

# VOLUNTEERS GUIDE TO RYDE EISTEDDFOD

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# What is Ryde Eisteddfod?

Ryde Eisteddfod is a great COMMUNITY INITIATIVE.

The Eisteddfod was established in 1988 by Ryde City Council and handed over to a volunteer team in 1990, with continued support from the council, both in the provision of venues, in communication and in direct sponsorship.

Because of generous donations by businesses, clubs and individuals from Ryde and the wider Sydney region Ryde Eisteddfod awards valuable prizes and scholarships in its five discipline areas.

One of these – the Seniors section (50 plus) – is included for older members of the community with an emphasis on entertainment as well as excellence in the performances.

The Eisteddfod is a non-profit, volunteer-run organisation which consists of a Committee and a large band of helpers. Venues have changed over the years but the current venues are listed here:

## Venues

- Cox's Road (201 Cox's Road, North Ryde Community Centre )
- Civic Centre , Top Ryde – being redeveloped in 2020-2022.
- West Ryde Community Hall, 3-5 Anthony Road, West Ryde.
- Ryde Secondary College Hall, Top Ryde. NB: entry is from Forrest Road.

*Vocal, Instrumental Solos and Seniors (50+) are normally held at Cox's Road  
Instrumental and Vocal Ensembles (bands, choirs, etc.) have been held at the Civic  
Centre until 2019 – an interim replacement in 2021-2022 while awaiting the Edna  
Wilde Hall in the newly developed 'Heart of Ryde'.  
Speech is held at the West Ryde Community Hall.  
Dance is held at Ryde Secondary College.*



## History

The History of Ryde Eisteddfod is covered in the book:

### 'Eisteddfod to Stage'

by Ann Howard, commissioned by the Committee in 2019 to mark the significant first thirty years of the eisteddfod.

Remarkable stories of organisation, of performances and exciting career outcomes are described in the book. These give testament to the value of aims of the eisteddfod in encouraging development of the arts in the Ryde region.

Ryde Eisteddfod is part of the larger eisteddfod community with coordinating body the AESA (Association of Eisteddfod Societies of Australia) which is made up of Eisteddfodau and Festivals from all over Australia.

The AESA mission (and those of its members):

*Together we make an Eisteddfod a better experience for those running them and for those participating in the events.*

*The Eisteddfod is held annually offering competitive and non-competitive sections for all types and styles of dance, vocal, instrumental, speech and drama. For several weeks each year, participants compete and perform, covering the full spectrum of the performing arts.*

*The artists benefit via competition: not only are their artistic skills improved, but also confidence, poise, commitment and self esteem - skills which they will later take into the community with them.*

Where possible, Ryde Eisteddfod events are held in locations in the Ryde area. The traditional owners of the land are the Wallumedegal clan. Many of the events are held in halls provided by the City of Ryde Council.

From Wikipedia:

The **Wallumettagal** or **Wallumedegal** (derived from *wallumai*, meaning snapper (fish) tribe was an indigenous Aboriginal tribe that inhabited the area of Sydney today known as the Ryde–Hunters Hill area of the Northern Suburbs. Common Aboriginal names in this part of Lower Northern Sydney also include *Willandra* and *Jacaranda*. Specifically the region is described as "North shore of the Parramatta River, including the City of Ryde, from the intersection of the Lane Cove River and west to Parramatta."

## Management

- **Performance Months**

July to September each year (not run in 2020 because of COVID-19 Pandemic)

