

# DANCING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD (DAA) SYLLABUS and INFORMATION FOR ORGANISERS, ASSESSORS, TEACHERS and DANCERS

The Dancing Achievement Award is for dancers from 12 years and over who wish to improve their technique and knowledge of Scottish Country Dancing. The course is open to members and non-members of the RSCDS.

## 1. Preparation

Where the assessment is to be carried out at a local venue, arranged by the **organisers**, *a minimum of six dancers are required to be assessed*. These six dancers do not need to be entering for assessment at the same level. In a course run at Summer School all six dancers must be at the same level. The DAA has three levels of achievement; Intermediate, Advanced and Very Advanced.

The course is intended to bring the dancers together as a team, while 'polishing' the finer points of their technical ability, performance in the steps, the formations and the dances at the particular level.

## 2. The Organiser will

- Arrange the course.
- Meet the costs of a teacher, musician and venue to enable the dancers to undertake the recommended course minimum of five hours and maximum of twelve hours to prepare the the assessment.
- If using a musician:
  - a suitable, tuned piano is made available for use and unlocked, or the musician brings their own instrument.
  - a chair, water and glass and nearby sockets are available for the musician.
  - that the musician is positioned where he/she can see the dancers from the top of the set, whilst ensuring privacy for the assessors' table.
- Or, if pre-recorded music is used, that:
  - all equipment is tested in advance and someone allocated to operate the equipment.
  - a table positioned sufficiently apart from the assessor's table to ensure confidentiality but within reach of a power source.

These arrangements are the same for the organiser of a course at a residential school.

The appointment of two assessors will be in collaboration with the Convenor of the Education and Training Committee.

Organiser's Application form to hold an Assessment (DAA -04) to be forwarded to The Examinations Officer at RSCDS Headquarters *a minimum of seven weeks* prior to the date of the proposed assessment.

The remaining forms:

- i. Final Application form (DAA - 08)
  - ii. List of Dancers (DAA - 09)
  - iii. Dancers' individual Application forms (DAA - 07)
- and that i) ii) iii) along with the appropriate fees should be sent to the Examinations Officer at RSCDS Headquarters, *a minimum of three weeks* before the date of the assessment.

Following the appointment of the Assessors by the Convenor of Education and Training Committee, the RSCDS Examinations Officer will notify the Organiser of the names and contact details of both Assessors.

- In conjunction with the course teacher, the Organiser shall prepare two copies of the list of dancers, which shows the order of dancing during the assessment, *see 5. Information for Dancers*.
- If there is not a complete set of dancers being assessed, the organiser, in liaison with the course teacher, shall provide dancers, with suitable ability, to complete the set.
- Send the order of dancing list to both the Assessors, as far in advance of the date of the assessment as possible, and no later than 24 hours before the day of the assessment.
- Provide a steward or stewards, if required, to manage the entry and exit of the dancers to the venue and the starting time. It is recommended that only one set of dancers should be in the assessment room at any one time.
- A copy of the order of dancing list should be given to the steward liaising on the day between the assessment room and any changing room.
- A copy of the order of dancing list should be posted in a suitable place e.g.
  - a) the hall where the assessment will take place
  - b) somewhere the dancers change and await their turn for their assessment.

As entry to the assessment room will only be permitted for the assessments, it is important to ensure that there is easy access to the toilet and kitchen facilities without the need to enter the assessment room.

*It is recommended that checks in advance are made on electricity supply, lights, sockets and heating (whether metered or included with the hire charge), and it should be ascertained who else may be in the building at the time of the assessments besides the dancers.*

Facilities of the room in which the tests will take place. The following will be required:

- table and chairs for two assessors
- water for two assessors
- suitable lighting over the table, if natural light is not available
- chairs at the side of the room for the musician or the person working the music, for the course teacher and a steward

### 3. Expenses and Fees

The organisers are also responsible for meeting all of the costs of venues, teacher and musician that may be incurred during the course preparation and for the assessment. During the Assessment the organisers will meet the costs of the hospitality and accommodation, if required, for the Assessors. RSCDS Headquarters will be responsible for the fees and travel costs of the Assessors.

#### Dancer's Fees

	Standard Fee	Concessionary *
• RSCDS Member	£20.00	£16.00
• Non-Member	£25.00	£20.00

\* Dancers aged 25 years and under at time of assessment.

### 4. The Assessment

In planning the timetable for the assessments, the Organisers and Teacher will:

- Allow 12-15 minutes per couple for preparation and dancing time.
- Allow a further 8-10 minutes for completion of paperwork for each dancer.

**It is permissible for the final paperwork to be completed at a different venue from the assessment.**

The organisers must consult with the assessors regarding the arrangements for completion of the paperwork, as this has to be done before the assessors depart for home.

