



The **World Highland Dancing Conference** will offer three tailored participant tracks to ensure a weekend of sessions and classes designed to meet the unique needs of every attendee. Whether you're a professional, dancer, or enthusiast, there's a track that fits your interests and goals.



For **Professionals**, the world is your oyster! As a registered professional, you'll have access to any session on the schedule, whether it's aimed at enhancing your teaching techniques, refining your own dancing, or learning more about competition and adjudication. This track provides the most comprehensive experience, allowing you to engage with all aspects of the conference and gain the most from this unique weekend of learning.



Dancers can attend sessions designed specifically for them, offering deep dives into technique, choreography, and performance tips. Dancers will also have the flexibility to attend Enthusiast sessions, making it a great option for those looking to not only improve their dancing but also learn how to maintain their health and performance longevity.



For those registering as an **Enthusiast**, the focus will primarily be on health, wellness, and the broader aspects of Highland dance culture. These sessions will provide valuable insights into topics such as nutrition, fitness, injury prevention, and overall dancer well-being, making it perfect for those who are passionate about Highland dance but not actively performing.

The following sessions and lectures are scheduled to be offered over the conference weekend, with more to be added. Some sessions may be repeated. These sessions are subject to change.

Released – July 23rd

“WHDC Welcome Reception”

Date: October 10th

Time: 7:00 – 10 PM

Room: TBD



Join us for the WHDC Welcome Reception on Friday, October 10th — an evening of camaraderie and connection to kick off an exciting weekend of Highland dance.

This gathering offers a warm and relaxed setting for all attendees to come together, enjoy light refreshments, and share in the vibrant spirit of our dance community. Whether you're reconnecting with familiar faces or meeting new ones, the reception is a perfect opportunity to celebrate our shared passion, engage in meaningful conversations, and begin the weekend with a strong sense of community and welcome.

“Taylor Swift Dancers Welcome Party”

Date: October 10th

Time: 7 – 10 PM

Room: TBD



Welcome dancers to the ultimate *Taylor Swift* Dancers Welcome Reception on Friday, October 10th! Get ready for a night filled with music, fun, and friendship as we kick off the weekend with a *Swiftie*-inspired celebration. Swap friendship bracelets with fellow dancers, sing along to your favourite *Taylor Swift* hits, and hit the dance floor for an unforgettable dance party. Whether you're a *Fearless* fan or living your *Wildest Dreams*, this is the perfect way to make memories, meet new friends, and start the weekend off in style!

“RSOBHD 2026 Set Step Lecture (With Technical Committee Video)”

Facilitator: RSOBHD Representative



RSOBHD Official 2026 Set Step Lecture, where the Technical Committee will present the latest Championship and Premiership set steps through detailed demonstrations and expert commentary. This comprehensive session is designed to enhance teachers' understanding of the required steps for the Highland Fling, Sword Dance, Seann Triubhas, and Reel, providing valuable insights into technique and performance. Attendees will have the opportunity to observe precise movements and receive guidance on key points of emphasis, ensuring they are well-prepared for the upcoming competitive year.

"RSOBHD Judges Meeting"

Facilitator: RSOBHD Representative
(RSOBHD Adjudicators ONLY)



The RSOBHD Judges Meeting is a vital session designed to ensure consistency, accuracy, and fairness in Highland dancing adjudication. This meeting provides judges with important updates on technique, performance standards, and rule clarifications, as well as discussions on adjudication best practices. Led by RSOBHD officials, the session encourages collaboration and professional development, equipping judges with the knowledge and guidance necessary to uphold the highest standards in competitions worldwide.

"Mastering the Highland Basics: Precision in Motion"



This session is designed to refine and strengthen fundamental techniques essential to Highland dancing. This class will provide in-depth instruction on key movements such as back-steps, pas de basques, and shuffles, along with other foundational steps that form the core of traditional Highland dances. Dancers will focus on precision, rhythm, and proper execution to enhance their technique and performance quality. Whether you are looking to build a strong technical foundation or fine-tune your existing skills, this session is an invaluable opportunity to develop confidence and mastery in Highland basics.