- **Preparation Months**

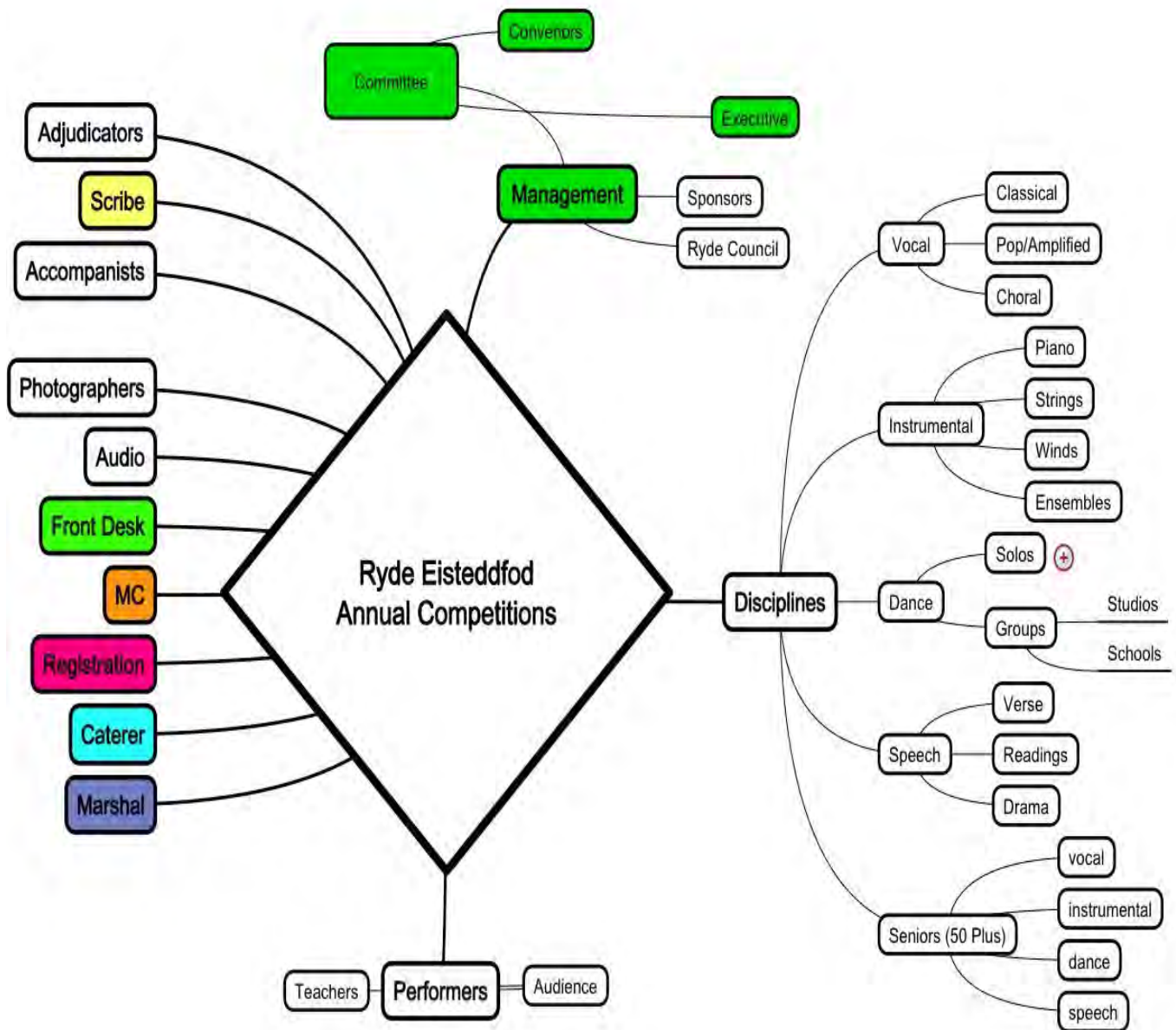
October to June, with new syllabus launched on November 30th and event entry open from January 14th to the end of April (slight variation for different disciplines)

- **Planning Months**

September meeting summarises the successes and failings of the eisteddfod just past and the October convenors plans the new syllabus. March AGM elects the new committee.

