

Kapitol
romotions

2026

NATIONAL RULES

**The National Rules of the
National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain**

These Rules replace all rules previously issued and are effective
from 1 January 2026 until further notice



nationalbrassbandchampionships.com

NATIONAL BRASS BAND CHAMPIONSHIPS OF GREAT BRITAIN

RULES

DEFINITIONS

In these rules the expressions have the following meanings:

Kapitol	Kapitol Promotions Ltd., P.O Box 53, Penarth, CF64 5XY. Owner of the title, National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain, and of the National Rules that apply to the eight Regional Championships and the National Finals of the National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain, together with the Appeals Panel of the same.
Contest	The National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain comprising the eight Regional Championships and the National Finals.
Accredited Registries	Brass Band Players Ltd. for bands based in England and Wales and the Scottish Registry for bands based in Scotland.
Contest Management	Kapitol shall manage the National Finals and each Regional Committee shall manage the Regional Championship for their respective regions.
Regional Committees	The organisations elected, or appointed, to organise each of eight Regional Championships of the National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain
Regional Championships	The Regional events to determine the bands that qualify for an invitation to the National Finals of The National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain and (subject to paragraph (d) of Appendix I - the Grading Rules) to provide results to determine the national grading of bands, in accordance with Rule 10(a).
National Finals	The one or more events organised by Kapitol each year to determine the National Champion Band of Great Britain for each section set out in Appendix I.
National Rules	The Rules under which all contests in the National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain (comprising the eight Regional Championships and the National Finals) operate.
National Forum	A body comprising of representatives from the eight Regional Committees, together with representatives of Kapitol Promotions Ltd.
National Appeals Panel	A panel appointed by Kapitol, to hear and determine appeals, as per the Rules of the National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain.

GENERAL

2. The title “National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain” is owned by Kapitol Promotions Ltd.
3.
 - a) These Rules govern the National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain, including the Regional Championships and National Finals.
 - b) Copyright of these Rules is owned by Kapitol and it reserves the right to amend or replace them, subject to Rule 25.
 - c) Prior written consent must be obtained from Kapitol if any contest promoter or organisation wishes to refer to, or to reproduce, any part or the whole of the Rules. Kapitol may take action against any reference to, or reproduction of, any or the whole of the Rules without prior consent.
 - d) If consent is granted, the appropriate acknowledgement must be given to Kapitol.
 - e) In these Rules, where the context so requires, the masculine shall include the feminine and the singular shall include the plural.
4. In order to enter the Regional Championships and the National Finals, a band secretary must complete the official invitation/acceptance form and return it, together with the entry fee, before the stated closing date, to the appropriate Contest Management. The entry fee is not refundable in any circumstances.
5. When the Contest Management has accepted a band's entry into the Contest, an acknowledgement will be sent to that band's Secretary. After the closing date, a schedule of the contest-day arrangements will be sent to the band secretary.
6. When the contest entry deadline has been reached, the Contest Management will send to the relevant Registry a full list of entered bands and will request a Registration Report for each band, dated ONE (1) Week prior to the Contest date.

THE CONTEST

7.
 - a) The Contest is open to brass bands only, consisting of a maximum of 25 brass players plus percussionists, as required by the band. Brass instrumentation will be from the following list:
Eb Soprano Cornet, Bb Cornet, Bb Flugel Horn, Eb Tenor Horn, Bb Baritone, Bb Euphonium, Slide Trombones, Eb and EEb Bass, Bb and BBb Bass.
A brass player may only play ONE brass instrument, unless required by the score. However, a brass player is also allowed to play percussion instrument(s) as required by the band.
 - b) To facilitate trombone players with limited arm mobility, they have the option to play a Valve Trombone but must gain approval from the Contest Management prior to Contest.
8.
 - a) All players taking part in the Contest must be registered with only ONE accredited Registry, and may only compete with the band that holds their Registration. It is the responsibility of the band secretary to apply to the relevant registry for the necessary registration documentation and to comply with the Registry Rules and procedures.
 - b) The deadline for New Player Registrations and Transfers to be fully received and processed by the Registry is the Friday one week before the contest. (For clarity: transfers will become effective 5 days later i.e. the Wednesday before the contest).
 - c) For the Regional Championships only, bands competing in sections 1,2, 3 and 4 are allowed to borrow up to two players, regardless of reason. The borrowed player/players must be registered with an accredited Registry (BBP/Scottish Registry), and can be registered with any band in any region of Great Britain. The borrowed player/players can be from another band in the same section or section below the borrowing band i.e. Section 1 bands can borrow from bands nationally graded Section 1 or below, Section 2 bands can borrow from bands nationally graded Section 2 or below, Section 3 bands can borrow from bands nationally graded Section 3 or below. Section 4 bands can borrow from bands nationally graded Section 4 only.

