

AUSTRALIAN PIPE BAND COLLEGE

RESOURCE PACK
for
TEACHING DIPLOMA



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THE TEACHING DIPLOMA

General

The Teaching Diploma is the formal teaching qualification of the Australian Pipe Band College. It is aimed at those musicians who are qualified in music at either Intermediate or Advanced level and who wish to develop skills and knowledge in basic teaching methodologies.

The College understands that there is “*a little bit of teacher*” in all of us, and that there are many excellent teachers of piping and drumming within our movement who do not possess any formal qualifications in education. However, most instructors within pipe bands would benefit from a foundation knowledge of the basic teaching methodologies, and this qualification recognises such an attainment.

Members of the Services (police, fire, armed forces, etc) who have undertaken courses in basic methods of instruction are encouraged to apply for recognition of prior learning (RPL) in some or all components of this qualification.

A Suggested Method of Approach

Assuming you have little or no experience in teaching others, there are a few things that you can do to ensure success with attempting this qualification.

Firstly, all candidates for this examination should obtain a copy of the recommended text book:

- Kroehnert, Gary, “**Basic Training for Trainers**”, 3rd edition, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Sydney, 2001. ISBN: 0 074 70913 5. The approximate price of this text is Aust. \$40

The syllabus and the examinations are set in the context of the terminology used in this book and so you will be disadvantaged without it. While the 3rd edition has been recommended, the first two editions contain much of the same information and can be used. The book may be available through your community library or your band may wish to purchase one to use as a teaching resource.

Secondly, you should seek a mentor who can guide you in some of the aspects of your preparation, especially in relation to the actual teaching components. This may be a person in your band who is a school teacher or TAFE lecturer, or in some way has been involved in community education.

Finally, don't be afraid to practise your instructional skills with learners; this is how improvement will take place. Have the courage to ask your mentor or another trusted person to observe your instructional technique and provide some constructive feedback.

Components of the Teaching Diploma Syllabus

Copyright regulations prevent any substantial duplication of the contents of the recommended textbook in these notes. However, some guidance and clarification is provided in the following section that will be a useful supplement to the textbook.

Caution: the following information is not sufficient *by itself* to prepare you for the exams.

Principles of Adult Learning (“RAMP 2 FAME”)

The nine principles of learning are captured in the phrase “RAMP 2 FAME”, where the characters refer to:

- **Recency**: *the principle that recently learned things are most readily recalled.*
- **Appropriateness**: *all element of the training process must be relevant.*
- **Motivation**: *the internal drive causing a learner to participate in the process.*
- **Primacy**: *you will have best engagement of learners at the start of the teaching session, so learning tends to be more thorough. ‘Primacy’ is about the first impressions and perhaps the first 5-10 minutes. This does not contradict ‘Recency’, which is about the last thing covered being freshest in their minds; the reason why a Summary is important.*
- **2-Way Communication**: *good teaching is a two-way process. Approach your teaching with “interaction” in mind, not just delivering your information.*
- **Feedback**: *This is linked to 2-way Communication (above) but goes further. As the teacher, your feedback to the learner needs to fair, supportive, and balanced (i.e. positive and negative) at all stages of the session.*
- **Active Learning**: *involve the learners in activities throughout the session.*
- **Multi-sense Learning**: *most commonly, Hear, See and Touch should be used. Taste and Smell are somewhat more difficult to use with music.*
- **Exercise**: *This concept is not new to most musicians, but now has to be extended to all facets of the learning process (even writing music).*

For your video recorded theory and practical sessions, you will be expected to incorporate the above into the presentations.

Location of Training

Often, we are constrained about many aspects of location e.g. all of your teaching may take place in a noisy band hall with lots of distractions. However, to maximise your effectiveness as a teacher you should also consider things such as:

- Seating
- Lighting
- Background noise and other distractions
- Access
- General facilities (tea, coffee, toilets, phone, etc)
- Acoustics
- Air conditioning and temperature
- Power availability
- Availability of Training Aids
- Storage areas
- PA system

For your video recorded theory and practical sessions, you will be expected to take *location* matters into account for your presentations.