- **Structure**

(NOTE: SEASONAL EVENT VOLUNTEERS POSITIONS SHOWN BY COLOURS)



- **Ryde Eisteddfod Committee Inc**

The Incorporated body is the Ryde Eisteddfod Committee Inc and its constitution defines:

The office bearers of the society are as follows:

- The Executive
- Chairman
- Vice-Chairman
- Secretary (and Assistant Secretary)
- Treasurer (and Assistant Treasurer)

*The Convenors (or Coordinator)*

- Vocal
- Instrumental
- Dance
- Speech & Drama
- Seniors (50 Plus)

Special Roles

- Online Administrator
- Web Administrator
- Public Officer
- Publicity Officer
- Catering Officer
- Volunteers Coordinator

General Committee Members

## **Summarised List of Duties of Seasonal Event Volunteers**

*- roles assumed by volunteers during the performing season - see the Appendix for more detail-*

- **MC (or Stage Manager)**

Welcomes guests to the event and issues any relevant notices regarding the smooth operation of the day's events. Announces new performers to the stage. Works with the adjudicator to keep the events running smoothly.

- **Front of House (Door)**

Issues/checks entry tickets, provides programmes and gives general directions to performers, teachers and audience.

- **Scribe**

Works with the adjudicator to provide an adjudication sheet for each performance, ordering marks sheets prepared by the adjudicator and filling in certificates and prize sheets/trophies.

- **Registration**

Works with performers on entry, keeping a tally of those present. Receives music or other required materials. Answers questions with regards to performance conditions. Liaises with MC re attendance numbers

- **Marshal**

A major liaison task on ensembles/groups days, working with the MC and front desk to ensure a smooth flow of groups on and off stage for performance.

- **Catering**

Provides refreshments to adjudicators, equipment operators, traffic management and operational volunteers at the halls as needed.

- **Sessional Convenor**

Is knowledgeable on ALL of the seasonal convenor roles and ensures that all positions are filled for any session. He/she may need to provide official ruling on all matters that may arise during the session - e.g. timing, trophies/cash, copyright observance, privacy, health etc.



*Volunteers at work on Strings Sections North Ryde Community Centre in 2019 - Dawn Nettheim (caterer) at the door, Ailsa Paix on Front of House, Leo Dent MC and Moya Sue Tin on Registration*



*Volunteers celebrating Chairman Edna Wilde's birthday during the 2014 Eisteddfod Speech sessions at West Ryde Community Centre*



## Introducing the Disciplines (Stories, useful tips, etc.)

- fictional stories, but based on real stories of real volunteers



- **Vocal (all events in range 100–199)**

The story of Victor and Veronique, who happened to meet while volunteering on the Vocal Sessions at Ryde Eisteddfod.

Victor: *When I arrived at the front desk with my young daughter as she was presenting her song I noticed that they were very busy and I asked if I could help.*



Veronique: *I volunteered through the SeekVolunteer programme and checked out the vocal sessions from the volunteer rosters on the website.*

*We have now worked on different parts of the vocal days at the eisteddfod for the last few days - and really enjoy hearing songs we've heard before, songs we've never heard before - and meeting a great variety of people each year.*

*The vocal finals, with the young performers performing opera and lieder at the top level - and dressed up in evening attire of course - is the highlight of the year for us - we come along even if we are not on duty.*

- **Instrumental (all events in range 200–299)**



Imelda and Ian volunteered independently at instrumental sessions at the Eisteddfod - Imelda the strings events and Ian the piano solos - but then met up with each other when invited to the end-of-year Volunteer Thank You Party.



*We enjoy sharing lots of fun stories of both the competitors, the volunteers AND the parents we meet during the course of the eisteddfod.*

*On one occasion a parent had been forbidden by her daughter to attend as she believed it would be embarrassing but she was very keen to see the daughter in action in her first ever performance with the school. Ian: I was on marshalling duties and noticed an "incognito" figure surreptitiously hiding amongst the spare drum kit at the side of the hall while the*



*performance was going on. It was actually a very good performance and the parent would have been delighted to have made the effort to be there - she escaped detection and quietly moved out of the hall before the section was finished.*

The audience is a very important part of the Eisteddfod experience - and while some competitors make sure their parents are part of the audience some are not at all keen for them to be there, believing that it will just make them nervous. Often the parents can be more nervous than the competitors and the volunteers are able to chat with them and reassure them that this is quite normal.

