

Competition Syllabus

Every year, a new programme syllabus with all the Urdd National Eisteddfod competition topics is listed. On-lookers, supporters and competitors open this programme to see which set pieces are listed for each competition, be it dance, singing, recitation, drama, learners section, literature, art, craft and so on. This programme takes months to collate, with different stages to the process.

It's no surprise therefore, that Eisteddfod yr Urdd Ceredigion 2010 syllabus is ready for publication. What is surprising is that the organisers of this annual event, not only work on one Eisteddfod, but in reality, three eisteddfodau at any one given time. For example, the team are in the last planning stages of Cardiff Bay Urdd National Eisteddfod (25 – 30 May 2009), in the mid-stage planning process for Ceredigion's 2010 Eisteddfod and in the early throes of planning Swansea's Eisteddfod in 2011.

Back to Ceredigion, and Sheelagh Edwards, the Urdd National Eisteddfod Organiser explains the syllabus process: "We are extremely fortunate to have so many talented volunteers who sit on different committee groups, scrutinising each section of the Eisteddfod's competitions. The process for Ceredigion began nearly two years ago, when the Executive Committee was formed, and from that committee the Local Subject Committees were put in place. Each local Subject Committee looked at a specific section, i.e. one committee for the music section, another for the recitation section and so on. The people who sit on these committees are specialists in their chosen field; some are teachers, tutors, writers, artists, musicians, directors etc. Once the local committees have chosen set pieces, the central committees then scrutinise each competition. These central committees double check that the pieces, topics and subjects are relevant to the age groups, have no copyright issues, will be accessible to competitors, schools and tutors across Wales and so on."

Some of the problems with musical competitions include manuscripts out of print. The Urdd officials would then have to seek special permission to copy manuscripts themselves. It can also be difficult sourcing the rights to new music material.

Sheelagh Edwards explains: "As an organisation working with youngsters, we are always keen to offer new and exciting set pieces for competitors. Sourcing pieces and copyright from new and established musical shows can prove difficult, but when you see competitors on the pavilion stage

during the final competition singing their hearts out, all the hard work and effort has definitely paid off!”

By October 2008, the skeleton for Ceredigion Eisteddfod’s Syllabus was agreed. The work then needs to be collated and designed, and for Ceredigion 2010, the syllabus programme will follow a new structure.

Sheelagh Edwards explains further: “Instead of listing the competitions under two sections, the primary and secondary age groups, Ceredigion will see competitions listed from the youngest categories straight through to the older categories. With 370 competitions to collate, each with a special competition number, you can imagine how much checking and double checking goes into the programme prior to publication. We try our best to minimise the errors!”

And with Ceredigion’s Urdd National Eisteddfod proclamation starting this Friday 24 of April, it will see the dawn of a new syllabus programme, in anticipation of the 2010 Urdd Eisteddfod at Llanerchaeron. Make sure you catch a copy, so you’re ready to begin your Urdd Eisteddfod 2010 preparations!