- d) A player may play with a maximum of three (3) bands in the Regional Championships' series i.e. a player can play with their own band and play as a borrowed player for two other bands. The only exception is for the application of the provisions of Rule 15.
 - e) A player may play with only ONE (1) band in any ONE (1) series of Finals' Championships. The only exception is for the application of the provisions of Rule 15.
9. a) For the purposes of the Contest and in accordance with the Grading Rules, every Regional Committee will grade the bands competing within its geographical boundaries, and in the National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain, into one of five National sections: Championship, 1, 2, 3 and 4.
- b) A band must take part in the section in which it is graded in that particular year.
10. Each band entering the Contest must enter the Regional Championships in the region in which its bandroom is permanently located, in accordance with the boundaries set out in Appendix III.
11. a) For the Regional Championships, bands in each section must perform the set test-piece, as stated on the entry form and comply with any clauses listed by the Contest Management on the schedule.
- b) For the National Finals, bands in each section must perform the set test-piece, as stated on the 'Finals' Contest Schedule, and comply with any clauses listed by the Contest Management.
- c) The provision of percussion instruments will be at the discretion of the Contest Management. Bands will be notified in advance of the details of this provision.
12. a) Closed adjudication will be used in the Contests.
- b) Adjudicators will be appointed by the Contest Management.
- c) Adjudicators will award band places only.
13. a) Qualification to the Finals
- i) In respect of sections 1 – 4, qualification for an invitation will depend on the number of bands entered in the sections at the Regional Championships.

Up to and including 6 bands entered	1 band qualifies
7-14 bands entered	2 bands qualify
15 to 19 bands entered	3 bands qualify
20 to 24 bands entered	4 bands qualify
25 or more bands entered	5 bands qualify
 - ii) In respect of the Championship Section, the first four placed bands in the previous year's 'Final' will qualify for an invitation to the following years 'Final', subject to competing in their respective Regional Championships.
Entry to the 'Final' of the National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain is at the sole discretion of Kapitool.
 - iii) In each of the Championship Section Regional Championships, the two highest placed bands will qualify for a invitation to the 'Final', in addition to those already invited under ii) above.
- b) The awarding of prize monies will be in accordance with the limits and procedures set out in the entry form.

CONTEST DAY

14.
 - a) The order in which a band will perform in a section will be decided by a draw. Contest Management has the right to apply discretion for matters that concern the order of play.
 - b) A band must appoint a delegate to attend the draw and act on its behalf in all matters pertaining to the Rules. Any queries or requests regarding the Contest must be raised by the delegate before The Draw takes place.
 - c) If a band's delegate fails to attend the draw, the Contest Management will draw on behalf of the band.
 - d) In the event of a section being subject to a split draw, bands will be notified by the Contest Management. The first stage of a split draw must be carried out at least TWO (2) weeks before the contest date. Stage two of a split draw will take place on the contest day in accordance with a), b) and c) above.
15.
 - a) In the event of a player being unable to compete due to personal or family illness, injury, bereavement or other emergency occurrence prior to the draw, the delegate may apply to the Contest Management for a deputy player, submitting documentary evidence in support of the application, either at the draw or within SEVEN (7) DAYS of the date of the Contest.

Providing the Contest Management is satisfied the application is genuine, the band drawn immediately before the band making the application must supply the relevant deputy with the band part and instrument, if applicable. In the event of the lending band not having such a player or instrument, the Contest Management may use discretion as to the next band required to supply the deputy player. If the band making the application is drawn first, the band drawn last must supply the deputy player. In the event of a split draw, this will mean the band drawn to play last in that group.

It is the responsibility of the lending band's delegate to ensure that the deputy player fulfils this commitment. The player acting as deputy must not accept payment for his services.
 - b) Only ONE (1) application for a deputy player per band will be considered, or otherwise, at the discretion of the Contest Management.
 - c) In the event of an application being made for a deputy player after the draw has taken place, a substitution may be made at the discretion of the Contest Management and with the agreement of the lending band.
16.
 - a) Bands must assemble at the registration point, as directed by the Contest Management.
 - b) Each player must present his registration card for endorsement.
 - c) Each player must sign the contest Registration Report form, if required by the Contest Management.
 - d) The registration officials will report any discrepancy to the Contest Management, which, in the case of doubt, will notify the band secretary that the player concerned and the band may be the subject of disciplinary action, including disqualification.
 - e) The Contest Management will refer any suspected breach of Registry Rules to the relevant Registry Management. The Registry will investigate to establish if a breach of the Registry Rules has occurred and report its decision to the Contest Management.
17. If any band is not ready to perform within FOUR (4) minutes of the time stated in the contest schedule, or of the preceding band vacating the stage, the band may be the subject of disciplinary action, including disqualification.

