

Medal Tests for Young Dancers

The Syllabus

revised November 2014

Published by
The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society
12 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh EH3 7AF

THE ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY
Scottish Country Dance Tests for Young Dancers

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Introduction

This syllabus for Scottish country dance tests is designed to help teachers provide structured and progressive learning for their pupils, to encourage young people to maintain and develop their interest in Scottish Dance and to improve the standard of their dancing.

The Introductory Award is suitable for young children generally in their first year of dancing. Although there are no formal lower and upper age limits for candidates taking these tests, Grades 1 – 5 are aimed at dancers aged 7 – 16.

It is recommended that only children with suitable experience should attempt the strathspey steps at Grade 5. The grades should be taken sequentially, but experienced dancers may enter at an appropriate level. Dancers may be entered for Grade 1 without having taken the Introductory Award. To prevent inappropriate entries, teachers should ensure that candidates, particularly young ones, have had sufficient experience and practice to maintain the sequence of the dance/s throughout the assessment.

It is the expectation that teachers will leave an interval of at least one year between entering candidates for successive tests to allow dancers time to develop between grades and to enable them to experience other aspects of Scottish country dancing, such as festivals, dances and ceilidhs. Only in exceptional circumstances will teachers be permitted to enter candidates for more than one grade at the same assessment session. Permission must be sought before, or along with, the provisional application form, in writing, giving reasons for the exception, to RSCDS Headquarters. Unsuccessful candidates may re-take tests after further preparation.

General Conditions

RSCDS medal tests are open to all children attending classes in Scottish country dancing.

In the first instance teachers should contact their local RSCDS Branch to book tests. If a teacher does not have a local Branch or their group is not organised by the local Branch, he or she should contact RSCDS Headquarters (address under Further Information).

The booking must be made at least 12 weeks before the proposed date of a test.

The venue for the tests may be where the candidates usually dance or a central location, where different groups join to form a viable number. For some regions, where different groups are expected to join together, an assessment date may be

fixed by HQ. A **minimum of eight candidates is required for an assessment session**. If the number of candidates is large, over 40, more than one assessor may be appointed.

Assessors will be appointed from Headquarters. Assessors should not test candidates known personally to them. The entry fee, which is set by RSCDS Headquarters, must be paid in advance to the organising Branch or group by the candidates.

If a candidate cancels 14 days or fewer before the assessment without a medical certificate the fee is non-refundable. For any cancellation more than 14 days before the assessment, fees are refundable but must be claimed no later than 14 days after the assessment date. Candidates who cancel may be replaced with new candidates but their details must be confirmed with RSCDS Headquarters at least 14 days prior to the assessment.

Test Conditions

Candidates will be tested in practical dancing only.

Dancers must be prepared to demonstrate the technique and all the formations listed under the appropriate Grade.

Teachers are responsible for selecting the dances from the syllabus. The dances selected must be performed in a four-couple set. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that sets are made up to the correct number with children of an appropriate level of ability. Candidates being assessed for the same grades should dance as couples as far as possible. If there are not sufficient candidates at the same level for a complete set, those being assessed should dance as leading couple/s. The supporting, non-assessed dancers (who ideally should be at only one grade below or one grade above the candidates) should occupy 3rd / 4th couple positions.

Dancers should wear suitable clothing in order that footwork may be clearly observed. Footwear should be soft shoes suitable for Scottish country dancing. Each candidate may wear a pinned-on number for identification purposes.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that live or recorded music is available for the tests. If recorded music is selected the RSCDS Music for Medal Test Dances should be used. The musician or music equipment should be positioned at a distance from the assessor's table to ensure confidentiality.

The teacher may be present in the room for ALL assessments. They **MUST** sit in sight of the assessor at all times and **NOT** be seen to be coaching the dancers in any way, otherwise the teacher will be instructed by the assessor to leave the room.

ONLY for the Introductory Award may the teacher provide a brief recap before each dance.

Another adult may operate the music equipment but should not communicate with the dancers during the test. It is preferable that this adult is also within sight of the assessor.

Only one set at a time will occupy the room where the tests are taking place. In addition to the assessor, two adults, who are not parents, relatives, guardians or carers, of candidates, must be present in the room during the test. One of these may be the teacher. No spectators are allowed.

Assessments and Awards

Candidates will be assessed individually in the following seven categories ~ Steps, Rhythm, Formations, Phrasing, Deportment, Use of Hands, and Teamwork and Sociability. An average assessment in each category will be determined for the dances performed.

