



Aims and Rules

This document serves to establish the purpose of the National Youth Brass Band Championships of Great Britain [Youth Champs or NYBBCGB].

By making clear what we aim to achieve from the Championships, we are able to set the rules accordingly and ensure that they align with the overall spirit of the event. Establishing a set of aims from the outset means that we can assess to what degree these have been met each year and implement any necessary changes for future events. These aims will serve as the basis for decision making and will be shared with all stakeholders and participants to ensure transparency.

The event will be run in accordance with Arts Council England's Seven Quality Principles for Working with Children and Young People. These Principles will inform how we plan and review the event and will ensure that it is inspiring, inclusive and innovative.

While every care has been exercised in the compilation and publishing of this document to ensure the validity of the information provided at the time of publication, BBE accepts no liability or responsibility for the accuracy of content or for any errors or omissions. June 2022.



Aims

Quality principles

1. The Youth Champs will be a high-quality National event, which promotes a standard of excellence and innovation at all levels.
2. The Youth Champs will remain true to the brass banding tradition.
3. The Youth Champs will be exciting, inspiring and engaging to young people.
4. The Youth Champs will maintain a positive and inclusive environment, rejecting discrimination in any form.
5. The Youth Champs will promote brass banding to children and young people as widely as possible.
6. The Youth Champs will encourage personal progression (both musically and generally) within a youth banding environment.
7. The Youth Champs will foster a sense of belonging and ownership in young musicians.

Additional aims

- The Youth Champs will aid player creation to ensure future resilience of brass banding at adult level.
- The Youth Champs will encourage participation and reward progress and excellence.
- The Youth Champs will be held in an inspiring venue with facilities of the highest standard available.
- The Youth Champs will engage with its venue's local population, both within and outside of the brass band community.
- The Youth Champs will be run to the highest possible professional standards.
- The Youth Champs will be run without bias.
- A sense of achievement should be the main prize for all competitors.
- The Youth Champs will promote the sharing of best practice between youth band leaders.
- The Youth Champs will encourage communication and collaboration between children and young people.
- Young people will be given a voice and an opportunity to feedback and shape the event



Sections

Besson Prodiges Showcase Section (18 and under)

The Besson Prodiges Showcase Section is the Youth Champs' non-competitive section, offering an opportunity to take part and contribute a great performance without the pressure of a competition. Bands of all standards are welcome to play, even if they've performed at the contest previously. All competitors in this section should have a positive experience to encourage them to continue to progress on their instrument. Bands will be able to select the length of performance to facilitate bands at different developmental stages to engage with the section. Bands also opting to play in competitive sections will have this facilitated for them to avoid a scheduling clash between sections. Those who are over 18 years of age but who are still studying within the formal education system will be permitted to take part in the event. Where this is the case please apply in writing for confirmation to youthchamps@bbe.org.uk

Performance Section (18 and under)

The principal aim of this section is to give young people an introductory experience of competitive performance. Participating bands will be given the freedom to select their own choice of music to promote flexible teaching and suitable repertoire for performance at this level. This section also aims to introduce young people to the concept of assessment with original brass band music, in preparation for advancement to performing more adventurous pieces in future years. Those who are over 18 years of age but who are still studying within the formal education system will be permitted to take part in the event. Where this is the case please apply in writing for confirmation to youthchamps@bbe.org.uk.

Championship Section (18 and under)

The aim of this section is for young people to perform together at a high standard and provide the final step through the doorway to student or adult banding. All the players in this section will be young people still in formal education. The principles established earlier mean that it is not appropriate for those over the age of 18, who have left the education system or who are studying in tertiary education, to still be taking part in youth contesting. Those who are over 18 years of age but who are still studying within the formal education system will be permitted to take part in the event. Where this is the case please apply in writing for confirmation to youthchamps@bbe.org.uk.



Rules

These rules will form the framework for participation and will be reviewed annually against the aims, as stated above.

General rules

- The location of the Youth Champs will change regularly in order to ensure that the distance that participants and spectators need to travel will not constantly benefit one area over another. Over the average time that young musicians take part in the Youth Champs, we expect that the event will take place in at least two different parts of the UK. It is not intended that the event will take place in the same location for more than two years consecutively.
- No cash prizes will be awarded (see Additional Notes No. 3).
- Entry fees will reflect the size of the ensembles taking part.
- Bands in all sections will be limited to a maximum of 55 players, including percussion and minimum of 5.
- Bands can enter from anywhere in the UK. Bands from outside the UK may be permitted but should contact youthchamps@bbe.org.uk to check availability.

It is the responsibility of band leaders to ensure compliance with the contest rules. If any bands are found to have broken these rules, they may, at the discretion of Brass Bands England, be subject to penalty or disqualification and could be refused entry to some future events. Brass Bands England reserves the right to investigate any alleged rule breaches and may request information (such as proof of age or education status) at any time. Such actions may be taken retrospectively and could, potentially, affect bands' eligibility to represent England in other events including the European Youth Brass Band Contest. BBE will not accept responsibility for any consequential losses under such circumstances.

