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AMATEUR MEDAL TESTS & GRADE EXAMINATIONS

SCOTTISH DANCE TEACHERS' ALLIANCE

HIGHLAND BRANCH

INDEX

	Page
Rules and Conditions	4
Timetable & Attainment Bands	5
MEDAL TESTS	
Highland	6 - 9
Highland One Dance	10
Scottish National	11 - 12
Scottish National One Dance	13
Tables of SND Steps	14 - 16
Irish Jig	17 & 18
Sailors' Hornpipe	19 & 20
Choreography	21
Queen's Platinum Jubilee Award	22
GRADE EXAMINATIONS	
Primary Foundation & Primary	23
Highland Grades 1 to 6	24 - 27
Scottish National	28 - 30
Irish Jig Advanced	31
Sailors' Hornpipe Advanced	32
FOUNDATION ASSESSMENTS	
Highland	33

RULES & CONDITIONS: MEDAL TESTS & FOUNDATION ASSESSMENTS

1. Candidates will be tested on demonstration only and the highland technique must conform to that laid down by the RSOBHD.
2. Suitable attire should be worn, wearing of jewellery is prohibited. Appropriate practice wear will be accepted for all tests, if kilt or national outfit is not available.
3. Teachers shall ensure suitable music is provided. The music operator must be over 16 years of age. They may not have any contact with the candidates and should be seated facing away from the dancers, able to see the Examiner only. The music operator should leave the studio at all breaks.
4. Teachers should not remain in the Examination room, with the exception of the Dance Stars test.
5. Teachers shall be notified by the Secretary re venue and/or time at which a candidate is due at a General Session, and it is the Teacher's duty to inform their candidates.
6. When filling in entry forms, teachers should group the various standards together regardless of the running order of the timetable.
7. Entrants must take Medal Tests and Foundation Assessments in order of achievement.
8. Candidates who enter for 2 consecutive tests at any one session must take the lower standard first and attain at least Commended/Merit. Teachers must confirm with the Examiner.
9. All candidates will receive the Examiner's report and those who are successful will receive the appropriate awards.
10. The SDTA appeals policy is available from our website www.sdta.co.uk.
11. The passing of an Amateur Medal Test, Grade Examination or Foundation Assessment cannot be regarded as a professional teaching qualification.
12. From Scottish Award 1 to 6, candidates must use double-hilted swords.
13. Candidates presented for Highland Scottish Awards 1 to 6 may use the current year's Championship steps throughout the test and the syllabus steps are not required to be performed. The demonstration steps are required. After October 1st, either the current or following year's Championship steps can be performed.
14. Candidates for Scottish National Awards 1 to 5 may use the current year's Premiership steps but only for a dance that is required for both the Scottish Award and Premiership. The syllabus steps are not required to be performed for this dance but the demonstration steps are required. After October 1st, either the current or following year's Premiership steps can be performed.
15. Due to the difficulty in obtaining Jig shoes, any suitable shoe is acceptable except for tap shoes.

RULES & CONDITIONS FOR GRADE EXAMINATIONS

As Rules and Conditions for Medal Tests & Foundation Assessments 2 to 16 above plus:

16. Except in Primary Foundation, candidates will be verbally examined as to their knowledge of the techniques in and up to the Grade in which they are being examined, and will also be required to give a practical demonstration of the dances as set down in that Grade.
17. Primary Foundation and Primary is for candidates under the age of 10 years.
18. Grade 1 onwards is for candidates aged 10 years and over.
19. Candidates from Grade 1 to 6 will be assessed on both theoretical knowledge and on practical demonstration of barre and centre work in addition to dances required in the practical section. 75% of the total mark will be awarded for theoretical knowledge and practical demonstration of the barre and centre work. 25% of the total mark will be awarded for the practical section.
20. Proper barre etiquette must be adhered to for all barre work: Facing the barre, place both hands lightly on the barre (do not lean). Facing the side, place one hand on barre and the other in 1st position. Positions or movements should be demonstrated on both sides. The number of repetitions is at the discretion of the examiner. A suitable chair will be accepted.
21. Candidates from Grade 1 to 6 will be marked as for Medal Tests taken on the same day but candidates must be able to demonstrate steps from the Grade syllabus if not included in the medal test.
22. Where an option is given, a candidate can choose to perform the dance in either the female role or the male role. The outfit and technique should match the chosen role

TIMETABLE – Times are approximate and based on 2 candidates, including Reels with fill-ins. The exception is Dance Stars, which is a maximum group of 4.

TEST	TIME (approximate)
HIGHLAND	
Dance Stars	5 mins
Preparatory and Preliminary	5 mins
Pre-Bronze/One Dance	5 mins
Bronze	10 mins
Pre-Silver and Silver	15 mins
Pre-Gold and Gold	15 mins
Scottish Awards 1 - 6	25 mins
SCOTTISH NATIONAL	
Pre-Bronze/One Dance	5 mins
Bronze, Silver and Gold	10 mins
Scottish Awards 1 - 5	15 mins
IRISH JIG / SAILORS' HORNPIPE	
Pre-Bronze - Scottish Award 4	5 mins
GRADES	
Primary Foundation	10 mins
Primary and Grade 1	15 mins
Grade 2	20 mins
Grade 3 & 4	25 mins
Grade 5 & 6	30 mins
Advanced (Irish Jig & Sailors' Hornpipe)	30 mins
CHOREOGRAPHY	
Choreography	5 mins
Group Performance	10 mins
FOUNDATION ASSESSMENTS	
Loch Katrine	5 mins
Loch Maree	10 mins
Loch Ness	15 mins
Loch Lomond	15 mins

ATTAINMENT BANDS *
Dance Stars, Preparatory, Preliminary and Foundation Assessments: Achieved
Medal Tests: Pass, Pass +, Commended, Commended +, Highly Commended
Grade Examinations: Pass, Merit, Highly Commended, Honours

* Mark sheets for Candidates who do not achieve the syllabus criteria will be marked as "Not Achieved".

