



Glasgow Music Festival 2026

WHAT MAKES A DANCE FESTIVAL SUCCESSFUL?

There are many answers to this question and each one of us will differ in our opinion.

The 114th Glasgow Music Festival, incorporating a Dance section, was held on 14th March, so in my role as GMF Dance Administrator, I aim to reflect on the successes of the event, giving my opinion, whilst also noting any future ideas for the 2027 event.

My Objectives	The Successes	Future Ideas/Actions
The dancers must have fun!	This was very apparent and the adult and children teams supported each other well.	Continue to welcome and support all entrants.
Teamwork should be observed.	All teams showed respect and commitment towards all participants.	Continue to ensure all teams are kept up to date with Syllabus or venue requirements.
A clear, precise and supportive adjudication is essential.	Absolutely essential! This was provided by Angela Young who not only encouraged dancers with less experience but also highlighted finer details for the adult teams. Angela had an extremely approachable manner. The pupils enjoyed a short practical feedback session too.	The Adjudicator for the 2027 Festival has now been appointed, and I am delighted to welcome Avril Smillie back to the festival. Sufficient time must be allowed on the timetable for practical adjudication sessions.
Provide live Music.	Susan MacFadyen accompanied the teams well and adapted to their skill set. As some children had not danced to live music before, Susan used tunes familiar to the children from their practice CD.	A musician for the 2027 festival has now been confirmed.
Dancers must turn up!	Due to a last- minute change of dancer availability, 3 teams did not have a full compliment. Fortunately dance teachers were able to use their emergency plans by drafting in extra "helpers". Only 1 team had to fully withdraw. All teams and stewards coped admirably with the Glasgow traffic being disrupted due to a recent city centre fire.	Continue to liaise with dance teachers prior to the festival.
A suitable venue requires to have the capacity for dancers plus a full audience.	Thanks are due to the Caretaker of Renfield Church Centre, Bath Street, Glasgow, who supplied extra seats as the schools were very well supported, bringing a larger than expected number of parents. Dancers were clearly observed in the centre of the room.	The heaters were on but the room was chilly for non -dancers. I will request that the heaters are put on much earlier in the morning. I was disappointed that the adult teams only had Branch Stewards as an audience, so hopefully this could be improved with further publicity on Branch Social media platforms.

	My thanks to RSCDS Glasgow Branch Chair, plus Elspeth, for attending and encouraging all entrants. Thanks also to Glasgow Branch for a generous donation towards the running costs of the festival.	I know there was a clash of date with the RSCDS Oban weekend
A fantastic Scribe	Maureen Daniel worked extremely efficiently and quickly, recording all information in her role as Scribe. She was also seated close to the musician so had to listen VERY carefully to Angela.	Possibly move the musician onto the stage rather than next to the Officials.
Informed, reliable and enthusiastic Stewards	The RSCDS Glasgow Branch members were superb volunteers who manned the Registration and Ticket Sales desks, escorted teams to the cloakroom and the display hall, prepared refreshments for officials and stewards, photographed teams (not dancing), liaised with GMF Office staff to print certificates and generally did anything required, to maintain the smooth running of the event. Thanks to Glasgow Branch for providing refreshments for stewards and officials.	Encourage Branch members to volunteer again for the event!
Celebrate different skill sets	The Children`s Classes are arranged by age and experience. They have the option to be compared to others and be given a score. All teams receive a certificate of performance plus written feedback. Many pupils began learning their dance in January whilst others have attended an after- school club since August.	For 2027, I am thinking of ways to develop the range of Adult Classes on offer. Possibly by using a formation as a Class Criteria with teams having free choice of a suitable dance or possibly selecting from a range of dances all containing a particular formation. I sincerely hope that more schools or branch classes will enter the event. I plan to contact schools who attended the RSCDS Glasgow Branch Day of Dance in March 2026(2 new schools have already expressed an interest). University clubs can change contact details as students move elsewhere, so please help by keeping me informed of any changed details.
Provide a welcoming, supportive atmosphere.	All stewards and officials were delighted to welcome all entrants, parents/carers and school staff. My aim was to provide an “assembly” style atmosphere for the children rather than a formal competitive style event.	Feedback from the 2026 festival shows that the atmosphere was appreciated by all.

<p>The opportunity to present awards and certificates</p>	<p>Although I personally do not think this is a requirement for a successful Festival, the tradition of GMF is to award the Marion B Hamilton Certificate to the team of children who gain the highest mark. This year it was awarded to Comely Park Primary School, Falkirk, who were taught by Avril Smillie. They gained 87% when dancing "Hedwig`s Reel". The Glasgow Branch Quach was presented to Glasgow Scottish Country Dancers for their performance of "The Golden Years/Ye`re Welcome Charly Stuart, with a score of 91%.</p>	<p>Perhaps a local Branch could sponsor a Class or award a small trophy?</p>
<p>Encourage a varied group of entrants.</p>	<p>I am delighted that all 4 primary schools from 2025 returned again. It was a pleasure to welcome young dancers from the RSCDS Dunfermline Branch. The adult dancers consisted of teams representing Dundee University Scottish Country Dance Society, Edinburgh University New Scotland Country Dance Society and the Glasgow area.</p>	<p>My hope for 2027 is that more RSCDS teachers will present a team. Many Glasgow schools attend the Branch Day of Dance but they are less interested in attending on a Saturday or receiving feedback. Adult teams prefer a Saturday to avoid the working week. This year the whole Dance section was held in the morning, due to GMF financial constraints. Ideally, (with more entrants) the section might revert back to a whole day.</p>

SO....DO YOU AGREE?

Do you have a Branch team or know of a local school or youth organisation who would be interested in the 2027 festival, which will take place on **SATURDAY 13TH MARCH 2027?**
Dancers with limited experience are very welcome. Children should be aged 10 or over.
Entrants do not need to live locally to Glasgow.

If you would like further information or to offer any suggestions or even to enter a team, please contact susan@glasgowmusicfestival.org

The Syllabus and an entry form will be online from September 2026 at www.glasgowmusicfestival.org with a closing date of 30th NOVEMBER 2026 for any entries.

Many thanks,

Susan Ewington

Glasgow Music Festival Dance Administrator