Objectives

Many people will use the word “objective” in everyday language, but in teaching it has a specific meaning. In fact, people will often confuse the words ‘Aim’ and ‘Objective’ and use the words interchangeably. In education, they have different meanings. An ‘Aim’ refers to the general intent of a session, whereas the ‘Objective’ is a detailed statement of what a learner should be able to do by the end of the session. The Aim is forward-looking (what you intend to do) and the Objective is outcome-focussed (what the learner should be able to do by the end of the session). Your text book has an example, but another follows:

AIM: To teach the learner about basic music notation as required for pipe bands.

OBJECTIVE: By the end of this session, the learner will be able to correctly list the first six music notes, their names and values, without reference to their textbook.

For your video recorded theory and practical sessions, you will be expected to write objectives for your session plans.

Demonstrating a Skill

This is the bread-and-butter for pipe band instructors as we are primarily aiming to teach students how to play pipes and drums correctly. The fact that our movement has continued to prosper for many years indicates that we are generally quite good with demonstrating skills.

Your textbook has a “Skill Sheet” which is basically a type of *Session Plan* for a practical session. You will be required to develop either a Session Plan or a Skill Sheet for the two lessons that will be video recorded for the exams.

It may seem to you that the Session Plans and Skills Sheets are “over the top”, but for an instructor starting out, they force you to plan the delivery of your lesson in the most effective way possible.

One of your video recorded sessions for the exam will be for a practical session.

Session Plans

The Session Plan is the personally-developed plan of the teacher which maps out the practical or theory session that is to be taught. As mentioned above in ‘Demonstrating a Skill’, the Session Plan can be used for all types of sessions. It keeps the teacher on track, ensuring that the objectives are met in the time allowed for the session.

The examples given in your textbook indicate the information that is required in a session plan.

For your video recorded theory and practical sessions, you will be expected to write a session plan for each.

Methods of Instruction

How will you conduct the training? If you do it exactly the same way every time then you risk becoming boring and predictable, and so learners will lose interest in your presentations.

Consider that there are many different ways in which to conduct the training process, for example:

- Lecture: tends to be one-way and has minimal interaction with students.
- Modified Lecture: involves group participation.
- Demonstration: perhaps teaching bagpipe or drum maintenance.
- Student Practice: which may follow a demonstration.
- Group Discussion: can be structured or unstructured.
- Simulations and Role Plays
- Videos: even including “YouTube” recordings for evaluation and then followed by “Group Discussion”
- Brainstorming: can be a good way to solve problems.
- Field Trips: perhaps taking learners to visit to another band’s practice.
- Question and Answer: can be a good way to assess if learning has taken place.

For your video recorded theory and practical sessions, you will be expected to incorporate some of the above in each.

Trainer Effectiveness

This area covers some of the nuts and bolts of being an instructor (or ‘*Trainer*’, as referred to in your textbook).

What is your appearance like? Do you look like you know what you’re doing? Perhaps not so important amongst your peers at band practice, but could be important to the parents of your valuable learners!

Where do you stand during the lesson itself? Do you move round like a ‘duck in a shooting gallery’?

How will you conduct the communication process during the lesson? What is your body language saying?

Using humour? It can be effective to gain attention but make it relevant, and never set-up one of your students as the target of such humour.....unless you are absolutely sure about how it will be taken.

Some good tips are given on page 115 of your textbook (3rd edition) in relation to “Good Habits”.

For your video recorded theory and practical sessions, you will be expected to demonstrate that you are an effective trainer.

Questioning

Direct Questions, Overhead Questions, Closed Questions, Leading Questions, Rhetorical Questions, Open-Ended Questions. So many different types, with all being valuable to a good teacher's toolbox of skills.

Questions form an invaluable part of the "2-Way Communication" and "Feedback" processes.

You will be required to demonstrate a good use of questions in your video recorded theory and practical sessions for the exam.

Difficult Situations and Nerves

This is a very good chapter in the textbook. Generally, the more experienced a teacher is then the less will be the problems with nerves and the more capable they will be with controlling difficult situations. However, there are some insurance measures that you can take as a new teacher, and on top of the list is for you to be thoroughly planned and rehearsed (not unlike your approach to music preparation for a contest).

While you want a friendly and cooperative learning environment, you are the teacher and so have to remain in control.

There are 20 tips given in this chapter for the new instructor and you will improve your video recorded theory and practical sessions for the exam by taking note of all of them.