DANCE STARS **AWARD: Certificates and Plaque to hold Dance Star Stickers**

- *A maximum of 3 Dance Stars Tests can be taken on the same day.*
- *Times are approximate, based on a maximum group of 4.*
- *Teachers may combine movements, if desired.*
- *Unless specified, movements can be danced with or without music.*

1ST TEST

- 1 A series of Marches, Skips OR Gallops in a circle.
- 2 Bow.
- 3 Arms taken from 1st position to 3rd position and back to 1st position.
- 4 Point close from 1st position to 4th position.
- 5 4 Jumps in 1st position and 4 Claps. Repeat.

2ND TEST

- 1 Jumps in 1st position.
- 2 Point close from 1st position to 4th position.
- 3 Spring Points in 4th position.
- 4 Toe-Heel movement (with or without elevation).
- 5 Single High Cuts.

3RD TEST

- 1 Pas de Basques (with or without music).
- 2 Arms taken from 1st position to 2nd position and back to 1st position.
- 3 Point close 1st position to 2nd position (using arms and feet).
- 4 Spring Points over 2nd Sword (with or without turning).
- 5 Jump (feet and arms in 1st position) in space A, B, C, D.

4TH TEST

- 1 16 Pas de Basques to music.
- 2 Single High Cuts with arms in 3rd position.
- 3 6th Step Highland Fling – bar 2 with or without elevation.
- 4 Open Pas de Basques over Sword.
- 5 Hop point in 2nd position, 3rd, 4th, 3rd position over Sword

5TH TEST

- 1 Pas de Basques and High Cuts to music.
- 2 Closed Pas de Basques over Sword 1.
- 3 Open Pas de Basques over Swords 2 and 4.
- 4 Shedding RF 4 Toe – Heels 4 Claps (toe-heels with or without elevation).
- 5 Shedding or 1st step Highland Fling.

PREPARATORY TEST

AWARDS: SDTA Medal and certificate

Demonstrate without music Movements of elevation in 1st position (Jumps)
Point close 1st position to 2nd position.
Spring Points in 4th position.
Toe and Heel (with or without elevation)
Single High Cuts
8 Shedding movements *or* 1st step Highland Fling

PRELIMINARY TEST

AWARDS: SDTA Medal and certificate

6 Pas de Basques and 4 single High Cuts repeated 4 times to music *or* 5 Pas de Basques Assemble, Disassemble into High Cuts
Highland Fling 3 steps – 1st, 3rd, 8th
Each step to be demonstrated separately without music

ALTERNATIVE PRELIMINARY TEST

6 Pas de Basques and 4 single High Cuts repeated 4 times to music *or* 5 Pas de Basques Assemble, Disassemble into High Cuts
Sword Dance (2 steps) 1st, 2nd *or* 4th
Each step to be demonstrated separately without music

NOTE: *In Pre-Bronze, Bronze, Pre-Silver and Silver tests, the steps are the teacher's choice and single High Cutting will be accepted in the Sword Dance.*

PRE-BRONZE TEST (One Dance)

AWARDS: SDTA Medal and certificate

Highland Fling 4 steps – no back steps
Sword Dance 2 slow steps and 1 quick step

BRONZE MEDAL TEST (Two Dances)

AWARDS: SDTA Bronze medal and certificate

Highland Fling 4 steps
Sword Dance 2 slow steps and 1 quick step

PRE-SILVER MEDAL TEST (Two Dances & Basic Movements)

AWARDS: SDTA Medal and certificate

Highland Fling 4 steps
Sword Dance 2 slow steps and 1 quick step
Basic Movements Brushes (4 RF 4 LF) travelling forward towards examiner.
Shuffles (8 times)
Hop Brush Beat Beat (2 RF 2LF)

SILVER MEDAL TEST (Three Dances)

AWARDS: SDTA Silver medal and certificate

Highland Fling 4 steps
Sword Dance 2 slow steps and 1 quick step
Seann Triubhas 3 slow steps and 1 quick step

PRE-GOLD MEDAL TEST (Three Dances & Basic Movements)

AWARDS: SDTA Medal and certificate

<i>Highland Fling</i>	4 steps
<i>Sword Dance</i>	2 slow steps to include 2 nd or 4 th and 1 quick step
<i>Seann Triubhas</i>	3 slow steps and 1 quick step
<i>Basic Movements</i>	Backsteps, Shakes from 2 nd step of Seann Triubhas (RF then LF), Shake Shake Down movement from 4 th step of Seann Triubhas (2 RF then 2 LF)

GOLD MEDAL TEST (Three Dances & Basic Movements)

AWARDS: SDTA Gold medal and certificate

<i>Highland Fling</i>	4 steps
<i>Sword Dance</i>	2 slow steps and 1 quick step – 1 st , 2 nd or 4 th , 8 th
<i>Seann Triubhas</i>	3 slow steps and 1 quick step – 1 st , 2 nd , 4 th or 5 th , 16 th
<i>Basic Movements</i>	4 Progressive Strathspey movements showing body turns 4 Progressive Reel movements showing body turns

NOTE:

Candidates for Scottish Awards 1 to 6 may use the current year's Championship steps throughout the test and the syllabus steps are not required to be performed. After October 1st, either the current or following year's Championship steps can be performed.

From Scottish Awards 1 to 6, candidates must use double hilted swords.
Demonstration step(s) are compulsory and danced without music.

SCOTTISH AWARD 1 MEDAL TEST (Four Dances)

AWARDS: SDTA award and certificate

<i>Highland Fling</i>	4 steps – 1 st , 2 nd , 4 th , 8 th
<i>Sword Dance</i>	2 slow steps and 1 quick step – 1 st , 2 nd , 8 th
<i>Seann Triubhas</i>	3 slow steps and 1 quick step – 1 st , 2 nd , 5 th , 14 th Finish entrechat method 1
<i>Reel</i>	½ Hullachan or Strathspey & Highland Reel (2 parts) Teacher's choice of steps
<i>Demonstration Step</i>	Sword Dance 3 rd step (any finish)

SCOTTISH AWARD 2 MEDAL TEST (Four Dances)

