



## **The Eastern Canada Regional Syllabus**

**Adopted March 6, 2005**

Amended: 3 December 2006; 27 January 2008; 6 November 2008; 10 August 2011; 23 November 2011; 4 December 2013; 13 November 2014; 30 December 2016; 2 May 2017; 29 April 2018; 28 April 2019; 28 January 2021; 03 October 2021; 01 January 2024

### **Introduction**

This document has been created to assist feis committees in planning in-person competitions in the Eastern Canadian Region, and to ensure continuity throughout the region with respect to the overall feis experience.

### **Key Contacts**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
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### **Getting Started – Planning Procedures**

All regional feiseanna must first submit an online form to request their date to host a competition. The IDTAC-ER Feis Registrar will confirm the date in addition to the procedures and timelines for registration and payment of fees.

All regional feiseanna must submit a draft of their syllabus to the IDTAC-ER Feis Liaison for approval at least one month prior to the anticipated publication date. Please ensure the IDTAC-ER Numbering System is utilized when creating your syllabus.

The syllabus for in-person feiseanna mandates double-age groups for all levels except Beginner. Requests to run competitions in single-age groups and/or to hold competitions which are not specified in this syllabus must be submitted in writing to the Regional Director for approval at least one month prior to

the event. If granted, permission does not automatically carry-over from a previous year, and must therefore be requested each year.

Approximately one week prior to the feis date, the entry counts (sorted by competition) must be sent to the IDTAC-ER Feis Liaison so that any splits and/or mergers can be verified.

## **Mandatory Requirements**

1. **At least one-third of the Adjudicators must be from outside the Eastern Canadian Region.**
2. **Boys and girls must be combined in all levels.**
3. **Beginner level competitions must be offered in single-age groups and may not be combined.**
4. **There must be an 8-bar break between each line of dancers in Beginner competitions.**
5. **All speeds MUST be listed on the feis syllabus as shown in the regional syllabus.**
6. **Traditional Set competitions at the Novice and Prizewinner levels must be a combined competition for all seven tunes, unlike in Advanced Beginner, which is solely St Patrick's Day.**
7. **Dancers must be registered at the Prizewinner level for at least three out of the four main dances (R/SJ/TJ/HP) to be eligible to register for the Contemporary Set (if offered).**
8. **Preliminary Championship competitions must consist of two rounds judged by three adjudicators, and Open Championship competitions must consist of three rounds judged by three adjudicators. Permission must be granted from the Regional Director to offer alternative systems of judging, such as rotating panels etc. Such requests must be made a minimum of one (1) month in advance of the anticipated publication date.**

## **Grade Levels and Age Groups**

Each feis must offer the following:

Beginner:	<b>Under 5, U6, U7, U8, U9, U10, U11, U12, 12&amp;O</b>
Advanced Beginner:	<b>Under 7, U9, U11, U13, 13&amp;O</b>
Novice:	<b>Under 7, U9, U11, U13, 13&amp;O</b>
Prizewinner:	<b>Under 9, U11, U13, 13&amp;O</b>
Prizewinner Contemporary Sets:	<b>Under 11, U13, 13&amp;O</b>
Preliminary Championship:	<b>Under 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 17&amp;O</b>
Open Championship:	<b>Under 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19 and 19&amp;O</b>
Adult:	<b>19&amp;O</b>

## **Length of Dances**

### Beginner:

Introduction (to be played for every line of dancers)	8 bars
Reel, Light Jig, Single Jig, Slip Jig	32 bars

Advanced Beginner, Novice, Prizewinner, Adult Beginner/Advanced Beginner, and Adult Novice/Prizewinner:

Introduction (to be played for only the first line of dancers) 8 bars  
 Reel, Light Jig, Single Jig, Slip Jig, Treble Jig, and Hornpipe 32 bars

Preliminary, Open, Adult, and Advanced Adult Championship:

Introduction (Reel, Slip Jig, Treble Jig and Hornpipe) 8 bars  
 Introduction (Set dances – length will vary) “Part A” of the tune  
 Reel and Treble Jig 48 bars  
 Slip Jig and Hornpipe 40 bars

Figure Dancing:

Introduction (to be played for each team) 8 bars  
 2-Hand and 3-Hand 48 bars

Note: If a dancer/team does not start after the proper introduction, the musician(s) MUST NOT add the number of bars to the dancers’ performance (i.e., if the dancer false-starts or misses their start). This applies to set dances as well. The onus is on the dancer to start correctly.