Motivation and Attention

Not all of our learners are highly motivated for any or all of the material that we would like to teach them. As the teacher, you may need to provide the incentive that will lead to the students becoming more highly motivated to learn. Don't make the mistake of thinking that all students are highly motivated for all topics.

Nine methods to get the learners involved are given at the end of the chapter.

While your video recorded theory and practical sessions may include experienced musicians and not strictly "learners" (your choice), you will still be required to demonstrate that you can actively involve the learners in the lessons and increase their urge to learn.

Barriers to Effective Communication

There are many reasons why you may have difficulty getting your message across to the learners, and what works for one group may not work for another. Just consider the differences between teaching adults and teaching children; for one thing, you would have to be very careful with your use of language (long words, jargon, new words, etc).

Some of the more common barriers to consider are: long words, jargon, new words, language differences, non-verbal mismatch with verbal, problems with training aids, invalid assumptions by teacher, speaking manner, and a mismatch between the expectations of the learner and what the teacher actually delivers.

You will be required to demonstrate a high degree of communication skill in your video recorded theory and practical sessions for the exam.

Nonverbal Communication

Believe it or not, we are all communicating to our students even before we open our mouths. Non-verbal communication is a very powerful way of conveying a message and can either be supportive of the topic or produce a barrier to communication. For example, Gestures, Dress, and Posture all add meaning to what we actually say. This chapter has a list of some of the more common errors made by teachers.

We should be aware of the nonverbal communication of our students because this may tell us about their level of engagement with the topic being taught.

You are not expected to become an expert on 'body language', but some of the basic indicators will be valuable to you as a teacher. [Your video recorded lessons for the exam should demonstrate your good use of gestures and an attention to your own 'nonverbal communication'.](#)

Testing

You have set the objectives for your lesson and then delivered the lesson. So, how do you know that learning has actually taken place? The answer to this is to conduct some form of testing.

Testing should be conducted throughout the lesson (called 'formative' testing) and then at the end of the entire session (called "summative" testing). How much of this you do and what form it takes will depend on the length of the session, complexity of the topic, and nature of the students (adult, children, non-english speaking background, etc). Formative testing may be as simple as a few carefully worded and directed questions to the students to confirm their understanding. Summative testing may take the form of a short multiple choice test at the end of the lesson.

Other test types include: Essays, Oral tests, Multiple Choice, Performance test, True-False test, and Short-Answer test.

[You will be expected to demonstrate the use of testing in your video recorded practical and theory lessons for the exams.](#)

Training Aids

Something that helps you to get your message across is called a 'Training Aid'. Some of the more common training aids are:

- Overhead Projector: you may have access to one of these if you use school facilities.
- Data Projector (and Powerpoint): the projectors are still relatively expensive but you can use a TV for display if you can't get a data projector.
- Video/Audio Recordings: very useful for music.
- *16mm Films: you can delete reference to this from the text. Obsolete media.*

- Whiteboards: very common training aid. Chalkboards (previously called 'Blackboards') are still about but not as common due to chalk-dust problems.
- Magnetic Boards and Feltboards: very useful and easy to use. Some whiteboards have a metal backing and can be used as a magnetic board.
- Charts and Posters: easy to use and obtain. Butchers Paper makes an excellent flip chart.
- DVDs and CD's, and for the more up-to-date, MP3s and MP4s. Modern storage media can be very useful as a training aid. The Internet itself can be a good training aid, especially with the rich resource of storage mechanisms like YouTube.

This chapter has some great practical tips in the last few pages. You will be expected to demonstrate a good use of some training aids in your video recorded lessons for the exams.

The Overhead Projector

These are still around in abundant supply, even though they are being replaced by data projectors which require a computer-generated input. You should at least know how to turn it on, how to focus it and minimise 'keystoning', how to make a basic transparency and write on it legibly.

You will not be compelled to use an overhead projector in your recorded lessons because it may be difficult for you to acquire.

Final Comments

Use the Teaching Diploma syllabus, the listed objectives and the textbook to guide your development of teaching skills. The theory exam will be based on the listed objectives and the practical exam requires you to present and record two lessons; one Theory and one Practical.

Being a teacher and passing on your knowledge, experience and skills is a commendable pursuit and one that will give you a great deal of satisfaction. The Teaching Diploma is a step in your journey as a teacher of piping and drumming and one that the Australian Pipe Band College commends to you.
