

Number	Entry	Category	Registration Requirements
551-552	Vocal/Instrumental Music	Performance	Sign up on student registration form. Submit project info & sheet music or chord chart online. Dates on website.

OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF ACCEPTABLE MUSIC FOR EXCEL CONVENTION COMPETITION

The intent of music competition is to encourage students to develop their musical ability and apply their musical talents to Christian values. Competition arrangements are to be Christian, patriotic, or classical rather than secular. Music must be appropriate for a typical Pentecostal church service. EXCEL recognizes the wide spectrum of “acceptable” music among Pentecostals and strives to accommodate distinctive styles from different churches represented. EXCEL does not necessarily endorse music performed during competition. Judges will evaluate contestant compliance to criteria on the judge’s form without prejudice for or against any particular style of Christian music.

MUSIC DIVISION RULES

1. Sheet music must be submitted. If music is changed, printed score must be rewritten to reflect the changes. Music must be performed exactly as the score.
2. Vocal contestants will perform with a microphone. Contestants may sing a capella; be accompanied by an adult, sponsor, or student (of Convention age) playing a piano supplied by the convention; or use a sound track. Also some instrumentals are eligible for accompaniment (see instrumental guidelines). Soundtracks must be submitted with sheet music online.
3. Students appearing in music competition should observe the performance appearance guidelines found on pages 10-11, as they will affect judging. Carelessness on these points could detract from an otherwise excellent presentation:

Poise/Self-Confidence

- a. **Approach** - The approach is one of the most important elements in speaking, public reading, or singing. The contestant should walk confidently and briskly to the podium or front of the room and establish eye contact, pause for 5-10 seconds, and begin his presentation.
- b. **Eye Contact** - Unless following a musical score, he should avoid looking down, at the ceiling, or out of the window. Eyes should move back and forth over the entire audience, slowly and naturally.
- c. **Posture and Gestures** - The rule for posture is DO NOT SLOUCH! The contestant should stand straight, but not lock his/her knees. Gestures should be free and flow naturally from enthusiasm. Natural movements are more effective than forced gestures.
- d. **Delivery** – Vocalists should project the voice, using the diaphragm, and plan breathing.

Preparation - Preparation and practice are prerequisites for all musical performances.

Platform Presentation - Introduction of entry before the judges: Contestants in platform presentations are to give their first and last name and title of presentation distinctly (“My name is John Doe and I will be playing the Blue Danube Waltz”). For entries involving more than one person a spokesman should be selected.

NOTE TO JUDGES: This introduction is NOT to be counted as time against their presentation.

4. All music is to be memorized. (EXCEPTION: Instrumental ensembles.)
5. Personal amplification equipment for competition is not encouraged but may be allowed in some cases. Check with the Convention Coordinator at registration. ALSO, UPON ARRIVAL AT EXCEL CONVENTION, CONSULT SOUND TECHNICIAN WELL BEFORE YOUR SCHEDULED PERFORMANCE IF YOU NEED TO LINK YOUR EQUIPMENT WITH THE HOUSE SYSTEM FOR YOUR PERFORMANCE.

HINTS FROM THE MUSIC JUDGES

Most of the music judges' comments deal with intonation and rhythmic accuracy; that is, the ability to sing and play on pitch and to perform the music exactly as written, giving all value to each note and dynamic marking. While poise, polish, and appearance contribute to a good performance, nothing can compensate for failures in intonation of rhythm. These are the heart of musicianship. Vocalists can improve their ability to sing on pitch by practicing good support. Instrumentalists need to practice proper playing with deep breathing, good embouchure, correct fingering, etc. The accompaniment is a vitally important part to a musical entry, so be sure the ability of the accompanist or the quality of the recording is as high as possible. The accompanist may improvise to enhance the performance, if desired.

CAUTION: Choose music that is not overly difficult for the experience and capabilities of the singer or player. It is better to choose music that is simpler than to attempt to perform music that is beyond the reach of the student.

VOCAL/INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC CATEGORIES

(551) Vocal/Instrumental Solo (1 contestant) - In this category, the contestant is to sing as well as play an instrument.

(552) Vocal/Instrumental Group (2 or more contestants) - In this category, contestants may sing, play an instrument or both.

VOCAL/INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC RULES

- Sheet music or a chord chart must be submitted. If music is changed, printed score or chords must be rewritten to reflect the changes. Music must be performed exactly as the score or chords as submitted.
- Vocal contestants will perform with a microphone. All musicians must be contestants. The judging will be on both the vocal and instrumental aspects of the performance. The final score will be an average between the vocal and instrumental scores.
- The time limit is 6 minutes.

VOCAL JUDGING CRITERIA

AREAS OF EVALUATION	POSSIBLE POINTS
I. Appearance and Stage Deportment	
a. Approach- with confidence yet with grace and humility	3
b. Posture- upright look, not slumped	3
c. Eye Contact- scan the audience, not stare	4
d. Poise- in full control	4
e. Clothing- color coordinated, neat, sharp, beautiful	3
II. Interpretation	
a. Mood- prayerful, enthusiastic, peaceful	5
b. Intensity- is it weak, strong, not enough power	4
c. Style- does the presentation match the printed intention	4
d. Tempo- flowing, not too fast or too slow	4
e. Phrasing- the feeling of motion or rest	4
f. Climax- was it handled well	4
g. Dynamics- do the volumes change correctly	4
h. Word Emphasis- each word needs to be handled with the right emphasis	4
III. Musicianship	
a. Memory	5
b. Projection- can each part of the music be heard	5
c. Proper Diction- correctly pronounced, articulated, enunciated	5
d. Tone Quality- the full, rich sound	5
e. Correct Rhythm- is it performed like the printed page	5
f. Proper Breathing- breathing at the right places, the right way	5
g. Intonation (pitch: for solos or blends: groups)	5
h. Balance of voices/accompaniment- does accompaniment add or override	5
IV. Appropriateness of Selection	
a. Message- does it minister to the listener	5
b. Difficulty of selection	5
TOTAL POINTS	100

INSTRUMENTAL JUDGING CRITERIA

AREAS OF EVALUATION		POSSIBLE POINTS
I. Tone	A. Beauty/Clarity	5
	B. Color	5
	C. Strength, Control and Embouchure	5
	D. Intonation	5
II. Technique and Musicianship		
	A. Meter	3
	B. Melody	3
	C. Fingering and Hand Positions	3
	D. Accents	3
	E. Precision	3
	F. Slurs	3
	G. Bowing (strings), Tonguing (wind instruments)	3
	H. Attacks	3
	I. Cut-offs	3
	J. Accuracy	3
II. Interpretation	A. Tempo	4
	B. Style	4
	C. Phrasing	4
	D. Dynamics	4
	E. Accuracy	4
III. Presentation	A. Deportment	4
	B. Posture	4
	C. Memorization	4
	D. Suitability of Ability	4
	E. Balance and Integration of Accompaniment	4
IV. Appropriateness of Selection		
	A. Appropriateness	5
	B. Degree of Difficulty	5
Total Points		100