

A report by
The National
Piping Centre

Scotland's Piping and Drumming Ecology Report 2023/24



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**WILLIAM GRANT
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Report

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Markinch Highland Games

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Skye Live Festival

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Strathmore Schools Pipe Band

The Argyllshire Gathering

The Competition League for Amateur Solo Pipers

The Glasgow International Piping Festival

The Lochaber Piping Society

The National Centre of Excellence in Traditional Music

The National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland

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**SCOTLAND'S
PIPING
ECOLOGY**

Foreword

In 2017, with support from the William Grant Foundation, the National Piping Centre published Scotland's Piping Ecology. That report – the first of its kind – presented an overview of the many areas in which piping touches upon the lives of Scotland's people, with additional reference to pipe band drumming and the wider international community. Since its publication, global and national events have had, and continue to have, a profound effect on the communities that support piping. As such, the need for an updated report has become increasingly clear.

For many people, piping and drumming is a hobby, for some it is a career and, for others, it is a way of life. It is often said that piping and drumming are at the heart of our musical and cultural heritage and as such must be nurtured and celebrated. This report examines the state of piping in 2023. With particular

An overview of the many areas in which piping touches the lives of Scotland's people

focus on the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, it provides current, unbiased and relevant information for individuals, organisations and funders as we navigate the next stage in our recovery from the unprecedented events of recent years.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks and gratitude to: the organisations, bands, community groups and funders on whose information and data this report is based; to Dr. Andrew Bova and Cameron Lawson for conducting and compiling the research; and, finally, to the William Grant Foundation for providing the funding to support the report's creation, and for their continued support of piping and drumming in Scotland and beyond.

Finlay Macdonald
Director of Piping,
The National Piping Centre

Piping & drumming are at the heart of our cultural and musical heritage

Global & national events have had a profound effect



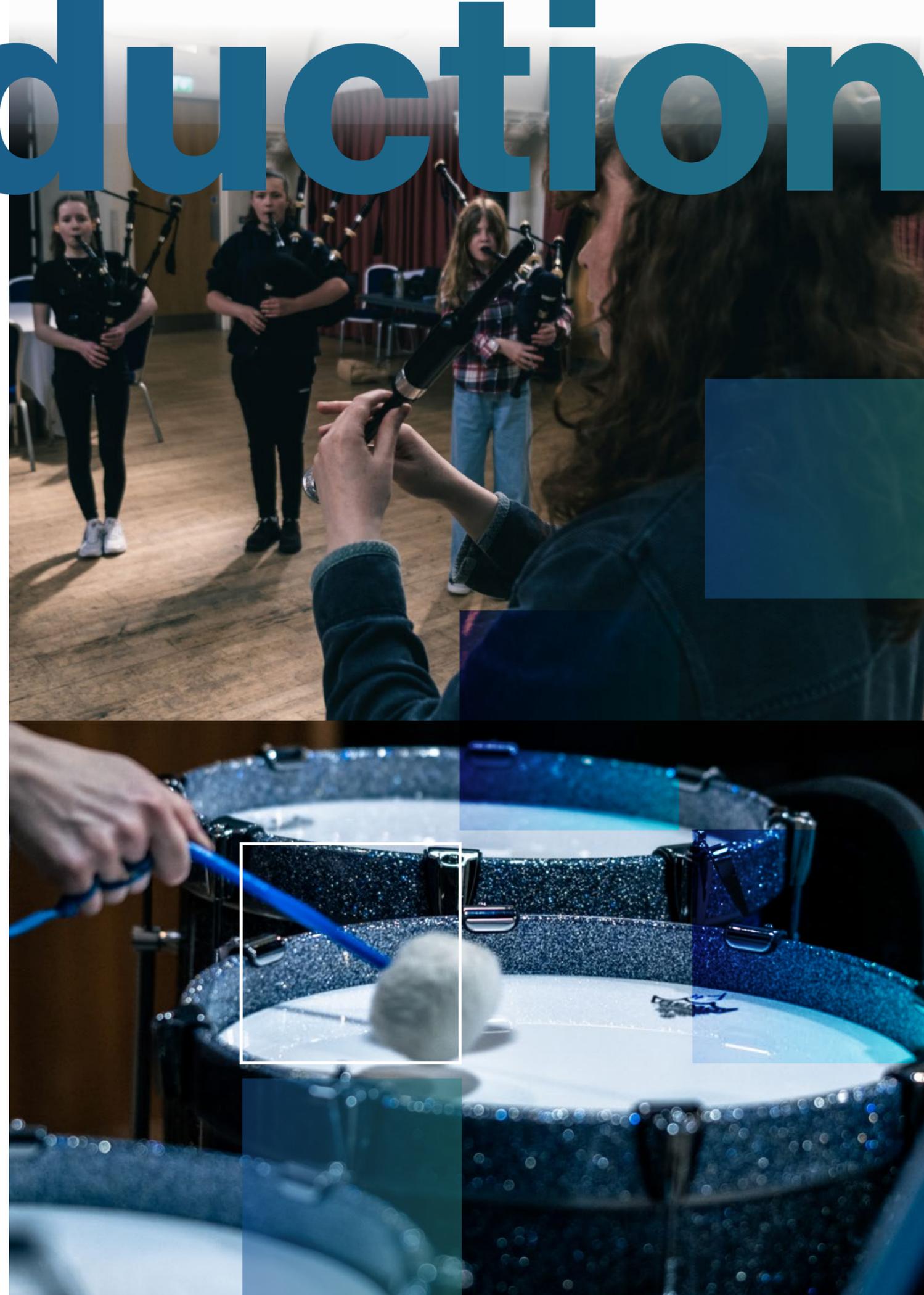
Introduction

This report examines the state of piping and pipe band drumming in Scotland and, to a lesser extent, abroad as of 2023. It exists to support The William Grant Foundation and other relevant piping and drumming organisations with the overarching objective of supporting and facilitating informed discourse and decision making by piping and drumming organisations, especially with regard to the allocation and distribution of funding.

Highlighting key information useful in understanding the state of piping & drumming

The report explores the overarching topics of piping and drumming organisations and societies, piping and drumming education and qualifications, performance opportunities, and funding and income. Through these topics, the report highlights key information useful in understanding not only the state of piping and drumming as of 2023, but, where data allow, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on pedagogy, accessibility, uptake, and participation.

The report does not make recommendations for action as a result of any findings, but does provide as much unbiased, quantitative information as is reasonably available to facilitate informed decision making.



Organisations and Societies

INTRODUCTION PIPING ORGANISATIONS

Within the Piping and Drumming Community in Scotland, a relatively small number of organisations undertake a wide variety of activities that make up the core of piping and drumming activity. This section provides an account of these organisations, along with their key aims. Where available, information on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is presented.

THE NATIONAL PIPING CENTRE



Founded in 1996, The National Piping Centre (TNPC) serves as Scotland's National Centre of Excellence for The Great Highland Bagpipe. TNPC's mission is '...to promote the study of the music and history of the Great Highland Bagpipe.' However, as TNPC

has grown and the culture of piping has evolved, TNPC has broadened its delivery beyond the Great Highland Bagpipe to include smallpipes, border pipes, whistle, and, at times, pipe band drumming. In 2018, TNPC acquired the College of Piping and now has a presence both in Glasgow's City Centre and West End.