"2026 Championship Steps: Fling & Seann Triubhas"



Dive into the 2026 Championship steps for the Highland Fling and Seann Triubhas in this essential session for dancers, teachers, and judges. We'll break down the fundamental movements, refine technique, and explore the seamless linking of steps required for the upcoming competition season. Gain valuable insights into execution, rhythm, and style to ensure a strong foundation and confident performance. Whether you're competing, coaching, or adjudicating, this class will provide the knowledge and precision needed to master the new set steps.

"2026 Championship Steps: Sword Dance & Reel"



Join us for an essential class covering the 2026 Championship Steps for the Sword Dance and Reel, designed for dancers, teachers, and judges alike. This session will dive into the core movements and their seamless linking, with a strong focus on the essential High Cuts that elevate the performance. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of technique, execution, and precision required for these two iconic dances, ensuring they're fully prepared for competition. This class is perfect for refining skills and mastering the new 2026 set step.

"Dance Foundations: A Teacher's Toolkit for Functional Anatomy & Physiology"



Join us for an engaging Applied Anatomy session designed to deepen your understanding of anatomy in Highland dance. This session will explore strategies to improve functional turnout, develop strong insteps, and refine posture coaching techniques. Learn how to support dancers in achieving optimal body balance, alignment, and fluid movement while building a solid foundation of transferable dance skills rooted in Anatomy and Physiology. Ideal for dancers, teachers, and judges, this session will offer practical insights to enhance technique and overall physical well-being through the application of key anatomical principles.

"Mindfulness for All: Meditation Session"



Join us for a rejuvenating meditation session, open to all conference participants—whether you're a dancer, teacher, or parent. This calming practice will focus on mindfulness and relaxation techniques designed to reduce stress, improve focus, and promote mental clarity. Take a moment to unwind, connect with your inner self, and explore the powerful benefits of meditation for both personal well-being and performance enhancement. No prior experience is required—come as you are and discover how this practice can support you on and off the dance floor.

"Joining a Tattoo: Your Ultimate Guide"



Interested in performing at a Tattoo? This session will cover everything you need to know to make your dream a reality! From understanding the audition process to the dos and don'ts of preparing for the big stage, we'll walk you through the key steps to get involved. Learn about the unique experience of performing in a Tattoo, including rehearsal expectations, performance tips, and what it's like to be part of such a prestigious event. Whether you're auditioning for the first time or looking to refine your approach, this class will equip you with all the essential knowledge to succeed.

"Fuel for Success: Understanding Nutrition for Dancers and Beyond"



This session is open to everyone, whether you're supporting a dancer or simply seeking to learn more about nutrition for yourself. Discover the essentials of good nutrition, including how to fuel the body for optimal performance, energy, and recovery. We'll explore balanced meal planning, hydration, and the importance of vitamins and minerals, providing practical tips that can be applied to any lifestyle. Whether you're guiding a dancer or looking to enhance your own health, this class will help you gain a deeper understanding of how proper nutrition supports overall well-being and success.

"Yoga for Highland Dancers: Flexibility, Strength, and Focus"



Join us for a rejuvenating Yoga session designed for all conference attendees, with a special focus on how Yoga can enhance your Highland dancing. This class will guide you through stretches and poses that improve flexibility, build strength, and increase balance, all essential elements for a dancer's body. Learn how Yoga helps prevent injury, improves posture, and promotes mindfulness, enabling you to perform with greater control and precision in your Highland routines. Whether you're a dancer, teacher, or simply looking to improve your overall fitness, this session will leave you feeling energized and ready to take on any challenge!

"Wired to Cope: Practical Tools for Managing Stress, Burnout, and Wellbeing"



In a world where demands on dancers, teachers, and parents can feel relentless, wellness is not a luxury but a necessity. This practical session explores the concept of self-regulation—how we respond to stress, plan effectively, and cope with both everyday pressures and high-stakes moments. Participants will gain insight into how stress manifests in the body and brain, and learn strategies to build emotional resilience, manage anxiety, and prevent burnout. With real, actionable tools to help regulate and reset, this session offers valuable support for anyone looking to strengthen their well-being and thrive in all aspects of life

"Irish Jig Technique for Males: Mastering the Shillelagh and More"



In this high-energy session, we'll dive into the unique Irish Jig technique for male dancers, focusing on everything from twirling your shillelagh to perfecting the sharp, rhythmic footwork that defines the dance. Whether you're a dancer looking to refine your technique or a teacher guiding young male dancers, this class will offer valuable insights into the specific style and strength required for Irish Jig. Learn how to emphasize power, precision, and style, while maintaining the distinctive flair that makes male Irish Jig performances so captivating. This session is packed with tips and drills to help both dancers and instructors excel in this exciting and dynamic dance form.

