



Australian  
Calisthenic  
Federation

## **Calisthenic Skills Programme**

### **General Information and Rules and Regulations for Coaches and Candidates**

*(for all States / Territories except Victoria)*

*(as at January 2009)*



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***This is a National Examination programme administered by each State / Territory committee.***

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***A National Examiners' Advisory Board is responsible for setting and changing guidelines.***

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***Successful participants receive a certificate and a cloth badge for each Test and Grade and a medal and a certificate for each Medal. The Honours Bar is the most prestigious award.***

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***The Test and Grade examinations are based on a written syllabus and music audio which emphasise technical detail, presentation and knowledge of terminology. In the Medals section choreography and performance are also considered. All candidates need their own copy of the syllabus and music audio and must be given the opportunity to view the relevant video/DVD as a guide.***

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***Any registered pupil whose coach is a Level One or Level Two coach registered with their State / Territory Coaches' Association is eligible to enter.***

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**Australian Government**  
**Australian Sports Commission**

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## **1) 1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The examination system was first introduced in 1979 to raise the standard of calisthenics and to unify terminology and technique throughout Australia.

The system consists of three divisions – TESTS, GRADES and MEDALS. Within these divisions there is a logical progression through the various elements which make up the foundation of calisthenics.

### **A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE DIVISIONS**

#### **TESTS 1, 2 & 3**

The three Tests are designed to introduce younger students to the procedure of examinations, to emphasise the importance of developing correct technique and to encourage confidence. No impromptu combinations of movements will be requested by the examiner.

#### **GRADES 1, 2, 3 & 4**

By progressing steadily through the Grades the student builds a comprehensive vocabulary of terminology and a firm understanding of the requirements of basic calisthenics. It also allows the student to develop at their own pace and within their capabilities. Throughout the Grades, combinations of movements are introduced to reinforce the terminology learnt. Exercises have been choreographed to develop co-ordination, artistry and musicality. The examiner can request unrehearsed combinations in Grades 2, 3 and 4.

#### **PREPARATORY GRADE 3**

This Grade was introduced as a 'stepping stone' to the higher levels. Depending on the background of their previous learning, a student may find benefit working with this level together with Grade 3 in preparation for the higher levels. In the dance section there is an introduction to jazz technique whereas in Grade 3 the dance is of classical style.

#### **STANDARD GRADES 1, 2, 3 & 4**

Standard Grades 1 & 2 are not on the video/DVD, however they are based on Grades 1 & 2 and the music is the same as Grades 1 & 2.

Please ensure you use the correct written syllabus for Standard Grades 1 & 2.

*Standard Grades do not qualify for solo entry or Level 1 requirements.*

The recent introduction of Standard Grades caters for students who are not focusing on the elements of classical dance as part of their team curriculum. The syllabus also makes allowances for those who are slightly restricted in natural flexibility by offering optional versions of several movements. The aesthetic section has a smaller progression in difficulty from the lower Grades, and the dance section in Standards 3 and 4 begins with jazz exercises, moving on to basic steps for a jazz routine. No impromptu combinations of movements will be requested by the examiner.

## **1) 1.1 INTRODUCTION *cont'd***

### **MEDALS**

- ◆ Candidates must achieve Grade 4 before commencing Medals.
- ◆ Minimum ages apply for Grade 4 and Medals.
- ◆ The Medals have been created with the more mature student in mind and, whilst they draw on the technique established in the Grades, they are designed to develop performing skills, quality of movement, musicality and a sense of floor pattern and space. Advanced movements in all facets of calisthenics must be mastered to a high standard, with a separate mark being allocated for each movement, which must reach the required standard to pass the overall examination.
- ◆ Self-choreographed routines introduce the student to the art of choreography and, working with the coach, the student can explore creativity in designing routines to enhance their own capabilities.
- ◆ Candidates in the GOLD MEDAL examination who achieve a pass of 90% or higher may strive for the ultimate distinction of GOLD MEDAL HONOURS, which is for elite performers only. To qualify to present for GOLD MEDAL HONOURS a candidate must achieve 90% or higher in the combined Parts 1 and 2. A candidate will not receive Honours for Gold Medal unless they successfully complete the Stage Performance (Part 3) which consists of three routines performed before an audience and the examiner, and achieves a combined Parts 1, 2 and 3 total of 90% or more.
- ◆ Presentation for Gold Medal Honours must be within the same calendar year as the technical examination Parts 1 and 2.
- ◆ Medal candidates cannot resit for 12 months, as time is needed to improve the technical recommendations on the assessment sheet.