## Required Solo Dances and Speeds

The following dances must be offered at the following speeds:

Dance	Beginner	Advanced Beginner and Adult Beg/Adv Beg	Novice, Prizewinner and Adult Nov/PW	Preliminary, Open, Adult, and Advanced Adult Championship
Reel	122	122	113	113
Light Jig	115	115	115 (not PW)	N/A
Slip Jig	122	122	113	113
Single Jig	124	124	124 (if offered)	N/A
Treble Jig	N/A	92	73 or 92	73
Hornpipe	N/A	138	113 or 138	113

Traditional Set Dance	Speed
Blackbird	144
Garden of Daisies	138
Job of Journeywork	138
Jockey to the Fair	90
King of the Fairies	130
St. Patrick’s Day	94
Three Sea Captains	96

All contemporary set dances for Prizewinner & Preliminary Championships (if offered) and Open & Advanced Adult Championships must be from the official CLRG list, within the permitted range of speeds.

Competitors Under 9 and younger and in Adult Championship may only compete a traditional set dance from the official CLRG list, at the official speed.

## Required Figure Dancing

The following requirements must be offered:

Dances: 2-Hand reel, 3-Hand reel and 4-Hand dance (teams' choice from *Ár Rinci Ceili*) must be offered in each age group as stipulated below.

Age Groups: U10, U12, U15, 15&O (Additional age groups are not permitted for 2-Hand or 3-Hand competitions; see Optional Categories/Optional Figures for more info.)

Entries must be submitted by dancers/parents. Teachers cannot be required to submit entries.

## Optional Categories

Optional competitions as shown below, may be offered without seeking permission, provided the stipulations shown are adhered to. Requests to hold competitions which are not specified in this syllabus must be submitted in writing to the Regional Director for approval, at least three months in advance of the anticipated publication date. Such requests must be submitted each year. Permission will be granted for one year only. Please provide as much detail as possible to help the approval process go quickly.

Alternate solos:	<p>The following requirements for alternate solos must be published: Preliminary Championship and Open Championship dancers will be combined for Reel/Slip Jig and Treble Jig/Hornpipe. Age groups must remain the same as for Preliminary Championships. Competitions will be judged by one Adjudicator.</p> <p>Dances are restricted to 32 bars. Competitors will dance two at a time regardless of stage size or age group.</p>
Contemporary Set Dance:	<p>A contemporary set dance competition may be offered at the Prizewinner and/or Preliminary Championship levels.</p> <p>For Prizewinner, dancers must be registered for the Prizewinner grade in at least three of the following: Reel, Slip Jig, Treble Jig and Hornpipe to be eligible to register. Dancers competing Under 9 are not eligible to dance a contemporary set dance.</p> <p>Refer to the Age Groups section for Prizewinner and Preliminary Championship set dance competitions.</p> <p>Dancers will perform a contemporary set dance from the An Coimisiún le Rinci Gaelacha Official List.</p>
Arts:	<p>The IDTAC-ER encourages the offering of non-dancing competitions such as: Art, Music, Singing, Recitation, Baking and Language. Age groups are at the discretion of the feis committee.</p>
Treble Reel:	<p>Treble Reel competitions - three age groups must be offered. Age and grade restrictions are at the discretion of the feis committee.</p>
Trophy Specials:	<p>Competitions deemed "trophy specials", in which dancers in one or more grades compete in a single dance, are permitted. Age and grade restrictions are at the discretion of the feis committee.</p>
Tir na nÓg	<p>A non-competitive event may be held, in which young dancers dance a short (at the stage manager's discretion) reel. This event is restricted to dancers Under 6 who have</p>

	never competed at any grade level. <b>No make-up or wigs are permitted. No Irish dancing costumes or shoes are required.</b> The non-competitive aspect of the event is to be highlighted, and the feis committees are encouraged to award all dancers.
Optional Figures:	6-hands, 8-hands, Figure Choreography and Dance Drama may be offered. 6-hands and 8-hands must be from <i>Ár Rincí Ceili</i> (latest edition). Under 8 may be offered for 4-hands, 6-hands and 8-hands <b>IF</b> this age group is offered at the corresponding year's Oireachtas.
Special Child:	A non-competitive event may be held, called Special Child, or Special Needs, in which dancers who self-identify as special (including those with mobility devices) may participate. The feis committee is encouraged to award all dancers.
Single Jigs:	Single Jigs may be offered in the Novice and Prizewinner grades in the corresponding age groups for the level.
Dance Offs:	At the Preliminary and Open Championship levels, dance-offs, in which the top award winners are eligible to compete in a single dance for a single award, are permitted.