"Open Forum for RSOBHD Judges: Navigating Challenges in Adjudication" (RSOBHD Adjudicators ONLY)



This exclusive session for RSOBHD Judges provides a platform for open discussion on critical topics in Highland dance adjudication. The panel will explore effective methodology, strategies for overcoming unconscious bias, and how to navigate common marking challenges. Judges will also delve into the differences between marking large groups versus smaller groups and discuss best practices for applying penalties appropriately. This session aims to foster a deeper understanding of the nuances in adjudicating, offering insights and practical advice to enhance consistency, fairness, and clarity in every competition.

"World Highland Dancing Conference Special Choreography"

Choreographer: Sherril Medd

Music Composer: Terry Medd



Join us for an unforgettable class as we learn a specially choreographed dance by award-winning choreographer Sherril Medd, set to a beautifully composed tune by Terry Medd. This unique dance blends creativity and tradition, offering a rich experience for dancers of all levels. Not only will you learn the steps and style of this exceptional choreography, but you'll also receive notes to bring back and teach to your students at home.

"2026 Premiership Set Steps: Scottish National Dances & Technique"



Get a head start on mastering the 2026 Premiership Set Steps in this detailed class focusing on the Scottish National Dances and their technical demands. While the official dances are yet to be released by the RSOBHD, this session will guide you through the fundamental movements, techniques, and performance styles typically required for these prestigious competitions. Attendees will gain valuable insights into the structure and execution of these dances, ensuring you're well-prepared for the upcoming new dances and ready to showcase your best technique when the official steps are unveiled.

Note – if the 2026 Premiership Set Steps includes a Sailors Hornpipe and/or Irish Jig, this will be covered in a separate class/lecture.

"Open Forum for Teachers: Enhancing Your Highland Dance Best Practices"



This engaging session for Highland dance teachers will feature several experts discussing key aspects of effective teaching. Topics will include setting competitive goals, managing expectations, and structuring classes for maximum impact. The panel will also address general questions about teaching Highland dance, offering practical advice and strategies to help you elevate your teaching practice. Whether you're working with beginners or advanced dancers, this session will provide valuable insights to help you inspire and guide your students to success.

"Teaching New Beginners: Building a Strong Foundation in Highland Dance"



This session is designed for teachers working with new beginners, especially the youngest dancers. Learn how to effectively introduce Highland dance by incorporating songs and movements that engage young learners while teaching them the basics of rhythm, coordination, and footwork. You'll gain valuable tips and tricks from an expert, experienced teacher who knows how to make the learning process fun and accessible. Whether you're guiding toddlers or first-time dancers, this class will provide the tools to create an exciting and supportive environment for your students to thrive in their Highland dance journey.

"Highland Musicality: Mastering Rhythms and Phrasing"



Unlock the secrets of Highland musicality in this insightful session, where we'll dive into the rhythms and phrasing that drive Highland dance. Understanding how the music influences movement is essential for precision and performance, and this class will guide you through the key patterns and structures in traditional Highland tunes. Whether you're a dancer or teacher, you'll gain a deeper appreciation for how musicality enhances your technique, helping you move in perfect harmony with the music. Learn to listen, feel the rhythm, and bring the music to life in your dance!

"Sailors' Hornpipe Technique: Rhythms and Characterization"

"Irish Jig Technique: Rhythms and Characterization"



Dive into the lively world of the Sailors' Hornpipe and Irish Jig in these dynamic classes, focusing on the core techniques that make these traditional dances so exciting. We'll break down the shuffle rhythms, explore the timing of key breaks, and emphasize the distinctive character and flair that bring these dances to life. Whether you're refining your footwork or learning to fully embody these popular dances' energy and spirit, these sessions will provide essential tips and techniques to elevate your performance. Perfect for dancers looking to master these high-energy traditional dances!

