



# Elevation

News and information from Laura Wilson School of Dance

## Ballet Exams at LWSD

From time to time, parents and students ask us about the various ballet exam and award routes which are available through LWSD, so in this issue of *Elevation* we'll give you an overview of what we offer..

At LWSD, our ballet classes follow two of the key areas set out by the Royal Academy of Dance - but let's also be clear about our approach to dance; whilst we recognise that exams and awards are a great way to mark milestones in a dancer's development, and we love to celebrate that success, we also believe that it is important for our lessons to be fun and friendly too - we want to inspire students to develop good solid abilities whilst enjoying themselves and developing what we hope will be a life long love for dance.

You can find out more about the full range of RAD syllabi, specifications and exams by visiting their web site at [www.rad.org.uk](http://www.rad.org.uk), but in this article we aim to give you a clearer view of the two main RAD pathways we offer here at LWSD, namely the **Graded Syllabus** and the **Vocational Graded Exams**.

### The Graded Syllabus

The Graded syllabus (Pre-Primary in Dance, Primary in Dance and Grades 1–5) provides a broad practical dance education and development to provide an overview of technical, musical and performance skills starting from age 5.

Within the Graded Syllabus, we work with **two key RAD assessment routes** in order to provide appropriate assessment and exam options for a range of students, as well as offering our own certification option for students who don't wish to take part in external examinations, so in all we offer:

- The LWSD Certificate
- The RAD Class Award
- The RAD Graded Exams

The **LWSD certificate** is available to students ranging from Pre-Primary, right through to Grade 5, and is a means of recognition for Students who regularly attend a weekly Ballet class and generally attain the appropriate level for the class, but do not wish to take part in externally regulated formal assessments or exams.

The two **RAD routes** are formally assessed by a RAD appointed external examiner, and result in a personal certificate and medal (or medal bar) being issued to each successful student by RAD.

The assessment is carried out at Manor Lane Studios, which is an RAD Approved Examination Centre.

The **RAD Class Award** is available to Pre-Primary, Primary and Grade 1–5 students. It is based around a specific Class Award syllabus, and the external examiner will assess each student within a group of eight. On the day, each student wears a number to identify them to the examiner, who will assess them individually against four key areas; Technique, Musicality, Presentation and the set dance. The session is led by the class teacher, and in each of the areas, each student is marked as meeting the criteria *Occasionally, Generally or Frequently*. Students who are progressing well would be expected to achieve *Frequently* in all four areas. Successful candidates will be awarded with a personal RAD certificate, result form and medal.

***"In our view, the RAD Class Award is often the most appropriate assessment route for students who regularly attend a weekly Ballet class and wish to continuously develop their standard"***

The **Graded Exams** are offered to our students in Grades 3 to 5. Success in these exams requires a higher level of commitment than the Class Award, as there are additional syllabus elements to cover, and an extra dance.

For the Graded Exams, students perform in front of the external examiner in groups of 4, allowing closer personal observation than the Class Awards. The session is completely run by the external examiner, and the class teacher is not permitted in the room during this exam. Each student wears a number to identify them, and is individually assessed against a set of criteria based on the particular exam level.

Each successful Graded Exam student will receive a personal certificate issued by RAD with a grading of Pass, Merit or Distinction as well as a result form and medal.

In order to be successful in this assessment route, students will need to regularly attend at least one Ballet lesson per week, and also attend one term of additional coaching lessons which specifically cover the additional material required for the exam.

***"We see the RAD Exam route as being most appropriate for students who wish to progress their dance beyond a recreational level and work towards higher qualifications or perhaps even a career in dance"***

## Exam and Assessment routes available at LWSD

LWSD Awards		Royal Academy of Dance Graded Syllabus offered at LWSD				RAD Vocational Graded Examinations	
LWSD Certificate		RAD Class Awards		RAD Exams		RAD Vocational Exams	
Level	Award	Level	Award	Level	Award	Level	Award
Pre-Primary	Certificate issued by LWSD	Pre-Primary	Certificate, Result Form and Medal issued by Royal Academy of Dance		Certificate, Result Form and Medal issued by RAD		Certificate and Result Form issued by Royal Academy of Dance
Primary		Primary					
Grade 1		Grade 1					
Grade 2		Grade 2					
Grade 3		Grade 3		Grade 3			
Grade 4		Grade 4		Grade 4			
Grade 5	Grade 5	Grade 5					
						Intermediate Foundation	
						Intermediate	
						Advanced Foundation	
						Advanced 1	
						Advanced 2	
						Solo Seal	
Recognition for Students who regularly attend a weekly Ballet class and generally work at the appropriate level for the class, but do not wish to take part in externally recognised formal assessments or exams.		Our most popular route. Students who regularly attend a weekly Ballet class and wish to continuously develop their dance to a recognised standard.		Students who wish to progress their dance beyond a recreational level and work towards higher qualifications. Attending regular weekly classes plus additional group coaching sessions.		Students with an ongoing commitment to higher level vocational dance. Regularly attending weekly class sessions (typically in more than one discipline) as well as group coaching and some private lessons as required.	

### The Vocational Syllabus

The Vocational syllabus (at levels including Intermediate Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced Foundation, Advanced 1 and Advanced 2) provides an in-depth study of ballet, designed to prepare students for a career in dance, starting from age 11.

Students entering the Vocational Graded Exams will perform in front of the external examiner in groups of 4. In a similar way to the graded exams, the class teacher is not permitted in the room during this exam, and the whole session is conducted by the examiner. Each student wears a number to identify them, and is individually assessed against the criteria appropriate for each level.

Each successful student will receive a personal certificate with a grading of Pass, Merit or Distinction as well as a result form providing a detailed breakdown of the assessment.

***“The Vocational Syllabus provides a recognised qualification route for students looking for a career in dance”***

### Any Questions?

Hopefully, this brief article has helped to give you an understanding of how we approach the various ballet qualification routes at LWSD. Please also see the table on the right hand side of this page which provides a summary. Most importantly, please do feel free to ask your teacher if you have any further questions; we'll be happy to help!



[www.laurawilsonschoolofdance.co.uk](http://www.laurawilsonschoolofdance.co.uk)

***Elevation - From Laura Wilson School of Dance***