maximum of 3 works may be programmed. Of these, 1 work may be a composition for soloist and band, provided that another work is programmed in addition.
- 3.5 The participating bands must perform a program with a total performance time of at least 20 minutes and a maximum of 30 minutes, including changes.

Time limits:

- 3.6 Violations of the set time limits will result in penalties in the form of point deduction(s) from the grand total: see Article 4.
- 3.7 Time limits will be checked by WMC through twofold time registration:
 - Total performance time: time registration of the total performance time including all stage interactions (for example changes, own announcement or presentations). This time registration starts at the first note of the program (that sounds), or at the first stage interaction being part of the performance and stops after the last note of the program (that sounds) c.q. the last stage interaction being part of the performance.
 - Applause time: time registration of the total applause time. Applause time will be deducted from the total performance time leading to the Final total performance time.

Article 4: Penalty points

Penalty points for exceeding time limits for Youth Division contests will be assigned based on the Final total performance time (total performance time minus applause time) as follows:

• Exceedance by one (1) minute	-	0,00	points
• Exceedance by two (2) minutes	-	0,50	points
• Exceedance by three (3) minutes	-	1,00	points
• Exceedance by four (4) minutes	-	1,50	points
• Exceedance by five (5) minutes	-	2,00	points
• Exceedance by six (6) minutes	-	2,50	points
• Exceedance by seven (7) minutes	-	3,00	points
• Exceedance by eight (8) minutes	-	3,50	points
• Exceedance by nine (9) minute	-	4,00	points
• Exceedance by ten (10) minutes	-	4,50	points

Article 5: Percussion, Stage – build-up, clearing the stage

Percussion

All bands must use the standard percussion set provided by WMC Kerkrade as listed in the application module, with a few exceptions (My WMC portal). Bands that substitute percussion instruments may be disqualified from the contest.

Wind Bands and Brass Bands Youth Division

The maximum stage time, 45 minutes (including build-up and clearing of the stage) is divided as follows:

1. A maximum of 10 minutes is available before your performance for build-up. (A warming-up room is available prior to your performance close to the main stage).
2. A maximum of 30 minutes is available for the performance (with adjudication).
3. A maximum of 5 minutes is available to clear the stage after your performance.

Article 6: Scores

Scores of the **Own Choice Program** must be submitted as follows:

1. As a PDF in the application module (My WMC portal) by February 1, 2026
2. Three (3 pcs.) original hardcopy scores must be submitted (for use by the adjudicators) by May 1, 2026. Send the scores to the post box of WMC, including the bands/ensembles name and registration number. A shipping label with the name and registration number can be downloaded from the application module (My WMC portal).

Article 7: Copyrights

WMC Kerkrade requires all participating bands/ensembles to comply with copyright laws regarding performance and/or use of arrangements of copyrighted music. If copyright violation is found to exist, disqualification may occur. We also refer to our General Terms and Conditions on our website for more details and information.

Article 8: Program and use of the contest venues

- 8.1. Each program to be performed must comply with the provisions of Article 3 Duration of the program.
- 8.2. For Wind Bands and Brass Bands each program contains a Test Piece set by WMC.
- 8.3. Compositions for bands that require an extended instrumentation are allowed, provided that they fit the available contest stage (see Technical Rider).
- 8.4. The use of the other spaces of the contest venue is also allowed but must be approved by WMC to guarantee such use does not interfere with general security regulations.

Article 9: Instrumentation and doubling of parts

Ideally compositions must be performed according to the instrumentation of the scores concerned. WMC allows the doubling of parts by instruments that are not in the original score. For the Youth Divisions substitute instruments are allowed and may be used to replace certain instruments during the performance, provided that the prescribed musical line is maintained.

Article 10: Adjudicators

The participating bands will be adjudicated by an International Team of Adjudicators, consisting of 3 people with broad expertise in Wind and Brass Bands and musical qualities. The International Team of Adjudicators will be supervised by an Independent Chairman of Adjudication.

Article 11: Scoring, adjudication parameters, distinctions and awards

11.1. Each band/ensemble will receive a score based on the following:

Test Piece – Wind Bands and Brass Bands:

Adjudicator	Artistic Outcome	Technical Outcome	Total	Score
Adjudicator 1	100,00	100,00	200 : 2 = 100	300 : 3 = 100
Adjudicator 2	100,00	100,00	200 : 2 = 100	
Adjudicator 3	100,00	100,00	200 : 2 = 100	

1. Artistic outcome of the performance (Test Piece), including musical interpretation.
2. Technical outcome of the performance (Test Piece):
 - aspects as general technique, rhythm, ensemble playing, articulation, tuning, sound balance, dynamics, phrasing;
 - quality of soloists and band sections.

Own Choice Program – Wind Bands and Brass Bands:

Adjudicator	Artistic Outcome	Technical Outcome	General outcome	Total	Score
Adjudicator 1	100,00	100,00	100,00	300 : 3 = 100	300 : 3 = 100
Adjudicator 2	100,00	100,00	100,00	300 : 3 = 100	
Adjudicator 3	100,00	100,00	100,00	300 : 3 = 100	

1. Artistic outcome of the performance (Own Choice Program), including musical interpretation.
2. Technical outcome of the performance (Own Choice Program):
 - aspects as general technique, rhythm, ensemble playing, articulation, tuning, sound balance, dynamics, phrasing;
 - quality of soloists and band sections.
3. General outcome of the performance (Own Choice Program):
 - general presentation of the performance;
 - repertoire choices in relation to the capabilities of the band.

Final Score – Wind Bands and Brass Bands:

Adjudicator	Test Piece	Score: Test Piece	Own Choice Program	Score: Own Choice Program	Final Score
Adjudicator 1	100,00	300 : 3 = 100	100,00	300 : 3 = 100	200 : 2 = 100
Adjudicator 2	100,00		100,00		
Adjudicator 3	100,00		100,00		

11.2. Each band/ensemble will receive a score that determines the ranking.

11.3. Next up to the ranking, each band/ensemble receives a distinction based on the final score:

- Score up to 59.99 WMC participant
- Score 60.00 – 69.99 Bronze
- Score 70.00 – 79.99 Silver
- Score 80.00 – 89.99 Gold
- Score 90 and above Gold with Distinction

11.4. Each participating band/ensemble will receive a final score, a short report of the individual adjudicators comments and a diploma.

11.5. The Team of Adjudicators will appoint in each division the following special awards:

- Award for an outstanding section or soloist
- Award for a musical promise or for (a) musical moment(s) that made great impression – in positive sense – on the Team of Adjudicators.

Article 12: Titles and Prizes

Regarding Titles and Prizes, we refer to the separate document ‘Titles and Prizes WMC 2026’ on the WMC website.

Article 13: Results and appeal

13.1. Once publicly announced, results are definite and binding. After this only WMC Kerkrade has the authority to adjust scores when deemed necessary.

13.2. No appeal is possible against results and WMC will not engage in any appeal process.

13.3. In case of unforeseen circumstances and/or situations these rules do not apply, WMC Kerkrade reserves the right to make decisions that are binding. No appeal is possible.

Article 14: Responsibilities

14.1. The Artistic Management is artistically responsible for all contests in the Roda Hall and the Kerkrade Theater.

14.2. The Independent Chairman of Adjudication is responsible for the correct application of the adjudication system by all adjudicators and for the execution of the rules and adjudication manual. The Independent Chairman of Adjudication reports to the Artistic Management.

World Music Contest, (WMC) Kerkrade, The Netherlands, April 2025.

General information

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