TNPC delivers a vast array of projects and initiatives with the aim to break down barriers to learning and participation. At the core of these initiatives sits tuition, which includes individual and group tuition, workshops, seasonal schools, HNC and HND certificates in piping, and teaching within schools in Glasgow. TNPC used to offer workshops in Europe and the USA but has discontinued the majority of these following the COVID-19 pandemic in accordance with a more home-based approach to in-person tuition due to the high cost and risk of running schools abroad. TNPC still operates a school in Italy and, in 2023, launched a pilot school in Surrey, England. However, seasonal schools are now run in tandem both online and in person to allow for continued global engagement.

TNPC also collaborates with The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland to offer a BMus Traditional Music - Piping degree and a Master of Music (Scottish Music) degree. More

about TNPC's involvement with higher education can be found in the Piping and Drumming Education and Qualifications section of this report.

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, TNPC has grown its online presence since 2020 with the aim of continuing to deliver piping through the pandemic, making TNPC more accessible to the global piping scene, and fostering interaction and engagement within the global piping community. During the pandemic, all tuition was moved online and many competitions were reformatted to suit online participation. Additionally, recitals, concerts, and, where possible, competitions were live streamed to provide pipers with continued access to events. As restrictions eased, many of these virtual initiatives have continued to reflect TNPC's commitment to global piping. The Piping Show, a YouTube programme launched in 2022, exemplifies TNPC's continued commitment to virtual engagement. As of May 2023, TNPC's Youtube channel has a total of 2,065 subscribers, 121,001 views, and 1,370,918 impressions.

To understand the current state of teaching at TNPC, and better understand the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, a comparison of non-degree teaching activities is presented below.

NPC Regular Paid Tuition		
Year	Total Teaching Hours	Avg. Teaching Hours Per Month
2019	3,026	252
2020	1,968	164
2021	3,228	269
2022	2923*	244*

**following a full reopening after the pandemic and a corresponding increase in lesson demand, TNPC sought a return to the use of contracted teaching staff. This was done to supplement and support core teaching staff as demand for tuition outstripped capacity. These lessons were not recorded in the tuition system in the same manner as staff teaching, thus the 2022 figure of total teaching hours represents a lower number than the reality of tuition conducted.*

The above figures represent what is considered at TNPC to be 'regular paid tuition', which includes non-degree based 1:1 online and in-person tuition, as well as one-week immersive courses. The drop from 2019 to 2020 is representative of the closing of the Centre at the start of the pandemic and the subsequent shift to a fully online teaching model during the pandemic lockdowns. The considerable increase from 2020 to 2021 is representative of TNPC's efforts to modulate to a fully online teaching model, which involved re-engaging with previous students and reaching new international students who opted to take advantage of



the prevalence of online tuition. Additionally, there was an increase in new learners taking up pipes during the lockdown period, further bolstering tuition numbers during this period.

Before the pandemic, TNPC operated four seasonal 'Junior Gatherings', or four-day piping schools for U16 learners, with an average of 22 students per school. In 2020, one of these schools was held before the onset of the pandemic, but TNPC did not operate any online youth-dedicated schools during the lockdowns. With the availability to return to in-person tuition, these schools have recommenced with a revised curriculum and are steadily growing in numbers alongside a new 'weekend piping club' initiative, aimed at providing weekly tuition for young people on Saturday mornings.

Junior Gatherings		
Year	In-Person Schools	Total Attendance
2019	4	88
2020	1	22
2021	0	0
2022	3	41

Similarly, TNPC operated three seasonal 'Adult Gatherings', or four-day piping schools for 16+ learners. These schools ceased operation at the start of the pandemic, but were revived in an online format mid-2020. The school shifted from a 9am-5pm operation to a 9am-9pm operation, split in two halves, 9am-5pm and 4pm-9pm, allowing for international students to participate. This initiative increased access to TNPC group tuition for students in North America. Additionally, TNPC took advantage of the new online format to invite international guest speakers who would not have previously been able to participate in the school, thus broadening the tuition available to its students and allowing for increased collaboration with international organisations such as The College of Piping and Celtic Arts Centre in Canada and Carnegie Mellon University in the USA. Following the pandemic, these adult gatherings have continued to operate both in-person and online, allowing for continued international engagement.

Adult Gatherings				
Year	In-Person Schools	Online Schools	Blended Schools	Total Attendance
2019	3	0	0	51
2020	0	2	0	41
2021	0	4	0	70
2022	0	1	3	71

TNPC also operates The National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland (NYPBoS) and The Glasgow International Piping Festival, known as Piping Live!.

THE NATIONAL YOUTH PIPE BAND OF SCOTLAND



Founded in 2002 by The National Piping Centre, The National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland Programme (NYPBS) supports pipe bands and individual young people across Scotland through unique music-making experiences, emphasising the exploration of new ideas to determine what is possible outside the competition setting.

The NYPBS provides unique development opportunities for young people aged 10-25 through its national bands, outreach programme, and projects targeting social and creative progress within traditional music.

NYPBS ensembles are formed across three bands: the Senior Band, Development Band, and Junior Band, the latter of which was launched in 2022. Below are the membership and engagement/outreach participation figures for The NYPBS from 2019-2023.

NYPBoS Membership 2019-2023

Year	Total Membership
2019/2020	113
2020/2021	134
2021/2022	120
2022/2023	95

Further to rehearsals and educational opportunities for band members, The NYPBoS operates a number of outreach activities across Scotland in places such as Glasgow, the Hebrides, Tobermory, and Dumfries.

NYPBoS Engagement/Outreach Activities 2019-2023

Year	Participation Figures
2019/2020	88
2020/2021	200
2021/2022	90
2022/2023	107*

*ongoing, projected 137

When asked about the NPYBoS' reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic, Steven Blake, Director of The NYPBoS reported,

'In response to fluctuating restrictions we were forced to adapt to a hybrid model of delivery ranging from fully online to in-person, and fully synchronous to fully asynchronous delivery.'

For example, when we were prevented from delivering our end of year concert in 2020 we facilitated video recording with a safe amount of participants, alongside video footage submitted from all of our other participants, combined into a professional film showcase, which was delivered as part of Piping Live!'s programme.

Organisations

Piping and Drumming Organisations and Societies

We also had to find a way to offer planned Outreach projects in Skye to a digital format. We managed to create a platform of online resources, coupled with live zoom tuition, featuring group sessions, workshops and talks and the chance for participants to perform by submitting videos in their own time. The project ran for a week as opposed to the originally planned 2 days, and was ultimately more accessible given the geographic spread of the participant base in the region.

We also transitioned our auditions onto online application forms and video submissions, followed by a second round of zoom interviews.'



PIPING LIVE!