18.
 - a) The decision of the adjudicator(s) is final.
 - b) Results will be announced and trophies presented, as stated in the Contest Schedule.
 - c) Prize monies will be distributed FOURTEEN (14) days after the Contest date, subject to 19(a).
19.
 - a) A band winning a trophy must give an undertaking, signed by TWO (2) officials of the band, to keep the trophy and its protective case (where applicable) in good and safe condition, and must protect and insure the trophy and its case (where applicable) against loss or damage. Proof of insurance cover must be provided, as required by the Contest Management.
 - b) It is the band's responsibility to return the trophy and its protective case (where applicable) in good condition upon instructions from the Contest Management.
 - c) Contest Management shall have the right to seek compensation from any band for failure to comply fully with trophy return instructions issued by it.
20. Any form of recording of a band performance is not permitted at the Contest unless approved by the Contest Management, in writing.

DISCIPLINE AND APPEALS

21.
 - a) Any objection concerning any alleged breach of the National Rules, or an error in the results, must be submitted to the Contest Controller within 14 days of the Contest, together with an fee of £200.00, which will be returned only if the objection is upheld. Objections must be in writing on the official headed paper of the band concerned and signed by an official.
 - b) If the Contest Management decides that there has been a breach of the National Rules, or an error in the results, it will revise the list of placings.
22. Disciplinary action will be taken by the Contest Management for any of the following offences:-
 - a) Any breach of the Rules;
 - b) Failure to comply with the instructions set out in the contest schedule;
 - c) Any action that the Contest Management deems to be detrimental to the reputation of the Contest.
 - d) Offensive and provocative statements made online regarding contest management and officials will be considered by the contest management. If they prove to be grossly offensive, abusive or obscene, appropriate action will be taken. The action considered may include a ban on the individual making the remarks and/or the band he or she represents. Before such action is taken, absolute clarity will be sought regarding the views of such individuals and the band they are connected with.
23. In the event of any player, official or band being found guilty of any of the above offences, the individual or band will be subject to one or more of the following penalties:-
 - a) Disqualification from the Contest
 - b) Forfeiture of the trophies and/or awards
 - c) Suspension from competing in the Contest for a period of time specified by the Contest Management.
24.
 - a) If the band or individual is not satisfied with the decision of the Contest Controller it/they may appeal, in the first instance in writing to the Contest Management within 14 days of the Contest.
 - b) If the band or individual is not satisfied with the decision of the Contest Management it/they may appeal to the National Appeals Panel within 1 month of the Contest Management's decision. The Nationals Appeals Panel is appointed by Kapitool, and the decision of this Panel is final. Your statutory rights are not affected.

- c) In the event the Appeal is substantially successful, the costs of the National Appeal Panel shall be paid by the Regional Committee concerned in the Appeal. In the event the Appeal is substantially unsuccessful, the costs of the National Appeal Panel shall be paid by the band that has submitted the Appeal. Failure by a band to pay the costs will be deemed by the National Appeal Panel to be detrimental to the reputation of the Contest contrary to Rule 22(c) and may result in the Appeal Panel imposing a sanction pursuant to Rule 22.

PROCEDURE FOR CHANGE OF RULES

25. Contest Management will liaise directly with the National Forum if a change of National Rules is requested. Proposed changes must be agreed with Kapitol, before they can be implemented.

APPENDIX I GRADING RULES

The National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain will apply the following grading system. In these Rules, the word placings means the position awarded at the Regional Championships, which appear as points in the Grading Tables.

