ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCE

Exams

Issue 1 2022



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^{*} Policy limits and exclusions may apply, please see policy wording for full terms and conditions.

 $^{^{**}}$ Based on one teacher of dance (in associations agreed syllabus), no previous claims, standard £5 million PL.

^{***} Shows up to 500 people in attendance (in UK) and fixed seating only. The operation of lighting and use of pyrotechnics is excluded.

Welcome

Welcome to Focus on Exams

We welcome our <u>new Chief</u>

<u>Executive, Tim Arthur</u>, who took up position from 1 March 2022. Tim succeeds Luke Rittner CBE who retires from the RAD on 30 April 2022, after 23 years in post.

Slowly but surely the RAD is moving into the new global headquarters on York Road. The official opening of the building took place in March. Although there will always be nostalgia for the happy times we spent in Battersea Square, it has been very exciting to come together in our shiny new headquarters. For candidates coming to the new building for their exams, we hope that they will be wowed by the new facilities - the large studios will definitely inspire any dancer (or non-dancer!) to start moving through the light filled space.

If candidates and teachers find that their preparation time has been adversely affected due to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, one option might be to consider a Class Award or Solo Performance Award, rather than an examination. The marking criteria for a Class Award is broader than that of an examination, in most levels there is less content to prepare, up to eight candidates can be examined at once (four for grade 8), and for Pre-Primary to Grade 7

the teacher conducts the Class Award, which may help support anxious candidates to feel more confident and perform at their best. All successful candidates receive a certificate and a medal to celebrate their achievement. For Solo Performance Awards a candidate presents three dances to the examiner, one of which can be choreographed by the teacher/ candidate and successful candidates receive a certificate and a bar. Both Class Awards and Solo Performance Awards are great options for learners if they need to build confidence or have had difficulties with preparation time.

The examiners' marking app project also continues to progress, so don't be surprised if your examiner arrives to mark exams with an iPad, rather than the stack of marksheets that we are used to seeing! In this edition we cover a revised refund policy, updates, and news as well as a look at scheduling an examination session from an organiser's perspective.

Stay safe and best wishes

James Stockdale
Director of Examinations



Summer Events 2022













From Summer Schools to Silver Swans courses, we've got something for everyone. Book now for the summer and get involved!

> ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCE

Photos: David Tett; WinkiPop Media

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News

Refund policy - from 1 April 2022

COVID-19 refund policy (this policy will be in place until December 2022)

- 1. This refund policy applies where an examination entry has been cancelled or prevented due to wide reaching COVID-19* issues, and only if the applicant is unable to take advantage of either the rescheduling/carry forward or video assessment options. So that learners are not disadvantaged, we would suggest that the alternative options are explored fully to ensure that they get the opportunity to have an RAD assessment.
 - *Cancelled by COVID-19 means examinations that have not been able to go ahead due to:
 - a. sudden wide-reaching changes in local government guidance about who/how many can meet and for what purpose, put into place after the examination entry has been submitted,
 - b. lockdown measures being put into place after the examination entry has been submitted, or
 - c. wide-reaching restrictions on travel put into place after the examination entry has been submitted meaning that the examiner/teacher and

- candidates cannot attend the planned examination day.
- 2. In the cases described above, you should contact your local RAD office to inform them of the situation and discuss options. If possible, the office will help you rearrange face-to-face exams at a safe time, or will help you arrange to film your examinations (sometimes filming is possible where live exams are not).
- 3. Where face-to-face exams are prevented from going ahead, the examinations should be filmed if possible. If this is not possible then the exam fee will be carried over for the next available session. If filmed exams are postponed, these should be rearranged as soon as possible, contact your office for support.
- 4. If a COVID-19 issue only affects some candidates (e.g. absence due to infection or a requirement to isolate), and the rest of the exam day can continue safely, then it should do so. The affected candidates can either carry forward their entry to the next session, or film their exam entry and submit this via video assessment. If the whole exam day is being filmed, then affected students can be filmed later and added to the entry. Contact your local RAD office for more detail on video assessments.

News



- 5. If some of the examination day goes ahead, the candidates who were not able to attend will be allowed to carry over their fee to the next session, or to film their exams within 12 months. You should liaise with your local RAD office to notify them of your plans.
- 6. If the whole examination entry needs to be cancelled due to sudden and wide-reaching government restrictions due to COVID-19, and there is no realistic expectation of them being able to be rearranged or filmed within the next 12 months (from the exam date) teachers may apply for a refund (less administration charges usually 10%) by writing to their local

RAD office with the details of the cancellation. Refunds are offered at the discretion of the RAD and your request will be reviewed by your local office. Where the cancellation affects only some students from a session, it is likely that these candidates will need to use the filmed examination option.

Attainment bands – from January 2022

We have now had sign-off from the regulators for adjustment to the attainment bands for exams (Pass, Merit, High Merit, Distinction, High Distinction).

The change will take place from 1 January 2022, meaning that any

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	Gold		

exam **entered** from this date will have the new bandings. Exams entered prior to this date will have the old bandings (Pass, Merit, Distinction).

We hope that the changes will be helpful to candidates and teachers and will prove a more accurate reflection of achievement.

These new band categories will be shown on certificates, 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. any replacement certificates for exams entered before 1 January 2022 will still use the classification which they were originally awarded.