## **IDTAC-ER DANCING COMPETITION RULES:**

### **REGISTRATION PROCEDURES**

A1. Entries for dancing competitions are confined to pupils of accredited Irish Dancing teachers who are registered with *An Coimisiún le Rincí Gaelacha*, and any additional regional bodies as required (based on residency). There are no such requirements for entries in art, music, soda bread etc.

A2. In the case of all solo and team competitions at all levels, the age of a competitor on the 1st of January in the year in which the competition is held will determine the right of entry. For the purposes of this rule, a competitor whose birthday occurs on the 1st of January shall be deemed to be under the age attained on that date.

A3. All dancers must compete in their own age group. Exceptions may be made to compete in a higher age group (specials, team events) but it is never permissible to compete in a lower age group. Proof of age may be requested in order to participate. Falsification of documents will result in disqualification from said event, with possible additional repercussions.

A4. Individuals holding TCRG, ADCRG, BG, SDCRG or TMRG status are not eligible to participate in any dance events.

A5. Dancers undertaking a six-month re-styling period are not permitted to participate. It is the responsibility of the dancer/legal guardian to ensure eligibility by confirming with the dancer's teacher(s).

A6. Grade-level dancers may not also compete in Preliminary or Open Championship level events and vice-versa, but may compete in team events, plus supplemental competitions corresponding to their level.

A7. The Feis Committee has the right to reject any entry for cause, to cancel all or part of the feis and/or to limit, merge or split competitions. The Feis Committee has the right to approve or deny requests for changes to entries on the day of the feis and/or to charge processing fees for same. The decision of the feis committee shall be final in all such matters.

A8. The Feis Committee (and any organization affiliated with same including, but not limited to the IDTAC-ER), will not be held responsible for personal injury, property loss/damage or any other incident as a result of participating in the event.

A9. Participants and/or their families who do not wish for their child's name to appear on published registration lists must contact the Feis Committee to make such arrangements. The Feis Committee must honour all requests received within a reasonable time frame prior to the commencement of the feis. It is the responsibility of the person making the request to ensure it has been successfully carried out.

A10. Feis Committees must ensure that all necessary steps to protect identification data of the participants are taken by the registration/tabulation company.

### **COMPETITION MERGERS & SPLITS**

B1. All competitions need five or more participants to warrant achievements to count toward advancement of levels, so competitions may need to be combined to facilitate this process. See DEFINITION OF LEVELS for more information on advancing levels.

B2. Merging of competitions occurs ONLY with the next higher age group and never with a lower age group. A competition with a satisfactory number of entries may not be merged in order to make the next highest age group have enough participants to "count".

B3. Double-age groups cannot be merged with another double-age group; therefore, only two single- age groups may be combined.

B4. It is also not permitted to merge three single-age groups, however, permission from the Regional Director may be requested for the oldest age groups of a particular level.

B5. Splitting of grade-level competitions must occur at 15 entries. Splitting of Preliminary and Open Championship competitions must occur at 25 entries. In all cases, double-age competitions shall be split to single age groups, while single-age group competitions shall be split at random into two groups.

B6. Competitions not reaching the threshold noted above may not be split.

B7. Open Championship Under 9 may NOT be combined with Under 11, unless there is only one entry, in which case it must be combined with Under 11 to provide some competition for the Under 9 dancer.

B8. Entries received after splits/mergers have been approved by the Feis Liaison and published by the Feis Committee shall not require further adjustments (effective Jan 1 2017).

### **ADJUDICATORS/MUSICIANS**

C1. Only persons currently registered with ADCRG certification from An Coimisiún le Rinci Gaelacha can adjudicate dancing competitions. Feis Committees must ensure that adjudicators are current with CLRG mandates related to Vetting and Child Protection Course certification before being contracted.