The National Piping Centre organises and hosts the multi-award winning and largest annual piping festival, The Glasgow International Piping Festival. Branded as Piping Live!, this internationally renowned festival showcases the world's best piping music and celebrates Scotland's national instrument in both contemporary and traditional contexts. Launched in 2004, Piping Live! coincides with The World Pipe Band Championships held annually in August. Below are the attendance figures, audience breakdown, and number of events offered at Piping Live! from 2019-2022

Piping Live! Attendance 2019-2022

Year	In-Person Attendance	Online Attendance
2019	33,370	N/A
2020	0	1,368
2021	716	9,900
2022	18,254	7,397

Domestic & International Audience Breakdown 2019-2022

Year	Domestic	International
2019	63%	37%
2020	N/A	N/A
2021	56%	43%
2022	65%	35%

Number of Events Offered 2019-2022

Year	Number of Events Offered
2019	150+
2020	7
2021	49
2022	Approximately 100

The festival was deeply impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Pre-pandemic festivals typically presented approximately 150 events, many of which were free for the general public to access. The lockdown restrictions in 2020 prevented an in-person festival from being held. However, in line with TNPC's aim to provide continued access to piping through the pandemic, a new delivery model was adopted to bring a reduced programme to the public. The 2020 programme consisted of six events, three of which were concerts held behind closed doors and streamed to the public, three of which were online talks. Unlike previous years, a paywall was added to these events in an effort to generate income. 2021 saw a step towards the pre-pandemic model, with a cautious return to in-person events. That year, fifty events were held. Forty of these were ticketed, in-person events with limited capacity to conform to COVID restrictions, ten of these were pre-recorded online events. All events, including in-person events, were live streamed.

THE ROYAL SCOTTISH PIPE BAND ASSOCIATION



The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association (RSPBA) serves as the preeminent authority for the promotion and advancement of pipe band music in the UK and, to a lesser extent, abroad. Headquartered in Glasgow, Scotland, the RSPBA is responsible for various functions related to the advancement of pipe band music, including education, training, and certification in piping, drumming, drum majoring, and pipe band adjudication. Additionally, the RSPBA operates an annual summer school, a pipe band college, and sets standards in pipe band competition performance.

Comprised of nine regional branches across Scotland, Northern Ireland, and England, the RSPBA liaises closely with affiliated global pipe band associations. The organisation operates the National Juvenile Pipe Band Fund, which provides financial assistance to novice and juvenile bands seeking to enhance their skills

Organisations

Piping and Drumming Organisations and Societies

and participate in competitions. The RSPBA is one of the five constituent organisations comprising the Piping and Drumming Qualifications Board, further attesting to its reputation as a distinguished and influential entity in the realm of pipe band music.

Central to its mission is the operation of pipe band competitions in Scotland. Below are the figures for the total number of competitions held by The RSPBA from 2019-2022.

Total Number of Pipe Band Competitions held 2019-2022

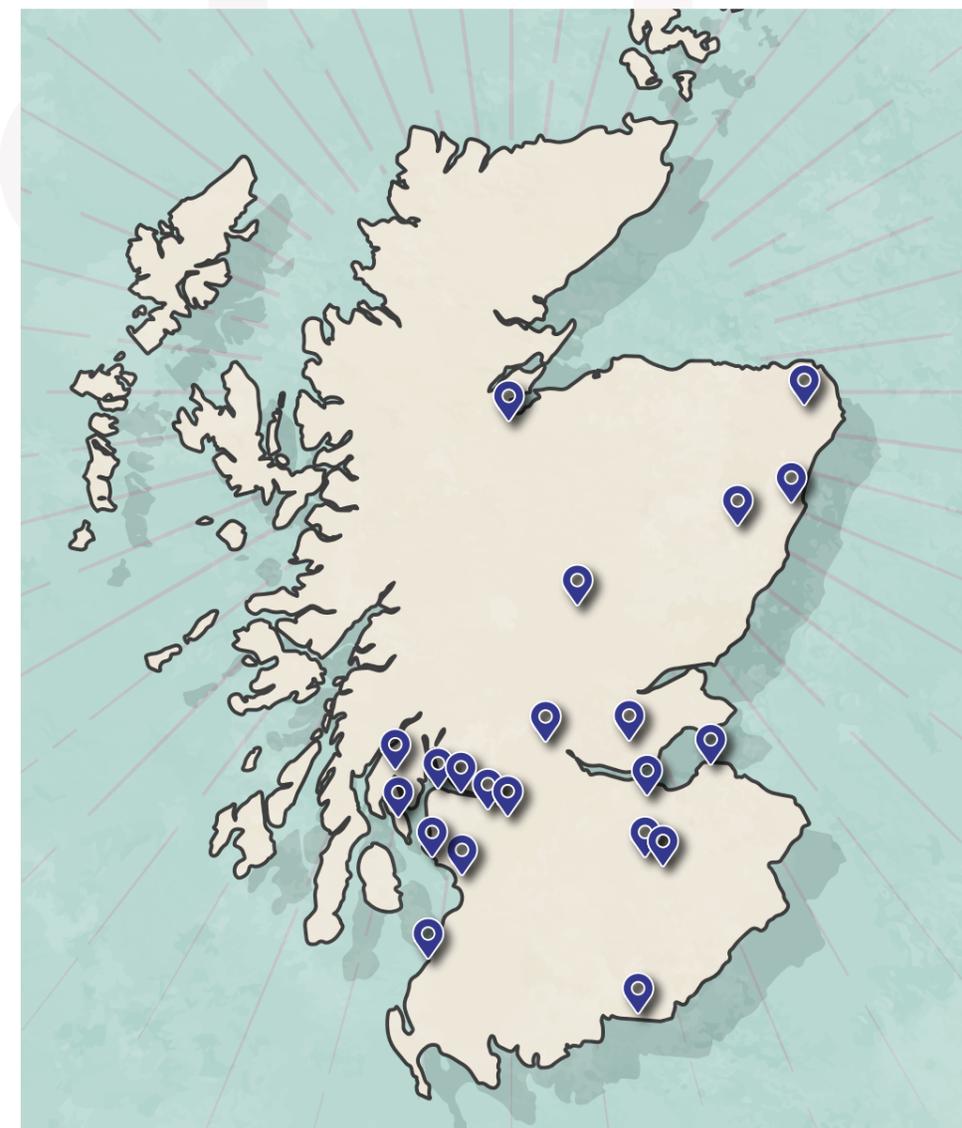
Year	Number of Competitions
2019	40
2020	0
2021	0
2022	32

Included in this tally of competitions are the five major championships: The British Championships, United Kingdom Championships, European Championships, Scottish Championships, and World Pipe Band Championships. Below is a list of these championships and the number of bands that participated in 2019 and 2022.

Championship	Participation of Bands 2019	Participation of Bands 2022	Reduction	% Reduction
British Championship	118	97	21	18%
UK Championship	94	68	26	28%
European Championship	114	90	24	21%
Scottish Championship	112	104	8	7%
World Championship	193	143	50	26%

The COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted upon the RSPBA, which relies heavily upon the major championships for income. While the overall number of bands registered with the RSPBA remained more or less static at approximately 465 bands each year from 2019-2022, all events run by the RSPBA were cancelled in 2020 and 2021 including competitions, schools, and examinations. As shown in the tables above, there were 8 fewer competitions in 2022 compared to 2019 and overall attendance at pipe band competitions following the pandemic was considerably reduced from 2019.

The following is a list of all competitions run by the RSPBA in 2022, as well as a map of the competitions held in Scotland.