Graded and vocational graded exams in dance at RQF Level 3 are allocated points on the UCAS* tariff. Below is a provisional look at the UCAS points for the updated bandings of our graded examinations. UCAS will be going through their process for the next Tariff update in May, although we have been told that it is unlikely that the points below will differ. We are also awaiting an update for total Intermediate and Advanced Foundation points.

*UCAS is a UK based Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. See their website for further details about UCAS points and RAD qualifications.

Exam	Pass	Merit	High Merit	Distinction	High Distinction
Grade 6	8	10	12	14	16
Grade 7	12	14	16	18	20
Grade 8	16	18	20	22	24
Intermediate	TBC				
Advanced Foundation	TBC				

RAV sessions

Organising an RAV session at London headquarters

Carys Barbour talks through the logistics of organising an RAV at RAD headquarters

Organising an exam session at our London headquarters is like completing a large jigsaw puzzle.

An average 8 week long headquarters session might see 80 teachers entering upwards of 750 students, with each student having their own date requests. All exam levels from Demonstration classes up to and including Advanced 2 will be examined over the course of the session.

Many different elements need to be taken into consideration to ensure the best outcome for all involved. Below are some of the factors I need to think about when scheduling an exam session, along with suggestions on what you can do to help when entering candidates.

Dates: Unlike exams in your own studio (AEC), you cannot pre-book for a date within an RAV session. This means that all teachers who submit by the closing date have the same chance of getting an date which suits them and their candidates. I do not schedule any exams before the closing date has passed so that I can ensure the date allocation is as fair as possible

for all teachers. Teachers are asked to provide a maximum of three impossible dates within the session. I do realise, however, that this is not always possible, so ask that notes are added on the exam entry as to any impossible dates, with the plea that as much flexibility as possible is given.

Times: You are asked to add travel time to your entry, so I know not to schedule your exam first thing in the morning if your candidates have a long journey to make. I try wherever possible to group all exam sets from the same school together to make it easier for teachers to arrange travel/teaching cover. Due to studios being used for other activities in the afternoons/ evenings, some early starts are unavoidable in order to create a timetable which best utilises the examiner's time. It is complex to schedule everyone at a suitable time of day whilst ensuring date requests are considered - if I have 3 teachers with a 2 hour journey and they all want the same day I cannot schedule them all for an afternoon slot!

Studios: The RAD is a working building with many departments sharing studio space. For this reason, it is not possible to guarantee exams on any specific date within an exam session, which is why flexibility as to date requests is vital.

Music: As stated in our format adaptations for COVID-19, we will still provide a pianist in RAV sessions where we can. Therefore, to support our freelance pianists and give students the opportunity to dance with live accompaniment. all Vocational levels at headquarters will take place with a pianist. You may request a pianist for Graded exams as well if you prefer. As the session schedule needs to make sense from a staffing perspective, I tend to group sets requiring a pianist together, and groups requiring a CD operator together.

Examiners: I try as far as possible within these boundaries to give the examiner a variety of levels within an exam day, and also have to ensure that they receive their rest breaks in accordance with our Quality Assurance framework. This ensures they have the best possible experience during an exam session.

All these factors must be considered when scheduling an RAV at headquarters, which is why it is very difficult to accommodate any changes after the closing date. So please ensure you have noted all impossible dates on your entry by the closing date. A certain amount of space is available for reschedules under exceptional circumstances (such as if a candidate was unwell on their allocated exam day but would be able to be examined later

in the session) but this is limited, so please be aware that any changes you request may impact other teachers and their students.
Rescheduling a single candidate is always easier than moving a whole set/entry, as I may be able to slot them in where it will cause only minor disruption. Moving hours' worth of exams from the middle of a day means either that other teachers, parents, and candidates may have to change their plans, or the examiner is left with a large gap in their day.

Although it is a complex jigsaw puzzle, organising an RAV session at headquarters is one of the most enjoyable and rewarding aspects of my role, and I look forward to welcoming you and your students for many future sessions in the new headquarters!

Solo Seal

Panel of Examiners

The Solo Seal is the highest level of exam offered by the RAD.
Candidates perform three solo variations and a virtuoso finale (choreographed by the candidate or their teacher), requiring a high degree of technical and expressive artistry, in front of an audience.
They must achieve a minimum of 8 marks (out of 10) in every component to pass. In a typical year, no more than 20-30 candidates around the world achieve this prestigious award.

Congratulations to the following:

Australia

Phoebe Anderssen (December 2021) Meg Rafinian (December 2021) Taylah Rohweder (December 2021) Sophie Walters (December 2021)

Canada

Isabel Tornqvist (October 2021)
Jacqueline Zhang (October 2021)

UK

Natalie Henry (December 2021) Alejandro Molina (December 2021) Miharu Sugahara (December 2021)

Fond farewell

We would like to take this opportunity to thank examiner Raul Sauz, who is leaving the Panel after 17 years. We also bid a fond farewell to retiring examiners Noreen Chisholm, Frances Flower, and Jacqui Wells, with 40, 30 and 45 years of examining experience respectively. The RAD has been lucky to have such dedicated and exceptional colleagues – we thank all these examiners for their work and commitment, and wish them all the best for their futures

Recruitment and training

We welcome seven new examiners to our Panel – Lesley Cox, Lucie Hendrie, Ruth Henry, Caroline Jenkins, Despina Kefalidis, Deborah Mercer, and Katy Tsangaris.

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