

The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association – Music Board



The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association Music Board

Reference Information on Competition Format

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2 Amendment History

Date	Version	Update Made
4/9/2019	Draft	Initial Version compiled from previous MB documents
10/02/2020	Version 0.2	Update of Number of Juvenile Drummers.
22/03/2020	Version 1.0	Final Version for Approval and Baseline at 4 th April MB Meeting
30/07/2020	Version 1.1	Update paragraph 4 bullet points 2,3 and 4 be merged to read “Pipe Band snare drum, Bass and Tenor drums – of a single pitch and paragraph 8.1 regarding Novice A playing requirements is to be aligned with paragraph 7.2.
18/09/2020	Version 1.2	Inclusion of comments from MB.
19/10/2020	Version 1.3	Added 18 Band Final Worlds Grade 4 (Para 9.1) and seeding (9.3.1).
27/10/2020	Version 2.0	Version Approved for Circulation and Baseline at the 24 th October MB Meeting
18/10/2022	Version 3.0	Updated with the Format Change for the Grade 1 MSR
14/07/2023	Version 3.1	Update on playing requirements wording (page 7 & 8)

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3 Introduction

This document has been compiled from previously approved documents issued by the Music Board on Competition Format used as a reference, and to expand on information contained within the Articles of Association and Standing Orders and Rules of the Association.

4 Instruments of a Pipe Band

Instruments that comprise a Pipe Band

- The Great Highland Bagpipe – an exception may be made where there is no cultural history of using the Great Highland Bagpipe
- Pipe Band Snare drum, Bass and Tenor drums – of a single pitch

5 Number of Performers

There is no maximum number of performers that can be in a Pipe Band, the minimum number of performers is defined for Major Championships and Minor Competitions: -

5.1 Major Championships

- Grade 1 - 8 Pipers, 3 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer
- Grade 2 - 8 Pipers, 3 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer
- Grade 3A - 8 Pipers, 3 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer
- Grade 3B - 8 Pipers, 3 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer
- Juvenile - 6 Pipers, 2 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer
- Grade 4A - 6 Pipers, 2 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer
- Grade 4 B - 6 Pipers, 2 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer
- Novice Juvenile A - 6 Pipers, 2 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer
- Novice Juvenile B - 6 Pipers, 2 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer

5.2 Minor Competitions

- Grade 1 - 8 Pipers, 3 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer
- Grade 2 - 6 Pipers, 2 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer
- Grade 3 - 6 Pipers, 2 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer
- Juvenile - 6 Pipers, 2 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer

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- Grade 4 - 6 Pipers, 2 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer
- Novice Juvenile - 6 Pipers, 2 Snare Drummers, 1 Bass Drummer

6 Adjudication Number Requirements

6.1 Major Championships

Each Grade/Final, including Qualifier Heats will be allocated a full Adjudication Team of 4.

- 1 x Ensemble Adjudicator
- 2 x Piping Adjudicators
- 1 x Drumming Adjudicator

6.2 Minor Competitions

Adjudicator Numbers for Minor Competitions will be a Team of 2, unless the use of a Full Adjudication Team (as per Major Championships) has been requested and approved by Board of Directors at time of licence application by the promoter.

- 1 x Piping Adjudicator
- 1 x Drumming Adjudicator

Note: Use of a Full Adjudication Team (as per Major Championships) may be granted by Board of Directors at time of licence application – Result procedures for a “Full” Adjudication process will be applied.

7 Prescribed Tunes

The MAP tunes list has been superseded by the “Prescribed Tunes List”, however the objectives of improvement and progression remains the same. This Prescribed Tunes list applies to Grade 4A, Grade 4B, Novice Juvenile A and Novice Juvenile B Pipe Bands.

The Prescribed Tunes List will be available to all by means of the RSPBA Official Website. This list may be updated, reviewed, and added to by the Tunes Group.

The Tunes Group is a sub – group within the Music Board, who have been tasked with this responsibility by the Music Board.

Prescribed Tunes will be played at All Major Championships and as specified on the Entry Forms of Minor Contests.

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7.1 Grade 4B and Novice Juvenile B

will play FOUR x 2 parted 2/4 Marches from the Prescribed Tunes List. There is no time restriction on these performances.

7.2 Grade 4A and Novice Juvenile A

may play TWO x 2 parted 2/4 March, or ONE x 4 parted 2/4 March, as well as either TWO x 2 parted Strathspeys OR ONE x 4 parted Strathspey, and also TWO x 2 parted Reels OR ONE x 4 parted Reel, ALL tunes to be taken from the Prescribed Tunes List. There is no time restriction on these performances.

8 Playing Requirements

The tables below specify the general criteria to be adhered to for each grade. The specific requirements will always be stated on the Competition Entry form.

The Requirements for Championships will be confirmed by the Music Board and ratified by the Board of Directors for the coming Season in November / December. Advice to the Bands will be via the Website and specified on each Championship Entry Form

The Playing requirements at a Minor Competition may be varied by request subject to approval by Board of Directors at time of licence application by the promoter. For example, this may be to run a Grade 4 MSR contest at a Minor Competition.