List of 2022 RSPBA Competitions

Aberdeen
Annan
Antrim and Newtonabbey
Ardrossan
Banchory
Bangor
Bridge of Allan
Chatsworth
Colchester
Cookstown
Cowal
Dumbarton - Scottish Championships
Dundonald
Edinburgh
Girvan
Glasgow - World Championships
Gourock
Greenock - British Championships
Innerleithen
Inverness - European Championships
Lochore
Lurgan - UK Championships
Markinch
Mintlaw
New Ross, Co. Wexford (All Ireland)
Newcastle, Co Down
North Berwick
Peebles
Pitlochry
Renfrew
Rothesay
Ulster Championship, Ballymena

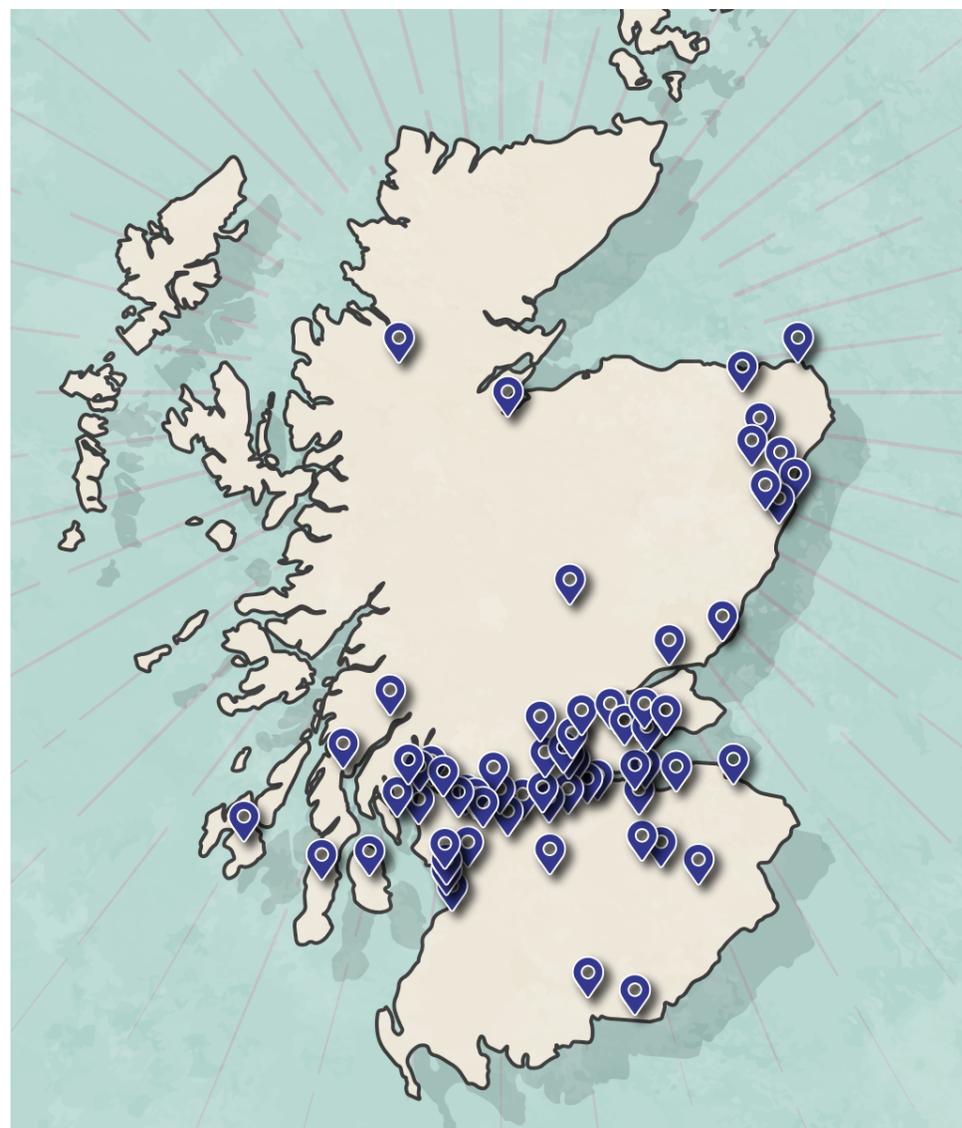
Organisations

Piping and Drumming Organisations and Societies

The World Pipe Band Championships (WPBC) typically attracts most competing bands in the UK, as well as a contingent of international bands. In 2019, 30 international bands competed at the WPBC reducing to 15 international bands in 2022. With 50 fewer bands overall in 2022, international participation does not fully account for the 26% reduction in overall participation, and may suggest that the cost of living crisis has had an impact on bands' ability

to participate in competition. In further support of this theory, the UK Championships, held in Northern Ireland and the most financially taxing event for Scottish bands, faced the largest reduction of participants at 28%.

The following is a list of all bands that competed in the 2022 WPBC, as well as a map of the Scottish bands' locations.



List of 2022 WPBC Competing Bands

- Novice Juvenile B
- Bucksburn and District Novice
- Burntisland and District
- Gordon's School
- High School of Dundee
- Isle of Arran Music School
- Lochgelly High School
- North Lanarkshire Schools
- Oban High School
- Oban High School Development Band
- Peoples Ford Boghall and Bathgate Caledonia
- Preston Lodge High School Pipe Band
- Renfrewshire Schools
- St Columba's School - Kilmacolm
- West Lothian Schools

Novice Juvenile A

- Dollar Academy
- George Heriot's School
- George Watson's College - Novice
- Stirling and District Schools
- West Lothian Schools

Grade 4B

- 1st Largs Boys Brigade
- 1st Troon Boys Brigade
- 47th Culter Boys Brigade
- Altnaveigh Memorial
- Barrhead and District
- Beinn Gorm Highlanders - Canada
- Black Raven - Ireland
- Brisbane Boys' College Pipe Band - Australia
- City of Discovery
- Dumfries
- Dunoon Argyll
- East Kilbride
- Fraserburgh Royal British Legion
- Govan Schools and Community
- Greyfriars Pipes and Drums
- Hollymount
- Irvine Memorial
- Kilbarchan
- Oldmeldrum Royal British Legion
- Paisley and District R.B.L.
- Peebles Ex-Servicemen's
- Stockbridge
- Syeria and District
- The Sons of Scotland - Canada
- Troon Blackrock
- Tulliallan
- Tynecastle
- Vienna Pipes and Drums - Austria

Grade 4A

- Ballyboley
- Brisbane Boys' College Pipe Band - Australia
- Camelon and District

- Cloughfin
- Culter and District
- Durham Regional Police - Canada
- Gransha
- Kildoag
- Kinross and District
- Kintyre Schools
- Kirkcaldy and District
- Lower Clyde Pipes and Drums
- Northwest Junior - USA
- Penicuik and District
- Raphoe Ulster Scots - Ireland
- Rothesay and District
- Royal Burgh of Stirling
- Royal High
- Strathendrick
- The Highland Thistle - Argentina
- Uddingston Strathclyde
- Vale of Atholl
- William Kerr Memorial

Juvenile

- Dollar Academy
- George Watson's College - Juvenile
- Preston Lodge High School
- St Thomas Episcopal School - USA

Grade 3B

- Arbroath
- Augharan
- Ayr Pipe Band Society
- Cleland Memorial
- Cullybackey
- Edradour Pitlochry and Blair Atholl
- Glenrothes and District 2010
- Macanta
- Major Sinclair Memorial
- Methil and District
- Mid Argyll
- Milngavie
- Pipes and Drums Scots Guards Association (South)
- Ross and Cromarty Pipes and Drums School
- Royal Scots Dragoon Guards Pipes and Drums
- Scottish Borders
- Tweedvale

Grade 3A

- Broughshane and District
- Buchan Peterson
- City of Inverness
- City of Newcastle
- Clogher and District
- Coalburn I.O.R.
- Colmcille
- Deeside Caledonia
- Denny and Dunipace Pipe Band Association
- Dunbar Royal British Legion
- Johnstone

