

## TRANSITION FROM UNIT 3 TO UNIT 4

Within Unit 3 the tutor if possible could cover some aspects of the following:

- Lesson Planning – sample lesson for Unit 4 (Teaching Certificate Syllabus Appendix E)
- Clarify format of review – go over guidelines

### CLASS ASSESSMENT FOR EACH LESSON

The tutor could give advice regarding assessment for each of the required lessons for Unit 4. The candidate should consider the following for each of the six lessons

1. How much of the lesson objectives/ tasks were achieved in terms of:
  - a) Steps
  - b) Formations
  - c) Dances
  - d) Organisation
2. Did observation take place concerning the different levels of ability in the class?  
(examples should be recorded)
3. How much improvement was made individually, or as a class?  
What faults or lack of understanding did you identify and correct?
4. How much change, if any, had to be made to the original lesson plan?
5. What aspects will require more work in the next lesson?
6. What progression will be made?

### SELF EVALUATION

The tutor could offer guidance to the candidates in order to analyse their own teaching and plan to improve it. The following aspects should be considered by the **tutor** and **candidate** and later by the **candidate** and **mentor**:

1. What insight the candidate has gained in analysing their strengths and weaknesses, in the teaching process, e.g.
  - Structuring the lessons
  - Observation
  - Presentation
  - Management
  - Pace
  - Demonstration

2. At an early stage careful and specific feedback must be given to the candidate by the mentor. The candidate requires to learn how he/she is performing and what changes, if any, are required for future progress.
- 3) What planning in the light of critical analysis of the teaching experience can now take place?
- 4) The candidate must have some understanding about how he/ she presents themselves – manner, approaches to teaching, holding the interest of the class, pace and motivation.
- 5) The candidate must respond sensitively to the needs of the classes.
- 6) How much success did the candidate have in progressing one lesson to the next?
- 7) Future planning of lessons

## **PROGRESSION**

- 1) Progression Planning
  - Consultation, gleaning information regarding the class and variety of level
  - Recent class content and programme planning
  - Short term planning – six hours work
  - Planning for each class session
- 2) Progression through presentation of Scottish Country Dancing with the knowledge of the necessary developmental stages and structures upon which to build:
  - Steps
  - Formations
  - Dances
- 3) Levels of Ability
- 4) Developing the ability to recognise the quality of the dancing– teach *dancing not just dances*.

## **ROLE OF A MENTOR – UNIT 4**

To achieve a worthwhile experience for candidates undertaking unit 4, requires close liaison between the candidate and mentor, who could perhaps help with the selection of client group / groups.

A Mentor should act as a Consultant to a candidate, who is required to present a series of lessons and show some understanding of the Teaching Process. With appropriate guidance

and supervision from the mentor, the candidate will be expected to teach, reflect critically and evaluate the learning experience.

Organise mentoring sessions and visits to include the following:-

- Pre session and initial planning meeting
- Observation of Teaching
- Analysis and Evaluation
- Feedback to Candidate
- Discussion and Questioning
- Future Planning – guide the candidate to reflect on the teaching experience, and if necessary work together to make required changes.

The mentor's role will be to listen, question, challenge, direct or assist when required and essentially guide the work of the candidate.

Mentors must be able to use skills of:

- Observation: Provides focus and is effective in giving the mentor a clear perspective of the candidate's level of ability.
- Feedback: Prime purpose is to see how candidate is managing and how help might be offered to enable progression.
- Constructive criticism, praise and application of listening and questioning skills should be carefully applied.

## **WORKING WITH A MENTOR**

The mentor should:

- Ensure that communication is always available, in order to give the candidate maximum support.
- Endeavour to give appropriate time commitment to the candidate.
- Visit the candidate where possible, at least twice during the period of teaching practice.
- If unavailable to visit, arrange for a candidate to discuss the teaching by email or Skype and receive advice. The tutor should offer assistance to achieve this.

## **TEACHING WITH A CLASS MUSICIAN.**

For teaching Scottish Country Dancing, working with an experienced musician is the most satisfactory arrangement, if possible. A good working relationship and rapport between the teacher and musician, underpinned by appropriate choice of music, will provide a really enjoyable learning experience for your classes. In order to achieve this, consider the following:

- Apply and build upon the knowledge and use of music already gained from Unit 3.
- When choosing music for dancing, your choice is mainly from the three basic dance

rhythms and styles; reel, jig and strathspey.

