

# British Academy of Fencing

## DIPLOMA EXAMINATION

The practical (sword in hand) section of the examination consists of the **Individual Lesson**.

### **Individual Lesson**

- The Individual Lesson comprises of four sections: routine lesson, compulsory elements and two special lesson.
- Should the candidate not achieve at least a Pass in any of the **bold underlined** areas, he/she will fail the Individual Lesson completely.
- To pass the Individual Lesson the candidate must achieve at least a Pass mark in each of the four sections mentioned above.

### **Grading**

Examiners will mark each aspect on the marking sheet with a grade ranging from A to E. These grades are explained as follows:

**A – Excellent (Pass)**

The candidate showed a superior understanding of the topics and an exceptionally high level of ability

**B – Good (Pass)**

The candidate showed a good understanding of the topics and a good level of ability

**C – Average (Pass)**

The candidate showed an adequate understanding of the topics and an adequate level of ability

**D – Below Average (Fail)**

The candidate showed an inadequate understanding of the topics and an inadequate level of ability

**E – Poor (Fail)**

The candidate failed to convey an understanding of the topics and had a poor level of ability

### **Notes:**

In order to pass the Diploma Examination at any particular weapon, the candidate must pass all four sections of the Individual Lesson

Candidates may not be credited with part passes for any of these sections of the individual lesson.

Candidates who pass the diploma practical examination in one or more weapons may use the title “Maître d’Escrime”.

To become a “Master of the Academy” and to use the title “Professor of the British Academy of Fencing” candidates must have achieved passes in all three weapons and also have passed the Diploma Written Paper.

## MARKING SHEET EXPLANATION – INDIVIDUAL LESSON

### General Points

The individual lesson at Diploma level is predominantly a coaching lesson although certain aspects (e.g. application of the stroke) may need to be taught.

- Unless the question dictates otherwise, therefore, candidates should assume that the pupil is familiar with the action and can perform it to an acceptable level. The candidate should seek to improve the ability of the pupil to perform the action, wherever possible putting it into a competitive setting.

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### Mark Sheet Indicators

#### Communication – manner and voice (All parts of the lesson)

- The candidate must be understood both by the pupil and by the examiners.
- The candidate should gain and maintain the attention of the pupil
- Use of voice to encourage and generate enthusiasm for the action
- Candidate should avoid giving extensive quantities of information at any one time. A “drip-feed” method is more educationally sound.
- Where appropriate, praise should be given. Such praise should not be automatic, but should be meaningful.

#### Control of Pupil (All parts of the lesson)

- The candidate must be in control of and clearly directing the lesson.
- The candidate should instruct the pupil on what to do and not vice versa.
- The candidate should dictate the manner in which and the conditions under which the stroke is to be executed.
- The candidate should initially control and initiate actions but, ideally, progress towards the pupil being given the freedom to initiate actions.
- Where appropriate, praise should be given. Such praise should not be automatic, but should be meaningful.

#### Logical development, structure and content (Routine and Special Lessons)

- The candidate should show that he/she has a repertoire of strokes that can be given to the pupil.
- The lesson should proceed in a logical, structured manner.
- The candidate should have in mind an end point for the lesson and be moving towards it.

#### Physical Balance (Routine and Special Lessons)

- The degree of strenuous physical activity required of the pupil should be interspersed with periods of active rest

#### Mobility (variety & validity) (Routine and Special Lessons)

- The candidate must be able to move the pupil up and down the piste, requiring footwork which is relative to the stroke
- All footwork must be meaningful and not performed just for the sake of it.
- Variation of size, speed and direction of footwork is expected.

## **Interpretation of the topic** (Compulsory Elements and Special Lesson)

- The candidate must answer the question asked.
- He/she must put the stroke(s) in the correct setting, with the required emphasis.

## **Explanation – theoretical/tactical** (Special Lesson only)

- The ‘How? When? Where? Why?’ aspects of the stroke, relative to its application, should be explained by the candidate.
- The stroke(s) may be slowed down, with the action paused to highlight and explain key points.
- The candidate should explain the theoretical/tactical execution of the movement(s), isolating and stressing the key points.
- The candidate should set the conditions under which and the manner in which the actions are to be executed.
- The candidate should refer to distance, timing, tactics and rules/conventions where appropriate.

## **Validity and Variety of examples** (Special Lessons only)

Variety relates to:

- The different parts of a fencing phrase where the stroke(s) may be executed.
- A range of examples, which fulfil the requirements of the question to demonstrate his/her depth of knowledge.

Validity relates to:

- Answering the question
- The conditions set by the candidate
- Tactical and competitive use of the stroke(s)

## **Value of the Lesson relative to the Pupil's ability** (Special Lessons only)

- The candidate should take into account the pupil's ability and adjust the lesson accordingly.
- The candidate should be able to impart relevant knowledge to the pupil.
- The candidate should endeavour to improve the pupil's technique, distance, timing and his/her ability to execute the stroke.

## **Blade Presentation** (All parts of the Lesson)

- At all times and in particular when there are changes in timing, rhythm and distance, the candidate's blade presentation should be meaningful and realistic. For example, when requiring the pupil to form a parry:
  - The depth of the point (or blade) must be sufficient to justify the desired response from the pupil.
  - The point (or blade) should be threatening the valid target appropriate to the weapon being taught.
- Blade actions from the candidate should be positive and controlled, particularly when working in absence of blade, e.g. when giving openings for offensive actions, the blade should normally move to a recognised position.

## **Footwork** (candidate) (All parts of the lesson)

- The candidate should have smooth, balanced footwork and be able to move efficiently up and down the piste relative to the ability of the pupil and the stroke(s) being taught/coached.

## **Distance Control** (All parts of the lesson)

- The candidate should, initially, set and control the distance but, ideally, progress towards giving the pupil the freedom to manipulate and control the distance.
- He/she must be able to recognise distance faults and correct the pupil accordingly
- The candidate should, when necessary, parry the pupils action or even hit the pupil when the distance is incorrect.

### **Coaching ability** (Special Lesson only)

- The candidate is required to show the ability to formulate practises which would lead to improved performance
- The candidate is expected use the correct terminology.
- The candidate should be able to impart relevant knowledge to the pupil.

In short the candidate must demonstrate his/her ability to:

- coach
- recognise faults and take the appropriate remedial action
- put the pupil (and the action) under pressure and/or more competitive conditions.

### **Timing – changes and variety** (Special Lesson only)

- The candidate should have the ability to require changes of rhythm and timing in the execution of fencing actions.

### **Use of Both Hands** (Compulsories and Special Lessons)

If the candidate wishes, he/she may change hands.

- It is not expected that the same speed will be shown as for the normal sword hand, but blade presentation should be correct
- Examples should be appropriate to the configuration that results.

### **Appreciation of the character of the weapon** (All parts of the Lesson)

- The teaching/coaching of the stroke(s) must be appropriate to:
  - the weapon
  - its conventions/rules
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## **Overall Comments**

Examiners are not obliged to make comments but, where there is agreement between members of the board, constructive comments may be entered by the Chairman in the spaces provided on the mark sheet.