A **Pass** will be awarded when the candidate has gained five average assessments at **C** or above, one of which must be for **Steps**.

A **Pass with Credit** will be awarded when the candidate has gained a minimum of four average assessments at **B** or above including **Steps**, and **C** or above in all other categories.

A **Pass with Distinction** will be awarded when the candidate has gained a minimum of four average assessments at **A**, including **Steps**, and **C** or above in all other categories.

No teacher or candidate may nominate his or her own assessor.

The assessor's decision is final and no correspondence or discussion may be entered into regarding the assessor's report. All candidates will receive a report on their performance.

For the Introductory Award successful candidates will receive a certificate and a badge.

For each grade a certificate and medal will be awarded to successful candidates.

A plaque on which to display the medals will be included at the first test.

Further Information

Descriptions of the dances and suitable recorded music are available from RSCDS headquarters for all the dances in the syllabus.

Further information on the formations found in the medal test dances can be found on the RSCDS website; search for "Medal Test" at www.rscds.org for this and other information.

Queries about the syllabus or the conduct of the tests should be addressed to:-

RSCDS
12 Coates Crescent
Edinburgh EH3 7AF

Tel: +44 (0)131 225 3854
Fax: +44 (0)131 225 7783
Email: info@rscds.org

Introductory Award

Technique

Dance rhythmically using skip change of step and slip step with good phrasing, showing enjoyment in the social spirit of Scottish country dancing.

Formations

1. Hands round and back
2. Hands across and back
3. Turn partner with right and left hand
4. Dance down the middle and up
5. Casting off

If formations are not performed within the dances candidates may be asked to demonstrate them separately.

Dances

All dancers are required to perform 2 dances, one from each section.

SECTION 1 *A Reel for Jeannie (Reel)*

RSCDS Book 40, No. 1

The Merry Reapers (Jig)

RSCDS Graded Book, No. 3

SECTION 2 *Cumberland Reel (Jig)*

RSCDS Book 1, No. 11

Mr Michael Bear's Reel (Reel)

RSCDS Graded Book 2, No. 5

The jig *The Flying Scotsman* may be danced as a non-assessed 'warm up' dance. Alternatively one of the prepared medal test dances may be danced as a warm up before the start of the assessment.

Grade 1

Technique

1. Show position of the feet – 1st , 2nd , 3rd , 4th
2. Dance rhythmically and accurately in reel and jig time
 - (a) Skip change of step
 - (b) Slip step
 - (c) Stepping up and down

Formations

Introductory Award formations plus:

1. Lead down the middle and up
2. Cross and cast
3. Casting down and up
4. Rights and lefts
5. Figure of eight
6. Promenade for two couples

If formations are not performed within the dances candidates may be asked to demonstrate them separately.

Dances

Three dances to be selected - one from each section to include at least one reel and at least one jig.

SECTION 1 A Jig For Mrs Dunn (Jig)

SCD for Children, No. 3

The Brudenell Jig (Jig)

RSCDS Graded Book 2, No. 3

SECTION 2 The Honeymoon (Reel)

RSCDS Graded Book, No. 8

The Waratah Weaver (Jig)

RSCDS Graded Book 2, No. 4

SECTION 3 Le Papillon (Jig)

SCD for Children, No. 2

Galloway House (Reel)

RSCDS Graded Book, No. 5

Grade 2

Technique

Revision of Grade 1 - plus pas de basque.

Formations

Grade 1 formations plus:

1. Allemande
2. Set and cross over
3. Advance and retire
4. Ladies' chain
5. Grand chain for three couples
6. Promenade for three couples
7. Reel of three

If formations are not performed within the dances candidates may be asked to demonstrate them separately.

Dances

Three dances to be selected – one from each section to include at least one reel and at least one jig.

SECTION 1 *Kendall's Hornpipe (Jig)*
RSCDS Graded Book, No. 22

Hedwig's Reel (Reel)
RSCDS Graded book 2, No. 9

SECTION 2 *The Provost Wynd (Reel)*
RSCDS Graded book 2, No. 19

The Deil amang the Tailors (Reel)
RSCDS Book 14, No. 7

SECTION 3 *Lady C. Bruce's Reel (Reel)*
Miss Milligan's Miscellany, No. 42

It's all right (Jig)
RSCDS Graded book 2, No. 12

Grade 3

Technique

e

Revision of Grades 1 and 2 plus a travelling pas de basque step.

Formations

Grades 1 and 2 formations plus:

1. Set and turn with one hand
2. Set and cast off
3. Set and turn corners followed by reel of three
4. Balance in line
5. Turn corners and partner
6. Poussette

If formations are not performed within the dances candidates may be asked to demonstrate them separately.

