



Dear SDGA Parents,

An exciting time of the year is coming up - Royal Academy of Dance Ballet Exams. We encourage our students to do exams because they give the students a goal to work towards and great pride when they receive their results. It is a great way for you as parents to see the effort your dancer and their teachers put into every lesson. We believe our students deserve to receive an internationally recognised qualification for the work that they are learning in class. Exams are a fun and exciting experience. Just ask any of our students and they will tell you they can't wait for their next exam!

Participation in class awards, examinations and solo performance awards is by INVITATION ONLY as the marks received by our students reflects on the school and our teachers. We have always achieved 100% success in exams and pride ourselves on the high marks we have achieved to date.

When are the exams held?

Exams are held one day between 14th October - 11th December. Ours are normally in November on a Monday, Thursday or Saturday. Your dancer will need to take approximately 3 hours off school to participate. We will receive the exact day and time approximately 1 month before the exam.

Where are the exams held?

At our Roseville studio - St Luke's Presbyterian Church, 28 Lord St. We hold the exams in our large studio and use the small studio and kitchen as the dressing / hair / waiting area. This is one of the main reasons why holiday classes are so important, as they familiarise the students with the space they will be dancing in.

When are entries due?

Entries must be received by 9pm on Monday 1st July. An online enrolment form will be made available on our website from Saturday 1st July for you to submit your child's entry. Your child's level will be assessed during their regular class and the level they will be entered into has been sent to you in an email. Students improve the most when they are working at a level that they feel they can confidently achieve.

Do students go into the room with their friends or by themselves?

Students are placed in groups according to level, with friends in their regular dancing classes. These groups may have a maximum of 4-8 dancers (depending on their grade) and are decided by SDGA. For Exams, the students all dance together except for their individual dances and for Solo Performance Awards the students greet the examiner together and then perform their dances as solos before all doing a curtsy together for the examiner. All students are assessed individually even when they are performing together.

What is involved in the preparation process?

All of our students learn the Royal Academy of Dance syllabus during their ballet lessons. Holiday classes will be put on during the Winter and Spring holidays as this extra time allows students to focus on their exam work, build their confidence in performing it for the examiner and learn the additional dances required.

Students must attend 3 days of holiday classes to participate in their Class Award/ Exam / Solo Performance Award. If students aren't able to attend the holiday classes, they will need to schedule 3 x 1 hour private lessons on top of their normal classes to learn the additional syllabus work to learn and be confident in performing the dances (only if they haven't attended the holiday workshops). Students who do not attend 3 days of holiday classes or book 3 private lessons will not be able to participate in the exam and will forfeit their exam fee.

What is the minimum age / why is there a minimum age?

The RAD strictly enforce their minimum age limits. The RAD has carefully planned the syllabus so that the technique required is appropriate for the age of the students to ensure safe dancing practices and reduce the risk of injuries. Technique, musicality and expression expected for each grade correlates to the minimal age of students for each exam. We will only enter students in a level where they meet the age requirement.

What are the costs?

The cost varies for each grade and type of award. The fee includes the RAD exam fee (this can be found on their website) + studio hire + music + uniform hire.

Grade	Examination Fee	Type of Award	Minimum weekly class requirement
Pre-Primary	\$135	Class Award	At least 1 Ballet class per week + holiday classes and/or private lessons
Primary	\$155	Class Award	At least 1 Ballet class per week + holiday classes and/or private lessons
Primary	\$155	Examination	At least 1 Ballet class per week + holiday classes and/or private lessons
Grade 1	\$165	Examination	At least 1 Ballet class per week + holiday classes and/or private lessons
Grade 1	\$165	Solo Performance Award Exam	At least 1 Ballet class per week + holiday classes and/or private lessons
Grade 2	\$185	Solo Performance Award Exam	At least 1 Ballet class per week + holiday classes and/or private lessons
Grade 3	\$205	Solo Performance Award Exam	At least 1 Ballet class per week + holiday classes and/or private lessons
Grade 5	\$225	Solo Performance Award Exam	At least 1 Ballet class per week + holiday classes and/or private lessons
Intermediate Foundation	\$200	Examination	Invitation only

What happens if my child isn't successful in their exam?

At SDGA we are very proud to have a 100% success rate in exams. We would never enter a child who isn't ready for the examination. There are 3 different types of award.

Class Award:

- Only our Pre-Primary and Primary dancers are invited to participate in a class award.
- Candidates enter the examination room with their teacher who can assist them in their dancing if required however they are only examined by the examiner.
- The teacher conducts the exam and can prompt the students if necessary.
- Candidates perform all exercises and dances as a group or with a partner.
- Students are given an award with achievement brackets (rarely, often, always) instead of a mark.
- Students receive a medal.
- Pre-Primary students only have the option of a class award as exams and solo performance awards are not offered at this level.

Exam:

- Candidates enter the examination room in their exam group (without their teacher).
- The examiner conducts the exam.
- Candidates perform their exercises as pairs or groups as practiced in class.
- Candidates perform their dance(s) as a solo.
- Candidates receive marks for technique, musicality and performance for their exercises and dance(s).
- Candidates receive a detailed report and medals indicative of result achieved. Bronze medal for Pass (40 - 54%), silver medal for Merit (55 - 74%) and gold medal for Distinction (75 - 100%).

Solo Performance Award:

- Candidates enter the exam room as a group (without their teacher) however perform all of their dances as a solo.
- The examiner conducts the solo performance award.
- Students perform 3 dances as a solo. Two dances from the syllabus are performed and the 3rd dance may be a free choice in any style - a great opportunity to show your lyrical, jazz, acro and tap skills.
- Candidates receive marks for technique, musicality and performance for their exercises and dance(s) and a Pass (40 - 54%), Merit (55 - 74%) or Distinction (75 - 100%).
- Candidates receive a detailed report with result achieved and a bar medal.
- Solo performance awards are offered for Grades 1 - 5.

Can parents watch the exam?

Parents and teachers are not able to watch the exam. Parents may wait in the small Reid Hall at the studio or may come back when the exam has finished. You may also wish to organise car pooling from school for your exam with another parent.

How do I know my child should be doing an exam?

We encourage our students to enter exams and will guide you as to when they are ready. For some students, this is the first year they are learning Ballet, for some it is a little later when they are ready and will perform at their best. Their level has already been assessed during classes and only students who we know are ready for an exam receive an invitation.

Are exams compulsory?

No, exams are not compulsory. If your dancer does not or cannot participate in the exam they may still move to the next grade with their class group at the discretion of SDGA and they may be invited to participate in the next examination as the younger grades do not have prerequisite exams.

Aren't exams a scary experience?

Exams should be a fun and exciting experience. They are an opportunity for your child to receive an award for working well in class and show the examiner how much they love to dance. At SDGA we emphasise the fun aspects of the exam process. Learning the importance of preparation is a lifelong skill which will help your child in every aspect of their lives. We teach students that exams don't have to be stressful - you'll thank us when school exams come along and your child knows how to prepare themselves! All of the RAD examiners have completed the ballet exams themselves and are teachers to students like ours. The last thing they want to do is discourage them. Every examiner is friendly and most like to have a little chat to the students at the end of their exam asking what their favourite dance or exercise is or what their favourite thing about dancing is. It's a very positive experience for every dancer.

If you have any more questions please just ask us. All of our teachers have enjoyed doing exams and would love to share this exciting and rewarding opportunity with your dancer.

Best wishes,

Regina

0413 221 277

info@sdga.com.au