Only the following persons, other than the set of dancers, are permitted to be present during the assessment:

- The teacher of the course.
- Either the musician or the person working the music equipment.
- A steward.

They must sit within sight of the Assessors but at a distance to preserve the confidentiality of the comments between the Assessors. These persons must not prompt, coach or interfere in any way with the assessment. If behaviour is felt to be inappropriate, the lead Assessor may request that they leave the room.

## 5. Information for Dancers

Dancers wishing to be assessed should:

- Have access to the most recent copy of the RSCDS Manual of Scottish Country Dancing (*3rd Edition, May 2013*) where all formations will be found.
- Obtain a copy of the Dancing Achievement Award Syllabus and Information for Organisers, Assessors, Teachers and Dancers (DAA-01) from the RSCDS website; [www.rscds.org](http://www.rscds.org)
- Send application form (DAA-07), if taking the assessment locally, to the organiser, a minimum of four weeks prior to the assessment date.

For Dancers wishing to be assessed at an RSCDS residential School, application form (DAA-07) should be used and sent to the Examinations Officer; [examhelp@rscds.org](mailto:examhelp@rscds.org). **An application to attend Summer School must be submitted in the usual manner.**

During the taught course the dancers should learn all the prescribed formations and dances pertaining to the level to be assessed.

After entry to the assessment room each couple will be notified of the dances they are to be assessed on.

### The format for the assessment will be:

- 1<sup>st</sup> couple is given their dance and a few moments to talk through with the set.  
1<sup>st</sup> couple do dance A, 2 x 32 bars, music stops, and they slip to the foot of the set.
- Next couple is given their dance and a few moments to talk through with the set, while the assessors write notes on the previous couple.  
This couple does dance B, 2 x 32 bars, music stops, and they slip to the foot of the set.
- Next couple is given their dance and a few moments to talk through with the set, while the assessors write notes on the previous couple.  
This couple does dance C, 2 x 32 bars, music stops, and they slip to the foot of the set.

This format is repeated until all the couples have danced a Jig, Reel and Strathspey as the leading couple.

- In addition to dancing their prescribed dances, each couple may be asked to dance a Jig or Reel time and a Strathspey time step and/or formation, chosen by the assessors from the list appropriate to that level, from the Syllabus.

### The order in which the dancers will dance during the assessment

In the list, or the diagram, the top of the set should be at the foot of the page, for easy reference by the Assessors, e.g.

4th woman	Deirdre Dunnet	Not assessed	4 <sup>th</sup> Man	Donald Dewar	Sprained angle
3rd woman	Catriona Cowie		3 <sup>rd</sup> Man	Callum Campbell	Non-native English
2nd woman	Bonny Banks		2nd Man	Bob Beattie	
1st woman	Annie Abernethy		1 <sup>st</sup> Man	Archie Anderson	Hearing impairment

#### TOP OF THE SET

If you have

- more than 4 couples, then extend the list to couples 5 and 6 etc.
- If there is an odd number of dancers being assessed, then identify which dancer is not being assessed.
- couples that are not being assessed, then identify them.
- a dancer who is a non-native English speaker then identify them, whether they are being assessed or not.
- a dancer with a permanent disability (e.g. deafness) or an injury then identify them and when the injury occurred.

### 6. Cancellation

A dancer, who is unable to take the examination due to illness or other emergency after he/she has paid the assessment fee, may apply for a refund within two weeks of the event.

### 7. The Results

At each level candidates will have '**not achieved**', '**achieved**', '**credit**' or '**distinction**' on their mark sheets. Assessors' comments will also be given, including advice on areas to be improved or worked on.

Assessors shall return the completed sheets to the Examinations Officer at RSCDS Headquarters for issue by RSCDS staff. Assessors will not issue the results at the centre to the dancers, the course teacher or the organisers.

The Examinations Officer will send out:

- The original Assessment Sheet (DAA-06) to the individual dancer.
- A copy of the original Assessment Sheet (DAA-06) to the course teacher, marked 'Confidential'.
- A copy of the original Assessment Sheet will be kept at Headquarters. Teachers should keep records of Candidates' dancing progress.

## DANCING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS AND ASSESSORS

- Teachers should keep records of Candidates' dancing progress.
- The following Guidelines and the attached Mark Sheet should be used as a teaching guide for all levels of the Dancing Achievement Award.

### INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

The purpose of this level is to encourage dancers by demonstrating the candidate's achievement in learning the basic steps and formations.

Candidates should show:

- appreciation of the tempo of the music
- attempt at phrasing
- linking of formation
- approximate foot positions
- attempt to maintain outward rotation
- linking of steps
- correct handing
- partner awareness
- attempt good teamwork

### ADVANCED LEVEL

The purpose of this level is to encourage dancers to improve general performance and introduction of more difficult formations.

