

GUILDFORD SLAVIC MUSIC FESTIVAL & YOUNG MUSICIANS COMPETITION



RULES AND REGULATIONS — 2027

15 MAY 2027 Date	GUILDFORD Place TBC	RUSSIAN SCHOOL AND CHOIR IN GUILDFORD Organised by
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“Every young musician deserves a chance to perform.”

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1. OUR PURPOSE

The Guildford Slavic Music Festival is an annual celebration of music, young musicians and cultural friendship.

Our main purpose is to give young musicians an opportunity to perform, gain confidence, meet other musicians and share their music with an audience.

The Festival therefore has two separate but connected parts:

THE FESTIVAL

A gala concert that serves as an open performance platform.

Musicians can take part simply because they want to perform and share their music.

Festival performances are not judged by the experts.

THE YOUNG MUSICIANS COMPETITION

An optional juried competition.

Participants who choose to enter the Competition perform before a jury and receive an assessment. Prizes, certificates and special awards are presented according to the Competition results.

Important

Taking part in the Festival does not mean entering the Competition.

A musician may:

- take part in the Festival only;
- enter the Competition only, where permitted by the programme;
- take part in both.

We want the Festival to be welcoming to musicians who are not interested in competing as well as to those who enjoy the challenge of competition.

2. WHO CAN TAKE PART?

The Festival welcomes:

- young musicians and music students;
- solo performers;
- duets and ensembles;
- choirs and groups;
- music schools and community groups;
- folk and cultural groups;
- invited musicians and professional performers.

The Competition is intended primarily for young musicians and students.

Unless otherwise stated in the Festival programme, the Competition is open to participants aged up to 25 years.

The Organising Committee may introduce different age limits or categories for a particular year where this is appropriate for the Festival.

The Festival welcomes different musical traditions, including classical, folk, traditional, contemporary and other suitable repertoire.

3. FESTIVAL AND COMPETITION — TWO DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES

3.1 Festival participation

The Festival is a performance opportunity.

A Festival performer does not receive a jury mark.

The purpose is to:

- perform in front of an audience;
- gain stage experience;
- share music and culture;
- meet other young musicians;
- enjoy performing.

Festival participants may receive a participation certificate or other recognition.

3.2 Competition participation

Competition participants:

- register separately for the Competition;
- pay the applicable Competition entry fee;
- perform before a jury;
- receive an assessment;
- may receive a Competition award or prize.

The Competition is intended to provide a friendly challenge and constructive musical feedback.

Winning is not the only purpose of the Competition.

4. COMPETITION AGE GROUPS

The proposed age groups are:

Group Age

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| A | Up to 8 years |
| B | 9–11 years |
| C | 12–14 years |
| D | 15–17 years |
| E | 18–21 years |
| F | 22–25 years |

Age will be determined as of 15th May 2027.

The Organising Committee may combine or divide age groups where the number of entries makes this necessary.

The purpose of the age groups is to create a fair and practical competition, not to prevent a young musician from participating.

For an ensemble containing performers of different ages, the Organising Committee will determine the appropriate category.

5. COMPETITION CATEGORIES

The Competition may include the following categories.

A. Instrumental Solo

One performer playing an instrument.

B. Vocal Solo

One singer.

C. Duet

Two performers.

D. Small Ensemble

Three or more performers, including chamber groups and small instrumental or vocal ensembles.

E. Large Ensemble / Group

Larger groups, orchestras, bands, choirs or similar ensembles.

F. Folk and Traditional Music

Soloists, duets or ensembles performing folk, traditional or culturally based music.

The Organising Committee may combine categories where there are too few entries to create a meaningful separate class.

The final categories will be confirmed after registration closes.

6. PERFORMANCE TIME

To allow as many musicians as possible to participate, the performance length will be kept at the following maximum times:

Category	Maximum time
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Solo	5 minutes
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Duet	6 minutes
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Small Ensemble	7 minutes
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Large Ensemble / Choir	10 minutes
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Special / Featured Performance	As agreed
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The Organising Committee may adjust these limits according to the number of entries and the Festival timetable.

The time limit applies to the musical performance.

Performers should be ready to enter and leave the stage quickly.

Where a performance substantially exceeds its allocated time, the Organising Committee or jury may ask the performer to stop.

7. REPERTOIRE

Participants may choose music appropriate to their age, instrument and level.

The application should provide:

- performer or group name;

- title of the piece;
- composer or traditional source;
- instrument(s) / voice;
- approximate duration.