AWARDS: SDTA award and certificate

<i>Highland Fling</i>	4 steps – 1 st , 5 th Alt, 4 th Alt, 8 th
<i>Sword Dance</i>	2 slow steps and 1 quick step – 1 st , 5 th , 8 th
<i>Seann Triubhas</i>	4 slow steps and 2 quick steps – 1 st , 2 nd , 4 th , 5 th , 13 th , 14 th Finish entrechat method 2
<i>Reel</i>	Strathspey and Reel of Tulloch - (2 parts Strathspey and 4 parts Reel of Tulloch) Teacher's choice of steps
<i>Demonstration Steps</i>	Highland Fling 6 th step and 6 th step 3 rd Alt method

SCOTTISH AWARD 3 MEDAL TEST (Four Dances)

AWARDS: SDTA award and certificate

<i>Highland Fling</i>	4 steps – 1 st , 5 th , 6 th - 3 rd Alt method, 8 th Alt
<i>Sword Dance</i>	3 slow steps and 1 quick step – 1 st , 4 th , 3 rd (any method), 8 th
<i>Seann Triubhas</i>	4 slow steps and 2 quick steps – 1 st , 3 rd , 4 th Alt, 8 th , 18 th , 14 th finishing method 1
<i>Reel</i>	Strathspey & Highland Reel (2 parts Strathspey and 2 parts Highland Reel) to include 6 th and last step
<i>Demonstration Step</i>	Sword Dance 6 th step

SCOTTISH AWARD 4 MEDAL TEST (Four Dances)

AWARDS: SDTA award and certificate

<i>Highland Fling</i>	4 steps – 1 st , 2 nd , 6 th – 4 th Alt method, 8 th
<i>Sword Dance</i>	2 slow steps and 2 quick step – 1 st , 6 th , 7 th , 8 th
<i>Seann Triubhas</i>	4 slow steps and 2 quick steps – 1 st Alt, 2 nd , 5 th , 9 th , 14 th & 16 th finishing Entrechat method 3
<i>Reel</i>	½ Hullachan – 1 st , 2 nd , 6 th , last
<i>Demonstration Steps</i>	Basic Reel steps 8 th & 10 th

SCOTTISH AWARD 5 MEDAL TEST (Four Dances)

AWARDS: SDTA award and certificate

<i>Highland Fling</i>	4 steps - 1 st , 5 th Alt, 6 th – 2 nd Alt method, 8 th
<i>Sword Dance</i>	3 slow steps and 1 quick step - 1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd (finish with High Cuts), 7 th
<i>Seann Triubhas</i>	4 slow steps and 2 quick steps - 1 st , 2 nd , 6 th , 10 th Alt with travel, 15 th , 16 th finishing Entrechat method 4
<i>Reel</i>	Strathspey & Highland Reel (2 parts Strathspey and 4 parts Highland Reel) Basic Introduction, 2 parts Strathspey with 2 nd Alt finish on bars 7 & 8 Highland Reel – 2 nd , 7 th , 10 th and last.
<i>Demonstration Step</i>	Highland Fling 7 th step

SCOTTISH AWARD 6 MEDAL TEST (Four Dances)

AWARDS: SDTA award and certificate

<i>Highland Fling</i>	4 steps - 1 st , 2 nd , 7 th , 8 th
<i>Sword Dance</i>	3 slow steps and 1 quick step - 1 st , 5 th , 6 th , 8 th
<i>Seann Triubhas</i>	4 slow steps and 2 quick steps - 1 st , 2 nd , 7 th , 11 th , 13 th , 18 th finishing Entrechat method 5 or 6
<i>Reel</i>	Strathspey & Reel of Tulloch (2 parts Strathspey and 4 parts Reel of Tulloch) Alt Introduction, 2 parts Strathspey with 3 rd Alt finish on bars 7 & 8 Reel - 1 st , 4 th , 5 th and last.
<i>Demonstration Step</i>	Highland Fling 6 th step 5 th Alt method

HIGHLAND ONE DANCE TESTS

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

HIGHLAND FLING	Level 1	1 st	3 rd	8 th or 8 th Alt.		
	Level 2	1 st	3 rd	4 th or 6 th	8 th or 8 th Alt	
	Level 3	1 st	2 nd	3 rd or 6 th	8 th	
SWORD DANCE	Level 1	1 st	4 th	7 th or 8 th		
	Level 2	1 st	2 nd	7 th or 8 th		
	Level 3	1 st	2 nd	4 th	7 th or 8 th	
SEANN TRIUBHAS	Level 1	1 st	2 nd	4 th	16 th	
	Level 2	1 st	2 nd	5 th	14 th	
	Level 3	1 st	2 nd	4 th or 5 th	11 th	13 th 17 th

NOTE: These stand-alone tests may be taken in any order and allow the teacher to choose a suitable progression route. Where applicable, any introduction or ending will be accepted.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL MEDAL TESTS

DRESS

Scottish National Dress should be worn from Pre-Bronze to Scottish Award 3 including Scottish National One Dance Tests. Highland Dress for Scottish Award 4 and 5.

Where an option is given, a candidate can choose to demonstrate either the female or male technique. The outfit worn should match the chosen role.

STEPS

All dances and steps listed in the Scottish National Medal Tests section of this syllabus, including One Dance Tests, are taken from the 'SDTA Scottish Dances – Revised 2025' (15th edition) textbook (The 14th edition from 2018 may be used until 1st July 2025). Teachers may elect to use the "RSOBHD Scottish National Dances for RSOBHD Competitions and SND Premierships – November 2020". If using the RSOBHD textbook, the tables on pages 14-16 denote the equivalent SDTA methods to be used.

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

Pre-Bronze (One dance) 4 Steps Flora Macdonald or Scottish Lilt or Dusty Miller

Bronze (Two dances) 4 Steps Flora Macdonald and Scottish Lilt

Silver (Three dances) 4 Steps Flora Macdonald, Scottish Lilt and WTGTT Barracks, Johnnie?

(Teacher's choice of steps for Pre-Bronze - Silver tests above)

GOLD

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

Highland Laddie	1 st	3 rd	4 th	6 th
Flora Macdonald	1 st	3 rd	4 th or 5 th	6 th
WTGTT Barracks, Johnnie?	1 st	3 rd	5 th	8 th

Demonstration Step

Scotch Measure, teacher's choice of 1st or 5th Step

NOTE: Between October 1st and December 31st, a Scottish National Award candidate can choose to perform the following year's Premiership set dances/steps. Candidates cannot, however, perform a combination of the current and the following year's set dances/steps.