Parents are also invaluable when a competitor has not remembered a copy of their music, needs piano stool adjusted, a costume fitted, hair done ... And many of the volunteers are also parents, so they know just how to calm nerves - of both parents and competitors

- **Dance (all events in range 300–399)**



Desiree and Don volunteered to help when they arrived at the Ryde Secondary Hall with a large group of performers on the Schools Dance day at the Eisteddfod. Don offered to help marshalling students on and off the stage and Desiree quickly learnt the skills of registering the competitors as they arrived.

Since then they have assisted on solo days, on scholarship days and on the many other events of the dance sections. They are not dancers themselves but greatly admire the skills of the young performers.



*Don: I still have a preference for the large groups performing but Desiree thinks her favourite day is the Junior Scholarship Award.*



- **Speech & Drama (all events in range 500–599)**

Sally and Donovan were persuaded to come and help on the organising side of the Speech events at West Ryde. They found that hearing the young performers in their many different styles of presentations gave them more courage in making presentations in their own work environment.



Donovan - *I enjoy all the sections but particularly the Shakespeare and drama. I also like encouraging the boys in the Boys Only Sections and it is interesting to see the older boys taking on the challenge of the News Reading Scholarship section.*

Sally noticed how much fun the children were having in the team events - especially the duos and trios, the monologues where they could dress



up and the telephone conversations. She hoped there would be more groups taking part in the prepared plays and verse choir sections as she remembered these fondly from her schooldays

- **Seniors (all events in range 700–799)**



Xenia and Xavier were asked to be on duty at the Seniors afternoon at Cox's Road. They thought they were just coming to help but found they had a wonderful day of entertainment and made great friends



They're looking forward next year's Seniors events and might investigate the regular events at the other venues as well.

Xenia and Xavier: *... and we might like to perform ourselves in the Seniors Events as well - there are so many events to choose from.*

## APPENDIX - Detailed List of Duties

### MC (STAGE MANAGER)

1. Provided:
  - One blackboard containing numbers to hang on the blackboard OR a projection computer/screen with prepared powerpoint files
  - Programme, names of competitors present (liaise with registration desk to have these brought to you).
  
2. When a section is ready to start, announce it, and the name of any person of business or other sponsor who is donating the prize(s).
  - If the sponsor ( or representative ) is present, introduce him/her to the audience. Then call the number (not name) of the first contestant to perform and announce the title of the item (written on the competitor slip of paper, or on the projector screen where projection used).
  - In some cases (e.g. instrumental ensembles and seniors) the name of the performer(s) may be used – check with the Session Convenor.
  
3. Hang the contestant's number on the blackboard under the section number OR advance the screen presentation, so the audience can see what section is currently proceeding and which competitor is performing.
  - After a contestant has finished, wait for a nod or indication from the adjudicator before changing the number on the board/screen and announcing the next contestant.
  - If some contestants were absent, ask at the conclusion if anyone who was eligible for this section has not yet performed. Sometimes people arrive late. If they have arrived and the section is not over, they MAY be permitted to go on last.
  - If no one else needs to perform, declare the section closed, and wait for the adjudicator to add up his/her marks.
  
4. When the adjudicator is ready, introduce him/her to the audience, and ask the sponsor (if applicable) to present the prizes for this section.
  - Some sponsors like to make a short speech, so ask if they would like to do so and allow time for this if necessary.
  
5. Other announcements:
  - Remind contestants occasionally to pick up their report sheets on the way out.
  - Warn audience if any possible breaches of rules detected such as photographing/videoing, talking during items, coaching etc.
  - General announcements (e.g. lost & founds, cars blocking the entrance, etc.) may be required from time to time.
  
6. Keep to time.
  - If the section is running late or early, you may need to 'pace' the announcements to keep to the time stipulated in the programme.