Where there is no Novice Juvenile competition, a Novice Juvenile Band will play in the Grade 4 contest, similarly where there is no Juvenile Contest, a Juvenile Band will play in Grade 3.

In Grade 2 where a Major Championship for an MSR Final requires a Qualifier, the Qualifier will be an MSR of the Bands Own Choice, with the alternate played in the Final. If there is no Qualifier required, the MSR will be drawn at the line.

In Grade 1 where a Major Championship for an MSR Final requires a Qualifier, the Qualifier will be an MSR of the Bands Own Choice, with the alternate played in the Final. If there is no Qualifier required, the MSR will be drawn at the line.

In Grade 1 where a Major Championship for a Medley Final requires a Qualifier, the Qualifier will be a Medley of the Bands Own Choice, with the alternate played in the Final. If there is no Qualifier required, the Medley will be drawn at the line.

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Bands must comply with the Interpretation of the melodic structure as per the Pipe Band College recommendations. Bands may customise tunes but must retain the Time Signature required

8.1 Major Championship

Grade	Playing Requirement	Selection	Tunes
Novice Juvenile B	FOUR x 2 parted 2/4 Marches	N/A	From Prescribed Tunes List
Grade	Playing Requirement	Selection	Tunes
Novice Juvenile A	MSR comprising: TWO x 2 parted 2/4 March, or ONE x 4 parted 2/4 March, as well as either TWO x 2 parted Strathspeys or ONE x 4 parted Strathspey, and TWO x 2 parted Reels or ONE x 4 parted Reel	N/A	From Prescribed Tunes List
Grade 4B	FOUR x 2 parted 2/4 Marches	N/A	From Prescribed Tunes List
Grade 4A	MSR comprising: TWO x 2 parted 2/4 March, or ONE x 4 parted 2/4 March, as well as either TWO x 2 parted Strathspeys or ONE x 4 parted Strathspey, and TWO x 2 parted Reels or ONE x 4 parted Reel	N/A	From Prescribed Tunes List
Grade 3B	1 X Medley of Tunes 3 Minutes to 5 Minutes OR 1 X MSR Set Minimum of 4 parts in each tune	N/A	Own Choice.
Grade 3A	1 X Medley of Tunes 3 Minutes to 5 Minutes OR 1X MSR Set Minimum of 4 parts in each tune	N/A	Own Choice.
Juvenile	1 X Medley of Tunes 3 Minutes to 5 Minutes OR 1X MSR Set Minimum of 4 parts in each tune	N/A	Own Choice.

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Grade 2	1 X Medley of Tunes 4 Minutes to 6 Minutes OR 2X MSR Set Minimum 4 Parted Tunes	Medley == Own choice MSR – Drawn at Line	Own Choice
Grade 1	2 X Medley of Tunes 5 Minutes to 7 Minutes OR 2X MSR Set Minimum 4 Parted Tunes	Drawn at Line	Own Choice
Grade 1 (worlds)	2 X Medley of Tunes 5 Minutes to 7 Minutes 1X MSR Set Maximum 4 Parted Tunes and 1X MSR Set Minimum 4 Parted Tunes	(> or =18 bands) Day 1 All Bands Qualifier MSR Set as published playing requirements. Medley – Own Choice. Day 2 12 Band Final MSR as published playing requirements. Medley – Alternate to Day 1 (<18 Bands) Day 1 All Bands MSR Set as published playing requirements. Medley – Own Choice. Day 2 All Bands MSR as published playing requirements. Medley:Alternate to Day 1 own choice.	Own Choice

Worlds Grade 1:

Grade 1 bands to submit 1 x MSR of a Maximum 4 Parted tunes (where the tune was written as a 4 parted tune) and 1 x MSR of a Minimum 4 Parted tunes (the current format)".

The 1X MSR Set Maximum 4 Parted tunes should comprise of 1 * 4 Parted March + 1 * 4 Parted Strathspey + 1* 4 Parted Reel where each tune was written as a 4 parted tune.

This change would mean that the MSR would not be drawn on the line but would be one of the MSR's (either Min or Max 4 parts as published playing requirements).

The impact on the 2 MSR performances at the 'Worlds' is as shown in the table above, with one format played on the Friday and the other on the Saturday

At the preceding Majors where the MSR is the set discipline, Bands would be given the option to play one of the two formats e.g. British Max 4x4x4, European Min 4x4x4 rather than have the set drawn in the ring. The Music Board will advise of this when preparing the season Playing requirements for publication.

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At local contests, the format will remain as a minimum of 4 Parted Tunes (to allow Bands to play either format or play up), unless modified by a local rule.

There will be a pre-draw for playing order for the Friday, and a separate pre-draw for the playing order for Saturday.

- 18 bands or more, then entries will be divided into 2 heats, all bands playing an MSR and Medley on the Friday, with 12 qualifying bands playing the alternate MSR and Medley on the Saturday as per published playing requirements.
- Less than 18 Bands: - All bands will play the MSR and Medley on the Friday. All bands will play the alternate MSR and Medley on the Saturday as per published playing requirements.
 - All 4 performances will count towards the final result.
 - The adjudicators critique sheets for all 4 performances will be handed out after the prize giving on Saturday.