C2. Adjudicators must declare any potential adjudication conflicts when contracted. It is the shared responsibility of the adjudicator and the Feis Committee to ensure that the adjudicator is assigned only to competitions without adjudication conflicts.

C3. Adjudicators and musicians shall be paid fees at current IDTANA rates, payable in US Dollars or, at the discretion of the Feis Committee, the Canadian Dollar equivalent using the exchange rate of the most recent business day prior to the commencement of the event.

C4. In matters pertaining to adjudication, the decision of the adjudicators is final.

C5. Adjudicators are responsible for ensuring the tempos played by the musician meet the requirements of this syllabus, therefore, Feis Committees are required to provide all engaged adjudications with syllabus requirements such as: the rules, lengths of dances and speed requirements.

C6. Feis Committees are requested to list adjudicators on their syllabus. If adjudicators are not listed on the syllabus, they must be posted on the Feis website/social media a minimum of 30 days prior to registration closing for the Feis. Adjudicators names should not be removed once registration closes.

C7. At least three adjudicators must be utilized for Preliminary and Open Championship competitions to serve as a set panel. Should a feis committee wish to offer an alternate format of judging, such as rotating panels, permission must be granted from the Regional Director. Such requests must be made in writing to the Regional Director a minimum of one (1) month in advance of the anticipated publication date of the syllabus.

C8. Live music played by accomplished feis musicians is required for every competitor.

## DEFINITION OF LEVELS

D1. Beginner Grade: A Beginner is a competitor who has not yet taken a full year of Irish Dance lessons from a registered teacher, thereby giving Beginners a full year with such status. A Beginner **must** move into the Advanced Beginner category the following year. See COSTUME RULES for more information.

D2. Advanced Beginner Grade: An Advanced Beginner dancer has at least one year's experience in Irish dancing, and no longer competes at the Beginner level. At this level, dancers begin to compete hard shoe dances (at traditional speeds), including the Traditional Set Dance called St. Patrick's Day. See ADVANCEMENT OF LEVELS and COSTUME RULES for more information.

D3. Novice Grade: A Novice dancer is someone who has won the necessary medals in Advanced Beginner in some or all of the required dances. It is possible to participate in more than one level, however not for the same dance. At the Novice level, the speed for soft shoe dances is slower than in Advanced Beginner, and there is a choice of speed for hard shoe dances. Additionally, dancers can choose from the list of seven Traditional Set Dances to expand their knowledge. See ADVANCEMENT OF LEVELS and COSTUME RULES for more information.

D4. Prizewinner Grade: A Prizewinner dancer is someone who has won the necessary medals in Novice in some or all of the required dances, meaning it is possible to participate in both levels, however not for the same dance. At this level, the dancer typically focuses on the four main solo dances (reel, slip jig, treble jig and hornpipe) and may start to learn a set dance at contemporary speed in addition to traditional speed set dances. There is no mandate that a dancer **MUST** advance to Preliminary Championship after achieving the required wins. The time to advance is at the discretion of the dancer's teacher. See ADVANCEMENT OF LEVELS and COSTUME RULES for more information.

D5. Preliminary Championship: Dancers who have successfully graduated from the grade levels shall advance to Preliminary Championship. This level may not be skipped over in favour of advancing straight to Open Championship. At this level, dancers choose one soft shoe dance and one hard shoe dance to compete in a single competition before three adjudicators on a larger stage. The length of the dances is longer than in the grade levels. Overall placements are awarded based on combined scores from all adjudicators. See ADVANCEMENT OF LEVELS and COSTUME RULES for more information.

D6. Open Championship: Dancers who have successfully met the advancement requirements for Preliminary Championship shall register for Open Championship. The Open Championship format is similar to that of Preliminary Championship; however, three dances are performed in Open Championship. Dancers who have not placed in Open Championship for a period of two years may return to Preliminary Championship (excluding dancers who have placed first, second or third over any period of

time). Dancers availing of this opportunity will have to win their way back into Open Championship. See **ADVANCEMENT OF LEVELS** and **COSTUME RULES** for more information.

