

Performance Judges Meeting Notes: (updated April 2018)

- Encourage students to take a “comfortable tempo” on technical skills that do not have tempo requirements. Do not be too stringent on minimum tempo requirements. Slightly under tempo is OK.
- Do not tell student that they are “doing it wrong” or correct any errors during the exam. Instead, write suggestions on the score sheets. Always be nurturing, respectful and kind.
- Be sensitive to terminology students may or may not be familiar with, and how a student was taught. Rephrase a question if student doesn’t seem to understand specific direction or term, especially for younger students. (i.e. 5-Finger pattern, Pentachord pattern, Pentascale pattern, etc.)
- **Be sure to make written comments whenever possible**, i.e. why you took points off, or when something was done well. Always be as positive and encouraging as possible. The more comments you write, the more helpful it is to both the student and teacher.
- Don’t take points off for false starts, but give student another chance to begin again.
- Deduct ½ a point for minor slips rather than full points. Also, deduct only once for the same mistake that may be made in different keys. **No ¼ point deductions please!**
- Be sure to check the fingering guide in the Syllabus Appendix (pp. A-11 through A-13) Be mindful of optional fingerings indicated in ()
- For triad and inversions, take ½ point off for minor incorrect fingering. Evaluate on consistency of fingering and reward fluency.
- Fingering will not be evaluated for four-note chords or chord progressions.
- **Don’t deduct any points if student does more than the minimum.** For instance, student plays 3 octave scales when only 2 octaves are required, or student plays I-IV-I-V7-I chord progression when only I-V7-I chord progression is required. **Only exception is at Level 7 scales. This must be heard in 3 octaves with triplet eighth notes.**
- Do not deduct any points for poor hand position or awkward playing as long as the skill is demonstrated well with correct fingering. Feel free to make written suggestions on the score sheet, but no deductions.
- For more advanced repertoire played with expression, consider rounding your score up rather than nit-picking on mistakes. Reward musicality. ***A good critique is NOT a laundry list of things that went wrong.***
- Don’t second guess a teacher’s choice of repertoire selection, ornamentation, dynamic markings, pedaling, etc. Instead, evaluate on the overall effectiveness of performance rather than content that may differ from yours.
- For upper level repertoire that is uncommon, especially 20th century repertoire, please consider sending a 2nd copy of the pieces that is not memorized for judges to follow along. It is OK to make Xerox copies for this purpose. Please collect and after the performance.
- Be sure students bring ALL their music with measures numbered for the judges. **No photocopies!**
- Finally, remember that we want to be as encouraging to these students as possible. When in doubt, it’s always better to deduct less than more!

Additional Notes for Specific Levels:

Level 1A, 1B, 1C: Do not take points off if rhythm isn't exact, i.e. the student doesn't hold the last note of the 5 finger pattern for the full 4 counts, etc.

Level 1C: Do not take points off for 5 Finger pattern if student plays 1-3-5-3-1 ending.

Level 2: Do not take points off if whole notes and chords are not held exactly as indicated.

For 2-note slurs, do not take points off if rhythm is not exact, as long as the lifts between slurs are heard. Also, do not take off points if the last tonic note is missing before the chords.

Do not evaluate on wrist movement or hand position as long as the breaks between slurs are heard.

Level 3: Five-Finger Pattern is circled on the Judges sheet. It is not student's choice

Contrary Scale – student can start on any C, does not have to be middle C. Also, if outer note is repeated, do not deduct any points.

Chord Progression: Do not deduct any points if student plays I-IV-I-V7-I chord progression instead of I-V7-I, as long as the notes are accurate.

For arpeggio thumb under fingering, 5-4-2-1 or 5-3-2-1 fingering is both correct. Deduct ½ point if fingering is inconsistent but arpeggio is otherwise secure.

Arpeggios: Students can play **EITHER** 4 octave Cross-Hand or 2 octave with thumb under.

Level 4: Triads and Inversion – student's choice of ANY TWO KEYS (C Major and G Major OR C Major and c minor OR etc.) Also students can play either blocked OR broken, not both.

From Level 5 and up: Triads and Inversion are now blocked AND broken. Fingering is evaluated for 3-note chords, but NOT 4-note chords.

From Level 6 and up: ALL technical skills are played hands together.

Minimum metronome tempo is indicated. Please have a general idea of these tempo markings but do not use a metronome to establish tempo! As long as the scale is secure and fluent, do not deduct any points if the scale is played a little under tempo. Deduct ½ point for obviously slower tempo than indicated.