Dances

Three dances to be selected – one from each section to include at least one reel and at least one jig.

SECTION 1 *The Braes of Balluder (Reel)*

SCD for Children, No. 9

Mrs MacLeod (Reel)

RSCDS Book 6, No. 11

SECTION 2 *The Maids of Currie (Reel)*

SCD for Children, No. 7

The Reel of the 51st Division (Reel)

RSCDS Book 13, No. 10

SECTION 3 *Ladies' Fancy (Jig)*

RSCDS Book 13, No. 12

Scottish Reform (Jig)

RSCDS Book 3, No. 1

Grade 4

Technique

Revision of Grades 1, 2 and 3.

Formations

Grades 1, 2 and 3 formations plus:

1. Reels of three on opposite side and then on own side of dance
2. Double triangles
3. Reel of four
4. Petronella turn

If formations are not performed within the dances candidates may be asked to demonstrate them separately.

Dances

Three dances to be selected – one from each section to include at least one reel and at least one jig.

SECTION 1 Maxwell's Rant (Reel)
RSCDS Book 18, No. 10

The Express (Jig)
RSCDS Book 20, No. 11

SECTION 2 La Flora (Jig)
RSCDS Book 27, No. 10

Inverneill House (Reel)
RSCDS Book 35, No. 2

SECTION 3 The Cumbrae Reel (Reel)
RSCDS Book 28, No. 8

Swiss Lassie (Reel)
RSCDS Book 39, No. 1

Grade 5

Technique

Revision of Grades 1, 2, 3 and 4
plus

1. Strathspey travelling step
2. Strathspey setting step

Formations

Grades 1, 2, 3 and 4 formations plus:-

1. Allemande for three couples
2. Set to corners and partner
3. The knot
4. The rondel
5. Set and rotate

If formations are not performed within the dances candidates may be asked to demonstrate them separately.

Dances

Three dances to be selected – one from each section to include a reel, jig and strathspey.

SECTION 1 Tribute to the Borders (Jig)
RSCDS Leaflet Book, No. 31

General Stuart's Reel (Reel)
RSCDS Book 10, No. 3

The Silver Tassie (Strathspey)
RSCDS Leaflet Book, No. 30

SECTION 2 A Capital Jig (Jig)
RSCDS 5 Dances 2009, No. 3

Lady Susan Stewart's Reel (Reel)
RSCDS Book 5, No. 9

Miss Gibson's Strathspey (Strathspey)
RSCDS Leaflet Book, No. 18

SECTION 3 Joie de Vivre (Jig)
RSCDS Book 39, No. 2

The College Hornpipe (Reel)
RSCDS Book 20, No. 12

Cape Town Wedding (Strathspey)
RSCDS Book 39, No. 4

Further Examinations

Dancing Achievement Award (DAA)

The DAA is to encourage a higher standard of dancing and is open to all members of the RSCDS. Dancers can be assessed at three different levels ~ Intermediate, Advanced and Very Advanced.

Applicants must be over 12 years of age at the date of the examination and be a member of the Society. Further information is on the RSCDS website at <https://www.rscds.org/article/dancing-achievement-award-daa>

The Teaching Certificate Part 1 and Part 2

This is a course of training which leads to the award of the RSCDS Teaching Certificate. The two-part structure consists of five units.

Teaching Certificate Part 1 is comprised of:

Unit 1 – written paper, Unit 2 – practical dancing and Unit 3 – teaching level 1

Teaching Certificate Part 2 is comprised of:

Unit 4 – teaching practice, and Unit 5 – teaching level 2

Further information about the above examinations is available from RSCDS Headquarters or <https://www.rscds.org/article/teaching-certificate-2>

Resources

RSCDS
12 Coates Crescent
Edinburgh EH3 7AF

Tel: +44 (0)131 225 3854
Fax: +44 (0)131 225 7783
Email: info@rscds.org Web:
www.rscds.org

The Manual of Scottish Country Dancing 3rd Edition May 2013 contains descriptions of all the techniques and formations required in the syllabus.

Instructions and suitable recorded music are available for all the dances in the syllabus.

“Jigs and Reels” - a set of lesson plans with accompanying music for primary school teachers available from September 2012, which also links to a CPD course delivered by the RSCDS.

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Edinburgh **Fax:** +44 (0)131 225 7783
Scotland **Email:** info@rscds.org
EH3 7AF **Web:** www.rscds.org

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