

ROYAL ACADEMY OF
DANCE



FOCUS ON Exams

Issue 3 2020



Health and safety and social distancing in exams

Adaptations to
exam formats

Focus on Exams Issue 3 2020

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Welcome to Focus on Exams

The pandemic has now become a longer-term part of everyday life, with no 'end date' in sight. Instead, countries and regions are adjusting their preventative measures in response to increasing or decreasing cases of COVID-19.

Our examinations model is based on sending an examiner (often from another country) into a country/region to travel and interact with students and teachers in different areas. This isn't practical due to current world events, and our insurers do not cover us for any COVID-19-related issues if examiners travel to examine.

We hold examinations in about 73 countries and have a panel of 224 examiners in 25 countries. The constant state of change makes planning extremely difficult, especially when we factor in government guidelines about travel, quarantine, and any testing results that would halt an exam session in addition to the normal exam planning. Organisers worldwide need to monitor changing advice, and if any planning does take place, its cancellation is complex, causing issues for the organiser, teachers, candidates and all involved.

Essentially, in the current climate we cannot continue to plan exams in the same way.

We are therefore temporarily putting in place the following measures to allow us to adapt our exams model during the pandemic and to help us provide examination sessions:

- We will be limiting extensive examiner travel. International travel will be signed off by the Director of Examinations to ensure the safety of candidates, teachers, examiners and exam day staff/assistants.
- Teachers and exam organisers must have a risk assessment in place for their examination session.

- We will be using more examiners who are local to the country/region in which exams are taking place.
- Filmed exams will remain an option for teachers and candidates until December 2021
- Where teachers have face-to-face examinations planned, we advise that they also have a 'plan B' in place to film, in case of emergencies. That way the work spent on planning the examination day is not wasted.
- Sessions may not follow normal patterns as organisers react to lockdowns, quarantines or closures – your local office will advise about options in your area.
- All the format and administrative adaptations previously circulated, e.g. CD permitted for vocational levels, soft ballet shoes permitted for all vocational levels (see document in Members' area for a full list) will be in place until December 2021, to help teachers with reduced studio and preparation time for their candidates.
- Reasonable adaptations of exam procedures (to allow for social distancing) are permitted.

We will review these points regularly, and where we find that conditions are more stable and travel less restrictive, we will relax these measures. Having a longer term plan in place, however, means that we can adapt to the realities of the current pandemic situation and continue to provide an examinations service for our members.

As you may be aware, we usually minimise instances of examiners being allocated to tours in areas close to where they live and work, to avoid conflicts of interest with pupils they may have taught, coached or examined in the previous two years. Using the above temporary model, examiners will be examining closer to home and it may not always be possible to follow this policy. Please be assured that we will closely monitor any possible conflicts of interest, using information from both teachers and examiners, and we will ensure that all cases are logged with the Quality Assurance Manager.

We have put together some helpful documents that are now available in the Members' area. These include a sample risk assessment to help with some of the issues you may need to think about for your exam day, as well as filming guidelines, and the format/administrative adaptations for exams during the pandemic.

We will try to be as flexible and pragmatic as we can, to provide an examinations service for our teachers and candidates during this time.

Stay safe and best wishes

James Stockdale
Director of Examinations

If you have any questions or feedback about RAD exams, contact us at exams@rad.org.uk



Health and safety and social distancing in exams

Key rules:

1. Any candidate with or showing any symptoms of COVID-19 is not allowed attend an exam.
2. No one who lives with somebody who has COVID-19 or its symptoms should attend an exam.
3. No one who has had contact in the last 14 days (check with current government guidance) with someone that they know has COVID-19 or symptoms should attend an exam.
4. If any candidate attends and feels unwell, particularly with any COVID-19 symptoms, these must be reported to their teacher or examiner immediately. Any such candidate should not take or should halt their examination (if already underway) and preparation should be made for them to go home.
5. **Teachers must have a risk assessment in place**, including a plan of action in case a student, exam attendant, music operator or the examiner does feel unwell (including where the symptomatic person would be able to wait while transport is arranged, and any necessary cleaning after they have left the premises). This should also include details of parents/guardians/carers who can pick up candidates, and a list of all those who attended the activity, so that they can be contacted if an instance of COVID-19 is reported.
6. Teachers, candidates and those involved in the exam day should follow all local guidance for relevant **'track and trace'** procedures. This includes providing contact details or downloading relevant apps/QR codes.
7. If, on the exam day, a candidate has or develops COVID-19 symptoms, the examiner will end the examination and consult with the teacher/exam attendant to put into place the action plan from the teacher's risk assessment. The teacher and examiner will review to see whether the rest of the examination day can go ahead based on the local government guidelines/health advice and the judgement of the examiner and teacher.
8. If a candidate tests positive for COVID-19 up to 14 days after their examination, they should inform their teacher and also email **exams@rad.org.uk**. The RAD teacher will then contact relevant parties (e.g. candidates, parents, CD operators/pianists, exam attendant, etc.) including their RAD organiser, so that the examiner can be informed.
9. If an examiner develops COVID-19 or symptoms, the examination day will be postponed or cancelled.
 - a. If the symptoms develop before the examiner attends the exam day, the teacher will be informed as soon as possible. The RAD organiser will then consult with the teacher to offer alternative arrangements for their examination day, i.e. filmed assessment, alternative date, or examiner if possible.
 - b. If the examiner develops symptoms during the exam day, exams will stop, the teacher and the RAD organiser will be informed, and all parties will follow the action plan from the teacher's risk assessment. The teacher will inform relevant candidates who have been in the exam studio with the examiner, so they can follow the local guidance (testing, self-isolation etc.). The rest of the exam day will be cancelled, and the examinations will be postponed to a later date. The examiner will take a test as soon as possible, and the RAD organiser will inform the teacher of the outcome.

Class awards

There are no prerequisites for our graded examinations, solo performance awards or class awards. If candidates have been previously working towards, or entered for, an examination, the entry can be changed to a class award if this a more appropriate option under present circumstances.

Grade 6, 7, 8 class awards

We brought forward the introduction of the grades 6, 7 and 8 class awards to September 2020. These are now in place for teachers who would like to take this option instead of an examination. The RAD no longer provide grade 6, 7 and 8 presentation classes.

Successful candidates for grade 6, 7 and 8 class awards will receive a certificate, result form and a medal, although due to the current pandemic-related supply issues, it is likely that students are sent their medals at a later date (for the remainder of 2020 at least).

We will update teachers with developments as soon as we have them.

Administrative/format adaptations (valid until December 2021)

Pianists for vocational graded examinations

Teachers will not be required to use a pianist for their vocational examinations in AECs and for filmed examinations. In RAVs, where possible, a pianist will be provided. If teachers can use a pianist, and would like to do so, we would of course encourage this.

Soft-pointe shoes

Due to the ongoing international impact of COVID-19 on the preparation of students for examinations, the use of soft-pointe shoes will not be compulsory for relevant vocational graded examinations (Intermediate Foundation to Advanced 2). Soft ballet shoes may be worn with either ribbons or elastic. Pointe shoes are required for the pointe section. Offices should inform their teachers of this via relevant channels. This information has also been published in the August edition of e-news.

Free Enchaînements (Intermediate Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced Foundation)

To facilitate the free enchaînement in live examinations without a pianist at the relevant levels, teachers should provide access to the free music found on the official RAD vocational CDs, associated with the level that is being examined.

Guidance for teachers regarding how to deliver the free enchaînement in filmed examinations can be found in the filming guideline documents available from local offices.

Class award and examination format adaptations

These changes have been made to help minimise the preparation time for candidates and teachers in a period where learning times and environments may have been compromised due to COVID-19 social distancing measures.

Class Awards

Pre-Primary in Dance – class award

- The warm-up, cool-down and imaginative movement sequence should be presented.
- Teachers may choose to present any 7 of the 9 set exercises.

Primary in Dance – class award

The following exercise choices are permitted at the teacher's discretion.