There is no requirement for repertoire to be exclusively classical.

Suitable repertoire may include:

- classical music;
- folk music;
- traditional music;
- national or cultural repertoire;
- contemporary music;
- popular music;
- original compositions.

The Organising Committee may ask for a programme to be changed if it is unsuitable for the event, the age of the performer or the venue.

8. ACCOMPANIMENT

Participants may perform:

- unaccompanied;
- with piano or another live accompanist;
- with a teacher;
- with their own ensemble;
- with an approved backing track, where appropriate.

Participants are responsible for providing any accompanist required for their performance unless otherwise agreed with the Organising Committee.

Technical requirements for backing tracks must be supplied before the published deadline.

9. FESTIVAL PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME

Festival-only performers may be included in:

- the Gala Concert;
- an open performance session;
- cultural presentations;
- workshops or other Festival activities.

Because stage time is limited, registration does not automatically guarantee a particular performance time or appearance in the Gala Concert.

The Organising Committee will prepare the programme according to:

- available stage time;
- age and type of performance;
- programme balance;
- technical requirements;
- cultural variety;
- practical considerations.

10. COMPETITION JURY

The Competition will be assessed by a jury selected by the Organising Committee.

Jury members may include:

- professional musicians;
- music teachers;
- performers;
- conductors;
- cultural professionals;
- experienced music educators.

The jury will be selected with the aim of providing appropriate musical knowledge and a fair assessment.

A jury member should not assess a participant where there is a significant conflict of interest, including where the participant is their current pupil.

Where possible, the participant will be assessed by another jury member.

11. JUDGING PRINCIPLES

The Competition is intended to encourage young musicians.

The jury will consider the participant's:

- age;
- experience;
- level of musical development;
- chosen repertoire;
- performance conditions.

A young beginner is not expected to demonstrate the same technical level as an older or more experienced musician.

The jury will assess the performance presented on the day, rather than the reputation of the performer, school or teacher.

12. SCORING

Each Competition performance will normally be assessed using a 100-point scale.

Recommended weighting:

Criterion	Maximum
Musical and technical skills	30
Musical expression and interpretation	30
Performance and communication	20
Repertoire and artistic choice	20
Total	100

The jury may use professional judgement within each area.

The scoring system is intended to provide structure and consistency rather than to suggest that musical performance can be measured with mathematical precision.

13. AWARD LEVELS

The following award levels are recommended:

Score Award

95-100 Exceptional

90-94 Outstanding

85-89 Honours

80-84 Commended

75-79 Merit

Below 75 Developing / Participation Recognition

These descriptors are intended to provide positive and constructive recognition.

The Organising Committee may adjust the terminology used on certificates.

This approach is consistent with the more developmental approach used by UK music festivals, including the British and International Federation of Festivals marking framework adopted by Sutton Music Festival. Suttonmusicfestival.org.uk

14. FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD PRIZES

In addition to the award level, the jury may award:

- First Prize;
- Second Prize;
- Third Prize.

These prizes are not automatically awarded simply because a category contains three participants.

The jury should consider both the standard of performance and the differences between performances.

Where appropriate, the jury may:

- award more than one participant the same prize;
- leave a prize unawarded;
- award a special jury prize;
- combine categories.

The Organising Committee will publish the prize structure before the Competition.

15. GRAND PRIX

A Grand Prix may be awarded to one Competition participant whose performance demonstrates an outstanding combination of musical achievement, artistic expression and communication.

The Grand Prix should normally be selected from Competition participants who have achieved a high award level.

The jury may decide not to award a Grand Prix if no performance meets the standard expected.

The Grand Prix is not intended to replace the individual category prizes.

16. SPECIAL AWARDS

The Organising Committee may introduce special awards such as:

- Young Musician Award;
- Most Promising Performer;
- Outstanding Musicality;
- Outstanding Performance;
- Best Ensemble;
- Best Folk / Traditional Performance;
- Cultural Contribution Award;
- Jury Special Award.

Special awards are intended to recognise qualities that may not be fully reflected by the overall score.

17. FEEDBACK

The Festival believes that constructive feedback is an important part of supporting young musicians.

Where practical, Competition participants should receive a short written comment or assessment from the jury.

Feedback should identify:

- a strength of the performance;
- an area for further development;
- an encouraging suggestion for future musical work.

Feedback should be respectful, age-appropriate and constructive.

18. JURY DECISIONS

The jury's artistic decisions are final.

The Organising Committee may correct an administrative or recording error but will not normally reconsider the artistic judgement of the jury.