(be able to choose dances which exemplify different styles – e.g. The Sailor –hornpipe style.)

- For Unit 4, you are required to extend lesson plans to include dances, dance analysis and appropriate tunes.
- Learn to apply the music accurately, for all components of the lesson. (e.g If dealing with a formation in bars 9-16, ask the musician for that particular phrase of the music.)
- Contact and inform the musician of the lesson plan of each lesson, a few days before each class, giving the names of dances to be taught and the published source. Also discuss with the musician, what music you will require for other sections of the lesson. The musician will usually offer suggestions for your consideration.
- Before the class starts, always consult with the musician, to recap what has been agreed, and to establish the phrasing, tempo and rhythms required for exercises and technique.
- Make maximum use of the musician throughout the lesson, asking her/him to speak about the history of the music and the source of a particular tune.
- Make it clear if you do or do not want the music, at any given time during the lesson, and ask distinctly for the exact amount of music. At all times, stand where the musician can see you. Be particularly aware of this, as you organise the class for different sections of the lesson and for demonstrations.
- At the end of each class, always show appreciation of the music, and acknowledge all contributions made by the musician during the lesson.
- When teaching steps and/or use of steps, for an exercise or a difficult section of a dance, as before in Unit 3, it is recommended that jigs are used for skip change of step and slip step, reels for pas de basque and traditional strong strathspeys for strathspey steps. (Tunes for step practice are listed in section 4.5 of the Manual.)

#### **TEACHING WITH RECORDED MUSIC.**

- Be confident operating all kinds of equipment that may be used.
- Variable speed is essential. Be aware that a variety of equipment plays at different speeds. If the speed of the digital media is not appropriate then choose another recording. Ensure that the tempo is correct for each part of the lesson. Inappropriate tempo will significantly affect dancers' learning.
- Practise identifying musical phrases in chosen music, in order to bring the class in at the correct phrase of the music. Practise “ready .... and” over the recorded music.

- If possible, it is helpful to organise your own music compilations, for step practice and warm up sessions.
- Ensure that music chosen is suitable for what you want to achieve and that it works effectively for any particular step, action or phrase.
- Check that the sound is effective throughout the working area.

## **MUSICAL ELEMENTS AFFECTING SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING.**

### **Good start and finish.**

- Aim for clear rhythmic cues, to start the music, which indicates the tempo involved, reel and jig or strathspey and which also alerts the class in preparation for action. ("Ready .... and") Agree with the musician a method of stopping the music. ("Thank you David")

### **Rhythm**

- Rhythm is the most important aspect of all dance music and for the wide ranging movement skills required within Scottish Country Dancing; steps, formations, phrasing of dances. It is used musically to describe the different rhythms, e.g. jig, reel, strathspey, waltz.

In dancing, it is used fundamentally to co-ordinate the movement with the music. e.g. the correct length of time and amount of energy that must be applied to each action, in order to produce accurate rhythm.

In technique practice, if not already mastered, always work on the rhythm of the steps and bring in the music, starting slowly and gradually increasing the speed to the correct tempo. Voice should be strong and rhythmic.

In order to assist rhythmic awareness and phrasing, encourage the class to really listen to the music, incorporating it into all sections of the lessons. e.g. In skip change of step, listen for 4 bars, travel for 12, or any such permutation.

### **Phrasing.**

Work to achieve the following:-

- Fitting or adjusting steps to the musical phrase, so that each formation begins and ends with the music.
- Making the dancers aware of how many bars of music are needed for each phrase, formation or link within the dances.

### **Tempo or Speed.**

- Music for Scottish Country Dancing should be played at a consistent tempo throughout a dance, support steps, formations and total phrasing of the dances.
- The main factor affecting speed is the purpose of the dancing. e.g. A learning situation of steps and formations, the experience and age of the dancers, a social occasion.

### **Use of music.**

- Make use of a variety of tunes and rhythms in your warm up and cool down, but always use Scottish Country Dance music for technique practice.
- Use the original where possible. If not available, select music with a strong beat, so that it is easy to hear the rhythm and phrasing. (Types of tunes for dancing are listed in 4.6 of the Manual.)

For future teaching of Scottish Country Dancing, time spent on the following research would be invaluable (and most enjoyable). Seek advice and guidance from your mentor, experienced teachers and musicians of Scottish Country Dancing, who have learned what tunes work for the particular task in hand.