- Hurry things along if the session is running late. It causes serious inconvenience to accompanists, bus drivers, meal preparers and others if the session goes over time.
  - If the session is running early, because of a lot of absences, you can declare a tea break, or refrain from starting the next section till the time specified. (If *EVERYONE* is present and ready, you *MAY* start a section early).
7. Some section coordinators like the stage manager to keep a record of prizewinners and other details. Consult your coordinator as to what is needed.

## FRONT OF HOUSE (DOOR)

1. Provided:
  - Cash box
  - Float (~)\$100
  - Variety of paper tickets - regular Adults, Concession and Season
  - Programmes for the Discipline -green (vocal) , blue(instrumental), yellow(dance), pink (speech) or white (seniors)
  - At some venues an EFTPOS machine will be available for payments.
  - Sheet for recording the number online tickets presented.
  - NOTICES for display - such as Admission Prices, Be Quiet notices etc.
2. Keep a record of all tickets purchased
  - Record the starting number of each paper ticket type at the start of the day so that records may be kept of the number of tickets sold.
  - Record the number of any online tickets presented.
3. ALL AUDIENCE NEED A TICKET
  - Online tickets may be purchased from the website and shown on entry (paper or phone receipt). Note the purchase number of each online ticket.
  - Concessions are for pensioners, seniors, students and unemployed. Pre-school and primary children have free entry.
4. Special Passes
  - Competitors, accompanists and the conductor of school groups enter free of charge.
  - Teacher's passes are available for bona fide teachers. These passes SHOULD HAVE BEEN PRE-ORDERED ONLINE. - not arranged at the door.
  - Transporting Parents Passes are available ( PRE-ORDERED ONLINE ) in Instrumental Ensemble events, held on weekdays only.
  - Sponsors (representatives of businesses and clubs who have sponsored an event) should display their SPONSORS PASS. Make them feel welcome and introduce them to the MC at your earliest convenience.
  - ALL SUCH PASSES SHOULD BE SIGNED AND CHECKED FOR DATE VALIDITY ETC.
5. Programmes are available for purchase.
  - These are kept at a low cost and competitors/audience should NOT be able to ask the volunteer staff to "just have a look" at the programme without charge.

- For all disciplines it is possible for anyone to order and download an online programme which they can refer to on their phones or tablets.
6. Cash Prizewinners may hand you their completed forms
    - keep these safe and ready to hand over to the Session Convenor
  7. At the end of your shift -
    - please ensure that the cash box and its contents are safely stored for the next volunteer to take over.
  8. AT THE END OF THE DAY please
    - pack up the programmes and tickets as directed by the Session Convenor
    - sort the money into
      - a float of \$100 consisting of coins and small denomination notes. Leave this in the cash box.
      - the rest of the takings in a bundle or bag to give to the Session Convenor
    - fill out the 'door returns' slip
    - hand to the Session Convenor
      - cash box
      - door returns slip
      - sheet with recorded ticket numbers
      - any cash prize claim forms and
      - the door takings

### SCRIBE

1. Provided:
  - Adjudicator's Report Sheets
  - 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place certificates - for cash prize events
  - Highly Commended Certificates - for all events
  - Programme - has competitor names for certificates
  - Stopwatch ( - feel free to use your own if preferred)
  - Pen
  - White-out
2. At the beginning of a section involving own choice music or scripts,
  - Registration staff will bring you copies submitted by competitors (It is also possible these may be provided instead on iPad or tablet)
  - They should be in order and labelled with the contestant's number.
  - If they have not arrived at the start of the event, go and fetch them from the Registration table which may be overwhelmed by arriving competitors.
  - It is important to start on time.
3. *Hand* the correct material for each competitor to the adjudicator just before each contestant begins to perform.
  - Write the section number, date, and the contestant's number at the top of the Adjudicator Report sheet, and hand to the adjudicator.