Metronome marking is a minimum requirement. Students may play faster than the metronome marking at each level without being penalized.

Octave range is also a minimum requirement. If only 2 octaves are required but students play 3 or 4 octaves, do not deduct any points.

Level 7: Students must play scales 3 octaves in triplet eighth notes. This is the only level where triplets are evaluated. If students play 2 or 4 octaves, deduct 1 point and explain the reason on the score sheet.

Level 8: Be sure students play the Two against Three scales both ways. Correct fingering is evaluated here. Students choose from the keys listed at level 8.

Level 11: 4-Note Chords are blocked AND broken. Students with small hands that may not be able to play 4-note tonic chords blocked may play 3-note chords blocked.

Level 11-12: Arpeggios – students will choose 2 keys from each category but judge will only select one of the keys to hear for each category.

For Technique, please be aware of any skill that allow students to choose hands separately or hands together, as well as choice of keys:

Level 3: 2. Articulation Pattern – Student’s choice of any Major key.

Level 4: 3. Triads and Inversions – Student’s choice of

- Blocked OR broken
- Hands separately or together
- ANY two keys, Major and/or minor.

Level 7: 2. Chromatic Scale – Student’s choice of any beginning key.

Level 8:

- 2. Two Against Three Scales – Student’s choice of any key.
- 3. Chromatic Scale – Students choice of any beginning key.

Level 9:

- 2. Two Against Three Scales – Students’ choice of any key listed at level
- 3. Octave Scale – Student’s choice of any key listed at level
- 4. Four-note Chords – Student’s choice of one key/chord listed at level

Level 10 - 12:

- 2. Octave Scale – Student’s choice of any key listed at level
- 3. Four-note Chords – Student’s choice of one key/chord listed at level
- 4. Arpeggios – Students will choose 2 keys from each category. Judges will select and hear and evaluate only one key from the 2 chosen keys from each category.

Chord Progressions - Major and minor Chord Progressions are required at all levels EXCEPT:

- **Level 3** - No minor scale or chord progression
- **Level 6** - No minor chord progression
- **Level 8** - No minor chord progression

Make Up Exams

Make up exams are limited to students that miss the exam due to illness or injury. Students that are out of town during both exam dates will be given consideration on a case by case basis.

Make up exams will not be given for students that are not prepared by their scheduled exam day. In these instances, students will receive an incomplete for the performance exam and will not receive the AIM certificate. However, students that pass the theory exam may move on to the next level in the following year.

Levels 1-8: ALL make up exams must be completed within 2 weeks of the final exam date, except in the case of illness or injury. Exceptions may be requested and will be considered on a case by case basis.

Levels 9-11: Extensions may be requested, on a case by case basis.

Students that pass the theory exam but do not complete performance exam may do one of the following:

1. Re-register for just the performance exam (for same level) the following year and pay the \$15 re-registration fee. For the same level, student does not need to take the theory exam again.
2. Accept incomplete at current level and move up to the next level in the following year at the teacher's discretion.

Level 12: All students will do the technique only on one of the exam dates.

No deadline to complete the repertoire portion of the exam. Students can either do an exam or a recital.

For Exams – when student is ready to do the exam, student will give several date options to site coordinator, who will secure a judge. The exam will be given at the location convenient to judge or agreed upon by the judge and site coordinator.

For Recitals – teacher and/or student will make all arrangements for the recital. As soon as date and location is confirmed, notify the site coordinator, who will secure a judge to attend the recital.

Please try to avoid scheduling recitals on a holiday weekend as it is hard to find judges.

Be sure all requirements as outlined in the syllabus are fulfilled, including writing program notes for your repertoire. *Program notes are due to the site location at least 2 weeks before exam or recital.*

NSMTA AIM Award for Level 12:

Monetary \$100 AIM Award is given to all Level 12 students upon successful completion of all requirements as outlined in the syllabus and also the following additional requirements:

- Student must have a combined theory and performance score of 89 or higher
- Student must have studied with a North Shore teacher for at least 3 years (does not have to be three consecutive years).

NSMTA AIM Award for Levels 10 and 11:

Monetary \$100 AIM Award is given to the top scoring Level 10 and Level 11 student who have successfully completed all requirements as outlined in the syllabus and also have fulfilled the above additional requirements. *Students eligible for these awards must have completed the exam within 2 weeks of the last exam date.*