Technique 2	Bend and run OR Bend and point
Technique 4	TWO of the following exercises: Jumps Spring Hops, jumps and springs
Technique 5	Galops and skips OR Run and leap

Graded Examinations

Level	Exercise	Adaptations
Primary in Dance	Run and leap	One diagonal only – Teacher/candidate's choice
Grade 1	Step hop and parallel assemblé	One diagonal only – Teacher/candidate's choice
Grade 2	Turns and parallel assemblés	One side only – Teacher/candidate's choice
Grade 3	Grands battements A – devant OR Grands battements B – second and derrière	Teacher/candidate's choice of exercise
	Ronds de jambe à terre	Teacher/candidate's choice of en dehors OR en dedans
	Glissades, sissonnes and assemblés	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting right OR left foot devant
	Turns	One diagonal only – Teacher/candidate's choice
Grade 4	Assemblés and temps levés	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting right OR left foot devant
Grade 5	Glissades and sissonnes	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting right OR left foot devant
	Turns	One diagonal only – Teacher/candidate's choice
Grade 6	Battements frappés OR Demi-pointe enchaînement	Teacher/candidate's choice of exercise
	Pirouettes en dehors OR Pirouettes en dedans	Teacher/candidate's choice of exercise

Vocational Graded Examinations

Level	Exercise	Adaptations
Intermediate Foundation (male/female)	Port de bras	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting right OR left foot devant
Intermediate (male/female)	Pirouettes en dedans and posé pirouettes (female)	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting side (corner 7 OR 8)
	Relevés passés derrière OR Relevés passés devant (female)	Teacher/candidate's choice of exercise
	Allegro 5 (male)	Performed one side only – Teacher/candidate's choice
Advanced Foundation (female)	Pirouettes (pointe work)	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting side (corner 7 OR 8)
Advanced 1 (male/female)	Port de bras	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting side – right OR left foot devant
	Pirouette enchaînement	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting side – right OR left foot devant; Double pirouette en dehors finishing in <i>attitude derrière en croisé</i> OR <i>2nd arabesque</i>
	Adage (female)	Teacher/candidate's choice of pivot en dehors in <i>arabesque</i> OR <i>attitude derrière</i>
Advanced 2 (female)	Port de bras	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting side – right OR left foot devant
	Pirouette enchaînement	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting side – right OR left foot devant
	Allegro 3	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting side – right OR left foot devant
Advanced 2 (male)	Port de bras	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting side – right OR left foot devant; Double pirouette en dedans in <i>attitude derrière</i> OR <i>1st arabesque</i>
	Battement fondus and ronds de jambe en l'air	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting side – right OR left foot devant; Double pirouette en dedans in <i>attitude derrière</i> OR <i>1st arabesque</i>
	Pirouette en dehors in attitude or arabesque	Teacher/candidate's choice of double pirouette en dehors in <i>2nd arabesque</i> OR <i>attitude derrière</i>
	Pirouette enchaînement	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting side – right OR left foot devant
	Allegro 4	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting side – right OR left foot devant

Discovering Repertoire

Level	Exercise	Adaptations
Level 2 – unit: Variation 2 (male)	Development exercise C Grand jeté en avant	Teacher/candidate's choice of side
Level 3 – unit: class (male/female)	Allegro 3	Teacher/candidate's choice of side
Level 4 – unit: Variation 2 (male)	Development exercise H Assemblés en tournant	Teacher/candidate's choice of starting right OR left foot devant

Further guidelines

- AEC – Where there is a choice of exercise or starting position, all candidates in the same set should perform the same setting when they are required to demonstrate the work all together or 2 x 2.
- RAV – where exercises are shown all together or 2 x 2 in sets with candidates from mixed schools, groupings in the examination will be adapted to facilitate the candidate's choice of starting foot.
- Candidates in the same set may choose different diagonals/sides to perform continuous 1 x 1 exercises.
- There will be no change to the length of examinations.
- Should you have any questions about the adaptations, please contact your local office or the headquarters Examinations department at exams@rad.org.uk.

Photo: Elliott Franks



Social distancing guidelines for examinations

Teachers should follow local social distancing government guidance with regard to teaching and examinations. Reasonable measures to facilitate social distancing in examinations are encouraged and will vary from country to country, school to school. The following are some suggestions of how social distancing can be incorporated into your examinations. If necessary, please liaise with your local RAD office for further guidance specific to your area.

