

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR TC CANDIDATES

UNIT 1

Preparation

1. Read the appropriate sections of the RSCDS Manual, 3rd edition May 2013. See pages 5 and 6 of these notes for the list of examinable areas of the Manual.
2. Prepare by studying past papers and their mark schemes and trying to answer the questions.
3. Do a timed “mock” paper to see if you can finish in the time.

In the examination

1. Ensure you have spare pens, pencils, ruler, eraser.
2. Divide your time up by checking the number of marks for each question. Higher marks mean a longer answer is needed.
3. Use lists and tabulate where possible in your answer.
4. Check to see that you have answered the question asked.
5. Check that you have made at least as many points in your answer as there are marks for that question.
6. Use the standard language and symbols from the Manual in your answers
7. If you have drawn diagrams, check that you have the correct number and that they are labelled. Include a key or annotation to explain symbols on the diagrams, e.g. ensure that you indicate which shape stands for man and which for woman and always indicate the top of the set.
8. Do not worry too much about spelling and grammar.
9. If you are dyslexic, or have any other issues with reading and writing or language, let the Examinations Officer know when you apply for Unit 1.

UNIT 2

This will vary depending on whether you are attending a residential or non-residential course. On a residential course the experience is very concentrated. You will gain most from it if you know what to expect and are well prepared.

What to expect

- You may be expected to dance/teach for 3 sessions every day on a residential course.
- Personal criticism of dancing and teaching will be given along with targets for improvement.
- Homework on lesson planning and preparation of teaching tasks will be set.
- On a residential course Unit 2 will usually be examined at the end of the first week.
- On a residential course Unit 3 will be examined at the end of the second week.

What to bring

- A pen and paper. You will need these in class and for homework.
- A copy of the current Manual
- Instructions for the Unit 2 dances.

Prepare before you start the course

- Be physically fit enough to sustain dancing to a good standard over the whole course. The course will be physically demanding and, as with any sustained high impact exercise, unless you are fit, injury is a possibility.
- Make sure your own dancing is as fault free as possible. Ask your teacher or a critical friend to help with this.
- Practice rhythmic counting for jig, reel and strathspey.
- Be familiar with the Manual, particularly the formations contained in the Unit 2 and 3 syllabus.
- Practice rhythmic words for formations, eg in poussette, “away from the centre, quarter turn...”
- Learn the prescribed dances and be able to recap them fluently.
- Practice coaching other dancers through these dances over the music.
- Analyse the set dances by **writing notes on the main points for each dance**, as follows:-
 1. The number of bars, type of music, time signature and number of couples required (eg 32 bar reel (4/4) for 3 couples)
 2. The different steps used.
 3. Where any stepping up or down occurs.
 4. The method of progression.
 5. Any changes of step within 8 bar phrases.
 6. Any changes of step between 8 bar phrases, including between ending first time through and starting second time through.
 7. Any changes of foot for dancing and supporting couples.
 8. Phrasing of the main formations.
 9. Any other potential technical difficulties e.g. transitions between formations or difficulties in phrasing.
 10. Any notes in the Manual and the [Technical Panel Dance section on the RSCDS website about the dance.](#)

UNIT 3

1. Unit 3 is not about potential; it is an examination to assess the ability of candidates to teach steps and basic formations at beginners' level.
2. Examiners will demand high standards in the examination. Candidates are required to teach a **first** lesson at beginners' level.
3. Examiners look for a structure in teaching the step and the formations.
4. Isolate and practice points for the step.
5. In the breakdown of steps the “stepping out” stage is often missed out, especially if the volunteers are experienced dancers. Do not omit this stage.

6. Practice bringing the music in...“with the music, ready and...”
7. Some candidates don’t use their voices well. Use of the voice is particularly important if candidates are using recorded music.
8. Candidates often struggle with rhythmic coaching and in counting in jig versus reel time. Practice this.
9. Candidates for Units 3 and 5 should be able to show that they can use recorded music effectively.
10. In the examination, if the whole class is rhythmic at the first attempt, the candidate should state this, giving praise, so that the examiners know that the candidate has observed the maintenance of good rhythm.
11. The [lesson plan for Unit 3 \(1 page only\)](#) should include teaching points, activity, organisation of class and structure of lesson.
12. Make notes on all the assignments issued during their course.
13. Tutors should give exemplar lessons, one of which uses recorded music but retains the desired structure.
14. The time for a Unit 3 lesson is 20 – 30 minutes, do not invent things to fill the time. Stop when you have finished.
15. Candidates are expected to include “teaching points” and “follow up of teaching points in their lesson structure.
16. Even if the formations given in the examination assignment contain two steps, the candidate should only teach the step specified in the assignment.

Conduct of the examination

Before the examiners issue the examination teaching assignments for Units 3 and 5, it is the responsibility of the tutor to arrange to draw lots for the order in which candidates are to teach in the examination.

Once the lots are drawn and recorded, the teaching tasks are assigned to candidates strictly in the order decided by the drawn lots. Candidates may NOT exchange teaching tasks. Once the teaching tasks for the examination have been assigned, the tutor cannot help the candidates to prepare for the task in any way.

In Units 3 and 5, on entering the examination room, candidates should give a copy of their lesson plan to each examiner, retaining a copy for their own use.

UNIT 4

[See Appendix G of the Syllabus \(effective March 2020\)](#)

UNIT 5

1. Candidates must include dance analysis in their [lesson plans](#).
2. Lesson planning must be more detailed in Unit 5 than in Unit 3
3. Improved observation and correction of faults will be expected.

4. Candidates for Units 3 and 5 should be able to show that they can use recorded music effectively.
5. Candidates should show effective organisation of the class and good use of space.
6. Because Unit 5 tasks require the teaching of a whole dance, particular care should be taken to structure the build up of the dance and demonstrate progressive teaching where appropriate.
7. Candidates are expected to teach “linkage” between formations. All entries and exits, with associated teaching points, must be analysed and taught.
8. In order to improve their teaching, candidates should expect to discuss with their tutor, any issues raised by the assessor of their Unit 4 submission.

General notes

In any examination course, especially in a residential course, where preparation time is limited, candidates need to realise that they may not be successful in meeting the set criteria and that they may be advised by the tutor to withdraw.

Feedback to candidates is no longer done by examiners. In Units 2, 3 and 5 the expectation is that this will now be done by the tutor after the candidate has received the result of the examination.

Unit 1 Examinable areas of the Manual Third Edition May 2013

Please refer to Appendix B of the [Syllabus](#).