Candidates should show:

- appreciation of the tempo of the music
- sound linking of all formations
- good phrasing
- accurate foot positions
- good outward rotation
- smooth linking of steps
- correct handing
- good partner awareness
- good teamwork

### VERY ADVANCED

The purpose of this level is to provide the ultimate challenge for dancers. Dancers should be able to perform to the highest standards with grace, style and accuracy.

Candidates should show:

- good appreciation of the tempo of the music
- excellent linking of all formations
- excellent phrasing
- accurate foot positions
- overall outward rotation
- excellent linking of steps
- excellent handing
- excellent partner awareness
- excellent teamwork

## DANCING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

### INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

#### FORMATIONS

Advance and retire - one step (6.1.2)	Lead down the middle and up (6.19.1)
Allemande for two couples (6.2.1)	Petronella turn (6.20)
Balance in Line (6.4)	Poussette for two couples (6.21.1)
Set and cast off (6.6.7)	Promenade for two couples (6.23.1)
Grand Chain for three couples (6.7.2)	Promenade for three couples (6.23.2)
Turn corners and partner (6.8.9)	Reel of four across the set (6.24.2)
Double Triangles (6.11)	Reel of three on the side-lines (6.25.1)
Figure of Eight for 2 couples (6.13.4)	Rights and Lefts for 2 couples (6.26.1)
Hands across and back (6.14.1)	Half Rights and Lefts (6.26.2)
Hands across half-way (6.14.2)	The Rondel (6.27)
Hands round and back in Jig and Reel time (6.15.1)	Stepping up or down (6.34)
Hands round and back in Strathspey time (6.16.1)	

#### DANCES

Light and Airy	Jig	Book 4
Linton Ploughman	Jig	Book 5
La Flora	Jig	Book 27
The Carl Cam' Ower the Croft	Reel	MMM
Bea's Delight	Reel	Bk 43
The Cumbrae Reel	Reel	Book 28
The Marquis of Lorne	Strathspey	MMM
The Silver Tassie	Strathspey	Leaflet dances
Miss Isabella McLeod	Strathspey	Book 25

- Dancers are required to learn all the dances before starting the course for the Intermediate level.
- Dancers will dance, as first couple, one Jig, one Reel and one Strathspey in the assessment.
- All dancers are required to act as supporting dancers for the other dancers being assessed.
- Dancers may be asked, by the Assessors, to dance a specific formation.

#### NOTES FOR MARKING

**To successfully achieve this level dancers must gain at least 45 marks out of 70, 55 marks out of 70 to achieve Credit, 65 marks out of 70 to achieve Distinction.**

## DANCING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

### ADVANCED LEVEL

#### FORMATIONS

Dancers should know all the formations required for the Intermediate Level plus:

Advance and Retire (6.1.1)	Reel of four across the set progressing one place (6.24.4)
Allemande for three couples (6.2.2)	Half Reel of four (6.24.6)
Ladies Chain (6.7.5)	Diagonal Reel of four (6.24.5)
Set to and turn corners (6.8.8)	Reel of three (after set to and turn corners (6.25.5)
Set to corners and partner (6.8.6)	Reel of three (after set to corner and partner (6.25.7)
Figure of Eight (6.13.2)	Half Reel of three (6.25.10)
Poussette right round in Strathspey time (6.22.1)	Set and Link for three couples (6.28.2)
	The Tournee (6.38)

#### DANCES

<b>Tribute to the Borders</b>	<b>Jig</b>	<b>Leaflet Bk</b>
<b>Todlen Hame</b>	<b>Jig</b>	<b>Book 16</b>
<b>Mrs Stewart's Jig</b>	<b>Jig</b>	<b>Book 35</b>
<b>Reel of the Royal Scots</b>	<b>Reel</b>	<b>Leaflet Book</b>
<b>Miss Clemy Stewart's Reel</b>	<b>Reel</b>	<b>Book 9</b>
<b>General Stuart's Reel</b>	<b>Reel</b>	<b>Book 10</b>
<b>Argyll Strathspey</b>	<b>Strathspey</b>	<b>Book 35</b>
<b>The Gentleman</b>	<b>Strathspey</b>	<b>Book 35</b>
<b>Gang the Same Gate</b>	<b>Strathspey</b>	<b>Book 36</b>

- Dancers are required to learn all the dances before starting the course for the Advanced level.
- Dancers will dance, as first couple, one Jig, one Reel and one Strathspey in the assessment.
- All dancers are required to act as supporting dancers for the other dancers being assessed.
- Dancers may be asked, by the Assessors, to dance a specific formation.