Demonstration step(s) are compulsory and danced without music.

SCOTTISH AWARD 1

AWARDS: SDTA Award and certificate

Highland Laddie	1 st	2 nd	5 th	6 th
Scotch Measure	1 st	2 nd	5 th	6 th
Blue Bonnets	1 st	2 nd	5 th	6 th

Demonstration Step Village Maid, 2nd Step

SCOTTISH AWARD 2

AWARDS: SDTA Award and certificate

Village Maid	1 st	2 nd	5 th	6 th
Scotch Measure	1 st	3 rd	4 th	6 th
Blue Bonnets	1 st	3 rd	4 th	6 th

Demonstration Steps Teacher's choice of Hebridean Laddie, 3rd Step or Earl of Errol, 2nd Step

SCOTTISH AWARD 3

AWARDS: SDTA Award and certificate

Village Maid	1 st	3 rd	4 th	6 th
Hebridean Laddie	1 st	3 rd	4 th	8 th
Earl of Errol	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	6 th

Demonstration Step Teacher's choice of Hebridean Laddie, 6th Step or Tribute to J.L., 3rd Step

SCOTTISH AWARD 4 (Arms as for Highland)

AWARDS: SDTA Award and certificate

Tribute to J.L. McKenzie	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	6 th
Hebridean Laddie	1 st	5 th	6 th	8 th
Earl of Errol	1 st	2 nd	4 th	6 th

SCOTTISH AWARD 5 (Arms as for Highland)

AWARDS: SDTA Award and certificate

Tribute to J.L. McKenzie	1 st	4 th	5 th	6 th
Hebridean Laddie	1 st	2 nd	7 th	8 th
Earl of Errol	1 st	4 th	5 th	6 th with leaps

SCOTTISH NATIONAL ONE DANCE TESTS

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

SCOTTISH LILT	Level 1	1 st	3 rd	4 th	8 th
	Level 2	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	8 th
	Level 3	1 st	3 rd	7 th	8 th
FLORA MACDONALD	Level 1	1 st	2 nd	5 th	6 th
	Level 2	1 st	2 nd	3 rd or 4 th	6 th
	Level 3	1 st	3 rd	5 th	6 th
WILT THOU GO TO THE BARRACKS, JOHNNIE?	Level 1	1 st	2 nd	4 th	8 th
	Level 2	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	8 th
	Level 3	1 st	3 rd	5 th or 7 th	8 th
HIGHLAND LADDIE	Level 1	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	6 th
	Level 2	1 st	2 nd	4 th	6 th
	Level 3	1 st	3 rd	4 th	6 th
SCOTCH MEASURE	Level 1	1 st	2 nd	5 th	6 th
	Level 2	1 st	3 rd	5 th	6 th
	Level 3	1 st	3 rd	4 th	6 th
VILLAGE MAID	Level 1	1 st	2 nd	5 th	6 th
	Level 2	1 st	3 rd	5 th	6 th
	Level 3	1 st	4 th	5 th	6 th
EARL OF ERROL	Level 1	1 st	2 nd	4 th	6 th
	Level 2	1 st	4 th	5 th	6 th
	Level 3	1 st	3 rd	4 th	6 th
BLUE BONNETS	Level 1	1 st	2 nd	5 th	6 th
	Level 2	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	6 th
	Level 3	1 st	2 nd or 3 rd	4 th	6 th
TRIBUTE TO J.L. McKENZIE	Level 1	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	6 th
	Level 2	1 st	4 th	5 th	6 th
	Level 3	1 st	2 nd	5 th	6 th
HEBRIDEAN LADDIE	Level 1	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	8 th
	Level 2	1 st	4 th	6 th	8 th
	Level 3	1 st	5 th	7 th	8 th

NOTE: These stand-alone tests may be taken in any order and allow the teacher to choose a suitable progression route.

RSOBHD SCOTTISH NATIONAL DANCES FOR RSOBHD COMPETITIONS AND S.N.D. PREMIERSHIPS – NOVEMBER 2020 – SDTA METHODS FOR EXAMINATIONS.

Scottish Lilt

SDTA Textbook (Revised 2025)*	RSOBHD Textbook Nov 2020
Introduction	Alt. Introduction
1 st Step – Circle	1 st Alt. Step - Circle
2 nd Step – Balance	2 nd or 2 nd Alt. Step - Balance
3 rd Step – Assemble	3 rd Step - Assemble
4 th Step – Pas de Basque	4 th Step – Pas de Basque
5 th Step – Forward Travel	5 th - 2 nd Alt. Step – Forward Travel
6 th Step – Rocking	6 th or 6 th Alt. Step - Rocking
7 th Step – Brushing	7 th Step - Brushing
8 th Step – Last Step	8 th Step – Round-The-Leg
Finish	Finish

Wilt Thou Go To The Barracks, Johnnie?

SDTA Textbook (Revised 2025)*	RSOBHD Textbook Nov 2020
Introduction	Introduction
1 st Step – Balance and Travel	1 st Step – Balance and Travel
2 nd Step – Pas de Basques	2 nd Step – Pas de Basque
3 rd Step – Point and Backstep	3 rd Step – Pointing and Backstep
4 th Step – Assemble and Change	4 th Step – Assemble and Change
5 th Step – High Cut Action	5 th Step – Diagonal Extension
6 th Step – Circling	6 th Step – Circling Balance and Travel
7 th Step – Reverse Shedding	7 th Step – Reverse Shedding
8 th Step – Last Step	8 th Step - Turning
Finish	Finish

Scotch Measure

SDTA Textbook (Revised 2025)*	RSOBHD SND Textbook Nov 2020
Introduction	Introduction
1 st Step – Hop and Travel	1 st Alt. Step – Hop and Travel
2 nd Step – Brush and Assemble	2 nd Step – Brush Assemble/Disassemble
3 rd Step – Plié and Turn	3 rd Step – Plié and Turn (Alternative counting)
4 th Step – Skip Change of Step	4 th Step – Skip Change of Step
5 th Step – Pas de Basques	5 th Alt. Step – Pas de Basque Derrière
6 th Step – Last Step	6 th Step – Second Hop and Travel (incl. Male options)
Finish	Finish

* (The 14th edition of the SDTA textbook from 2018 may be used until 1st July 2025).

