



the association for music in international schools • church farm house • north loham • diss • norfolk • ip22 2lp • england  
phone/fax 44 (0) 1379 687 270 email [amis@bassetts.demon.co.uk](mailto:amis@bassetts.demon.co.uk)  
website: <http://amis-online.org>  
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## AMIS INTERNATIONAL SOLO AND ENSEMBLE FESTIVAL

### DIRECTORS' HANDBOOK

The AMIS International Solo and Ensemble Festival (SE) generally numbers between 400-500 students. Schools may enrol as many students as they wish in a solo or ensemble format. A student is allowed only once performance on a particular instrument or in any given category, but they may perform in more than one category. Categories include various combinations of wind, percussion, voice, piano and string events. Accompanists must be provided by participating schools for any performance requiring accompaniment. In the interests of scheduling, it is requested that any one accompanist performs in no more than ten entries. A list of recognized events is available on the web site. Students must be in Grades 5-13.

Students (with the help of their teachers) are responsible for the complete learning of their own selected ensemble piece. A judge who is a specialist on the given instrument or voice will then evaluate the student. Students must be well prepared in order to make their performance and its evaluation a positive experience. An intention form and all registration materials can be found online.

**Auditions:** All students in grades 5-13 are eligible for participation. Selection is based on the discretion of the school's music teacher, with the understanding that only well-prepared students will be submitted for participation.

**Concert:** There will generally be a short concert at the end of the festival day, featuring an outside group, and/or one or more of the adjudicators.

**Deadlines:** These are designed for the success and smooth operation of each Festival. Please try to use the deadlines given on the web site as the **last possible** date to submit materials.

**Directors' Responsibilities:** Directors are expected to be present throughout the course of the day, to offer encouragement, assist students in finding their room assignments and attend as many performances as possible.

**Dress code:** There is no official dress code for this Festival but appropriate appearance is expected. Extremely casual attire is not suitable for such a festival.

## **Festival Fees:**

**School Fees:** Each school must pay a participation fee for their school, in addition to the fees for each performance entry. Member schools submitting only one or two entries pay a reduced school participation fee. As usual with AMIS events, non-member schools pay a considerably higher entry fee than member schools.

**Entry Fees:** There are specific entry fees for solos, duets, and larger ensembles. These are listed on the web site.

**Festival: Host schools:** If you are interested in hosting this Festival please contact the Executive Consultant, Georgia Bassett. The American School of The Hague has hosted this event for a number of years. AMIS is also searching for hosts who will organize a similar festival in their regional, eventually leading to a whole series of regional solo and ensemble festivals to allow for more participants to experience this type of festival without having to travel for long distances.

**Saturday:** The Festival will begin at approximately 9.00hrs. Events will take place throughout the course of the day. Where possible, master classes will take place at the end of the day, possibly followed by a brief performance. This will allow participants to either return home that evening or to make arrangements for a Saturday evening activity.

**Forms: Forms are no on line. It is very important that these be filled out carefully and completely with all requested information, well in time to meet any deadlines set. Scheduling for this event is complicated. Late information makes this scheduling virtually impossible.**

**Housing:** Due to the large number of participants in this Festival, all participating schools who need to stay overnight will be requested to make their own housing (hotel) arrangements. A list of hotels close to the host school will be available on request through the AMIS office.

**Judges:** Most of the judges assigned to this Festival are familiar with, or are members of, AMIS. All AMIS teachers are invited to let AMIS know if they would like to be a judge for this event. Judges receive only a small honorarium

**Meals:** The school cafeteria will be open throughout the course of the day for snacks and lunch.

**Passports:** It is the Director's responsibility to check on the status of their students' passports and, where necessary, visas. It takes a long time to obtain visas in today's world. You will need a letter of invitation from the host school in order to obtain the necessary visas.

**Payments** An invoice will be issued as an email attachment once your online registration has been received. Fees can be paid either in sterling or in Euros by bank transfer or by cheque. You will need to request the currency in which you prefer to pay so the appropriate invoice can be issued to you.

Any unpaid fees are payable in sterling or euros cash or cheque at the Festival.

As with all AMIS festivals, registration fees are not refundable.

**Preparation:** Students should be well prepared. Teachers should be sure to have listened to each entry prior to the Festival in sufficient time to be sure the preparation level is adequate.

