



2019 NC Chapter NATS Audition Rubric - CCM (Contemporary Commercial Music) Categories

As adjudicators hear singers, they should compare the singer’s performance against the general standard for the category they are adjudicating.

No sound is off limits, but all sounds are purposeful and intentional, and as vocally efficient as possible. Painful sounding sounds are produced in a vocally efficient way.

Belt: This high-energy sound is often described as “called,” or “brassy,” an outgrowth of mix. While it must be possible to be vibrant in a belt, vibrato is a stylistic choice.

Mix: This sound is often described as “speech-like,” and may be light or heavy based on the needs of the selection. This sound is clearly distinguishable from typical classical timbre.

Legit: This sound is often described as “lyrical,” “sweet,” and “round,” employing similarities to classical singing, but able to move easily to “mix” as needed.

STANDARD	70-79	80-89	90-100
<p>TONE: Singer shows mastery of vocal technique and every stylistic choice, regardless of registration. Tone is unique to the singer and does not carbon copy previous recordings whenever possible. Singer demonstrates mastery of stylistic choices including, but not limited to: vocal fry/creak :Creak ex. Aspirate tone:Aspirate ex., Yodel: Yodel ex., Constricted quality: Constricted quality ex., scream: Scream ex., Twang: Twang ex., registration flips, melismas and riffs, growl/rumble:Rumble Ex.</p>	<p>The singer shows little mastery of the vocal technique required for their chosen selections (belt, mix, and/or legit, and additional stylings), makes few appropriate choices in keeping with the style.</p> <p>Stylings happen thoughtlessly, not by choice or control.</p>	<p>The singer shows some mastery of the vocal technique required for their chosen selections (belt, mix, and/or legit, additional stylings), and makes some appropriate choices in keeping with the style.</p>	<p>The singer shows full mastery of the vocal technique required for their chosen selections (belt, mix, and/or legit, additional stylings), and makes appropriate choices in keeping with the style for all selections.</p>

STANDARD	70-79	80-89	90-100
<p>BREATHING/ALIGNMENT: Inhalation is easy, efficient, and sufficient to the task. Exhalation provides the appropriate stability, support, and vocal energy for the selections. The alignment assists in the engagement of the chosen tone and is appropriate for the selections. The body moves freely and is not locked into one position</p>	<p>Inhalation is often unintentionally noisy or insufficient. Exhalation does not provide stability, and the singer tenses or collapses body. Phrasing is not purposeful, and extra breaths are taken because of lack of air rather than artistic choice.</p>	<p>Inhalation is mostly easy and sufficient. Exhalation provides what is needed for the artistic choices in terms of stability, and the singer does not tense or collapse in the body. Phrasing is mostly purposeful, and most breaths are taken from artistic choice.</p>	<p>Inhalation is easy and sufficient. Exhalation provides what is needed for the artistic choices in terms of stability, and the singer does not tense or collapse in the body. Phrasing is always purposeful and use of breath always reads as an artistic choice.</p>
<p>LANGUAGE/DICTION: The text is sung with accurate pronunciation and effective articulation in the style or vernacular appropriate to the selection or song/genre style. The singer displays thorough understanding and communication of the lyric. For example: 1) The hard dental /t/ is not generally appropriate in most CCM styles. 2) Placement of diphthongs do not generally mirror that of Classical style.</p>	<p>The text is pronounced inaccurately or with articulation inappropriate to the selection. The singer communicates little of the meaning of the lyric. The singer shows little understanding of how pronunciation is commonly understood in the genre.</p>	<p>The text is pronounced accurately or with articulation appropriate to the selection most of the time. The singer communicates of the meaning of the lyric most of the time. The singer shows understanding of how pronunciation is commonly understood in the genre, but inconsistencies are present.</p>	<p>The text is pronounced accurately or with articulation appropriate to the selection. The singer communicates of the meaning of the lyric effectively. The singer shows understanding of how pronunciation is commonly understood in the genre.</p>
<p>MUSICIANSHIP: Pitches and rhythms are purposeful. Performance is easily sung from memory. Vocalist demonstrates thoughtful and appropriate use of the microphone. Vocalist has chosen a key that allows the song(s) to be sung and interpreted in the appropriate style while maximizing communication of the text.</p>	<p>Singing is out of tune. Pitches and rhythms are not tastefully personalized. Attention to chart lacks understanding. The style requires further study. Memorization is incomplete</p>	<p>Singing is mostly in tune, as appropriate to the style. Pitches and rhythms are tastefully personalized most of the time. Essential stylistic markings in the music are observed, and style presented is predominantly idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete with few errors.</p>	<p>Singing in tune, as appropriate to the style. Pitches and rhythms are tastefully personalized. Essential stylistic markings in the music are observed, and style presented is consistently idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete with no errors.</p>

STANDARD	70-70	80-89	90-100
<p>ARTISTRY/EXPRESSION: The physical life, musicality, and vocalism of the singer fully express the music and story, engage the listeners in a fulfilling aesthetic experience, and are genuine and integral to the selection. Choices and stylings show us the singer’s personality and they are engaged directly with their audience. Singer “makes the song their own.” Riffs/Runs/Scat: Are within the musical structure of the song and are appropriate to the era/genre</p>	<p>The singer copies available recordings and makes few individualized choices for the selections. The singer lacks confidence and personal connection to the Selections. The physical life, musical and vocal choices made by the singer often do not communicate the intentions of the genre or lyric, and do not engage the listeners in the entire set list.</p>	<p>The singer makes individualized choices for the selections most of the time. The singer shows confidence and personal connection to the selections most of the Time The physical life, musical and vocal choices made by the singer communicate the intentions of the genre or lyric, and they engage the listeners in the entire set list, most of the time.</p>	<p>The singer makes individualized choices for the selections. The singer shows confidence and personal connection to the selections. The physical life, musical and vocal choices made by the singer communicate the intentions of the genre or lyric, and they engage the Listener in the entire set list.</p>
<p>Ensemble: COMMENT ONLY: The singer and band/ensemble/pianist are well rehearsed and coordinate their efforts toward the same artist.</p>	<p>The singer and band are not synchronized, or do not seem aware of each other. The artistic goals of the performance were unclear.</p>	<p>The singer is aware of the band most of the time and efforts mostly Are coordinated toward the same artistic goals in the performance.</p>	<p>The singer is completely aware of the band and all performers are fully coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals throughout the entire performance.</p>

**CCM is the current NATS accepted term for “Contemporary Commercial Music” which was coined decades ago by NATS members Edrie Means Weekly and Jeanette LoVetri.*

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