Covid pandemic impacted on attendance figures

Kilmarnock
Mackenzie Caledoniaian
Matt Boyd Memorial
McNeillstown
Royal Burgh of Stirling
Stockbridge
The Highlanders (4 Scots)
Tullylagan
Turriff and District
Vale of Atholl

Grade 2

Buchan Peterson
Bucksburn and District
City of Discovery
City of Edinburgh
Highland Granite
Kilchoman Distillery Isle of Islay
Los Angeles Scots - USA
Mackenzie Caledonian
Manorcunningham - Ireland
North Stratton - Canada
Oban
Peel Regional Police - Canada
Porlethen and District
Ravara
Royal Burgh of Annan
St Joseph's - Ireland
St Marys, Derrystrasna
Uddingston
Wallacestone and District

Grade 1

78th Fraser Highlanders - Canada
City of Dunedin - USA
Closkelt
Field Marshal Montgomery
Inveraray and District
Johnstone
Peoples Ford Boghall and Bathgate Caledonia
Police Scotland and Federation
Police Scotland Fife
Scottish Power
Shotts and Dykehead Caledonia
Simon Fraser University - Canada
St Laurence O'Toole - Ireland
St Thomas Alumni - USA

THE PIOBAIREACHD SOCIETY



The Piobaireachd Society was founded in 1903 to encourage the study and playing of piobaireachd. The society promotes and supports teaching, research, grant funding, and publication of resources concerning piobaireachd. Of these publications, the most notable are the sixteen Piobaireachd Society Books, reconfigured from B4 to a more convenient A4 size in 2021. Available to its members through their website is a vast research database of recordings, manuscripts, photographs, conference proceedings, and other information useful to anyone interested in the history, composition, and performance of piobaireachd.

The Society serves as a financial supporter of piping, sponsoring events at The Northern Meeting, the Argyllshire Gathering, the Scottish Piping Society of London's annual competition, Piping Live!, the Lochnell competition, and through individual bursaries.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the society launched an online education initiative entitled 'Talk Piobaireachd' in 2020 and began delivering their annual conference online. While specific figures are not available, the society reported an increase in international engagement as a result of these initiatives.

provided approximately £9,000 annually towards piping funding. Through the pandemic, a number of events sponsored by the HSL were cancelled including The Argyllshire Gathering, The Northern Meeting, the Skye Games, and the Scottish Piping Society of London Competition. All of these events returned to their former in-person formats in 2022.

THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY OF LONDON

The Highland Society of London is a charity that exists to promote and support the traditions and culture of the Highlands of Scotland, whilst maintaining a membership of individuals to support the Society's activities. One of the oldest societies in piping, it was formed on the 28th of May 1778, when twenty-five Highland gentlemen met at the Spring Garden Coffee House in London in order to form a society that 'might prove beneficial to that part of the Kingdom'. The society awards the prestigious Gold Medal for piobaireachd at both the Argyllshire Gathering and Northern Meeting, as well as a variety of other prizes at various piping competitions.

Current accounts for the HSL are not available at the time of this publication. In 2020 and 2021 the HSL provided £1,865 towards sponsorship of The MacGregor Memorial Competition, which moved to an online competition during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Northern Meeting Piping Trust and Instrument Scheme. Pre-pandemic, the HSL

THE SCOTS GUARDS



The Scots Guards Regiment, The Scots Guards Club, and The Scots Guards Association maintain a high profile in piping.

The regiment has produced a number of publications and recordings of their pipe bands which are widely available. Their most impactful works, the Scots Guards Collection of Pipe Music Volumes 1, 2, and 3, are popular collections to own within the piping world due to their affordability and broad content. Volume 1, first published in 1954, has undergone no fewer than fourteen revisions, and is still sought after and available from most piping retail outfits. Most recently, Volume 3 was published in 2012.

Organisations

Piping and Drumming Organisations and Societies

The Scots Guards Club, located in the Haymarket area of Edinburgh, remains a popular venue for piping activity including an annual junior piping competition, a knockout competition for professional pipers, and informal recitals. The club was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with all events being cancelled from 2020 through 2022. In early 2023, the knockout competition recommenced.

The Scots Guards Association maintains three pipe bands located in Scotland, Manchester, and the South of England. The bands primarily perform at ceremonial events. However, the Scots Guards Association Band (South) competed at the World Pipe Band Championships in 2022.

THE ARMY SCHOOL OF BAGPIPE MUSIC AND HIGHLAND DRUMMING

Founded in 1910 as the Army School of Piping, The Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming teaches pipers and pipe bands within the British military from their facility at Inchdrewer House within Redford Barracks in Edinburgh. Courses are available to soldiers within the British armed forces and, in some cases, members of commonwealth armed forces, though tuition is not available for civilians. These courses are for all ability levels from beginner through to the level of

a Pipe Major's exam. In addition to its educational programming, the school also operates internal competitions for students and pipers within the British and commonwealth armed forces. Further, they assist with important cultural and ceremonial events such as the Royal Edinburgh Tattoo and various state functions. While the majority of their work is internal, they provide support to numerous piping and drumming events by providing volunteers to assist and, in partnership with the Competing Pipers Association, host the annual Captain John MacLellan MBE Solo Piping Championship, which is open to the general public.

Myriad employment opportunities exist within the British armed forces as a piper, though it should be noted that these musicians act first as soldiers and second as musicians. Many graduates of The Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming continue on to professional piping careers following their service in the military.

COMMERCIAL PIPING AND DRUMMING ENTITIES

There are currently a number of manufacturers and retailers active in Scotland, supplying instruments and accessories to the piping and drumming performer community as well as providing employment opportunities in the piping and drumming industry. A list of these companies, for both piping and drumming, can be found in the tables provided.

Bagpipe Related Businesses Based in Scotland

Achiltibuie Bagpipe Specialists
Ayrshire Bagpipe Company
Bagpiper Company
Bagpipes Galore
Bannatyne
Begg Bagpipes
Bennett Pipe Bags
Blow Pipes and Striking Drum
Bowes Bags
Burgess Bagpipes
Cabar Feidh Bagpipe Supplies
Cameron Pipe Bags
Canmore Pipe Bags
Canning Reedmakers
Castle Bagpipes
Chesney Reeds
Deeside Kilts Bagpipe Shop
Dunfion Bagpipes
Elder Reeds
Elite Pipe Bags
Flux Solutions
Fusion Bags
G1 Reeds
Highland Reeds
Iain D. Murray Bagpipes
Johnstone Bagpipes
Kilberry Bagpipes
Kinnear Bagpipes
Lamond Reeds
MacLellan Reeds
MacMurchie Bagpipes

MacPhee Reeds
McCallum Bagpipes
MG Reeds
Murray Reeds
Pettigrew Bagpipes
Pipe Dreams
R.G. Hardie & Co. [Subsidiary of St. Kilda (Holdings) Group]
R.T. Shepherd & Son
Scott Currie Music
Selbie Reeds
Soutar Bagpipes
Stirling Bagpipes
Strathmore Bagpipes
The Bagpipe Refurb Co.
The Bagpipe Shop
The Pipe Band Store
Wallace Bagpipes
William Sinclair & Son

Pipe Band Drumming Businesses in Scotland

Andante Drums
Beatstreet
British Drum Company
D'Addario
D2 Percussion
DrummingMad
DrummingOnDemand
Flam5
Flint Percussion
Hardcase
Kilpatrick Percussion
Kingdom Thistle
Pearl Percussion
Premier Percussion
Rhythm Monster
Rudimental Drummers
Scott Currie Music
Steven McWhirter Percussion
The Bagpipe Shop
TyFry
Vic Firth



Providing employment opportunities in the Piping & Drumming industry

Education and Qualifications

INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATION

A key change in piping and, to a somewhat lesser extent, drumming, has been the growth, development, and formalisation of tuition over the last thirty years. While the grassroots element of piping and drumming education still exists in band halls and front rooms, there now exist a plethora of formalised and semi-formalised education pathways, bolstered by professional educators and the availability of formal qualifications. This section provides an account of the educational pathways, qualifications available to students, and explores the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on tuition.