Besson Prodiges Showcase Section (18 and under)

1. This section will be open to all performers who have not reached their 19th birthday on or before 31 August in the year of the contest (in the case of 2023, players born on or after 1 September 2004).
2. Bands are required to play an own-choice programme not exceeding their chosen playing time, which will be either 10 or 15 minutes.
3. There is no set test-piece.
4. Players and bands may play in this section as many years in succession as they wish, age restrictions permitting.
5. Up to four adult (playing or non-playing) helpers will be allowed, in non-principal positions, to assist the young musicians during their performance.
6. There will be no awards given. It is intended that each child will receive a token for taking part in the event (such as a sticker or a certificate).
7. Each band will receive constructive public comments from an adjudicator at the end of the section, along with a set of written notes.
8. Non-standard 'brass band instruments' (i.e. trumpets, French horns and plastic instruments) will be allowed, but all instruments must be from the brass or percussion families. Singing is permitted.
9. Those who are over 18 years of age but who are still studying within the formal education system will be permitted to take part in the event. Where this is the case please apply in writing for confirmation to youthchamps@bbe.org.uk



* To clarify, this is an expectation rather than a requirement.

Performance Section (18 and under)

1. This section will be open to all performers who have not reached their 19th birthday on or before 31 August in the year of the contest (in the case of 2023, players born on or after 1 September 2004).
2. All bands will be awarded a Certificate of Achievement (Gold, Silver, Bronze or Merit) to indicate their level of playing within the section.
3. Bands will perform an own-choice programme not exceeding 15 minutes, which must include at least one original brass band work*.
4. There is no set test-piece.
5. Up to two adult helpers (playing or non-playing) will be allowed, in non-principal positions, to assist the young musicians during their performance.
6. Prizes will be awarded as follows:
 - 1st Place: The BBE Chairman's Cup, trophy to be retained
 - 2nd Place: Trophy to be retained
 - 3rd Place: Trophy to be retained
 - Best Soloist: Trophy to be retained
7. Non-standard 'brass band instruments' (i.e. trumpets, French horns and plastic instruments) will be allowed, but all instruments must be from the brass or percussion families of instruments. Singing is permitted.
8. Those who are over 18 years of age but who are still studying within the formal education system will be permitted to take part in the event. Where this is the case please apply in writing for confirmation to youthchamps@bbe.org.uk

* 'Original' in this context refers to a piece of music originally written for brass band. This does not mean that the piece must be a new composition, although competitors are free to commission and perform new works if they choose. This could be a test-piece, a march, concert piece, solo or anything else originally written for brass band.

Championship Section (18 and under)

1. This section will be open to all performers who have not reached their 19th birthday on or before 31 August in the year of the contest (in the case of 2023, players born on or after 1 September 2004).
2. All bands will be awarded a Certificate of Achievement (Gold, Silver, Bronze or Merit) to indicate their level of playing within the section.
3. Bands will perform an own-choice programme not exceeding 20 minutes, which must include at least eight minutes of original brass band music.
4. There is no set test-piece.
5. Prizes will be awarded as follows:
 - 1st Place: The BBE President's Cup, banner and trophy to be retained
 - 2nd Place: Trophy to be retained
 - 3rd Place: Trophy to be retained
 - Best Soloist: Trophy to be retained
6. Those who are over 18 years of age but who are still studying within the formal education system will be permitted to take part in the event. Where this is the case please apply in writing for confirmation to youthchamps@bbe.org.uk.
7. 'Non-standard' brass band instruments (i.e. trumpets, French horns and plastic instruments) will be allowed, but all instruments must be from the brass or percussion families. Singing is permitted.



8. The highest placed English band in this section will be eligible to represent England in the Development Section of the European Youth Brass Band Contest [EYBBC]. †

N.B. In order to maintain a high level of inclusivity in all sections, special circumstances will be taken into consideration at the discretion of Brass Bands England – i.e. an additional adult helper to assist with a specific physical or learning disability. Please discuss any specific requirements with a member of BBE staff by contacting youthchamps@bbe.org.uk.

Additional notes

1. Brass Bands England will endeavour to hold the Youth Champs at a set date each year i.e. the last weekend of March, as to avoid school Easter Holidays. There will occasionally be a need to adjust this to avoid clashing directly with the Easter weekend.
2. BBE will endeavour to announce information regarding dates, venues and set test-pieces at least one year in advance.
3. Additional prizes may be sponsored by external partners or donors. It is not envisaged that cash prizes will be awarded. However, prizes from instrument manufacturers or publishers etc. may have a cash value.
4. Bands qualifying to represent England at the European Youth Brass Band Contest may be eligible to receive support from Brass Bands England including, but not limited to, contributions towards travel costs. Brass Bands England may request that, in order to receive this support, qualifying bands participate in specific development events (i.e. workshops with leading brass musicians concluding with a public performance, joint concerts or similar). The level of support offered may vary from year to year and will be solely at the discretion of Brass Bands England.

* 'Original' in this context refers to a piece of music originally written for brass band. This does not mean that the piece must be a new composition, although competitors are free to commission and perform new works if they choose.

† If the winning band has already qualified from the previous year's EYBBC, the runner-up will also qualify.