Highland Laddie

SDTA Textbook (Revised 2025)*	RSOBHD SND Textbook Nov 2020
Introduction	Introduction
1 st Step – Half Turn and High Cut	1 st Step – Half Turn/High Cut in Front
2 nd Step – Point and Extend	2 nd Step – Point and Extend
3 rd Step – Shuffles	3 rd Step - Shuffles
4 th Step – Heel and Toe Travel	4 th Alt. Step – Hop Heel Travel
5 th Step – Brush and Travel	5 th or 5 th Alt. Step – Brush to Second and Travel
6 th Step – Last Step	6 th Alt. Step – Balance and Round-The-Leg
Finish	Finish

Flora Macdonald's Fancy

SDTA Textbook (Revised 2025)*	RSOBHD SND Textbook Nov 2020
Introduction	Alt. Introduction
1 st Step – Hop Brush Beat Beat	1 st Alt. Step – Hop Brush Beat Beat
2 nd Step – Hop and Travel	2 nd Alt. Step – Syncopated Hop
3 rd Step – Diagonal Travel	3 rd Step – Diagonal Travel
4 th Step – Backstep and Travel	4 th 2 nd Alt. Step – Backstep and Travel
5 th Step – Pas de Basques	5 th Step – Pas de Basques
6 th Step – Last Step	6 th Step – Second Syncopated Hop
Finish	Finish

Blue Bonnets Over the Border

SDTA Textbook (Revised 2025)*	RSOBHD SND Textbook Nov 2020
Introduction	Introduction (alternative -step flat bar 7, rise bar 8)
1 st Step – Skip Change of Step	1 st 2 nd Alt. Step – Skip Change
2 nd Step – Retiré Skip	2 nd Step – Backward Skip
3 rd Step – Assemble and Travel	3 rd Step – Assemble and Backward Skip
4 th Step – Diagonal Travel	4 th Step – Diagonal Glide
5 th Step – High Cut in Front	5 th Alt. Step – High Cut in Front
6 th Step – Last Step	6 th Step – Assemble/Disassemble
Finish	Finish

* (The 14th edition of the SDTA textbook from 2018 may be used until 1st July 2025).

Earl of Errol

SDTA Textbook (Revised 2025)*	RSOBHD SND Textbook Nov 2020
Introduction	Introduction or Alt. Introduction (Males)
1 st Step – Circle and Point	1 st Step – Circle and Point
2 nd Step – Double Treble	2 nd Step – Double Treble (with travel)
3 rd Step – Hop and Travel	3 rd Step – Hop and Travel
4 th Step – Balance	4 th Step – Balance
5 th Step – Double Treble Turning	5 th Alt. Step – Double Treble Turning
6 th Step – Last Step	6 th or 6 th Alt. Step – Single Treble
Finish	Finish

Village Maid

SDTA Textbook (Revised 2025)*	RSOBHD SND Textbook Nov 2020
Introduction	Introduction
1 st Step – Hop and Travel	1 st Step – Hop and Travel
2 nd Step – Russian Bourrée	2 nd Step – Russian Bourrée
3 rd Step – Second Hop and Travel	3 rd Step – Second Hop and Travel
4 th Step – Hop and Bourrée	4 th 1 st Alt. Step – Second Russian Bourrée
5 th Step – Seven-Step Side Travel	5 th Alt. Step – Pas de Basque and Side Travel
6 th Step – Last Step	6 th Alt. Step - Diamond
Finish	Finish

* (The 14th edition of the SDTA textbook from 2018 may be used until 1st July 2025).

IRISH JIG TESTS

Due to the difficulty in obtaining Jig shoes, any suitable shoe is acceptable except tap shoes.

PRE-BRONZE STANDARD (Three Steps & 1 Finishing Step)

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

Teacher's choice of steps

BRONZE MEDAL TEST (Four Steps)

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

1	1 st	Circle
2	2 nd	Shuffling
3	10 th	Four Beat Side Run
4	2 nd Finishing Step	Triple Shuffle

SILVER MEDAL TEST (Four Steps)

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

1	1 st	Circle
2	2 nd	Shuffling
3	6 th	Diagonal Travel
4	2 nd Finishing Step	Triple Shuffle

GOLD MEDAL TEST (Five Steps)

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

1	1 st	Circle
2	2 nd	Shuffling
3	4 th	The Chase, either method
4	5 th	Flap
5	3 rd Finishing Step	Heel Travel

SCOTTISH AWARD 1 (Five Steps)

AWARDS: Plaque and certificate

1	1 st	Circle
2	2 nd	Shuffling turning with double shuffle bars 5-6 & 13-14
3	11 th	Second Diagonal Travel
4	1 st Finishing Step	Toe-Tap
5	3 rd Finishing Step	Heel Travel

SCOTTISH AWARD 2 (Five Steps)

AWARDS: Plaque and certificate

1	1 st	Circle
2	2 nd	Shuffling turning with Toe-Tap bars 5-6 and 13-14
3	3 rd	Break Step
4	7 th	Donnybrook (any method)
5	8 th	Cross and Clip Heels

SCOTTISH AWARD 3 (Five Steps)

AWARDS: Plaque and certificate

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | 1 st | Circle |
| 2 | 3 rd | Break Step with Alt. method bars 5-6 and 13-14 |
| 3 | 5 th | Flap with Hop |
| 4 | 8 th | Cross and Clip Heels using Break C |
| 5 | 3 rd Finishing Step | Heel Travel |

SCOTTISH AWARD 4 (Five Steps)

AWARDS: Plaque and certificate

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Introduction | | Female 3 rd Method or Male use Male Introduction |
| 1 | 1 st | Circle finished using cramp roll bars 15-16 |
| 2 | 9 th | Diagonal Roll |
| 3 | 4 th | Chase using Method A |
| 4 | 1 st Finishing Step | Toe Tap using Break B |
| 5 | 8 th | Cross and Clip Heels |