FEIS GAELIC FESTIVALS & ACTIVITY PROVIDING PIPING & DRUMMING TUITION TO YOUNG PEOPLE ALL OVER SCOTLAND

A plethora of educational pathways now exist

FÈISEAN NAN GÀIDHEAL

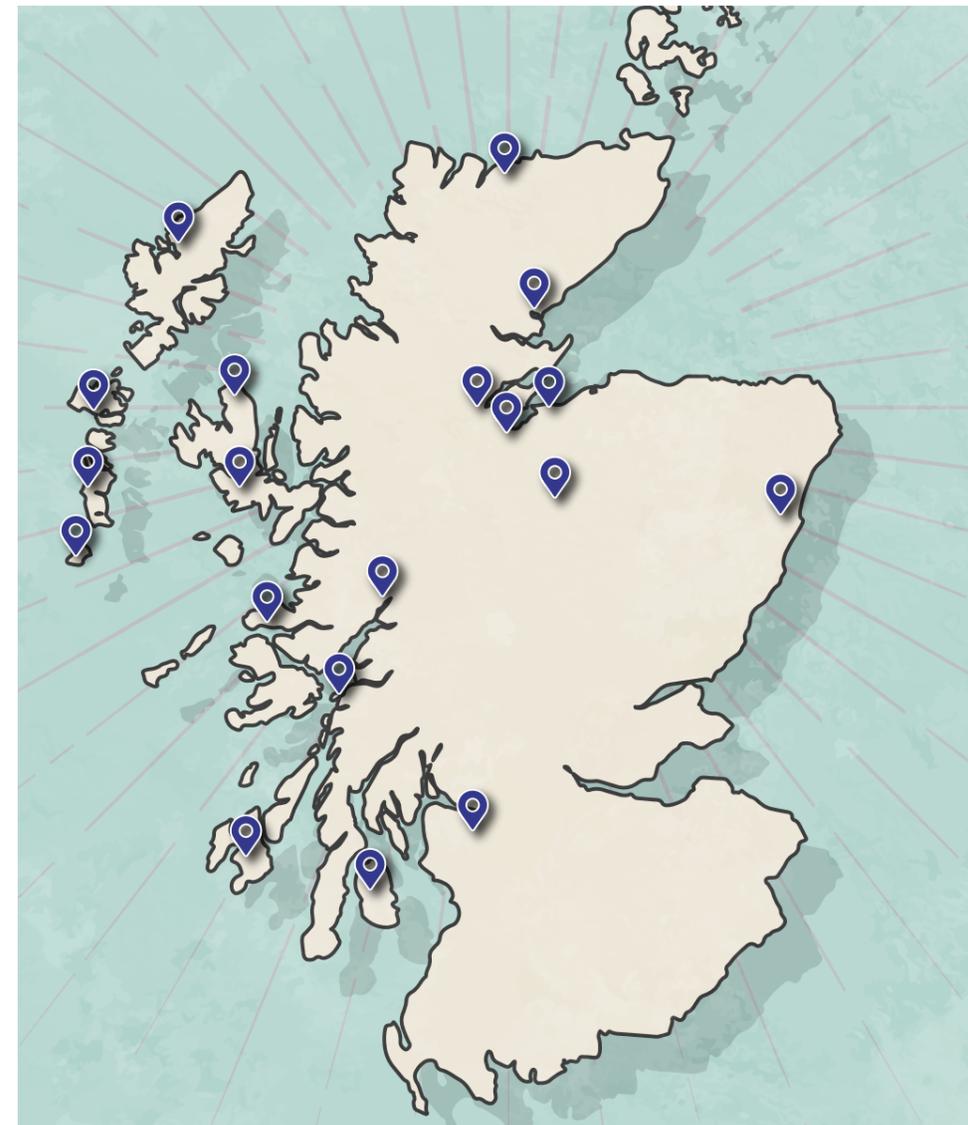


In recent years, fèis activity, or festivals of Gaelic culture, in Scotland have continued to provide piping and drumming tuition to young people all over Scotland. The fèisan are overseen by Fèisean nan Gàidheal, a registered charity founded in 1991 and funded by Creative Scotland, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, The Highland Council, Argyll & Bute Council, and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. Fèisean nan Gàidheal assists local fèisan in providing access to Gaelic arts for young people.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal kindly provided information for this report involving their piping and drumming activities. According to the information provided, they currently oversee 39 fèisan in Scotland. Of these, at least 20 provide chanter and/or piping tuition and at least 9 offer pipe band drumming tuition. This tuition is offered through a mix of weekly and monthly tuition, as well as tuition offered at main fèisan weeks.

A comparison with a similar study conducted by TNPC in 2017 shows there are 14 fewer fèisan currently offering piping and drumming tuition. A map of 2022's fèisan activity can be found in the tables provided.

Year	Fèisean Featuring P/D Tuition
2017	34
2022	20



Fèisean Featuring P/D Tuition
Fèis an Earraich
Fèis Lochabair
Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan
Fèis Chataibh
Fèis na h-Òige
Fèis Air an Oir
Fèis Rois
Fèis a' Bhaile
Fèis Inbhir Narann
Fèis Spè
Fèis Thròndairnis
Fèis Tìr a' Mhurain
Fèis Tìr an Eòrna
Fèis Bharraigh
Fèis Taigh Dhonnchaidh
Fèis Latharna
Fèis Ìle agus Dhùira
Fèis Arainn
Fèis Obar Dheathain
Fèis Phàislig

THE ARMY CADET FORCES

True to piping and drumming's indelible connection to the military, The Army Cadet Forces (ACF) offer piping and drumming tuition to those aged 12-18. Instruction takes weekly at the regional level and at national instruction takes place over five weekends through the winter and two week-long national courses held throughout the year. The ACF offer training for a variety of courses such as the BTEC First Diploma in Music and the Piping and Drumming Qualifications Board exams in piping, snare drumming, and bass/tenor drumming, the latter battery of which they have the facilities to examine in house.

D2 PERCUSSION

D2 Percussion exists as one of the largest pipe band drumming instruction organisations in Scotland. Founded in 2008 by directors David Henderson and David Ross, both graduates of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland traditional music degree and active competitors within the Grade 1 pipe band competition scene, the company aims to create opportunities for individuals to learn pipe band snare drum, tenor drum, bass drum, and bagpipes. Their company has a student body of approximately 250 students across a broad range of programmes and teaching models, including private tuition, schools tuition, The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and The National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland. The company employs six freelance snare drumming teachers, one freelance tenor drumming teacher, and one freelance piping teacher.