8.2 Minor Competitions

Grade	Playing Requirement	Selection	Tunes
Novice Juvenile	1 X Selection of Marches 2 Minutes 30 Seconds to 4 Minutes 30 Seconds in Quick March Rhythm.	N/A	Own Choice.
Grade 4	1 X Selection of Marches 2 Minutes 30 Seconds to 4 Minutes 30 Seconds in Quick March Rhythm.	N/A	Own Choice.
Grade 3	1 X Medley of Tunes 3 Minutes to 5 Minutes OR 1 X MSR Set Minimum of 4 parts in each tune	N/A	Own Choice.
Juvenile	1 X Medley of Tunes 3 Minutes to 5 Minutes OR 1X MSR Set Minimum of 4 parts in each tune	N/A	Own Choice.
Grade 2	1 X Medley of Tunes 4 Minutes to 6 Minutes OR 2X MSR Set Minimum 4 Parted Tunes	Medley -- Own choice MSR -- Own choice	Own Choice

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Grade 1	2 X Medley of Tunes 5 Minutes to 7 Minutes OR 2X MSR Set Minimum 4 Parted Tunes	MSR == Own choice	Own Choice
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9 The Contest

All bands will play in ONE contest within their Grade.

Any changes due to the “Number of Entries” at a Major Championship, such as the qualifying requirement, must have the Approval of the Music Board (prior to the Championship Draw). Consultation with the Music Board is the responsibility of the CEO and Board of Directors.

If the Music Board is not “In Session”, it has approved that the Standards Convenor has the autonomy to decide on the Music Board’s behalf.

Where a Qualifying requirement has been identified, the Final shall be 12 bands – an equal amount from each Qualifying Heat progressing to the Final.

9.1 Qualifier Thresholds (excluding G1 Worlds).

Qualification (Heats) will be considered where the number of entries is above 23.

- 1 to 23 entries – Straight through Final
- 24 to 47 – Two Heats: 6 Bands from each heat go through to a 12 Band Final.
- 48 to 70 – Three Heats: At the Worlds Grade 4 (A and B) there will be 6 Bands from each heat going through to an 18 Band Final. In all other competitions 4 Bands from each heat to go through to a 12 Band Final.

9.2 Draw

The Draw will be made as ONE contest – i.e. 27 entries = draw 1 to 27

The Draw will then be divided into qualifying heats as needed. (Example in 1 above = Heat 1 – Bands 1 to 14 and Heat 2 – Bands 15 to 27).

Adjudicators will rank Bands 1,2,3 etc as per normal adjudication process. Normal process of ranking will be in place – 1 point for 1st, 2 for 2nd etc with the lowest combination of all adjudicators results defining First etc.

We currently have a rule in place (4.68) which is the process for breaking ties in a contest: -

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- 1st Preference - Ensemble combined overall totals
- 2nd Preference - Piping combined overall totals
- 3rd Preference - Drumming combined overall totals
- 4th Preference - Ensemble total in MSR contest
- 5th Preference - Ensemble total in Medley contest
- Worlds G1 (<18 Bands) apply the above 5 preference criteria to the totals from all four performances. If there is still a tie this would be resolved by applying the above preference criteria again based on the two performances on the **Saturday only**.

Information for the 12 Bands who qualify for a Final will be displayed in Draw order and will also define time of play.

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9.3 Seeding of Heats

9.3.1 Grade 2 and 3 (Worlds)

The accumulated position of the top 12 bands in the Major Championships prior to the Worlds, will be used to split the Bands between the Qualifying Heats. Those bands who have not entered the competition will be removed from the list. Even numbers will be allocated to one heat and the odd numbers to the other heat. i.e. if only 10 of the top 12 enter, there would be 5 in each heat.

9.3.2 Grade 1 (Worlds > 18 Bands)

The top 12 bands will be identified by the result of the World Championships in the previous year. Even numbers will be allocated to one heat and the odd numbers to the other heat. Where some of the previous year's top twelve don't enter for the competition, the current year entrants will be ranked and seeded to ensure an even distribution of the previous year's finalists and thereby an even distribution of bands who did not play in the previous year's final. i.e. if only 10 enter, there would be 5 in each heat.

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10 Drum Majors

The Dress Inspection must be completed prior to the Marching element of the Contest.

Bands will be required to play 6/8 Marches, taking their command from the Drum Major Adjudicator.

The competition shall be run with Drum Majors in Heats of up to 4, in an arena that is 64 paces long: -

- Junior Drum Majors shall complete 2.5 lengths
- Juvenile Drum Majors shall complete 2.5 to 4.5 lengths
- Adult Drum Majors, excluding the Worlds, shall complete 4.5 lengths

The World Championships will include 2 semi-final heats of 5 competitors, followed by a Final of 6 competitors. All those in the Final would be competing with the same band, under the same weather conditions.