KPO NSW Secondary Schools Concerto Competition 2027

COMPETITION RULES – please also read the FAQs at kpo.org.au

1. The 43nd NSW Secondary Schools Concerto Competition is open to all students in Years 7 to 12, aged 18 years and under on the date of the Finals, Sunday 27 June 2027, and living or studying in NSW or the ACT.

2. There are 3 sections in the 2027 Concerto Competition:
Junior Solo Concerto – age, 14 years and under on the date of the Finals (27 June 2027)
Senior Solo Concerto – age, 15 years to 18 years on the date of the Finals (27 June 2027)
Multiple Instruments Concerto – 2 or more performers, all ages eligible, according to Rule 1.

3. There are 3 stages in the Competition:
Stage 1, the Auditions: video recorded solo concerto with piano accompaniment.
Stage 2, the Semi-Finals: live solo performances with piano accompaniment.
Stage 3, the Finals Concert: solo performance with the Ku-ring-gai Philharmonic Orchestra (KPO).

4. The key dates and venues for each stage of the 2027 competition are:
Registrations open: Tuesday 1 December 2026.
Registrations close: When 100 Solo Entries are reached or 10 pm Monday 15 February 2027 (whichever comes first). NB last year we reached 100 solo entries in just four days!
Submission of recordings (up to 5 minutes) for the 100 solo entrants close 10 pm Monday 22 February 2027. Failure to submit a recording after entering may result in you being excluded from entering in the future.

Due to the strong demand for students to take part, competitors may NO LONGER enter on more than one solo instrument.

If 100 Solo Entries have been reached, entries for the Multiple Instruments Concerto section can continue until Monday 15 February 2027.

Stage 1, viewing the video auditions Sunday 7 March 2027 (3 adjudicators assessing a previously downloaded and collated reel of all 100 performances, together at a private venue). Semi Finalists will be notified by email later that evening.

All Multiple Instruments Concerto video entries must be submitted by 10pm on Monday 22 February 2027. Due to the large number of groups now entering, Multiples will now need to submit a video recording (up to 8 minutes) for Stage 1 and three groups of Finalists will be

chosen, by a team of adjudicators, for a live performance at the Semi Finals on Sunday Sunday 4 or 11th April 2027 (TBC). The Multiple Instrument concerto, or work with orchestra, will be limited to 10 minutes on the Semi Final Day but the full performance, by the winners, may be longer at the Finals (at the discretion of the conductor)

Stage 2, Semi-Finals of the Solo Concertos and the Multiple Instrument Concerto Final. The selected 3 Multiple Groups will perform first and then the 20 Solo Semi-Finalists perform live with piano accompaniment to an open audience, Sunday 4 or 11th April 2027 (TBC), from 10.30 am to 6.00 pm at Abbotsleigh Senior School, Wahroonga.

Stage 3, the Finals Concert: Sunday 27 June 2027 at 3.00 pm at The Concourse, Chatswood.

5. Stage 1 will be adjudicated by assessment of submitted video recordings. Each recording must be in one, unedited take, include a short, spoken introduction of the entrant's name and the title of the work being performed. It must be from the past 12 months. The total length of the recording for solo entrants, including your introduction, must not exceed 5 minutes.The total length of the recording for multiple instrument concerto entrants, including the introduction, must not exceed 8 minutes. Please refer to 'Video Entry Instructions' and the FAQ page for more details. Always discuss with your teacher the "best sections" of your concerto movement or movements to submit for the Stage 1 adjudication. Keep in mind that there are only 4 weeks to prepare for the Semis if you are chosen so please make sure that the complete performance is very well prepared. (Not just a perfect 5 minutes!)

Stage 2, Semi-Finals, Performance Timetables will be available on kpo.org.au/cc after Monday 15 March 2027. Competitors must be prepared to perform at their scheduled times at Stage 2, the Semi Finals.
Any special Stage 2 requests (staging, school or accompanist commitments etc) must be indicated on the registration form before the closing date (February 15). All requests will be reviewed and accommodated where possible.
Please note: Under no circumstances can changes be made to the schedule once it is published. (The timetable is arranged so that accompanists with multiple entrants have time to warm up and perform with each Semi-Finalist.)

The Finals Concert rehearsals with the orchestra, will be on Tuesday evenings and will commence on Tuesday 25 May 2027. Finalists will be sent a rehearsal schedule by email two weeks in advance. Finalists must inform the committee of any clashes with school or other commitments on those Tuesday evenings in the rehearsal period before the end of April.

6. Competitors must nominate to perform a concerto, movement(s) of a concerto or an instrumental solo with orchestral accompaniment. The entry form must state the total performance time for the nominated movements that will be played at the Finals Concert, should the competitor proceed through the Auditions and Semi-finals.

Please note. It is important to understand that for the Finals Concert:
Music chosen by competitors must have an orchestral score and parts readily available in Australia. Scores and parts which are not available to be hired by the KPO in Australia will incur additional costs for competitors. In the past three years, some overseas score hires and

performance rights have cost over $1000. (Please personally check with score hire companies eg, Clear Music Australia or Zinfonia. There are more details in FAQ on the website) https://www.kpo.org.au/current/concertocomp/faqs
If orchestral parts are not available, the competitor must withdraw from the competition.
The choice of work and movements nominated on the registration form cannot be altered after the final closing date for entries (15 February 2027). Please discuss your concerto and movement choice with your instrumental teacher before entering the competition.

