

2026 Syllabus for Piano Competitions

Monday 2 to Friday 27 March

and

Saturday 11 April to Saturday 16 May

The closing date for the Emanuel Trophy Competition is **Sunday 15 February**.

The closing date for all other piano competitions, including the Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association Piano Prize Competition, is **Friday 13 March**.



100 — Emanuel Trophy Piano Competition

Saturday 11 April 2026, from 1:30 pm

Venue: Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church, Central Square, N11 7AG

Adjudicator: XXX

Entry fee: £65

This competition is for a Challenge Trophy and a cash prize of **£750**.

If there are four contestants or more, the Trophy will be awarded to the winner to be retained for one year. If there are six contestants or more, there will be a further cash prize of **£250 to the runner-up**.

The Emanuel Trophy Piano Competition is the Festival's top piano competition and is one of the most prestigious within the festival movement. It was founded in 1985 by Emanuel Cedar (1916-2000). "Manny" entered North London Music Festival piano competitions as a young pianist, became a Festival Council Member in 1960 and Festival Chairman in 1975. The competition continues to be sponsored by Manny's family.

The 2026 competition will be open to the winner of the top senior piano award at any UK Music Festival held between 1 January 2025 and 31 December 2025. Entries will only be accepted if submitted via the Secretary, or Section Secretary, of the Festival represented. If the top prize-winner has already been entered to represent another Festival then the Secretary should, if possible, enter the next best pianist.

Nominations for the Emanuel Trophy should be made using the entry form that can be downloaded from the Festival's website. The completed form should be sent to Janice Twisleton by post or email (janicetwist@talktalk.net). **Entries cannot be made via the play and perform platform.**

The closing date is Sunday 15 February 2026.

Please see the next page for the **Rules for the 2026 Emanuel Trophy Competition**.



The Grand Piano chosen and hired by the Festival for these performances is supplied and maintained by Steinway & Sons, London.

Rules for the 2026 Emanuel Trophy Competition

- **The 2026 competition is open to the winner of the top senior piano award at any Music Festival held between 1 January and 31 December 2025.** If the top prize-winner has already been entered to represent another Festival then the Secretary should, if possible, enter the next best pianist.
- The contestant must have received a mark of 88 or more or be in the Outstanding Category if the “Category System” is used. They can be of any age but are expected to be of at least Grade 8 standard.
- Two contrasting pieces are to be played, and the performance must last no longer than 15 minutes and not less than 10 minutes. One of the pieces may include more than one movement. Competitors not conforming to these limits will be disqualified.
- Playing from memory is not essential.
- Candidates must provide the Adjudicator with a clean copy of the music for each work to be performed.
- The Adjudicator’s decision will be final.
- Entries must be received by Sunday 15 February 2026.
- Entries will only be accepted if submitted through the Secretary, or Section Secretary, of the Festival concerned.
- Only one contestant from each nominating Festival will be eligible.
- All television, radio and recording rights are reserved by the organiser of this competition – the organisers being the Executive Committee of the North London Festival of Music, Speech & Drama.
- Competitors are reminded to wear dress appropriate for a performance.
 - If an entrant has been a pupil of the Adjudicator in the 12 months prior to the Festival or is well-known to the Adjudicator, they should contact the Section Head before entering.



101 — Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association Piano Prize

Tuesday 28 April 2026, from 11:00 am

Venue: Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church, Central Square, N11 7AG

Adjudicator: XXX

Enter online via the Festival's website from January 2026 – Entry fee: £50.

Closing Date – Friday 13 March

A cup and a **£750 cash prize** will be awarded, to the First Prize-winner and a **£250 cash prize** to the Second Prize-winner. The Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association is generously sponsoring the First Prize.

This competition was previously the Appelbe Piano Prize and has been a component of the North London Festival since 2013. It is both a celebration of creativity centred around the piano repertoire, and a platform for talented pianists to exhibit their technical and artistic prowess.

The 2026 competition will be live and is open to pianists currently studying in the Senior Department of any UK Music College, Academy or Conservatoire.

Entrants are to perform two contrasting pieces by different composers with a **time limit of 15 minutes**; one piece may include more than one movement.

A spoken introduction to the musical programme is an integral part of the performance. It should include an announcement of each item and composer as well as giving details and points of interest about the music, or the background to the circumstances of, or reasons for, its composition. Notes may be used as long as they do not interfere with the sense of communication with the audience. Both the spoken introduction and the performance **must be within the 15-minute time limit**. Both the introduction and the subsequent pacing and sequence of the programme will be taken into account in the adjudication.

If an entrant has been a pupil of the Adjudicator in the year prior to the Festival or is well-known to the Adjudicator, they should contact the Piano Section Administrator before entering.

At approximately 6 pm on the same day there will be a short concert in the Free Church, at which winners and outstanding players may be invited to perform. When you enter, please indicate whether you would be available to perform, should you be invited to do so. Availability to perform at the evening concert will have no influence over the result; the Adjudicator will not be aware of whether entrants can perform at the concluding concert.



STEINWAY & SONS

The grand piano hired by the Festival for these performances is supplied and maintained by Steinway & Sons, London

Piano Competitions

Piano Day 1 – Saturday 18 April – **Adjudicator: ANO**

Piano Day 2 – Sunday 19 April – **Adjudicator: ANO**

Piano Day 3 – Tuesday 21 April – **Adjudicator: ANO**

Piano Day 4 – Friday 24 April – **Adjudicator: ANO**

Piano Day 5 – Monday 27 April – **Adjudicator: ANO**

Hampstead Garden Association Residents Association Piano Prize:

Piano Day 6 – Tuesday 28 April – **Adjudicator: ANO**

Piano Day 7 – Saturday 2 May – **Adjudicator: ANO**

Piano Day 8 – Monday 4 May – **Adjudicator: ANO**

Venue: Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church, Central Square, NW11 7AG

Closing Date – Friday 13 March

For each entry dependent on age, it is the ***age on 1 September 2025*** that applies, so that all the entrants in any age-limited class are in the same school year or years.