"Organizing Competitions: Best Practices and RSOBHD Guidelines"



This session is perfect for anyone looking to get more involved in organizing Highland dance competitions. Whether you're a new organizer or an experienced one seeking to improve your process, this session will offer valuable insights into the best practices for planning and running successful events. We'll explore the key elements of competition organization, including logistics, timing, and communication, while also providing a thorough overview of RSOBHD rules and regulations to ensure compliance and consistency. Join us to learn from seasoned organizers and gain the tools to make your next competition a smooth and successful experience.

"Highland Technique with David & Delma: A World-Class Duo"

Presented by the *David Wilton Dance Clinic*



Join this highly entertaining and informative session with David & Delma, a world-acclaimed teacher and World Champion dancer, as they delve into the intricacies of Highland technique. With their unique relationship as teacher and student, David & Delma will offer an exclusive glimpse into their dynamic approach to technique, emphasizing precision, strength, and artistry. This session promises to reveal the deep connection that drives their success, providing attendees with insights that go beyond standard technique—expect an experience that could rival any entertainment on

the Vegas Strip. Whether you're a dancer or an instructor, this class is an unmissable opportunity to learn from two of the best in the world!

“Mastering the Basics: Building Strong Highland Technique for Pre-Premier Dancers”



Strong fundamentals are the foundation of every great Highland dancer. This practical, technique-focused session is designed specifically for Pre-Premier dancers and those who teach or support them. We'll take a deep dive into essential movements such as Back-Steps, Pas de Basques, and High Cuts—breaking them down for better understanding, cleaner execution, and long-term improvement.

Through targeted drills, corrections, and helpful coaching tips, dancers and teachers will leave with tools to build consistency, strength, and precision in their technique. Whether you're just starting out or refining your approach, this session will help you take those all-important basics to the next level.

“Scottish National Technique Essentials for Pre-Premier Dancers”



This session offers Pre-Premier dancers and their teachers a focused look at the technical foundations of the Scottish National dances—essential for building confidence, control, and style. With emphasis on posture, timing, arm placement, and step patterns in dances like Flora, Lilt, Highland Laddie, and Barrack Johnnie, the class addresses common challenges and provides practical corrections to support steady, graceful improvement.

“Introduction to the Sailors’ Hornpipe and Irish Jig for Pre-Premier Dancers”



Ready to explore the lively world of character dances? This fun and energetic session offers Pre-Premier dancers an engaging introduction to the **Sailors’ Hornpipe** and **Irish Jig**—two dynamic styles that combine strong technique with storytelling and personality.

Dancers will learn the key foundational movements, character traits, and rhythmic patterns that bring these dances to life. We'll cover basic steps, posture, musicality, and expression, helping dancers gain confidence and accuracy while developing their performance skills.

Perfect for dancers just starting out with these dances or looking to build a solid base before entering them in competition, this session promises a great mix of education and enjoyment—with a few laughs along the way!

“Practice with Purpose: Building Strong Habits for Pre-Premier Dancers (and Their Parents!)”



Good practice habits are key to a dancer’s progress and confidence, and this session helps Pre-Premier dancers and their parents build a solid, stress-free routine at home. We'll explore how to

structure effective practice sessions, set realistic goals, stay motivated, and develop self-discipline while avoiding burnout. Parents will also learn practical ways to support their dancer by fostering a positive environment, encouraging accountability, and knowing when to step in or step back. This session provides valuable tools to make practice time productive, enjoyable, and rewarding for the whole family.

“Strong Starts: Building Turnout and Strength for Pre-Premier Dancers”



This session helps Pre-Premier dancers develop essential strength and control by focusing on turnout and balanced work between the working and support sides. Through simple exercises and conditioning drills, dancers will improve alignment, muscle engagement, and body awareness—building a strong, injury-resistant foundation to support their technical progress from the very beginning.