SAILORS' HORNSPIPE TESTS

PRE-BRONZE STANDARD (Four Steps)

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

Teacher's choice of steps – Single High Cuts accepted

BRONZE STANDARD (Four Steps)

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

- | | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | 1 st | Circle |
| 2 | 2 nd | Shuffle over the Buckle |
| 3 | 9 th | Heel Pull |
| 4 | 16 th | High Cutting |

SILVER STANDARD (Four Steps)

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

- | | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | 1 st | Circle |
| 2 | 2 nd | Shuffle over the Buckle |
| 3 | 12 th | Rocking |
| 4 | 16 th | High Cutting |

GOLD STANDARD (Five Steps)

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

- | | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | 1 st | Circle |
| 2 | 3 rd | Diagonal Travel |
| 3 | 6 th | Gathering |
| 4 | 13 th | Toe-Heel |
| 5 | 16 th | High Cutting |

SCOTTISH AWARD 1 (Five Steps)

AWARDS: Plaque and certificate

- | | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 1 st | Circle |
| 2 | 4 th | Farewell |
| 3 | 7 th | Look-Out |
| 4 | 15 th | Forward Crab Walk |
| 5 | 16 th | High Cutting |

SCOTTISH AWARD 2 (Five Steps)

AWARDS: Plaque and certificate

- | | | |
|---|------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | 1 st | Circle Using Polka Step |
| 2 | 2 nd | Shuffle over the Buckle using Break C with Shake |
| 3 | 5 th | Scissors |
| 4 | 8 th | Crab Walk |
| 5 | 16 th | High Cutting with Variations |

SCOTTISH AWARD 3 (Five Steps)

AWARDS: Plaque and certificate

Intro		Alternative Method with Break A
1	1 st	Circle
2	2 nd	Shuffle over the buckle
3	11 th	Low Cutting
4	13 th Alt	Toe Heel
5	16 th	High Cutting with Variations

SCOTTISH AWARD 4 (Five Steps)

AWARDS: Plaque and certificate

1	1 st	Circle
2	11 th	Low Cutting without Break
3	12 th Alt	Rocking
4	14 th	Run and Cable Haul
5	16 th	High Cutting with Variations

SOLO, DUET and GROUP CHOREOGRAPHY TESTS

1. These tests can be taken in any order.
2. For solo choreography tests only, candidates can be taken in groups of two or three if using the same choreography, although each will be examined individually.
3. Duets are 2 candidates and groups have a minimum of 3 candidates. There are no maximum number for groups.
4. Costume – Scottish theme suitable for the dance or Highland and Scottish National dress will be acceptable.
5. Music – predominantly a Scottish theme. Lyrics are accepted.
6. Steps – should predominantly use movements from Highland, Scottish National, Irish Jig and Sailors' Hornpipe.
7. One Solo, Duet or Group feedback report will be given by the Examiner and all candidates will receive individual medals and certificates.
8. Recommended levels of dance experience are listed under each test. These are only recommendations to help teachers evaluate the level of dance experience for candidates.

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

BRAEMAR AWARD

(Recommended for Pre-Bronze to Silver Highland level candidates)

Solo Dance (Teacher's Choreography)	Time – 1 to 1½ minutes approximately
Duet Dance (Teacher's Choreography)	Time – 1 to 1½ minutes approximately
Group (Teacher's Choreography)	Time – 1 to 1½ minutes approximately

BALMORAL AWARD

(Recommended for Silver to Gold Highland level candidates)

Solo Dance (Teacher's Choreography)	Time – 1½ to 2 minutes approximately
Duet Dance (Teacher's Choreography)	Time – 1½ to 2 minutes approximately
Group (Teacher's Choreography)	Time – 1½ to 2 minutes approximately

GLAMIS AWARD

(Recommended for Gold upwards Highland level candidates)

Solo Dance (Teacher's Choreography)	Time – 1½ to 2 minutes approximately
Duet Dance (Teacher's Choreography)	Time – 1½ to 2 minutes approximately
Group (Teacher's Choreography)	Time – 2 minutes approximately

ABOYNE AWARD

(Recommended for all levels of dance experience)

Solo Dance (Teacher's Choreography)	Time – 2 to 2½ minutes approximately
Duet Dance (Teacher's Choreography)	Time – 2 to 2½ minutes approximately
Group (Teacher's Choreography)	Time – 2 to 2½ minutes approximately

QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE AWARD

AWARD: Boxed medal and certificate

This Award was created in 2022 by the SDTA in celebration of Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee. The dance was choreographed by SDTA examiners, Aileen Robertson and Janice Macquarrie. The music was composed by SDTA Member Sabra MacGillivray. The award is open for both amateur and professional candidates to enter the examination.

All information including the syllabus, link to purchase the music and the video tutorials is available here:

[SDTA Queen's Platinum Jubilee Award – Scottish Dance Teachers' Alliance](#)

Or scan the QR code below.



There is also an option for younger and/or less experienced dancers to submit their teacher's choice of dance for this award.

HIGHLAND GRADE EXAMINATIONS

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

PRIMARY FOUNDATION

For candidates under the age of 10 years and demonstration only required.

Barre Work

Positions of Feet **Demonstrate** - 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th. All (except 1st position) with the working foot placed on the toe and with the supporting foot flat.

Basic Movements **Demonstrate** - Hop, Spring, Shedding, Toe and Heel, Spring Points in 4th position

Centre Work

Demonstrate - Grouping of fingers, correct stance, positions of arms (1st - 5th), bow, spaces in Swords

Practical

Highland Fling – 4 steps (with music)
Pas De Basque & High Cuts (with music)

PRIMARY

For candidates under the age of 10 years.

All work from Primary Foundation plus:

Barre Work

Positions of Feet **Demonstrate & describe** – 1st, 2nd with the working foot placed on the toe and with the supporting foot flat.

Demonstrate - 3rd, 4th & 5th. All with the working foot placed on the toe and with the supporting foot flat.

Basic Movements **Demonstrate & describe** - Hop, Spring,
Demonstrate - Shedding, Toe and Heel, Spring Points in 4th position

Centre Work

Demonstrate and describe - 1st position of Arms, the grouping of fingers and Spaces and Spots of Swords.