A copy of the music for each entry should be carefully labelled with measures numbered to be given to the judge for use during the performance. It will not be possible to make copies at the Festival, so these must be made ready to bring with you.

Students should all be carefully prepared to be a good audience member during the festival. Listening to other students is an important part of their learning for the day. They should be ready to be extremely quiet and attentive audience members at all times.

They should also be prepared for the fact that singing and playing other than in the official warmup rooms is not permitted.

This is not a contest. Students should be aware of that fact. There will be a rating given to each performance, but more importantly, comments and suggestions for improvement will be given, along with encouragement.

**Schedule :** Detailed information regarding assignment times and rooms will be sent to each school About a week prior to the Festival either by fax or email. Because of the extremely complicated nature of creating a schedule for an event such as this, it is crucial that all information be received on or before the due dates for entry materials.

**Travel:** Make your plans early. Festival registration begins approximately 9.00hrs on Saturday and all participants should arrive at school by that time, or preferably a little before. Transfer from the airport/main train station to the school is the responsibility of each Director and information will be provided on the web site to assist you with this..  
**Delays should be notified to the Festival organizer as soon as possible giving a new estimated time of arrival.**

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

The following guidelines will help you as you participate in the Festival.

1. **Accompaniment:** Any person may be an accompanist. Solos may be performed with or without piano accompaniment or with taped piano accompaniment. The performer must furnish the needed equipment for a recorded accompaniment. Pianos will be provided for solo accompaniment. We strongly suggest that several accompanists be available from each participating school. Events frequently run behind on the day of the Festival because the judge is waiting for the accompanist from another event.
2. **Classification:** Students will be divided into the following two divisions:
  - (i) Junior Division: Students ages 11-14 OR students currently enrolled in Grades 5 - 8.
  - (ii) Senior Division: Students ages 14-18 OR students currently enrolled in Grades 9 – 13.
2. **Judging guidelines:** Students will be judged on the criteria found on the judging sheet. This also acts as the entry form
4. **Limitation:** A student may enter any number of solo and ensemble events; however, (s)he may not enter two solos with the same event number.
5. **Memorizing:** Solos do not have to be memorized.
6. **Rating:** Students will be given a rating for each performance. The rating system will be:
  - a) Superior
  - b) Excellent
  - c) Good
7. **Scores:** Each soloist shall supply the judge with one score of his/her selection with each measure individually numbered.
8. **Time:** A solo performance should not exceed 5 minutes. Where feasible, cuts may be made in the piano accompaniment, introduction and interludes. Each judge has been given instructions to spend some time and offer suggestions to the participant. This should be one of the greatest benefits of the Festival. Try to take advantage of this service. Ensemble performance time should not exceed 8 minutes.

**PLEASE SHARE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WITH STUDENTS**

- a) Try to get to your performance room well ahead of time. It is quite possible that the judge will request you to perform ahead of your allocated time because the event scheduled before you has been delayed for some reason – i.e. the judge might be waiting for a piano accompanist to report.
- b) Upon the conclusion of your prepared piece the judge has been asked to offer a few suggestions about the nature of your performance. Don't interpret this as a bad sign. The judge is only trying to help you with your musical advancement.
- c) Do not play instruments except in the warm-up or performance rooms.
- d) Please do not run in the hallways and please do not enter a room while a performance is in progress.
- e) There will be two warm-up rooms, the elementary gym located by the front entrance and the gymnastics room located by the cafeteria. These rooms should only be used just prior to your performance time. Instrument cases and belongings can be kept in these rooms but you must arrange for the safeguard of personal property. There will be an extra piano in the gymnastics room for vocal and piano warm-ups.
- f) The cafeteria will be open all day during the Festival. All payments will be in Euros. Lunch will cost approximately €6.00. If you are leaving right after the awards ceremony and wish to take food with you it should be ordered from the cafeteria by 10:00hrs on the Saturday morning.
- g) When not playing in an event, all participants should be listening to other events. This opportunity is one of the most valuable aspects of this Festival. You should support the other students from your school or listen to students from other schools playing the same instrument as you do. Remember, everyone is nervous that day and proper courtesy and compliments to your fellow musicians will be appreciated by them.
- h) No smoking is allowed in the building at any time.
- i) Everyone should report to the theatre at approximately 16:30hrs for an awards ceremony.