Parents, teachers and participants should not approach jury members during the Competition to challenge or influence a decision.

Questions concerning administration should be addressed to the Organising Committee.

19. PRIZES AND CERTIFICATES

Competition participants will receive an appropriate certificate or award according to the results.

Prizes may include:

- trophies or medals;
- certificates;
- musical gifts;
- educational opportunities;
- performance opportunities;
- other prizes announced for the particular year.

Festival-only participants may receive a Festival participation certificate.

The Organising Committee may change the physical prizes available from year to year.

20. THE GALA CONCERT

The Gala Concert is a celebration of the Festival.

It is not another competition.

The Gala may include:

- Competition prize winners;
- selected Competition participants;
- Festival-only participants;
- invited young musicians;
- ensembles;
- professional or guest musicians;
- cultural performances.

Selection for the Gala may take into account:

- musical quality;
- programme variety;
- age and performer diversity;
- cultural representation;
- suitability for the audience;
- available stage time.

A performer does not have to win a Competition prize to be invited to perform at the Gala.

Equally, receiving a Competition prize does not automatically guarantee a Gala performance.

This gives the Festival a purpose beyond competition: the Gala celebrates the whole musical community.

21. PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES AFTER THE COMPETITION

Where opportunities exist, the Organising Committee may invite selected young musicians to perform at:

- future Festival events;
- school concerts;
- cultural events;
- community concerts;
- partner events.

Such invitations are opportunities rather than guaranteed prizes.

22. ENTRY FEES

Festival participation and Competition entry are separate.

The applicable fees will be published with the Festival programme.

Competition entry fees cover the organisation and administration of the Competition and do not guarantee a prize.

Fees are normally non-refundable after the closing date except where the Organising Committee cancels the relevant Competition or agrees otherwise.

If a Competition category is cancelled because there are insufficient entries, the Organising Committee may offer:

- an alternative category;
- Festival participation;
- a refund;
- or another reasonable solution.

23. APPLICATIONS

Applications must be received by the published deadline.

The Organising Committee may close applications early if available performance capacity has been reached.

The application should include:

- participant's full name;
- date of birth;
- parent/guardian contact details where applicable;
- school or music organisation, if applicable;
- teacher, where applicable;
- category;
- repertoire;
- approximate performance time;
- accompaniment requirements;
- Festival-only or Competition participation.

Submitting an application confirms acceptance of these Rules and Regulations.

24. CHANGES TO CATEGORIES

The Organising Committee may reasonably:

- combine age groups;
- divide age groups;
- combine categories;
- divide categories;
- change performance times;
- change the order of performances;
- move performances between Festival sessions.

Such changes may be necessary to create a fair and practical event.

Participants will be informed of significant changes as soon as reasonably possible.

25. SAFEGUARDING

The safety and wellbeing of children and young people is a priority.

The Festival will follow the safeguarding policies and procedures of the organising school and the requirements applicable to the venue and event.

Parents, guardians, teachers and group leaders remain responsible for the children in their care except where Festival staff have formally assumed responsibility for a particular activity.

Any safeguarding concern should be reported immediately to the Festival's designated safeguarding person or another responsible member of staff.

The Festival may refuse participation or remove a person from the event where this is necessary to protect the safety or wellbeing of participants.

26. PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

Photography and video recording may take place during the Festival.

The organising school will follow its applicable photography, filming, privacy and data-protection procedures.

Parents/guardians will be informed about the intended use of official photographs and recordings and any required permissions will be obtained.

Participants or their parents/guardians should inform the Organising Committee in advance of any relevant restrictions.

Photography or filming must not:

- disrupt performances;
- interfere with the running of the event;
- be intrusive;
- be used for inappropriate purposes;
- be used commercially without appropriate permission.

The Organising Committee may restrict photography or filming where necessary.

27. COPYRIGHT

Participants are responsible for ensuring that music, recordings, backing tracks and other materials they provide can legally be used.

The Festival will comply with applicable copyright requirements.

Where necessary, participants may be asked to provide information about their repertoire or music sources.

28. ARRIVAL AND PUNCTUALITY

Participants should arrive at least 30 minutes before their scheduled Competition performance unless a different arrival time is provided.

Participants should be ready to perform when called.

Late arrival may make it impossible to include a participant in the scheduled programme.

Where practical, the Organising Committee may offer an alternative performance time, but this cannot be guaranteed.

29. RESPECTFUL CONDUCT

All participants, parents, teachers, volunteers, jury members and visitors are expected to behave respectfully.