D7. Competitions for Adult dancers are to be offered at 4 levels: Adult Beginner/Advanced Beginner, Adult Novice/Prizewinner, Adult Championship, and Advanced Adult Championship. In each instance, an Adult Dancer must be at least 19 years of age or older. An Adult Beginner/Advanced Beginner must never have competed as a juvenile and may compete in hard shoe dances at traditional speeds only. An Adult Novice/Prizewinner dancer must not have competed as a juvenile during the previous five (5) years and must be offered a choice of speed for hard shoe dances (Treble Jig and Hornpipe), along with the full list of Traditional Set Dances. An Adult Championship dancer must not have competed as a juvenile during the previous five (5) years and must be offered a choice of the full list of Traditional Set Dances. A Contemporary Set Dance competition may not be offered at any level. An Advanced Adult Championship dancer is an adult dancer who has previously placed in the top three of a Preliminary Championship or competed in Open Championship levels in the youth/& over levels regardless of when the competitor was active. Once a dancer begins competing in Advanced Adult, they may not return to youth/& over.

D8. Dancers who are eligible to compete as Adult Beginner/Advanced Beginner, Adult Novice/Prizewinner, or Adult Championship under Rule D7 may choose to compete in the non-Adult 99 age groups for Beginner, Advanced Beginner, Novice, Prizewinner, Preliminary Championships or Open Championships, per the qualifying rules for those levels, but may not return to Adult Beginner/Advanced Beginner, Adult Novice/Prizewinner, or Adult Championship for a period of five (5) years.

### **ADVANCEMENT OF LEVELS**

E1. At least five (5) participants (not entries) are required for advancement to the next higher level.

E2. For Advanced Beginner, a first/second/third will warrant advancement to the Novice level.

E3. For the Novice and Prizewinner levels, only a first-place warrants advancement.

E4. Dancers who win a first place in at least one Prizewinner soft shoe (Reel or Slip Jig) plus one Prizewinner hard shoe (Treble Jig or Hornpipe) will be eligible to advance to Preliminary Championships.

E5. Dancers who win first place in two eligible Preliminary Championship competitions (with five competitors or more) in the same calendar year must advance to Open Championship in the following year. However, if the second win is achieved in a different calendar year, then the dancer must advance to Open Championship at their next competition. If their next competition is to be held on the same weekend as that second win, then they shall not be required to advance levels until the following weekend.

E6. Placing in a regional or national Oireachtas does not affect one's status as feiseanna.

E7. For Adult competitions, advancement to be at teacher's discretion.

### **DANCING RULES**

F1. Any unauthorized visible or audible coaching (by a parent, teacher or anyone else) to a dancer who is competing on stage, may disqualify that dancer from that competition. The Feis Committee is encouraged to provide a knowledgeable volunteer to assist beginners (and other less experienced dancers) with coaching to know when to start dancing. However, once the dancer commences, no more counting/coaching will be permitted.



F2. No block/"en Pointe"/toe-walking movements, stationary or moving, are allowed to be performed for dancers competing up to and including the under 12 age group, in any level. After September 1 of each year an exception is made for those dancers who are 11 years of age and competing in the under 12 age group.

F3. All dancers up to and including U9 in any level may not compete a Set Dance at contemporary speed. Participants in Open Championship shall dance their Traditional Set Dance on stage one-at-a-time, whereas participants in grade-level competitions and in Preliminary Championships shall dance their Traditional Set Dance two (or three)-at-a time, at the discretion of the Feis Committee (and subject to the rules governing stage sizes).

F4. Dancers finishing ahead of the required part of music and/or not completing the required number of steps shall be deemed to have not completed the dance and will be marked accordingly.

F5. Stages for grade level and team competitions must be at least 20' wide x 16' deep, and in order to run competitions three-at-a-time, stages must be at least 24' wide x 20' deep.

F6. Stages for Preliminary and Open Championship competitions must be at least 24' wide x 20' deep, and in order to run competitions three-at-a-time, stages must be at least 32' wide x 24' deep.

F7. Stages may not be either on bare concrete or cement, or with rolled out flooring overtop.

F8. Awards should be a minimum of 40%, based on the number of participants. Feis Committees are encouraged to ensure that situations are avoided where, due to ties or otherwise, one dancer is left out of a result, and that all Beginner level participants receive at least one award.

