

NATIONAL
THEATRE
SCHOOL
FESTIVAL

FESTIVAL
ÉCOLE
NATIONALE
DE THÉÂTRE

Teacher and Student Adjudication Guide

Last revised by the Adjudication Committee in January 2019

Adjudication Advisory Committee: Erin Brubacher, Marisa Cavataio, Wayne Fairhead, Carmelo Iachelli (Chair), Janet Kish and Kathy Martinez

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO SEND TO ADJUDICATORS?

If you are working from a previously published or original script, you will need to send a copy of the script for the adjudicator(s). Some productions are more movement/ score / improvisation based: in these cases, you may send text for your piece with accompanying notes as you deem appropriate. In all cases, please submit for the adjudicator(s) an artistic statement (of 250 words or less) that includes a response to the following questions:

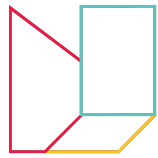
Why are you working on the play/ subject matter/ material you have chosen? (Why this piece here and now?)

What has been the most challenging part of your process so far?

What are you most excited by in this work that you are making together?

These questions should be discussed and answered as a company. *The group's* thoughts on these matters can be *summarized* by the director, the writer, another member of the creative team or, ideally, composed collectively. Please indicate the authors of your artistic statement. Teachers are expected to guide and participate in the process of generating artistic statements, but should not be the lead or sole author.

Please consult your District Rep/ Regional Coordinator regarding deadlines by which to submit your script materials and artistic statements. Materials may be sent either via the District Rep/ Regional Coordinator, or directly to the Adjudicator— the specific channels of communication vary district to district or region to region. Ask your District Rep or Regional Coordinator where and when to send these items electronically. Please make sure to submit your materials in a timely fashion to respect the adjudicator preparation time.



HOW ARE PRODUCTIONS EVALUATED?

Adjudicators will consider all elements of a production: scenic design/ lighting/ sound/ directing/ performance/ new writing/ music/ choreography... And, most importantly, how those elements work together! That said, no production will be penalized for more or less or the absence of any of these elements. For example: one company may choose, for artistic reasons, to use a bare stage and employ no set pieces at all, while another company may create a set that is a crucial element to the point of feeling like another character in the piece! There is no point system and there are no 'marks' to lose in this way. The adjudicators feedback is qualitative not quantitative.

Note: It is important that students know that while adjudicators have been selected for their expertise and have insight to offer, each adjudicator will have her/his/their own points of view. Teacher-advisors or directors should model receptiveness to feedback for their students while communicating that the participant's job is to listen to the adjudicator, consider the feedback and determine for themselves and as a company what is most valuable.

PREPARING FOR ADJUDICATION: THINGS TO CONSIDER

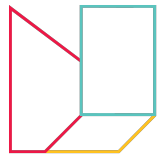
Talk about adjudication before it happens. Talk about what to expect and what can be gained. Talk about the importance of listening deeply to what adjudicators have to offer and then using critical reflection to decide what feedback is most valuable. Some teachers organize mock-adjudications for their student companies and practise receiving feedback together.

Adjudicators are not the only ones who should try to be specific: students should ask specific questions and steer away from general seeking of affirmation such as "Did you 'get it'?" or "Was I 'good'?" Another thing to prepare for is how to share space. One good way to address this is to talk about knowing when to 'get up' or 'get back'. In other words:

- Do you tend to talk more the other members of your company? If so, maybe this is an opportunity to encourage others to share *their* questions and responses.
- Do you rarely offer your thoughts? If so, than maybe this is an opportunity to share *your* perspective or raise *your* questions.
- How can adjudication be an occasion for each member of the company to consider what they offer the group dynamic in sharing ideas or creating space for others to do so?

Please communicate clearly to students — and parents — the expectations around timing of private adjudication. This will help address the issue of some participants leaving before having a chance to participate in private adjudication. Still, some students may not be able to stay due to family restrictions or geographic distance. The following are recommendations to help ensure that ALL company members are able to benefit from private adjudication:

1. Make an audio recording of the private adjudication. This can be done simply using a cell phone. This can then be shared with the whole group back at school. These recordings are for company use only and to be deleted after use. Confidentiality of these recordings is the responsibility of the teacher-advisor.
2. A teacher advisor may arrange a subsequent Skype or Google Hangout meeting with the adjudicator and students, subject to the discretion / availability of the adjudicator and company. This should *not* replace the more crucial in-person adjudication but rather offer an addition opportunity to students with barriers.



AWARDS

It is a valued and important tradition of the Festival that students are recognized and receive awards for their achievements.

In the District and Regional Festivals there are two different categories: Awards of Merit and Awards of Excellence — in addition to the OUTSTANDING PRODUCTIONS (which are awarded to schools moving on the next Festival level).

The precise number of awards to be given is determined by the overall number of shows.