7. For Stage 1, the Auditions, upload your 5 minute (for solo) &/or 8 minute (for multiple instruments) video recording (including a very short introduction of your name and work) as described on the Concerto Competition website.
Twenty solo competitors will be selected to proceed to the Semi-Finals, including at least one Junior, and at least one Senior. Three multiple instrument concerto groups will selected to proceed to the Semi-Finals.

8. For Stage 2, the Semi-Finals, the allocated time for each solo competitor is up to 15 minutes. (Cuts to orchestral tuttis help to feature your performance). The 15 minutes includes entering the stage, taking a bow, tuning and adjusting the piano seat if necessary. Please do not plan to perform 14 minutes and 59 seconds of music! The Multiple Instrument Concerto, or work with orchestra, will be limited to 10 minutes on this day.

9. For the Finals Concert, longer works may require some sections to be cut. The conductor of the Finals Concert will make the final decision.
As a guide for time limits, please refer to the 15 minute limit for the Semis. Sometimes the conductor will consider allowing a slightly longer program (eg 2 movements to a length of 18 minutes). However, a full 25 minute concerto is too long for the competition.

10. For Stages 1 and 2, the Auditions and Semi-finals, competitors must perform with piano accompaniment. Competitors may provide their own accompanist or choose an accompanist from the KPO's database of accompanists, available upon request.

11. Competitors should provide a copy of their music, piano reduction or full score, for use by the adjudicators at the Semi finals. Authorised copies and original parts can be collected from the front desk during the allocated breaks. Photocopies will be retained and destroyed by the KPO in accordance with copyright law.

12. The following awards will be presented following the Finals Concert:
a) Overall Winner, awarded to the best performer across both the Junior and Senior sections: $6,000 plus the opportunity to perform a full concerto with the KPO as a guest artist.
b) Barbara Robinson award: $1,500
c) Barbara Cran award: $1,500
At least one Junior section finalist and one Senior section finalist will receive two of these top three awards. (There have been times in the past when a junior performer was the overall winner and the two next awards went to seniors and/or a junior performer)
e) Perpetual Cups, awarded to schools of the Overall Winner, Barbara Robinson award winner and the Barbara Cran award winner
f) The Dual Crescendo Award for Great Potential: $800

The four awards above shall go to four different performers.
g) KPO players' award, awarded to the best solo performer (as voted by KPO players and the KPO finals concert conductor) during the KPO finals concert rehearsals: $500.00.
h) All solo finalists will receive $250.00 and a certificate.
i) The Emily Sun Violin Prize is a generous 3 year loan of her A E Smith Violin to a Senior violinist (preferably Years 11 or 12), to use as they further their study and career as a performer. This prize will be awarded in 2027 (at the discretion of the adjudicators). Finalists will be invited to apply for this award in writing, outlining their future plans and goals.
j) Multiple Instruments Concerto prize: $400 each. Multiple Instrument entrants must be available to perform at the Finals Concert if they win.
k) Other possible prizes, from our generous Sponsors, will be confirmed closer to the time of the Finals Concert, at the discretion of the Concerto Competition Committee.

13. The overall winner cannot enter the competition again in subsequent years on the same instrument. A Junior section winner of either the Barbara Cran or Barbara Robinson award cannot enter as a Junior again on the same instrument but may compete in the Senior section.

14. Video and audio recording is only permitted during the dress rehearsal for the Finals Concert. No other recording of any competitor will be permitted during any public performance. The Finals Concert will be sound recorded for possible radio performance.

15. All competitors perform at their own risk and KPO will not accept responsibility for any accident or misadventure.

16. No provision will be made for private rehearsal time in competition venues. For the Semifinals and Finals, warm-up times at the venue will be assigned before the performance time.

17. The decision of the adjudicators is final, and no discussion will be entered into. Please, do not approach or contact the adjudicators after the performances.

18. The KPO reserves the right not to award prizes.

19. Registration Fees: $75.00. The registration fee for each individual entrant, solo or each member of a multiple group, includes:
a) One student ticket to the Finals Concert
b) adjudicator report from Stage 1, the Auditions
c) adjudicator report from Stage 2, the Semi-Finals

20. All registrations and payments must be made online at www.kpo.org.au.

21. All Registrations must be received by 10 pm, Monday 15 February 2027. Only the first 100 solo entrant registrations received up to this date will proceed through to the auditions. (Please note: in 2026 the 100 Solo Concerto entry limit was reached in four days so please do not leave entries until the closing date)
The adjudicators' names will be published on the KPO's website at www.kpo.org.au as soon as details become available.

22. All competitors must abide by these Competition Rules and KPO's Privacy Policy, available at kpo.org.au/privacy.

23. By submitting the NSW Secondary Schools Concerto Competition entry form, all competitors consent to the KPO using any information contained in the entry form (plus any photography, videography or audio recordings taken at the competition) for media publication (including on KPO's social media pages in accordance with KPO's Social Media Policy, available at kpo.org.au/socialmedia). Entrants will also be updated about KPO activities through their newsletter, The Overture, by email.

24. If a competitor does not comply with these Rules, they may be disqualified from competing in the competition at the Concerto Competition Committee's absolute discretion.
Please also read the FAQs on the KPO website
https://www.kpo.org.au/current/concertocomp which contains important information, and will help with understanding these Rules. All enquiries should be emailed to concertocomp@kpo.org.au.