## **1.2 THE COACH'S ROLE**

The examination system provides a full calisthenics syllabus which focuses on specific levels of achievement and provides satisfaction to the students and belief in themselves when they succeed. It is very important that students are well prepared for their examination. If they are entered before they are ready their confidence can be adversely affected.

Students must be allowed to progress at their own pace and not necessarily to conform to their age group. They must feel confident in their own ability to master each level and their individual development must be of prime consideration.

Under normal circumstances an unsuccessful candidate is a reflection of inadequate preparation, poor judgement by the coach in the level attempted or poor coaching.

Many coaches incorrectly assume that if the student learns the terminology and the set routines of the syllabus, then a pass will be awarded. This is not so. A candidate must present for every examination with good deportment, footwork, musicality and presentation. Correct technique in all movements is expected at each level.

Turnout and development exercises are included in the syllabus and coaches are encouraged to use them in class, as well as movements and terminology from the syllabus, so they become familiar to the participants.

An examination is just that – an examination. If passes were awarded to poorly prepared candidates, then a candidate who had been prepared to a high standard would gain no pride in her achievement or satisfaction for the hours of preparation and practice time.

The Examiners' Advisory Board encourages coaches to spend time with pupils after examinations to read and discuss the assessment sheet together. Always look for positives. Carefully look at the placement of ticks in the boxes on the assessment sheet to learn where a candidate's strengths and weaknesses are. Aim to work on the areas of weakness before progressing to the next level.

In order to highlight the achievements of candidates it is suggested that they are presented with certificates and badges at a suitably important event such as presentation day or concert. Medals are presented at the State Championships where a candidate is competing.

Assessment Sheets, Certificates, Cloth Badges and Medals are the sole property of the candidate. Coaches must in no circumstances withhold them; they must be forwarded to the candidate immediately.

Be aware that the time spent in training an individual student for examinations will be rewarded by the significant improvement in teamwork.

***It is the coach's responsibility to acquire the current syllabus, official music CD and video/DVD.*** It is the aim of all those associated with the examination system to develop a high standard and it is expected that coaches prepare candidates as thoroughly as possible with the aim of executing their work to the best of their ability.

Assistance is available to any coach, particularly those wishing to show improvement on past results or those intending to enter candidates for the first time. The *VIDEO/DVD* of the syllabus (except for Standards 1 & 2) is available as a *reference only* and must not be used as a substitute for training by a qualified coach.

***Every coach who enters candidates for examinations must have a thorough knowledge of calisthenic technique and know the requirements of each syllabus.***

**IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COACH OR COACHES SIGNING THE ENTRY FORM TO READ AND ENFORCE THE REGULATIONS.**

## **1.3 THE EXAMINATION**

### **GENERAL DISCIPLINES AND PROTOCOL**

#### ***Deportment***

The importance of correct posture cannot be over-emphasised. Whatever the age or capability, the student must be made constantly aware of posture and how it affects the technique and style of every movement performed. Posture influences turnout, flexibility, extension and style.

#### ***Classical Technique***

Classical ballet positions and steps are used throughout all calisthenic items. As only the basic positions are used in our syllabi, a reasonable degree of competence is expected. If coaches exercise care and persistence throughout, a solid foundation for the technique of all movements will result.

#### ***Turnout and Technical Development Exercises***

These exercises have been included in Grades 1, 2, 3 & 4 and are designed to create an awareness of turnout as well as body, arm and head lines. These exercises address incorrect alignment of hips, knees and feet as highlighted in the research report by Jean Leaf (Physiotherapist). Turnout from the hips must be emphasised, and not just of the knees and feet. When teaching the movements used in the syllabus, care must be taken to maintain correct deportment and equal turnout of both legs.

It should be noted that it is at the examiner's discretion whether or not to request the presentation of the *Turnout Exercise* in Grades 1-3. However, in Grade 4 the *Turnout Exercise* will be requested by the examiner and marked separately.