The Festival does not tolerate:

- bullying;

- discrimination;
- harassment;
- aggressive behaviour;
- inappropriate contact with children;
- behaviour that disrupts performances or threatens the safety of others.

The Organising Committee may ask a person to leave the event where necessary.

30. THE SPIRIT OF THE FESTIVAL

The Guildford Slavic Music Festival is built around a simple idea:

Every young musician deserves a chance to perform.

Some musicians enjoy competition.

Others simply want to perform on stage.

Both are welcome.

The Competition provides an opportunity to receive professional assessment, challenge yourself and celebrate achievement.

The Festival provides a wider platform for musicians to share music, culture and friendship.

We hope that every young musician who takes part leaves with:

- more confidence;
- a positive performance experience;
- useful musical feedback;
- new friendships;
- and a desire to continue making music.

The Festival is about more than winning.

It is about giving young musicians a stage.

31. ORGANISING COMMITTEE

The Organising Committee is responsible for the practical organisation of the Festival and Competition.

The Committee may make reasonable decisions on matters not specifically covered by these Rules, provided that such decisions are consistent with:

- the purpose of the Festival;
- fairness to participants;
- the safety and wellbeing of children and young people;
- the practical requirements of the event.

APPENDIX A — RECOMMENDED 2027 COMPETITION STRUCTURE

Competition Classes

Class 1 — Solo Instrumental

A1: Up to 8

A2: 9–11**A3: 12–14****A4: 15–17****A5: 18–21****A6: 22–25**

Class 2 — Vocal Solo

Same age groups.

Class 3 — Duet

Age group determined by the Organising Committee.

Class 4 — Small Ensemble

3–10 performers.

Class 5 — Large Ensemble

11+ performers, choir, orchestra, band or similar group.

Class 6 — Folk & Traditional Music

Solo, duet or ensemble.

The Committee may combine classes where there are insufficient entries.

APPENDIX B — JURY SCORE SHEET

Participant: _____

Category: _____

Age Group: _____

Piece: _____

Criterion	Maximum	Score
Musical & technical skills	30	
Musical expression & interpretation	30	
Performance & communication	20	
Repertoire & artistic choice	20	

TOTAL 100**Jury Comment****Strengths:**

Suggestion for further development:

Award level:

- ☐ Exceptional
- ☐ Outstanding
- ☐ Honours

- ☐ Commended
- ☐ Merit
- ☐ Developing / Participation Recognition

Prize:

- ☐ Grand Prix
- ☐ First Prize
- ☐ Second Prize
- ☐ Third Prize
- ☐ Special Jury Award
- ☐ No prize

Jury Member: _____

APPENDIX C — RECOMMENDED FESTIVAL PARTICIPATION FORM

<https://forms.gle/746NqXFafxj75ba7>

I wish to participate as:

- ☐ Festival performer — non-competitive
- ☐ Competition participant
- ☐ Festival performer and Competition participant

Performer

Name: _____

Date of birth: _____

Instrument / Voice: _____

School / Organisation: _____

Teacher: _____

Performance

Title: _____

Composer / Source: _____

Duration: _____

Accompanist: _____

Parent / Guardian

Name: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Additional information

Please tell us about any access, technical, safeguarding or other arrangements that we should know about.

APPENDIX D — SIMPLE MESSAGE FOR PARENTS

What is the difference between the Festival and the Competition?

Festival:

Your child can perform, meet other musicians and enjoy being part of the event. Their performance is not judged.

Competition:

<https://forms.gle/Vuvf5rSDPiubYLsw9>

Your child chooses to enter a separate competition. Their performance is assessed by a jury and they may receive a prize or award.

Your child does not need to enter the Competition to take part in the Festival.

Our aim is to create a friendly event where young musicians can gain confidence and enjoy performing.

Whether they compete or simply perform, they are very welcome.

My main recommendations for implementation

I would use this structure rather than your previous rules for 2027. The strongest practical features are:

- Festival and Competition have separate registration choices.
- 5-minute solo limit keeps the event manageable.
- 100-point jury sheet gives judges consistency without making the event feel excessively formal.
- 30/30/20/20 scoring puts musicality and expression alongside technique.
- Age groups are broad enough that you don't end up with many tiny categories.
- Categories can be merged when numbers are low.
- Prizes are not automatic simply because someone entered.
- Gala selection is separate from competition ranking.
- Festival-only performers can appear in the Gala.
- Constructive feedback is part of the Competition.
- Safeguarding and photography are explicitly separated from artistic rules