District Awards

- 19 – 24 shows =
4 OUTSTANDING PRODUCTIONS (plus 16 – 21 Awards of Excellence; 19 -24 Awards of Merit; 1 Stage Management)
- 12 – 18 shows =
3 OUTSTANDING PRODUCTIONS (plus 9 – 15 Awards of Excellence; 12 – 18 Awards of Merit; 1 Stage Management Award)
- 7 – 11 shows =
2 OUTSTANDING PRODUCTIONS (plus 5 – 9 Awards of Excellence; 7 - 11 Awards of Merit; 1 Stage Management Award)
- 6 or less shows =
1 OUTSTANDING PRODUCTION (plus 2 – 5 Awards of Excellence; 3 - 6 Awards of Merit; 1 Stage Management Award)

Adjudicator Discretionary District Awards:

These awards have been created to acknowledge exceptional student achievements in Playwriting and/or Directing or Ensemble work. These are not mandatory but up to two of these awards may or may not be given, in addition to the standard awards, for extraordinary work at the discretion of the adjudicator.

Regional Awards

- 2 Outstanding Production Awards
- 1 Stage Management Award
- 1 Adjudicator's Award
- Awards of Excellence = Number of entries minus 2
- Awards of Merit = Number of entries
- + Local Awards as applicable

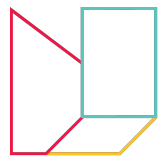
There are distinct awards given at the Ontario Showcase as outlined below.

Provincial Awards

- 6 Mira Awards for Excellence
- 12 Outstanding Achievement Awards
- 1 Outstanding Achievement Award for Stage Management
(Awarded by the Festival Stage Manager)
- 1-2 Bennie Awards for Excellence in Technical Theatre
(Awarded by the Festival Technical Director, in consultation with the Adjudicator)
- + Any other Provincial Awards, Bursaries and Scholarships

Awards Formula

The formula to determine the total number of **Awards of Merit** is to take the number of plays in and to match that with the total number of Awards of Merit. For example, if there are 12 productions altogether, there will be 12 Awards of Merit. If there are 5 productions, there will be 5 Awards of Merit.



NATIONAL
THEATRE
SCHOOL
FESTIVAL

FESTIVAL
ÉCOLE
NATIONALE
DE THÉÂTRE

To determine the number of **Awards of Excellence** subtract the total number of **Outstanding Productions** from the total number of productions that have been performed in the District or Regional Festival. For example, if there are 15 productions in total, subtract 3 (the number of Outstanding Productions) for a total of 12 Awards of Excellence. If there are only five shows, subtract 1 for a total of four Awards of Excellence.

(Number of Shows) - (Number of Outstanding Productions) = Number of Awards of Excellence

HOW ARE ADJUDICATORS SELECTED? + NOTES TO DISTRICT REPS ON SELECTING DISTRICT FESTIVAL ADJUDICATORS

District Adjudicators are selected/ engaged locally by District Reps. At the regional and provincial levels, adjudicators are invited by NTS Festival leadership.

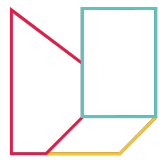
All adjudicators should be professional theatre artists and/or arts educators and should be approached based on their experience, expertise, training and commitment to creative learning.

The central role of the adjudicator is to provide useful critical feedback, in a thoughtful, caring way. Adjudicators should provide feedback that helps participants to grow as artists and people through enriched understandings of their own collaborative work.

Guidelines for Selecting Adjudicators

Restrictions

- No adjudicator may adjudicate the same District, Regional, or Provincial Festival two years in a row
- No Regional Adjudicator can adjudicate any district within a region for which they are adjudicating the Regional Festival in the same year
- No Provincial Adjudicator can adjudicate any regional or district festival in the same year



NATIONAL
THEATRE
SCHOOL
FESTIVAL

FESTIVAL
ÉCOLE
NATIONALE
DE THÉÂTRE

Recommendations

- Adjudicators must be professional artists, professional arts educators, or both
- Adjudicators must have experience with working with youth/ young artists/ high school students
- It is recommended that districts choose adjudicators with different professional backgrounds from year to year. For example, if an actor adjudicates in 2018, perhaps select a director or designer for 2019 or if a physical theatre expert adjudicates in 2019, perhaps choose a specialist in post dramatic theatre in 2020 etc.
- Bilingualism and cultural representation:

In order that students may see themselves reflected in their adjudicator-mentors, District Reps should consider the demographics of their districts. If there are french schools participating in a particular district, adjudicators must be bilingual (French/ English). Adjudicators should also reflect, year to year, the cultural demographics of communities. Adjudicators should not be from a homogenous cultural identity, year after year, especially amidst diverse student populations. NTS is in the process of developing an artist-educator roster for workshops and adjudication. This should be available in 2020. In the mean time, if District Reps are having difficulty connecting with new adjudicators, they should reach out to NTS for support in meeting new artists/ educators.