OTHER SEMI-FORMAL AVENUES OF EDUCATION

Beyond the avenues highlighted above, there exists a broad range of opportunities to access piping and drumming education. An example of this can be found in pipe bands with teaching programmes, such as Johnstone Pipe Band, Boghall and Bathgate Caledonia Pipe Band, Strathendrick Pipe Band, and Kilmarnock Pipe Band. Worthy of mention are community

programmes, such as the scouts and Boys Brigade. However, these community programmes have a minimal impact on piping and drumming education compared to their historical significance and the prevalence of other avenues of learning today. Finally, private tuition remains as a long-standing model of highly individualised tuition. Given the expansive and individualised nature of this model, it is impossible to produce a comprehensive list of private teachers. The National Piping Centre offers individual tuition, and more information on this activity may be found in the first section of this report. It is important to note that there may exist a financial barrier to some students in accessing this type of tuition, due to its premium costing.

SCHOOLS TUITION

Now more than ever, piping and drumming tuition is available to students in school through a mix of private school tuition, council-led programmes, and programmes run by organisations such as The Scottish Schools Piping and Drumming Trust and The Southwest Schools Piping and Drumming Academy. The following sections aim to present information, insofar as it is available, on the current state of piping and drumming in schools.

PRIVATE SCHOOL TUITION

A total of 92 schools have been identified in this sector in Scotland. Of these, 34 offer piping and/or drumming tuition. A list of these institutions, as well as a map of their locations, is available at the conclusion of this section.

Within the private school sector, provisions for piping and drumming programmes varies widely. A key example of a school deeply invested in its piping and drumming programme can be found in Dollar Academy. The band programme is a cornerstone of the school with over 200 members in a school of approximately 1300 pupils. To accommodate this large pool of students, the school fields three competition bands, one in Juvenile, one in Novice Juvenile A, and one in Novice Juvenile B. These bands are overseen by a teaching staff of six pipers and drummers including the 2022 Glenfiddich Solo Piping Championship Piobaireachd winner (Callum Beaumont), Pipe Sergeant of the 2022 World Champion Field Marshal Montgomery Pipe Band (Matt Wilson), Drum Sergeant of the Grade 1 Shotts and Dykehead Caledonia Pipe Band (Andrew Lawson), member of the 2022 Grade 1 Champion of Champions Inveraray and District drum corps (Louise Augaitis), and one RSPBA adjudicator (Lee Innes). This teaching team reflects the programme's dedication to competitive success, which is evident in the bands' competitive results, having won both the World Pipe Band Championship and Champion of Champions titles for 2022 in both Juvenile and Novice Juvenile

Education and

Piping and Drumming Education and Qualifications

A. Participation in the piping and drumming programme costs students £247.50 on top of their school fees.

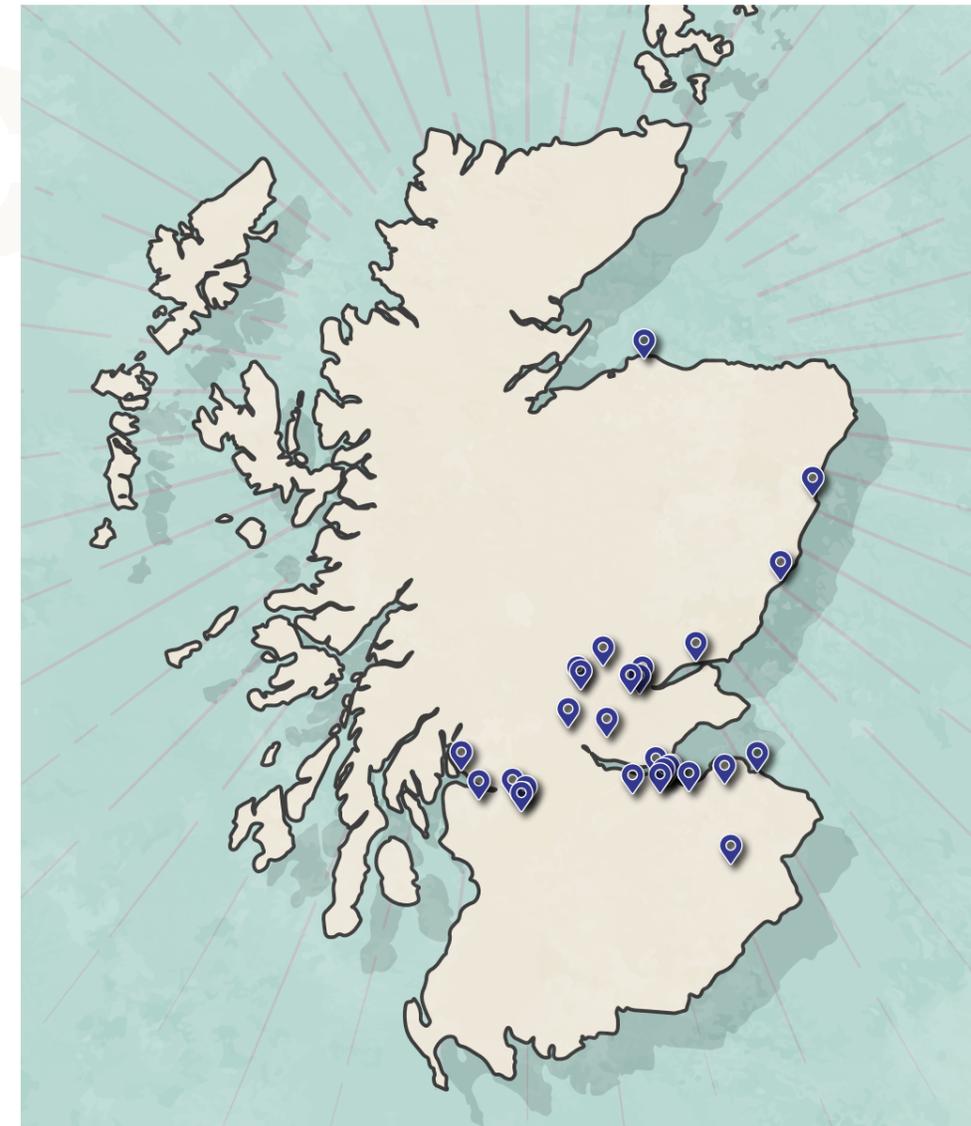
As previously stated, provisions for piping and drumming programmes do vary. An example of a small programme currently undergoing a shift in ethos can be found in Hutcheson's Grammar School. While this school has long taught piping, tuition is outsourced through The National Piping Centre with a teacher from TNPC visiting the school one day per week. However, in recent years the school has demonstrated a renewed interest in their piping programme, now bringing in a piping instructor two days per week and having hired a contracted drumming instructor. Like Dollar Academy, the teaching staff, while smaller, demonstrate a considerable amount of experience with a member of Shotts and Dykehead Caledonia's pipe corps (Dan Nevans) and a member of Scottish Power Pipe Band's drum corps (Russell Esler) running the programme. The piping and drumming programme currently has 17 pupils. While this programme still finds itself in its infancy, there is considerable support from the school, with the band being increasingly included in school and publicity events. Additionally, the band won their first competitive appearance at The Scottish Schools Pipe Band Championship in 2023, winning the Debut category.