“History Lesson: An Introduction to the History of Highland Dancing for Pre-Premier Dancers”



This fun and engaging session introduces Pre-Premier dancers to the rich history and traditions behind Highland dancing. From its origins in Scottish culture to the stories behind iconic dances, dancers will discover how Highland dancing has evolved and why it remains such an important and celebrated art form today. Perfect for young dancers curious about their dance’s heritage and eager to connect with the spirit of Highland dancing beyond the steps.

“RSOBHD Penalties: Correct Interpretation and Application for Adjudicators” (RSOBHD Adjudicators ONLY)



This session is exclusively for RSOBHD Adjudicators and provides a focused review of the official penalty guidelines. It will cover the correct interpretation and consistent application of penalties as outlined by the Board, with discussion on practical scenarios and common areas of uncertainty. This is an opportunity to align understanding, ensure uniformity in adjudication, and uphold the standards of fair and accurate judging across all competitions.

“Behind the Score Sheet: Understanding Judging and RSOBHD Rules”



Ever wondered what adjudicators are really looking for on the platform? This informative session is open to all dancers, parents, and teachers who want to better understand the judging process and the RSOBHD rules that guide adjudicator decisions. We'll cover how dancers are evaluated, what common deductions are based on, and how consistency and fairness are maintained. This session is a great opportunity to demystify the judging process, ask questions, and gain clarity on how competition results are determined.

“Basic Movements Technique Lab - Highland Fling”
“Basic Movements Technique Lab – Sword Dance”
“Basic Movements Technique Lab – Seann Triubhas”
“Basic Movements Technique Lab –Reels”



These interactive labs take a deep dive into essential Highland basic movements through small group breakout groups of professionals. Each group take one or two basic movements and will share their technical approach, key corrections, and effective drills for refining execution. Designed to encourage dialogue and detailed feedback, this session gives teachers the chance to explore multiple perspectives on how to teach and perform these foundational movements with strength, clarity, and precision. A must-attend for anyone looking to sharpen the building blocks of Highland technique.

“Unconscious Bias in Judging: Awareness, Impact, and Strategies for Fairness”
(RSOBHD Adjudicators ONLY)



This thought-provoking session invites RSOBHD adjudicators to explore the role of unconscious bias in judging and how it can subtly influence decision-making on the platform. Through guided discussion and real-world scenarios, we’ll examine common forms of bias—such as appearance, region, reputation, or familiarity—and how they may affect evaluations, often without awareness. Participants will learn strategies to recognize and reduce these biases, with the goal of enhancing objectivity, fairness, and consistency in competition outcomes. This session is designed to foster reflection, accountability, and continued professional growth within the adjudication community.

"Unlocking Your Core Potential"



Core strength is essential for achieving elevation, turnout, posture, stability in leaps, and precision in High Cuts. In this dynamic session, you’ll learn how to properly activate and engage your deep core muscles to build a strong, supportive foundation for optimal performance. Say goodbye to outdated crunches—this class introduces innovative, dance-specific core training techniques that will enhance control, alignment, and power in every movement. Whether you're a dancer or teacher, this session will equip you with the tools to strengthen from the inside out and elevate your Highland technique to the next level.

"Reel Elevation Through Strength & Power Training"



Stand out on stage with explosive elevation that commands attention. This high-energy session is designed to help Highland dancers unlock their full elevation potential through targeted strength and power training tailored specifically to the demands of the dance. You’ll learn how proper body alignment, muscle engagement, and dynamic conditioning work together to create higher, more

controlled jumps—safely and effectively. Walk away with practical drills, a deeper understanding of jump mechanics, and the tools to elevate your performance with confidence and precision.

“Injury Prevention & Recovery: The Role of Physiotherapy in a Dancer’s Journey”



Injury prevention is a vital part of every dancer’s longevity and success—and when injuries do happen, physiotherapy plays a key role in the healing process. This informative and practical session will explore the most common injuries seen in Highland dancers, how to recognize early warning signs, and strategies to reduce risk through proper technique, conditioning, and rest. Learn how physiotherapy supports recovery through individualized treatment plans, hands-on care, and exercises that restore strength, mobility, and confidence. Whether you're aiming to stay injury-free or return to dancing stronger than before, this session offers essential knowledge for dancers, teachers, and parents alike.