- a) Grading will be carried out following the Regional Championships, to take effect from 1st January the following year, with the exception of the Scottish Brass Band Association, which is allowed to operate its own grading table, for which the Contest Management is not responsible and for which it will not, under any circumstances, accept objections or hear appeals.
- b) The Regional Committees will maintain the grading register. Grading will be based on the results of the Regional Championships only.
- c) The bands will be notified of their gradings by the Regional Committees.
- d) The winning bands of sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the 'Finals' will receive automatic promotion.
- e) In the sections 1, 2, 3, 4, the bands with the two best aggregate placings over the previous three years contests will be promoted. In the case where two or more bands tie with equal first placing, then only these bands will be promoted. If two or more bands tie with equal second placing, then only the highest placed band in the current years results will be promoted.
- f) In sections where there are ten bands or less on the grading register, only the band or bands with the best aggregate placings over the last three years contests will be promoted. In the case where two or more bands tie with equal first placing, then only the highest placed band in the current years results will be promoted.
- g) In the Championship, 1st, 2nd and 3rd sections, the two bands with the lowest aggregate placings over the last three years contests will be relegated. In the case where two or more bands tie with equal last placing, then only these bands will be relegated. If two or more bands tie with equal second to last placing, then only the lowest placed band in the current years results will be relegated.
- h) In sections where there are ten bands or less in the grading tables, only the band or bands with the lowest aggregate placing over the last three years contests will be relegated. In the case where two or more bands tie with equal last placing, then only the lowest placed band in the current years results will be relegated.
- i) It will be the responsibility of Regional Committees to allocate a grading to any band entering the Regional Championships for the first time. Any Regional Committee receiving an application from a first-time entrant will assess the standard of the band in question by whatever means available, and this may include having the band assessed independently, at the band's expense.
- j) A band entering the Grading Register for the first time will be given an average position for the two previous years contests in the section in which it has been graded. The average position will be shown in Appendix II.
- k) Where two or more bands receive equal placings, each band will be given the same numerical placing. The next band will be placed the equivalent number of places below.
- l) Any band failing to compete, or which is disqualified from the Contest in any particular year, will be given one place lower than the lowest placed competing band in that section.
- m) Any band failing to compete for two consecutive years contests can be relegated, at the discretion of the Regional Committee, in addition to any action taken under Rule (g).
- n) Any band failing to compete for three consecutive years contests will be removed from the grading tables at the end of the third years contest, prior to the determination of promotion or relegation in that section. If such a band wishes to resume participation in the contest, it will be treated as a first time entry in accordance with Rule (i).

- o) If a band notifies the appropriate Regional Committee in writing that they are no longer competing and/or disbanded, they will be immediately removed from the grading registry before any further gradings are calculated.
- p) Bands promoted or relegated will be given an average position for the 2 year contests prior to promotion or relegation to that section. The average position table is shown in Appendix II.
- q) In the event of a Regional Committee needing to evaluate the number of bands in any given section, the Committee shall have the power to suspend rules € and (g) with regard to the number of bands promoted or relegated. The bands affected WILL be given notice of the Regional Committee's intention, following the Regional Contest and the publishing of the Grading Tables that will take effect from the following January. Bands will be notified that after the following year's contest, a re-evaluation will be effective and the number of promotions and relegations planned for that year. All band secretaries will be notified in writing by the Regional Secretary.
- r) No appeal will be considered against a band's grading unless the band feels it has been wrongly calculated by the Regional Committee. A valid appeal must be made in writing or email within 4 weeks of receiving the notification of grading. The decision of the Regional Committee is final in all matters concerned with grading.

APPENDIX II

CALCULATION OF AVERAGE POSITION

Number of bands competing	Average position
8	4.5
9	5
10	5.5
11	6
12	6.5
13	7
14	7.5
15	8
16	8.5
17	9
18	9.5
19	10
20	10.5
21	11
22	11.5
23	12
24	12.5
25	13
and so on...	

APPENDIX III REGIONAL BOUNDARIES

LONDON & SOUTHERN COUNTIES	Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Channel Islands, East Sussex, Essex, Greater London, Hertfordshire, Kent, Norfolk, Oxfordshire, Suffolk, Surrey, West Sussex.
MIDLANDS	Derbyshire, Herefordshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands, Worcestershire.
NORTH OF ENGLAND	Cleveland, Cumbria, Durham, * East Riding of Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire, Northumberland, North Yorkshire, Tyne & Wear.
NORTH WEST	Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Isle of Man, Lancashire, Merseyside, Northern Ireland.
SCOTLAND	All Scottish bands.
WALES	All Welsh bands.
WEST OF ENGLAND	Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Somerset, Wiltshire.
YORKSHIRE	South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire.

* For the purposes of counties within Regional boundaries, the East Riding of Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire includes all bands previously defined under the former Humberside.

Note: Regional Boundaries for all bands, regardless of any change of county names, remain unchanged.

Regional Secretaries

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