#### ***Aesthetic and Dance Sections***

As well as executing all movements with correct technique, the candidate is expected to perform the set exercises with artistry, showing body and facial expression appropriate to the movements and music.

Also note that boys are to replace the curtsy with a bow.

#### ***Musicality***

In all aspects of calisthenics the music is extremely important to both the performer and the choreographer. It strongly influences the strength and style of every movement as well as rhythm. It is therefore considered a very important part of the examination and it is essential that the coach devotes the necessary time to develop an appreciation and understanding of the music in each section.

Another important part of the examination is the musical appreciation section. Again, it is essential for coaches to devote the necessary time to develop a thorough knowledge and recognition of the set time signatures for march / waltz / polka as required at each level.

## **1.3 THE EXAMINATION *cont'd***

### ***Presentation and Style***

- Marks will be forfeited if the hair is untidy, if there are holes in leotards or tights, or if underwear is showing. Garments should be well fitted.
- Candidates with short hair must make every effort to conform with the appearance required.
- If a candidate displays poor manners or attitude, chews gum, converses with or copies the sharing candidate this behavior will be taken into consideration in the overall presentation.
- Senior candidates are permitted to wear light makeup.
- Style – overall manner in which the candidates presents herself/himself. Aim to display elegance, grace and artistry.

### ***Examination Uniform***

#### ***GIRLS***

- Black leotard – long or no sleeves. No halter or plunging neckline front or back.
- Black or flesh lightweight tights only (footless or stirrups allowed only, no bulky woollen tights), or no tights.
- Black crossover top optional – but must be long sleeved and well fitted.
- Hairstyle - No fringe, hair in a bun – position optional. Black headband optional.
- Rod and clubs – tape and colour optional.
- No jewellery (*other than medical alert bracelet or necklet*). Body piercing must not be visible - remove or cover.
- No nail polish on fingers or toes.

#### ***BOYS***

- Black bicycle shorts with plain black or white singlet.
- Hairstyle – Neat and tidy and if long must be tied back.
- Rod and clubs – tape and colour optional.
- No jewellery. Body piercing must not be visible –remove or cover.

## **1.3 THE EXAMINATION *cont'd***

### ***The Day of the Examination and Conduct***

- Candidates must arrive at the examination venue no later than 30 minutes prior to their given time. This will allow for checking in and warming up.
- If you are entered for Tests 1 or 2 you may share your examination with three other candidates. If you are entered for Test 3 or higher you may share with one other candidate.
- On arrival, check in with the supervisor who will confirm your name and number and give you a coloured belt to wear around your waist.
- The supervisor will tell you the name of your examiner.
- Warm up in the waiting area.
- Consider whether you need to visit the toilet.
- Be ready to enter the examination room at your scheduled examination time with your rod, clubs and the assessment sheet which the supervisor will give you.
- When the examiner is ready for you she will ring her bell and the supervisor will show you the way into the examination room.
- Say “Good Morning” or “Good Afternoon” and use the examiner’s name if you can remember.
- Place your rod and clubs on the floor near the wall and stand in the centre of the room ready for the examiner to tell you what she would like to see first.
- The examiner may ask you to perform your work by yourself or along with the other candidate/s.
- Do not speak to the other candidates during the examination.
- If you do not understand, or cannot hear the examiner, politely ask her to repeat her instruction.
- If you feel extremely unwell, or cannot wait until after the examination to visit the toilet, don’t be afraid to tell the examiner.
- At the end of the examination pick up your rod and clubs, curtsy to the examiner and say “Thank you” before leaving the room.

### ***Marking / Results***

- Candidates will receive an assessment sheet containing ticked boxes showing competency in various elements and brief comments on each section, with a final comment and result classification.
- Participants in Grade 1, 2, 3 & 4 must gain 60% in each section to receive a certificate and cloth badge.
- Participants in Tests 1, 2 and 3 must received a Pass (or higher), and Standard Grades 1, 2, 3 and 4, require a 60% overall pass rate to be awarded their certificate (and cloth badge where applicable).
- Medal participants must gain 60% for each individual mark to earn a medal and certificate.
- Examination results will be forwarded to State / Territory administrators no later than 2 weeks after the end of the examination period.
- The examiner’s decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

### ***Assessment Sheets, Certificates, Cloth Badges and Medals***

Assessment Sheets, Certificates, Cloth Badges and Medals are the sole property of the candidate. Coaches must in no circumstances withhold them; they must be forwarded to the candidate immediately.

