



The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association

Standards and Grading Group

(Role description, duties and guidance)

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2 Amendment History

Date	Version	Update Made
4/9/2016	Version 1	Baseline document agreed by the MB
22/03/2020	Version 1.1	Added Table of Contents, Amendment History; Footer and the updates requested at the 11 th Jan MB Meeting (MB working on grades outside of MB meetings and group is now “Standards and Gradings Group”)
22/03/2020	Version 1.1	Tidy up changes to Post of Convenor, election of members January not November
11/05/2020	Version 2.0	Set as Final version as agreed at MB on the 9 th May2020

3 Introduction / Role context.

The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association (RSPBA) Standards & Grading Group is a subcommittee of the Music Board that works on behalf of the Directors to grade all Bands to the most appropriate grade.

Bands will be placed into one of the following Grades:

- For Major Championships only: - Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3A, Grade 3B, Juvenile, Grade 4A, Grade 4B, Novice Juvenile A and Novice Juvenile B.
- At all other competitions: - Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3, Juvenile, Grade 4 and Novice Juvenile.

4 Organisation and Reporting.

The directors assigned to the Music Board have delegated authority to approve Music Board decisions, this includes recommendations by the Standards & Gradings Group to ensure those impacted can be notified at the earliest opportunity, without waiting for a meeting of the full Board of Directors.

The Standards & Gradings Group has a Convenor who is appointed by the Members of the Music Board.

The Convenor chooses the other eight members of his group, at least six members must be fully elected members of the Music Board, two members of the group may be co-opted members, from within the association (such as the Adjudicators Panel or Education Management Group).

The Music Board agree the members of the Standards & Gradings Group annually at their January meeting and ensure they are approved by the Board of Directors.

The Convenor is responsible for maintaining a record of decisions made (and the reason for that decision), as well as maintain a Grading Chart which shall show the result of each Band's performance in each grade of contest (rule 3.27).

Any grading requests received are dealt with as and when they are received, they do not wait several weeks until the next MB meeting. This way, bands get an answer sooner, and can manage their plans accordingly.

- Between September and April, decisions are made Standards and Grading Group in combination with the whole Music Board.
- In the Competition season April to September the grade recommendations are made by the Standards and Grading Group.

Decisions are ratified by the Music Board Directors being responsible to the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee {rule 2.3} in the competition season.

The Convenor will present the grade recommendations at Music Board meetings between September and the April as an appendix to the Minutes.

5 Role Purpose.

To implement the Standing Orders and Rules appropriate to the allocation of a Grade to a band (rules 3.23 to 3.31).

6 The Grading Process.

The Standards & Gradings Group will consider the Grading of a Band in the following circumstances: -

- Assign a grade for a New Registration.
- Assign a Grade for an Overseas Band to compete in a UK Competition.
- Review of grade on Request of the Band.
- Review of grade on Request of the Company during the Season.
- Review of grade on Request of the Company at the End of the Season.

6.1 Assign a grade for a New Registration.

Factors taken into account along with the bands application to be a member of the RSPBA are: -

1. The band member's registration is available and up to date.
2. The minimum player requirements for the requested grade must be met.
3. Higher to lower transfers will be considered as it may help determine the bands grade.

6.2 Assign a Grade for an Overseas Band to compete in a UK Competition.

Factors taken into account along with the bands application to the RSPBA are: -

1. The band member's registration is available and up to date.
2. The minimum player requirements for the requested grade must be met.
3. Higher to lower transfers may be considered as it may help determine the bands grade.
4. Details of the bands grade in their Affiliation.

6.3 Review of grade on Request of the Band.

A member may on behalf of a band request a change of grade (up or down). The request must be provided in writing to the RSPBA headquarters, providing supporting evidence for consideration.

The evidence could be (but is not limited to):-

- Changes in the band registration (updated band registration must be available), in recognition of either an increase or loss of personnel, and previous player experience.
- In the case of Grades 3 and 4 a desire to advance in playing requirements to challenge the band members.

Other factors taken into account will be:-

1. The band members registration is available and up to date.
2. The minimum player requirements for the requested grade must be met.
3. Higher to lower transfers may be considered as it may help determine the bands grade.

Bands applying for downgrading must be prepared to compete in TWO further contests in their existing grade, prior to decisions being given.

6.4 Review of grade on Request of the Company during the Season.

On the recommendation of the Music Board, the Board of Directors shall be empowered to regrade any Band at any time during the contest season if such a course should be deemed necessary (rule 3.27). Consideration under this rule will be triggered when: -

1. A written report is received from the adjudicators on a particular band stating that in their opinion that band is not in the appropriate grade for their ability.
2. Higher to lower transfers have given the band an unfair advantage on other bands in the grade by an influx of players (with a higher playing background).
3. A band has been granted a lower grading by request and starts the season winning contests in the lower grade.
4. A band has submitted an appeal because they have changed their name and believes they should not be in the same grade.
5. An application is received that requires a dormant band to be placed in its former grade

In 4) and 5) the band member's registration must be available and up to date, and the minimum player requirements for the grade must be met

6.5 Review of grade on Request of the Company during the Season.

A member of the Music Board shall maintain a Grading Chart which shall show the result of each Band's performance in each grade of contest. The Board of Directors shall have power to consider such factual information when annual regrading takes place. (rule 3.27) .

A band may have their grade adjusted at the end of the season after a review of all the bands results, but may only be promoted or relegated to a different grade on the grounds that they currently meet the standard of the allocated grade and will be competitive.

There is no automatic right to be promoted or relegated to the grade above or below. A band must still meet the minimum player requirements for the grade.

6.6 Consideration

The members of the Standards & Gradings Group consider the material evidence presented and make their recommendation to the Convenor. Where there is disagreement this is debated and a decision is agreed.

The branch Music Board representative may be consulted to obtain local information which could support the request.

In some cases, the decision may be to visit the band for an assessment of their standard.

The Convenor keeps a record (file) of each request and the input material provided along with a summary of why a particular decision was reached.

The recommendation must remain confidential until ratified by the Music Board directors.

6.7 Notification

The decisions once ratified by the Music Board directors can be notified to the impacted bands. Members of the Music Board can pass on the decision to the respective Band, and the details are published on the RSPBA web site, to give bands advance notice.

The decision detail prepared by the Convenor is included in a letter prepared by RSPBA headquarters to notify the member of the grading decision and how it impacts the band they represent.

7 The Appeals Process.

The provision of rule 3.25 gives a member the right to appeal a grading decision ratified by the Music Board and Board of Directors.

A member may on behalf of a band appeal against a grading decision (up or down).

The request must be provided in writing to the RSPBA headquarters, providing supporting evidence for consideration. The evidence could be (but is not limited to): -

- Changes in the band registration (updated band registration must be available), in recognition of either an increase or loss of personnel, and previous player experience.
- Facts regarding changes to significant elements of the band. For example, Juvenile players becoming Adults. A band becoming weakened because it is a feeder band (supported by the registration). Change of Pipe Major that impacts on the bands capability

Other factors taken into account will be: -

1. The band member's registration is available and up to date.
2. The minimum player requirements for the requested grade must be met.
3. Recent higher to lower transfers may be considered as it may help determine the bands grade.

7.1 Consideration

The members of the Standards & Gradings Group consider the material evidence presented and make their recommendation to the Convenor. Where there is disagreement this is debated and a decision is agreed.

The branch Music Board representative may be consulted to obtain local information which could support the request.

In some cases, the decision may be to visit the band for an assessment of their standard.

The Convenor keeps a record (file) of each request and the input material provided along with a summary of why a particular decision was reached.

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7.2 Notification

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