#### NOTES FOR MARKING

**To successfully achieve at this level dancers must gain 45 marks out of 70, 55 marks out of 70 to achieve Credit, 65 marks out of 70 to achieve Distinction.**



## DANCING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

### VERY ADVANCED LEVEL

#### FORMATIONS

Dancers should be familiar with all the formations required for the Intermediate and Advanced Levels plus:

<p>Corners Pass and turn (6.8.3)          Hands round half-way (6.16.4)          The Knot for 2 couples (6.17.1)          The Knot for 3 couples (6.17.2)          Petronella turn in tandem (6.20.1)          Reel of three across (6.25.9)</p>	<p>Rights and Lefts for three couples (6.26.5)          Set and Link for 2 couples (6.28.1)          Set and Rotate for 3 couples (6.30.2)          The Spoke (6.32)          The Targe (6.36)          The Tourbillon (6.37)</p>
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#### DANCES

Alan J Smith	Jig	Book 45
Links with St Petersburg	Jig	Book 46
The Festival Man	Jig	Book 48
The Clansman	Reel	Book 32
The Dancers' Wedding	Reel	Book 41
Trip to Timber Ridge	Reel	Book 52
Cape Town Wedding	Strathspey	Book 39
The Silver Strathspey	Strathspey	Book 44
Sands of Morar	Strathspey	Book 45

- Dancers should know the dances above before committing to a course.
- Dancers will dance, as first couple, one Jig, one Reel and one Strathspey in the assessment.
- All dancers are required to act as supporting dancers for the other dancers being assessed.
- Dancers may be asked, by the Assessors, to dance a specific formation.

#### NOTES FOR MARKING

To successfully achieve this level dancers must gain 45 marks out of 70, 55 marks out of 70 to achieve Credit, 65 marks out of 70 to achieve Distinction.

## RSCDS DANCING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD (DAA) - ASSESSMENT FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Candidate number: \_\_\_\_\_

Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Venue: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1.0 Skip change of step		Reel	Jig	Total
1.1	Correct rhythm			
1.2	A positive hop			
1.3	Extended front leg followed by reach forward			
1.4	Close-up in 3 <sup>rd</sup> position			
1.5	Flight			

2.0 Pas de Basques		Reel	Jig	Total
2.1	Correct rhythm			
2.2	3 distinct beats			
2.3	Correct 3 <sup>rd</sup> position			
2.4	Strong fully extended Jete			

3.0 Slip step		Reel	Jig	Total
3.1	Correct rhythm			
3.2	Correct angle of feet			
3.3	Heels close in mid-air			
3.4	Smooth even step with heels together in change of direction			

4.0 Strathspey travelling		Score	Total
4.1	Correct rhythm		
4.2	Long reach forward		
4.3	Close-up in 3 <sup>rd</sup> position		
4.4	Long second reach forward		
4.5	Slow pull through		
4.6	Gentle hop on 4 <sup>th</sup> count		

5.0 Strathspey setting		Score	Total
5.1	Correct rhythm		
5.2	Long reach towards 2 <sup>nd</sup> position		
5.3	Close-up in 3 <sup>rd</sup> rear		
5.4	Long second reach towards 2 <sup>nd</sup> position		
5.5	Slow smooth lift of foot into rear placement		
5.6	Accurate position of foot at rear if supporting leg		

6.0 Deportment		Score	Total
6.1	Easy natural poise		
6.2	Upright carriage		

**Subtotal Score: Sections 1.1 – 6.2 :**

7.0 Dances		Reel	Jig	Strathspey	Total
7.1	Knowledge of Dance				
7.2	Correct phrasing				
7.3	Linking of formations				
7.4	Dancing all steps in each phrase				
7.5	Correct hand holds and arm positions				
7.6	Covering				
7.7	Sociability and Teamwork				
7.8	Maintenance of outward rotation of foot positions				
7.9	Maintenance of elevation (heels off the floor)				
8.0	Maintenance of style, spirit and character				

**Subtotal Score: Sections 7.1 – 8.0 :**

<b>Total Score: Sections 1.1 – 6.2 :</b>	/40
<b>Total Score: Sections 7.1 – 8.0 :</b>	/30

*Please Tick Grade Awarded:*

 Achieved 45 +  
 Credit 55 +  
 Distinction 65 +

RSCDS DANCING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD (DAA) - ASSESSMENT FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Venue: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Required levels were **Achieved**

Required levels were achieved **with Credit**

Required levels were achieved **with Distinction**

Required levels were not achieved

**Assessor's Comments:**

Assessor 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessor 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: To achieve the level required dancers must gain 45 marks out of 70, 55 marks to achieve a Credit and 65 marks to achieve a Distinction.