If an entrant has been a pupil of the Adjudicator in the year prior to the Festival or is well-known to the Adjudicator, they should contact the Section Head before entering.

The European Piano Teachers Association Cup will be awarded to the most talented pianist under 16 years of age.

Entrants must provide the Adjudicator with a clean copy of the music for each work to be performed, and pieces may not be repeated in different competitions.

Challenge and Recital Competitions		Time (mins)	Fee (£)
102	Challenge Competition (formerly Premier) — 13 years and over. One piece only. A £100 cash prize and a cup will be awarded. Class 102 on Monday 4 May.	10	28.00
103	Recital — any age. A recital programme of three or more pieces of contrasting styles and periods. A £100 cash prize, donated by Janice Twiselton, will be awarded to the First Prize winner and a £50 cash prize, donated by Janice Twiselton, to the Second Prize winner. Class 103 on Monday 4 May.	15	30.00

Period Competitions		Time (mins)	Fee (£)
Baroque/Classical Period 1600—1820:			
105	One Piece — 14 years and over. Class 105 on Saturday 2 May.	8	22.00
107	One Piece — 11—13 years and under. Class 107 on Friday 24 April.	5	18.00
108	One Piece — 10 years and under. Class 108 on Sunday 19 April.	4	16.00
Romantic Period 1820—1911:			
109	One Piece — 14 years and over. Class 109 on Saturday 2 May.	8	22.00
111	One Piece — 11—13 years. Class 111 on Friday 24 April.	5	18.00
112	One Piece — 10 years and under. Class 112 on Sunday 19 April.	4	16.00
20th and 21st Century 1911—Present day:			
113	One Piece — 14 years and over. Class 113 on Saturday 2 May.	8	22.00
115	One Piece — 11—13 years. Class 115 on Friday 24 April.	5	18.00
116	One Piece — 10 years and under. Class 116 on Sunday 19 April.	4	16.00
117	Duet Competition — Any age. One piece only. The Elizabeth Sellers Memorial Cup will be awarded to the most outstanding piano duet. Class 117 on Monday 27 April.	6	Per performer 12.00
Novices			
118	Novices — 10 years and under. One piece only. For entrants who have not won a prize in a solo piano class at a festival for the last three years. Class 118 on Saturday 2 May	5	18.00

Graded Piano Competitions

Saturday 18 April 2026 – starting at 1:30 pm

Adjudicator: XXX

For each of the graded competitions, performers should play one or two pieces from the *2025/2026 ABRSM Piano Syllabus* or the Trinity Piano Syllabus valid from 2025 or the Guildhall Piano Syllabus valid from 2025.

These classes are designed to provide performers with constructive feedback on their playing as they prepare for their exam. Every entrant receives a certificate and for each class the Adjudicator may award 1st, 2nd and 3rd place medals and certificates.

Entrants are reminded to introduce themselves and the piece(s) they are playing and to wear dress appropriate for a performance.

Enter online via the Festival's website from January 2026

Closing Date – Sunday-Friday 13-15 March

	Grades 1 to 5 (for other grades see classes 124-128)	Time (mins)	Fee (£)
119	Piano — any age, Grade 1.	3	16.00
120	Piano — any age, Grade 2.	4	16.00
121	Piano — any age, Grade 3.	4	16.00
122	Piano — any age, Grade 4.	5	18.00
123	Piano — any age, Grade 5.	5	18.00

Other Graded Competitions

For each of the graded competitions, performers should play pieces from a current or past ABRSM Piano Syllabus or a Trinity Piano Syllabus or a Guildhall Piano Syllabus.

		Time (mins)	Fee (£)
124	Pre-Grade 1. Two or three contrasting pieces. Class 124 on Tuesday 21 April.	2	15.00
125	Grade 6. One piece only. Class 125 on Monday 27 April.	6	19.00
126	Grade 7. One piece only. Class 126 on Monday 27 April.	8	22.00
127	Grade 8. One piece only. Class 127 on Monday 27 April.	8	2200
128	Grade 5 and above — 10 years and under. One piece only. Class 128 on Saturday 2 May.	5	19.00

Repertoire Competitions

131	Recital — 11 —12 years. Two or more contrasting pieces. Class 131 on Monday 27 April.	8	22.00
132	Recital — 9—10 years. Two or more contrasting pieces. Class 132 on Sunday 19 April.	6	19.00
133	Recital — 7—8 years. Two or more contrasting pieces. Class 133 on Tuesday 21 April.	6	19.00
134	Recital —6 years. Two or more contrasting pieces. Class 134 on Tuesday 21 April.	6	19.00
135	Recital — 5 years and under. Two or more contrasting pieces. Class 135 on Tuesday 21 April.	4	17.00



Festival Administrator:

Janice Twiselton, 64 Powys Lane, London N13 4HS

tel: 0208 886 7237 or 07943 117752

email: janicetwist@talktalk.net

For venues, a full list of competitions and an online entry form, visit

www.northlondonfestival.org.uk

Or email: enquiriesnlf025@gmail.com