RAD Exam Results

RAD Ballet exams are the **hardest in their field** and as such are extremely highly respected and very difficult to pass. We are very proud of our students for succeeding in these challenging and demanding exams, however some children expect unachievable results. There is huge pressure to always "be the best", but the RAD's mark-scheme has been created to actually allow for _all_ achievements to be recognized. As such, the RAD examiners are rightly tough which is integral to the respect shown to them and their exams; they don't give "Distinctions for all". Merits and Passes are **wonderful achievements** in themselves and must be celebrated.

What and how do the examiners mark?

The examiners can only mark on what they see; if work is forgotten or not shown, they cannot mark it. If they feel that a candidate can do better (if they tripped or clearly had a mind blank) they may let them have another try **if** they feel it severely affected the candidate, but this is not usual and definitely not guaranteed as the examiners are bound by time constraints. The examiner will then mark the **best** attempt.

The results **ARE** out of 100 but are **NOT** a percentage. They are the **mean-average** of the adjectives the examiner used to describe your exam. The average is **always** rounded up, and if an examiner is undecided between a **good** or a **very good**, they will give the **very good**.

These words have numbers attached to them to form the 'marks' as detailed below.

Mark	Descriptor
0	No work was shown
1	The candidate showed an **extremely limited** ability to achieve the elements assessed
2	The candidate showed a **very limited** ability to achieve the elements assessed
3	The candidate showed a **limited** ability to achieve the elements assessed
4	The candidate showed an **adequate** ability to achieve the elements assessed
5	The candidate showed a **fair** ability to achieve the elements assessed
6	The candidate showed a **fairly good** ability to achieve the elements assessed
7	The candidate showed a **good** ability to achieve the elements assessed
8	The candidate showed a **very good** ability to achieve the elements assessed
9	The candidate showed an **excellent** ability to achieve the elements assessed
10	The candidate showed an **exceptional** ability to achieve the elements assessed

This can be likened to Bake-Off.

If you are a **limited** baker, you can make a packet cake, but it's burned when it comes out of the oven.
If you are a **fairly good** baker, you can make a fresh cream Victoria Sponge from scratch, a Tart and Cookies.
If you are a **very good** baker, you can make Mille-feuille, all types of Meringue and a Rough Puff.
If you are an **exceptional** baker, you own your own bakery in the centre of a big city and have the contract to make the cakes and pastries for all the Royal Family events.

These descriptions are then allocated to the various sections and for Grades 1 - 5 the sections are:
Technique which makes up 6 of 10 parts in the exam and so is the biggest factor
Performance which make up a total of 2 of 10 sections in the exam (1 section in itself, then 2 x half sections for the dances)
Musicality which make up a total of 2 of 10 sections in the exam (1 section in itself, then 2 x half sections for the dances)

To get a Distinction, at minimum, you need your average to be 5 x "good" (7) and 5 x "very good" (8), or enough to add to 75. Not many dancers can honestly say they are "good" and "very good" all of the time ☺

Technique

Term	Definition
Correct posture and weight placement	Secure use of torso (refer to page 8 *The Foundations of Classical Ballet Technique*) The body weight centred over one or two legs or transferring with ease from one to two legs and two to one leg *sur place* or in travelling movements
Co-ordination of the whole body	The harmonious relationship of torso, limbs, head and eye focus in movement
Control	Sustained and balanced movements, achieved through strength and correct use of turnout (as appropriate to the genre)
Line	The ability to demonstrate a range of harmonious lines through the whole body
Spatial awareness	Effective use of peripheral space and performance space, also the ability to move through space
Dynamic values	The ability to perform the range of movement dynamics appropriate to each step

Example candidate:
Correct posture & Weight Placement - Good (7)
Co-ordination of the whole body - Fairly Good (6)
Control - Fairly Good (6)
Line - Good (7)
Spatial Awareness - Excellent (9)
Dynamic Values - Very Good (8)
43/6 = **7** (rounded)