- Have a risk assessment/action plan in place, including contact details for all involved in the exam day. Think about relevant paperwork/processes, e.g. health declaration forms, emergency contact numbers, temperature testing etc.
- If holding a face-to-face examination, it would be sensible to have in place the processes/paperwork to film the day, should an issue arise – that way the work that has gone into arranging the examination day is not wasted.
- Provision of hand sanitising facilities for candidates, music operators/pianists, teachers, parents, and the examiner. Regular hand washing should be encouraged at appropriate times, e.g. during scheduled breaks. Gloves may be used, as required.
- Masks and face coverings may be worn by candidates, music operators, pianists, teachers, and examiners if there is a personal preference or required by local law. If masks are worn by candidates, performance will be assessed via expression shown through the body including the eyes. All participants should be aware that verbal communication may be affected. It may be that masks are required when inside a building, but that they can be removed in the exam studio, as long as local rules and appropriate social distancing are in place. If this is the case, you can make your examiner aware that students will enter with a mask, but they will remove it for the examination if preferred.
- Sanitise the barre between examination sets.
- Where required, the floor should also be sanitised - this may be particularly relevant for exercises/dances/variations which have floor work. Alternatively, candidates may opt to wear disposable gloves whilst performing any of these which require the hands to come in to contact with the floor. If candidates choose to wear gloves for floorwork, they should be safely disposed of as soon as possible, and the method for this should be covered in the teacher's risk assessment/action plan.
- If possible, those already assisting with the exam day should help with wiping down barres/equipment between sets, as this reduces the number of people in the exam room.
- Positions at the barre and general dance space can be marked with tape to help candidates space their performance and waiting positions to keep within social distancing guidelines.
- Examination group sizes may be reduced, if required, to meet local social distancing guidelines. For example, a group of four could be divided to make two groups of two. Please liaise with the local RAD office to facilitate this. This may not be necessary in schools with larger studio spaces.
- Depending on local guidelines, teachers are advised to consider adapting their settings for the 'teacher arrangement' exercises found in Pre-Primary-Grade 5 to remove any physical contact between candidates, e.g. handholding. As already permitted, the Grade 6 Character exercises may be performed 2 x 2 as two solos on the same side rather than working in opposition.
- The use of props is optional for most settings. Where props are required for some dances, we suggest candidates have their own personal props to avoid shared usage.
- Reasonable adjustments to floor patterns for exercises will be accepted if required to facilitate social distancing guidelines.

Photo: Elliott Franks



- Teachers may require candidates to arrive at the exam venue ready (wearing uniform, hair in bun, etc.) to limit the amount of time/people in changing area.
- If candidates require water bottles, these should be filled before arriving at the venue.
- Separate entrance and exit pathways for venues/examination room could be employed if there is the facility to do so.
- Extra time may be scheduled for changeover/ cleaning between sets – teachers can add notes for this in their exam entry so that the local RAD office can add additional breaks as required.
- Shared restroom facilities should be appropriately sanitised between usage.
- Single use candidate identification numbers may be used.
- Consider social distancing in the warm-up space or changing area, with staggered arrival times to limit the number of people congregating. Markers on floor/cornered areas for warm up and changing areas and the use of personal yoga mats in shared warm up areas.
- Restrict the number of people attending with the examination candidate (we would recommend one accompanying adult) and make any accompanying adults aware of whether there is space for them to wait, or whether they need to drop off their candidate and return once the exam is completed.
- Examiners will be updated regarding the local social distancing protocols prior to their tour. They may choose to follow their own personal preference with regard to wearing a mask and gloves even if it is not required by law. Should there be specific information you wish to share with the examiner about the protocols at your school prior to their arrival, please add notes in your RAD online exam entry so that the local office can share this with the examiner.
- Examiners will be asked to bring their own packed lunch, snacks and drinks, although access to hot water to facilitate tea/coffee would be appreciated.
- Please contact your local RAD office, or the examinations team at headquarters, if you have any queries or concerns, require further guidance, or feel that further measures or exceptions may be required to accommodate your particular situation. We are aiming to deliver as much flexibility as possible to facilitate examinations during this time.