- He/she may wish to write his/her own comments, but be ready to take down from dictation, if he/she prefers you to write the comments. If you are doing the writing, make sure it is neat and clear.
  - (Have a bottle of white-out liquid in case of mistakes).
  - Make sure contestant's number corresponds to the number displayed by the stage manager (sometimes, people are permitted to perform out of order, or are missing).
  - A competitor's name must NOT appear on the sheet unless specified by the Session Convenor. Preferably write the title of the piece being performed (in case of need for reference).
4. Make sure the adjudicator signs each report sheet.
5. TIMING.
- If there is a time limit on the performance, you need to start timing with the stopwatch at the opening note/word/step of any performance.
  - Only take note if the time is exceeded and draw the adjudicator's attention to this at the conclusion of the item.
  - There are penalties for going over time.
  - This is most important, as complaints come in if the time is exceeded and nobody has a record of it at the adjudication table.
6. At the conclusion of the section:
- The adjudicator will extract the 1st, 2nd & 3rd prizewinner reports from the bundle of report sheets, and any that he/she highly commends.
  - Keep a record of these place-getters in your programme or on a Prizewinners sheet provided by the Session Convenor
  - WRITING NAMES ON FORMS/CERTIFICATES
    - Fill in the number and name (referring to your program) of the contestant on any HIGHLY COMMENDED CERTIFICATES, so that these can be presented along with trophies or prize money.
    - If there is a money prize, fill out a 1st, 2nd, 3rd PLACE CERTIFICATE with the competitor's name & details. (Certificates are *not* given to those who receive trophies.)
    - You (OR the stage manager OR the Session Convenor) will be required to fill in the placegetters' names on the PRIZE AND SCHOLARSHIP FORMS provided by the Session Convenor.
  - EXTRAS  
In ensemble sessions you may be asked to supply ribbons for members of the placegetting teams. Check with the Session Convenor as to the colours and numbers.
7. While the prize presentations are happening -
- quietly take the rest of the report sheets, and the copies of the materials back to the registration desk so they can be returned to the contestants.

## REGISTRATION

1. Provided:
  - Pen
  - Programme
  - Registration lists
  - tear-off or stick-on labels supplied by the convenor
  - Notices for Display - directions to competitors etc.
  
2. Please mark off competitors as they arrive.
  - Attach the small label to the material they have brought for the adjudicator (it should have Section No. and Competitor No. only on it, NO NAMES should be visible to the adjudicator).
  - Fill in the name of the piece being presented on the larger label. This is given later to the stage manager so he/she can announce the item.
  - Sometimes, a competitor arrives late. He/she/they may still *be* permitted to perform if the section has not closed, but must go on last.
  - In a few sections there are competitors who have been given permission by the convenor/coordinator to perform at a different time or in a different section to that marked. Please treat them as part of the section. Give them a number if necessary. Check with the Session Convenor if not sure.
  
3. When a section is ready to commence
  - take the bundle of labelled material to the adjudicator's table.
  - take the title labels to the stage manager.
  
4. When the section has finished
  - collect the material AND the adjudication reports from the adjudicator's table.
  - Hand back to the competitors as they come out:
    - their reports,
    - any printed music or authorised photocopies.
  - If the photocopy is NOT authorised (stamped with copyright owners' permission), you must retain the copy and destroy it. This is most important, as AMCOS regularly checks up on us.
  
5. Keep the lists for reference at the registration table.

## MARSHAL – INSTRUMENTAL and CHORAL EVENTS only

1. Obtain a copy of the day's programme from Convenor or from the Front Desk.
  
2. The Eisteddfod provides some leads, stands, drums and some amplifiers, keyboards, etc. but schools will also bring their own equipment in some cases.
  - Familiarise yourself at the start of the session with what is being provided and try to ensure that equipment provided by the Eisteddfod is not inadvertently taken away by any group!



3. Approach the teacher/conductor in charge of each group
  - identify yourself as the Marshal and ask how many chairs and music stands they need.
  - Assist the teachers in
    - setting up the stage (or front of stage) area with the required number of chairs and music stands for each group.
    - rearranging drums, amplifiers, etc.
  