Performance

Term	Definition
Expression	Expression reflected in face, body and dynamics of the movement
Projection	The ability to project expression, feelings and emotions to an audience
Interpretation	Dancing with understanding and intelligent response to what one is dancing about, i.e. the motivation for the movement
Communication	Appropriate engagement with the audience and partners

Example candidate:
Expression - 3 (Limited Ability)
Projection - 8 (Very Good)
Interpretation - 3 (Limited Ability)
Communication - 7 (Good)
21/4 = **5** (rounded)

Term	Definition
Timing	The steps performed in time with the music, i.e. on the correct beat
Responsiveness to music	The ability to respond to phrasing (musical punctuation), dynamics (volume and musical highlights), atmosphere (the style and mood of the music) and the varying accents and 'shape' of different time signatures and dance rhythms

Example candidate:
Timing (what the RAD syllabus asks for) - 9 (excellent)
Rhythm - 6 (fairly good)
15/2 = **8** (rounded)
Atmosphere - 3 (limited ability)
Phrasing - 4 (adequate)
Dyniamics - 5 (fair)
12/3 = **4**

These are then merged to get the mean Musicality mark: (8 + 4)/ 2 = **6**

Each Grade has a different mark-scheme (depending on content) but we will use a Grade 1-3 one for our illustration. *Section 8 should have Music & Performance descriptors; it's an error on the RAD website.*

Examination content		Component marks
EXERCISES		
1. Technique 1		7
• Correct posture and weight placement 7	• Line 7	10
• Co-ordination 6	• Spatial awareness 7	
• Control 7	• Dynamic values 6	
2. Technique 2		7
• Correct posture and weight placement 7	• Line 6	10
• Co-ordination 6	• Spatial awareness 9	
• Control 5	• Dynamic values 6	
3. Technique 3		7
• Correct posture and weight placement 8	• Line 5	10
• Co-ordination 6	• Spatial awareness 8	
• Control 6	• Dynamic values 8	
4. Technique 4		6
• Correct posture and weight placement 5	• Line 7	10
• Co-ordination 5	• Spatial awareness 9	
• Control 5	• Dynamic values 7	
5. Music		8
• Timing 9	• Responsiveness to music 7	10
6. Performance		7
• Expression 5	• Interpretation 3	10
• Communication 9	• Projection 9	
DANCES		
7. Dance A or B: Technique		7
• Correct posture and weight placement 6	• Line 7	10
• Co-ordination 6	• Spatial awareness 10	
• Control 5	• Dynamic values 8	
8. Dance A or B: Music and performance		7
• Correct posture and weight placement 5	• Line 7	10
• Co-ordination 6	• Spatial awareness 7	
• Control 7	• Dynamic values 9	
9. Character dance C or D and Révérence: Technique		7
• Correct posture and weight placement 9	• Line 7	10
• Co-ordination 6	• Spatial awareness 6	
• Control 6	• Dynamic values 5	
10. Character dance C or D and Révérence: Music and performance		7
• Timing 8	• Communication 9	10
• Responsiveness to music 4	• Interpretation 5	
• Expression 5	• Projection 9	
TOTAL		70 100

You can see that this example candidate did actually score a total of nine "excellent" and one "exceptional" but the average was then brought down by the other factors. Equally, a "very limited" was brought up by the other results in that section. The total of **70**, is a very respectable mark; the words used to describe this candidate average out as a "good" attempt.

Final Thoughts

Very few people are **exceptional** but quite a few people are **fairly good**. Of course, you can practice (which is excellent!), and this can get you to be **good** or even **very good**, but others can practice and practice but might not have the natural ability to be **excellent** or **exceptional**. It's not always about the ultimate achievement on one day; the journey is so important too! I appreciate this might feel frustrating but we have to be realistic; *not every applicant can win bake off and not every child can get **excellent** or **exceptional** marks.*
This is the case in **all** fields of study.
RAD examinations are unique in that they do allow those who are exceptionally talented to be recognized, but to achieve "good" in the tough world of RAD, is fantastic.