Attainment bands from 2021

We will be revising attainment bands for examinations with effect from 1 January 2021:

Result classification	Total marks	Medal classification (graded exams only)
Standard not attained	0 – 39	n/a
Pass	40 – 54	Bronze
Merit	55 – 64	Silver
High Merit	65 – 74	
Distinction	75 – 84	Gold
High Distinction	85 – 100	

These new attainment bands will be shown on certificates, and result forms however, there will be no changes to medals.

It should also be noted that candidates will not be able to change their banding retrospectively, i.e. replacement certificates for exams awarded before 1 January 2021 will still use the current bands.

We hope that these new bands will be helpful to candidates and teachers and will prove a more accurate reflection of achievement.

*The prerequisite for Solo Seal will remain as Distinction (75+) at Advanced 2 level.

Certificates and medals

RAD headquarters has now reopened, and our certificates team has returned to the office and have started work on outstanding certificates. We hope that most of the certificates, result forms and medals will be distributed throughout October and November but will keep members updated if there are further issues.

Filmed examinations

Teachers are reminded to take extra care that all required exercises and dances/variations are presented in filmed examinations. When sections are missing in filmed footage, this can significantly delay the processing of results not only for the schools involved but other schools as well.

Therefore, from **1 November 2020** we will no longer be contacting teachers if examination footage is incomplete. Any exercise and dance/variation missed will be given a mark of '0' and will have a negative impact on the overall result. Please refer to the **specifications** for a complete list of exercises required in all examinations and class awards and we strongly advise that footage is reviewed by teachers prior to submission.

Exam payments from 2021

From January 2021, to improve our membership service and finance processes, you will only have the option of paying online via card in your online exam entry. When you submit your entry, you will be automatically directed to the payment portal. If you don't have a card payment facility available to you, please contact your local office to arrange an alternative method of payment. As per our **specifications**, this payment must be received on the date the entry is submitted,

If at the stage of submitting your entry, you have a query regarding the total fee, please contact your local office prior to completing the submission process.

Please also note that we only accept the payment from the school, this includes RAV entry payments, with reference to our specifications, we will not accept separate payments from individual students.

Panel of Examiners

Our dedicated panel of examiners have continued to support the efforts of regional and national offices to examine locally, where this has been possible, and have quickly adapted to examining in a COVID-19 world. Many have commented how pleased they are to be in back in the studio. Those who cannot examine in person are marking filmed assessments from home and have commended teachers' efforts for filming their candidates in such challenging circumstances. All of the panel are staying connected with us via video meetings, which will continue throughout the year, as we adapt to our new ways of working.

Fond farewell

Following her retirement earlier this year, we would like to thank Australian based examiner **Annette Dirickx** for her wonderful contribution to the Panel over 21 years.

Recruitment and training

Due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 all new examiner training programmes have been delayed until 2021/22.

Future recruitment campaigns, including details of the role of RAD examiner and the application process, will be advertised on the 'Current Vacancies' page on the RAD website, via members' publications and on the RAD's social media sites. For general queries about examiner recruitment, please contact examinerrecruitment@rad.org.uk. We do not anticipate future recruitment to happen until 2023/24 at the earliest.

Errata

The Royal Academy of Dance in Greece 1972-1989

Explore the **history of the RAD** in Greece with this piece by RAD Examiner Belinda Tanner, or for a translated version in Greek, please click [here](#).

To note *the abridged version of this article in the July edition of Focus on Exams is a shortened and abridged version of this piece* and not the full version as in the links above. This information was missed from the digitally published version and we apologise to Ms Tanner for this error.

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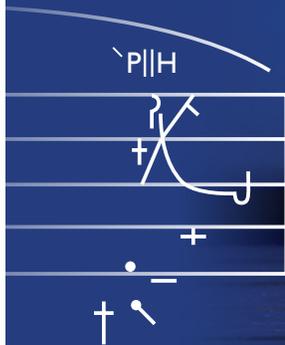


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