Demonstrate - correct stance, positions of arms (2nd - 5th), bow.

Practical

Highland Fling – 4 steps (with music)
Sword Dance – 1st, 2nd or 4th with or without music

HIGHLAND GRADE 1

All work from Primary plus:

Barre Work

Positions of Feet

Demonstrate and describe –

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 3rd Aerial, 3rd Rear Aerial, 4th & 5th.

Basic Movements

Demonstrate and describe - Hop, Spring, Shedding, Toe and Heel, Spring Points in 4th position

Centre Work

Demonstrate and describe - Grouping of fingers, correct stance, positions of arms (1st - 5th), Bow, spots, spaces and corners in Swords, line of direction.

Demonstrate, describe and count -

Introduction for Highland Fling

Practical

Highland Fling - 1st, 3rd, 6th, 8th

Sword Dance – 1st, 2nd or 4th, 7th or 8th

HIGHLAND GRADE 2

All work from Grade 1 plus:

Barre Work

Positions of Feet

Demonstrate and describe - As for Grade 1 with the working foot placed on all parts of the foot plus second aerial position (all levels), 4th opposite 5th position.

Basic Movements

Demonstrate, describe and count -

Back-steps, Rocks, High Cut, Shake for Highland Fling, Pas de Basques, Open Pas de Basques in 4th opposite 5th position.

Centre Work

Demonstrate and describe - spots, spaces, corners and auxiliary spots of the Sword, placing of working foot on ½ point.

Arm work as for Grade 1

Head positions

Demonstrate, describe and count - Introduction for the Sword Dance (one method)

Practical

Highland Fling - 1st, 2nd, 4th, 8th

Sword Dance – 1st, 2nd, 8th

HIGHLAND GRADE 3

All work from Grade 1 & 2 plus:

Barre Work

Positions of Feet

Demonstrate and describe - As for previous grades plus 4th Aerial position, 4th Rear position, Mid 4th position and Mid 4th Aerial position.

Basic Movements

Demonstrate, describe and count - Outward & Inward Brushes, Shuffle, Assemble, Disassemble, Hop Brush Beat Beat.

Centre Work

Demonstrate and describe -

Raising and lowering of the arms

Placing of working foot on the ball

Aerial and open positions

Demonstrate, describe and count - Introduction for the Seann Triubhas (one method)

Practical

Sword Dance – 1st, 4th, 7th or 8th

Seann Triubhas – 1st, 2nd, 4th, any quick step and any finishing method

HIGHLAND GRADE 4

All work from Grade 1 to 3 plus:

Barre Work

Positions of Feet

Demonstrate and describe – As for previous grades plus 4th Intermediate position, 4th Intermediate aerial position, 4th Intermediate rear position and 4th Intermediate rear aerial position.

Basic Movements

Demonstrate, describe and count - Shake for Seann Triubhas, Balance, Entrechat, Travelling Balance, Round-the-Leg, Open Pas de Basques in all positions and where to apply e.g., name step.

Centre Work

Demonstrate and describe – Circling of the arms, placing of working foot on the heel, supporting foot, ground and rear positions.

Demonstrate, describe and count - Introduction for the Seann Triubhas (one method)

Practical

Seann Triubhas – 1st, 2nd, 9th, any quick step and Entrechat finish.

½ Hullachan – any setting steps.

HIGHLAND GRADE 5

All work from Grade 1 to 4 plus:

Barre Work

Positions of Feet

Demonstrate and describe - As for previous grades plus 3rd Rear position, 5th position, 5th Rear position, 3rd crossed position.

Basic Movements

Demonstrate, describe and count - Shake Shake Down, Heel and Toe, Change, Leap, Step, Pivot turn, Low Cutting (for Highland Fling).

Centre Work

Demonstrate and describe - Closed position

Demonstrate, describe and count - Introduction for the Strathspey (one method)

Practical

Highland Fling - 1st, 5th Alt, 6th – 4th Alt, 8th
Strathspey & Highland Reel – any setting steps.

HIGHLAND GRADE 6

All work from Grade 1 to 5 plus:

Barre Work

Positions of Feet

Demonstrate and describe - As for previous grades.

Basic Movements

Demonstrate, describe and count - High cut in front,

Centre Work

Demonstrate and describe - General rule for movement of arms

Demonstrate, describe and count - Propelled Pivot Turn, Progressive Strathspey & Highland Reel movement, Spring Points (bar 4 – 2nd step Sword Dance).

Practical

Sword Dance - 2 & 2 any steps.
Strathspey & ½ Tulloch – any setting steps.

NOTE: Candidates from Grades 1 to 6 will be marked as for Medal Tests taken on the same day but candidates must be able to demonstrate steps/dances from the Grade syllabus if not included in the medal test.

Examiner may nominate Highland Grade Candidates to participate in the SDTA Highland Scholarships, if Honours has been attained.

Juvenile Scholarship candidates will qualify from grade examinations 1 & 2. Candidate's age on the day of the grade examination must be a minimum of 10 years and under 12 years.

Junior Scholarship candidates will qualify from grade examinations 1 – 4. Candidate's age on the day of the grade examination must be a minimum of 12 years and under 14 years.

Senior Scholarship candidates will qualify from grade examinations 4 – 6. Candidate's age on the day of the grade examination must be a minimum of 13 years and under 18 years.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL GRADE EXAMINATIONS

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

PRIMARY

For candidates under the age of 10 years and demonstration only required.

Barre Work

Positions of Feet

Demonstrate -

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th. All (except 1st position) with the working foot placed on the toe and with the supporting foot flat.

Basic Movements

Demonstrate -

Bourrée devant, Derrière, Hop, Spring, Spring Points, Assemble, Changes.

Centre Work

Female -

Demonstrate -

Holding the skirt, curtsy

Male -

or

1st Position of Arms. Bow

Practical

Scottish Lilt or Dusty Miller (with music) 4 steps - Teacher's choice of steps.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL GRADE 1

All work from Primary plus

Barre Work

Positions of Feet -

Demonstrate and describe -

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th. All (except 1st position) with the working foot placed on the toe and with the supporting foot flat.