4. Assemble each group on one side of the hall just before they are ready to be called. Ask the preceding group to leave the stage area on the other side of the hall to limit crowding and congestion.
  
5. Ask waiting contestants to sit in designated areas.
  - If the hall is crowded, some groups may have to be asked to wait outside.
  - Instruments and instrument cases should not clutter the aisleways. The aisles should be kept clear for emergency evacuation in case of fire.
  - Instrument cases and school bags can be kept on the floor between the seats, except for very large ones such as tubas, vibraphones, etc. These should be kept against the wall near the back, the sides or at the front of the hall - depending on the venue.
  
6. Make sure each group is ready and waiting to go on in order.
  - As timing is crucial (because of bus bookings, etc.), it is important to keep things moving. You cannot afford to stand and watch or listen to a performance, you must be always organising the next group to go on or hurrying the previous group out.
  - If a group is outside practising and has not come when summoned, ask the stage manager if a subsequent group can go on instead.
  - Time cannot be wasted waiting for someone to arrive.
  - The late ones may be permitted to perform last on the program - check with the Session Convenor if in doubt.

## CATERING

1. Liaise with the session convenor as to when refreshments should be taken.
  
2. Check with adjudicators and all attending volunteers to ascertain their preferences with regard to refreshments
  - The session convenor should have advised you of any dietary requirements sent in by adjudicators, accompanists and volunteers.
  
3. Ensure that meals are ready at the scheduled times - with the ability to vary that time in the case of delays to the scheduled break times

## SESSIONAL CONVENOR

1. Often will be the official convenor for that discipline (as appointed at the AGM) but may be one of the sessional volunteers assigned to oversee the session
  
2. Is acquainted with all the tasks for each volunteer assigned for the day.

3. Ensures that all positions are pre-filled for any session - and fills in for missing volunteers until they arrive
4. Has in hand a copy of the rules and regulations of the Eisteddfod and is able to make rulings on:
  - copyright issues, such as the APRA requirements relating to admission of adjudicator/accompanist copies and appropriate return of original material or disposal of copies
  - door entry requirements - i.e. the need to pay for entry, for programmes etc.
  - restricted videoing of performances as allowed in the respective disciplines.
  - time limit issues
  - special requests - e.g. the awarding of a trophy instead of a cash prize
  - interpretation of the rules and of the descriptions as included on the website and in the programme
  - relevance of material performed to a particular section
  - any disputes or queries raised by adjudicators, accompanists, volunteers, competitors, parents, teachers, or by their representatives
  - any extraordinary matters arising - such as fire, health emergency, untoward noises outside the hall, etc. etc.
5. Any complainants not satisfied with the on-the-spot ruling by the Session Convenor should be asked to put their complaint in writing to the Committee for consideration at the September (Autopsy) meeting.

## Acknowledgments

This document has been compiled from material already available to the current Volunteer Community and the Constitution of Ryde Eisteddfod Committee Inc. It is a training document prepared as part of the 2019 Ryde Council Grant "Launch of Book "Thirty Amazing Years - History of Ryde Eisteddfod" with a major component " PROMOTION TO THE WIDER COMMUNITY TO ENCOURAGE MORE VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION".

## VOLUNTEER ACCREDITATION

New volunteers should read through the Guide and undertake the Volunteers Quiz <https://rydeeisteddfod.org/EISTEDDFOD/index.php/volunteer-pages/quizzes-for-volunteers> on the website.

There are several assessments

- General (Introductory, Historical and Management)
- Sessional Operations (Catering, Front of Door, MC, Marshalling, Registration and Scribing)
- Quizzes for Particular Disciplines

Everyone should complete the General Introductory session and any of the other quizzes appropriate to the role they have been asked to undertake. Successfully completing the various section of the quiz should equip any volunteer with the information needed to become a confident, accredited Ryde Eisteddfod Volunteer.