F9. Teachers or team captains are responsible to ensure that their teams are complete and in position when the competition is announced. Team competitors may compete in the next higher age group but never in a lower age group. A competitor may compete in no more than two different age groups for any one category (4-hand, 8-hand, etc.)

F10. Competitions may be closed at the discretion of the Feis Committee if there are no competitors at the assigned stage ready to compete when the competition is scheduled or announced. Dancers involved in stage conflicts should notify (or send a representative to notify) the stage manager for each stage so an accommodation can be made.

## **COSTUME RULES**

G1. The costume for Beginner and Advanced Beginner level dancers may consist only of a skirt and blouse/leotard (or shirt and trousers for boys) or an official school costume. Solo costumes are not permitted at these levels.

G2. Novice, Prizewinner, Preliminary Championship and Open Championship level dancers are permitted to choose a "solo" costume, subject to the current directives of CLRG, but may also wear a School Costume. Costumes must adhere to modesty and decency in terms of length, fit and fabric.

G3. Shorts or any other unconventional dresses/costumes are strictly prohibited, unless expressly permitted under these rules or the rules of a special category (e.g., charity treble reel).

G4. Where costumes are deemed to be too short, an adjudicator may insist that tights of a denier not less than 70 must be worn by the dancer. The adjudicator shall notify the Stage Manager or Feis Committee representative in a discreet manner, who in turn must handle the situation tactfully.

G5. All dancers aged 14 and older competing in what is commonly referred to as “all-black” or “black-out” attire (irrespective of the actual colour of the outfit) must wear tights of a denier not less than 70.

G6. Makeup (including facial tanner) is not permitted on dancers in Beginner and Advanced Beginner levels, up to and including the under 12 age group.

G7. Makeup (including facial tanner) is prohibited on dancers in Novice, Prizewinner, Preliminary Championships and Open Championships up to and including the under 10 age group.

G8. Dancers using artificial carriage aids will be subject to disqualification from that particular competition. Medically prescribed aids (proof of which may be required) will exempt dancers from this rule.

G9. Dancers must wear an official competitor’s number when performing in all competitions. The use of reflective plastic number covers is discouraged because it can be difficult for adjudicators to see the number in certain lighting conditions.

G10. All dancers (solo and teams) must be in full costume and Irish dance shoes for award presentations.

## **FEIS GUIDELINES**

H1. No one other than the Feis Committee may approach an adjudicator during the competition day, and no one may approach an adjudicator while dancers are performing.

H2. Feiseanna must read the statement “No one other than the Feis Committee may approach an adjudicator during the competition day, and no one may approach an adjudicator while dancers are performing”, once in the morning (recommended after anthems are performed), and once after lunch.

H3. Adjudicators can keep stationary (pens, paper, calculator, etc.) on the table. All other items should be under the table/in a purse while competitions are in progress.

H4. Adjudicators must not use cell phones, smart watches, or other transmitting devices while at the judge’s table.

H5. TCRG who are practicing judging must not practice adjudicating any competitions (meaning individual competitions, not the entire event) where their own dancers are entered.

H6. Only committee members and volunteers are allowed in tabulation.

## **OTHER**

J1. If a rule is not specifically listed in the feis syllabus, the rules of the Eastern Canada Regional Syllabus shall preside.

J2. A competitor may be disqualified for any of the following reasons: a) Conduct unbecoming of a lady or gentleman. b) Failure to report on time to compete. (Penalty: disqualification from said event) c) Falsification of age or other important facts – i.e., teaching, award winning, competing under another competitor’s name or number, etc.

J3. In consideration of safety and in fairness to dancers performing at a Feis, photography of any kind which has the capability of capturing a dancer’s image while in motion is strictly forbidden. A Feis may elect to allow in motion photography for publicity purposes, but the pictures are considered the sole property of the Feis and solely for Feis use only; these are not be used for personal gain through

commercial use or sale, and under no circumstances can they be published on any website or other areas, without the express written permission of the persons involved. Additionally, a professional photographer may be formally contracted by a Feis to capture non-motion photographs, such as portrait photography, awards ceremonies, etc. and/or in motion photography provided it is taken at a vendor station or suitable location: (a) away from the dancing stages and, (b) requested by a consenting parent, guardian, or dancer (over the age of 18).

**END**