## **1.4 GENERAL NOTES ON THE PROGRAMME**

- A suitably qualified interstate examiner or (in consultation with ACF Director of Skills) a suitably qualified member of the EAB or EAB approved examiner can examine Grade 4 candidates in their own State / Territory.
- A suitably qualified interstate examiner will examine all Medals.

## **2.1 REGULATIONS and ENTRY FORMS**

### **2.1.1 General**

1. It is the responsibility of the coach/coaches signing the entry form to read and enforce the Regulations.
2. The coach/coaches signing the entry form take(s) responsibility for ensuring that candidates are prepared as well as possible using the up to date syllabus.
3. Although it is not compulsory, it is highly recommended that candidates complete all Grades including Preparatory Grade 3.
4. Candidates cannot progress to a higher Test or Grade if they have been Unable to Qualify at an examination; they must re-present that Test/Grade examination.
5. Grade 4 must be passed before attempting Medals.
6. Any examination may be videoed by the EAB. This video is strictly for examiner training purposes only and not for general distribution.

### **2.1.2 Entry**

1. Entry forms must be completed clearly, accurately and in order from Test 1 through to Grade 4 and Medals (please print). Copy more forms if required.
2. Entry forms without payment, or arriving after the closing date, will not be accepted and therefore will be returned.
3. Clear, correct spelling of candidates' names is essential. This ensures that names appear accurately on certificates.
4. Birth dates and ages are needed to timetable candidates fairly.
5. Entry forms to be signed by the Calisthenic Skills coach.
6. A Club co-ordinator cannot sign on behalf of an accredited coach.
7. An email contact address must be supplied, and a stamped self-addressed business (DL) envelope (for return of timetable) must accompany Entry forms.
8. A \$25.00 fee will be incurred for late changes.
9. All correspondence / results will be sent to the Calisthenic Skills coach unless otherwise requested.

### **2.1.3 Examination**

1. Candidates must have knowledge of all movements from previous syllabi.
2. Candidates must present in Examination Uniform (as per page 7 of this document).
3. A Medical Certificate is not to be presented to the examiner on the day.
4. Candidates with injury/illness will not be examined.
5. Candidates entering the examination with known injuries and medical conditions do so at their own risk.
6. Withdrawn candidates are not to be replaced with another.
7. Refunds not available for withdrawals or non-appearance at the examination venue.
8. Deferral of examination (in advance of examination date) only possible for medical reasons, and a Medical Certificate has to be presented. 50% of the fee will be deferred; so candidates will incur 50% of fee to re-present at later date (preferably within 12 months).
9. Convenor to be notified ahead of the examination if a Special Needs candidate is presenting – preferably when entry forms are submitted. (This is not to be confused with injury/illness.)

## **2.2 RECOMMENDED AGES FOR EXAMINATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SOLO ENTRY**

*All ages as of 31<sup>st</sup> December.*

<b>Examination</b>	<b>Recommended Age</b>	<b>Solo/Graceful Requirement</b>
Test 1	7 years	8 years
Test 2	7-8 years	9 years
Test 3	9-10 years	10 years
Grade 1	10-12 years	11 & 12 years
Grade 2	12-14 years	13 & 14 years
Standard Grade 1	10-12 years	Not applicable
Standard Grade 2	12-14 years	Not applicable
Standard Grade 3	13-15 years	Not applicable
Standard Grade 4	15 years	Not applicable
Prep Grade 3	13-15 years	15 years
Grade 3	13-16 years	16 years
Grade 4	Min 15 years	17 years
Bronze Medal	Min 16 years - Must have Grade 4	
Silver Medal	Min 17 years - Must have Grade 4	
Gold Medal	Min 18 years - Must have Grade 4	
Gold Medal Honours	Min 18 years - Must have Grade 4 and attain 90% or higher in Gold Medal Parts 1 and 2	