Basic Movements -

Demonstrate, describe and count -

Bourrée devant, Derrière, Hop, Spring, Spring Points, Assemble, Changes.

Centre Work

Female -

Demonstrate -

Holding skirt, curtsy

Male -

or

Bow

Arm Positions -

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th

Practical

Scottish Lilt - 4 Steps (with music) – Teacher's choice of steps.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL GRADE 2

All work from Grade 1 plus:

Barre Work

Positions of Feet -

Demonstrate and describe –

As for Grade 1 with the working foot placed on all parts of the foot plus 2nd Aerial position (all levels), 3rd Aerial (all levels), 3rd Rear Aerial (both levels), 4th Aerial, Mid 4th Aerial.

Basic Movements -

Demonstrate, describe and count -

Changes, Disassemble, Hop brush beat beat, Brush to 2nd Aerial low position, Retiré Skips.

Centre Work

Demonstrate and describe -

Head positions

Demonstrate, describe and count -

The break for Flora Macdonald's Fancy

The Introduction to Flora Macdonald's Fancy

The Introduction to the Scottish Lilt

Practical

Flora Macdonald's Fancy - 4 steps (with music) - Teacher's choice of steps

Demonstrate the 3rd step in the Scottish Lilt (without music)

SCOTTISH NATIONAL GRADE 3

All work from Grade 1 & 2 plus:

Barre Work

Positions of Feet -

Demonstrate and describe –

As for previous grades plus Forward 2nd, Forward 2nd Aerial, 3rd Rear, Rear, 5th Rear

Basic Movements -

Demonstrate, describe and count –

High cut in front and travel from WTGT Barracks, Johnnie

Pas de basque derrière, Entrechat

Centre Work

Demonstrate, describe and count –

Plié and Turn

Hop and Travel (both positions)

The break for Barracks Johnnie

Introduction to Barracks Johnnie

Introduction to Highland Laddie

Practical

Wilt Thou go to the Barracks, Johnnie? 4 steps (with music) - Teacher's choice of steps

Demonstrate the 5th step of the Flora Macdonald (without music)

SCOTTISH NATIONAL GRADE 4

All work from Grade 1 to 3 plus:

Barre Work

Positions of the Feet -

Demonstrate and describe -

As for previous grades plus Inverted 2nd position, 3rd crossed, 4th intermediate position, 4th intermediate aerial (both levels), 4th intermediate rear, 4th intermediate rear aerial (both levels)

Basic Movements -

Demonstrate, describe and count -

Ronde, Lateral Coupés, Shuffles for Highland Laddie and Flora Macdonald, Développé

Centre Work

Demonstrate, describe and count -

Skip Change of Step
7 Step Side Travel
Syncopated Hop
Pas de Valse

Practical

Highland Laddie - 4 Steps (with music) - Teacher's choice of steps

Demonstrate the 2nd step of Wilt Thou Go to the Barracks, Johnnie? (without music)

Demonstrate the 5th step of the Scottish Lilt (without music)

NOTE: Candidates from Grades 1 to 4 will be marked as for Medal Tests taken on the same day but candidates must be able to demonstrate steps/dances from the Grade syllabus if not included in the medal test.

National Grade examinations are not a route for nomination for the SDTA Highland Scholarships.

IRISH JIG ADVANCED EXAMINATION

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

Candidates should be 14 years or over.

Count (if applicable), demonstrate and describe:

Barre Work

Positions of Feet - Inverted 2nd Aerial, Forward 2nd, Forward 5th and where they can be used

Basic Movements - Stamp, Tap-spring, Tap-step, Toe tap, Heel tap, Heel beat, Heel dig, Heel change, Flap, Slap, Heel clicks, Shuffles

Centre Work

Female Arms - 1, 2, 3, 6

or

Male Arms - 1, 2,3 Shillelagh action

Break A, B, C

Female Introductions 1st and 2nd methods

Male Introduction.

Practical

Irish Jig - 3 steps and 1 Finishing step (with music)

Teacher's choice of steps

SAILORS' HORNPIPE ADVANCED EXAMINATION

AWARDS: Medal and certificate

Candidates should be 14 years or over.

Count (if applicable), demonstrate and describe:

Barre Work

Positions of Feet - Inverted 1st, Inverted 2nd, Forward 2nd Aerial, 3rd Rear
Inverted 5th, Forward 5th and where they can be used.

Basic Movements - Heel tap, Heel Dig, Shuffle, Ball-change, Shuffle over the
Buckle, Hoisting Slacks

Centre Work

Arm positions - 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th

Arm actions - Hauling, Pulling Ropes downwards and inwards, Casting,
Hitching

All Hornpipe Breaks
All Hornpipe Introductions
Salute

Practical

Hornpipe - 5 steps (with music)

Teacher's choice of steps

FOUNDATION ASSESSMENTS

These tests are structured to support the progression of our non-competitive students and dancers who wish to develop their technique further before progressing to the next level in their Highland Medal Syllabus studies.

Each Assessment level builds upon the previous one, so they should be completed in order. Candidates may take only one test per session.

LOCH KATRINE AWARD (Two Dances)

AWARDS: SDTA Medal and Certificate

Highland Fling 2 steps – 1st, 3rd
Sword Dance 1 slow step

LOCH MAREE (Two Dances)

AWARDS: SDTA Medal and Certificate

Highland Fling 3 steps – 1st, 3rd, 8th
Sword Dance 2 slow steps – 1st, 2nd or 4th

LOCH NESS AWARD (Three Dances)

AWARDS: SDTA Medal and Certificate

Highland Fling 4 steps – 1st, 3rd, 6th, 8th
Sword Dance 2 slow steps and 1 quick step – 1st, 2nd or 4th, 7th or 8th
Seann Triubhas 2 slow steps – 1st, 2nd or 4th

LOCH LOMOND AWARD (Three Dances)

AWARDS: SDTA Medal and Certificate

Highland Fling 4 steps – 1st, 3rd, 6th, 8th
Sword Dance 2 slow steps and 1 quick step – 1st, 2nd or 4th, 7th or 8th
Seann Triubhas 3 slow steps and 1 quick step – 1st, 2nd, 4th, 14th or 16th,
Method 1 Ending.