Private school tuition appears to be largely unaffected by the COVID-19 pandemic, as displayed in the chart below outlining private school tuition in 2017 and 2022. Additionally, a list and map of schools offering piping and drumming tuition is provided.

Year	Number of Private Schools offering Piping and/or Drumming Tuition
2017	33
2022	34

List of Private Schools offering Piping and/or Drumming Tuition

- Ardreck School, Crief
- Belhaven Hill School, Dunbar
- Cargifield Prep School, Edinburgh
- The Compass School, Haddington
- Clifton Hall School, Edinburgh
- Craigclown Prep School, Perth
- Dollar Academy
- Edinburgh Academy
- Erskine Stewart's Melville Schools (2), Edinburgh
- Fettes College, Edinburgh
- George Heriot's School, Edinburgh
- George Watson's College, Edinburgh
- The Glasgow Academy
- Glenalmond College
- Gordonstoun, Elgin
- The High School of Dundee
- The High School of Glasgow
- Hutcheson's Grammar School, Glasgow
- Kilgraston School, Bridge of Earn
- Lathallan School, Johnshaven
- Lomond School, Helensburgh
- Loretto School, Musselburgh
- Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh
- Morrison's Academy, Crief
- Queen Victoria School, Dunblane
- Robert Gordon's College, Aberdeen
- St. Aloysius' College, Glasgow
- St. Columba's School, Kilmalcolm
- St George's School, Edinburgh
- St. Leonard's School, St. Andrew's
- St. Mary's Music School, Edinburgh
- St. Mary's School Melrose
- Strathallan School, Forgandenny



Education and

STATE SCHOOL TUITION

Piping and drumming provision in state schools is provided primarily through the local authorities responsible for education within their areas, often with support from the Scottish Schools Piping and Drumming Trust. The Instrumental Music Services 2022 survey highlights the position of piping and drumming within local authorities' music programmes with regard to music instructors.

Instructor FTE by discipline, 2013/14 - 2021/22									
	2013 /14	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	2019 /20	2020 /21*	2021/ 22
Strings	180.3	175.3	174	168.2	166.46	162	159.6	156.4	152.4
Woodwind	124.5	123.3	123.5	119.6	122.2	114.6	112.6	107.6	112
Brass	120.8	125.2	123.1	119.8	118.1	111.8	111.5	104.7	106.3
Percussion/ Drum Kit	64.4	62.2	64.4	64.7	64.9	64.6	65.2	57.6	63.6
Guitar	56.8	60.6	61.1	58.9	58.9	59.6	58.6	56.5	63.8
Traditional Instruments (exc. Piping and Highland Drumming)			9.3	7.5	6.51	7.07	8.07	7.7	2.2
Bagpipes/ Chanter			33.1	34.8	37.1	38	37.3	38.2	37.9
Highland Drumming			4.6	5.1	4.7	8.6	8.6	9.5	11.3
Traditional Instruments (inc. Piping and Highland Drumming)	37.5	46.5	47	47.4	48.3	53.7	54	55.4	51.4
Voice	17.8	19.3	21.5	27.4	20.4	21.3	21.9	24.3	20.9
Piano/ Keyboard	43.6	41.8	43.7	41.3	42.6	35.9	34.2	34.7	36.8
Other	4.8	2.4	7.3	6	6.6	8.9	8.4	6.8	11.9

*Please note - not all local authorities could provide this data in 2020/21, and missing values have been filled forward from 2019/20

The Instrumental Music Services 2022 survey shows that as of 2022 there are a total of 37.9 FTE piping instructors and 11.3 FTE highland drumming instructors employed in local authorities. This indicates a pattern of growth, with a total of 33.1 FTE piping instructors and 4.6 FTE highland drumming instructors listed in their 2016 survey. The pattern of growth, while small, stands in contrast to other areas of instructor employment such as string, woodwind, brass, and keyboard instructors, all of which have shown a downward trend in employment over this 5-year period.

The 2022 IMS Survey also lists the number of chanter/piping and drumming students by council area. Unfortunately, this information is not available from 2019, and so prevents a comparison of data to explore the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, but still allows a greater understanding of the prevalence of piping and drumming tuition in Scotland. This data is available in the chart below.

These data show a total of 3,453 chanter/piping students and a total of 1,128 highland drumming students.

As with the private sector, there exists a wide range of programmes within state schools. One example of a successful state school programme can be found in Renfrewshire Council. The SSPDT partnered with Johnstone Pipe Band in 2017 to bring piping and drumming into schools in Johnstone and Linwood. This programme continued to expand and, in 2018, Renfrewshire Council took the programme over and currently funds the Renfrewshire schools pipe band. Renfrewshire council currently boasts approximately 150 pupils and fields a band in Novice Juvenile B with one full-time piping instructor, one 0.8 FTE piping instructor, and one 0.4 FTE snare drumming instructor.

Local Authority	Bagpipes/ Chanter	Highland Drumming
Aberdeen City	59	-
Aberdeenshire	90	54
Angus	49	-
Argyll & Bute	466	109
Clackmannanshire	27	0
Dumfries & Galloway	-	-
Dundee City	125	57
East Ayrshire	69	113
East Dunbartonshire	10	0
East Lothian	47	0
East Renfrewshire	32	13
Edinburgh, City of	0	0
Eilean Siar	285	73
Falkirk	85	-
Fife	304	26
Glasgow	112	96
Highland	1019	410
Inverclyde	54	0
Midlothian	0	0
Moray	-	-
North Ayrshire	-	14
North Lanarkshire	77	60
Orkney Islands	0	0
Perth & Kinross	38	-
Renfrewshire	218	64
Scottish Borders	-	-
Shetland Islands	-	-
South Ayrshire	43	0
South Lanarkshire	0	0
Stirling	137	39
West Dunbartonshire	-	-
West Lothian	107	-

SCOTTISH SCHOOLS PIPES AND DRUMS TRUST



Building resilience, teamwork and confidence

The Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust (SSPDT) was formed in 2006 as the East Lothian Pipes and Drums Trust, becoming a national organisation in 2015 with the aim of ensuring young people in all of Scotland have access to piping and drumming. While their 2021/22 report is not available at the time of this publication, as of their 2020/21 report the SSPDT supported 2,700 pupils through tuition and/or instrument loans in 266 schools. This reach was clearly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, as in their 2019/20 report they showed support for 3,750 students across 292 schools. However, this reduction in utilised support does not reflect a reduction in available support from the SSPDT, but rather reflects on supported programmes not operating at full capacity. A full breakdown of their activities can be found in the chart below, lifted from their 2020/21 Trustees Report.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Pupils supported by SSPDT through tuition and/ or instrument loans	2,000	2,500	3,050	3,750	2,700*
Schools where pupils are learning with SSPDT's support	166	190	227	292	266
Programmes supported during the year with cash grants, bagpipe loans and pledged funding	32	37	44	47	42
Bagpipes on loan and pledged	128	129	155	331	301
Local authorities where SSPDT lends support	15	18	24	22	19

*at available capacity

During the 2020/21 period, the SSPDT distributed grants totalling £140,099 towards tuition and related costs, loaned a total of 301 sets of pipes to students, and co-created two new Piper in Residence posts at primary schools in East Lothian, bringing the total of co-created piping and drumming posts to 57 since 2006. In addition to supporting schools throughout Scotland, the SSPDT directly employs one full-time piping instructor, one full-time snare drumming instructor, and one part-time tenor drumming instructor at Preston

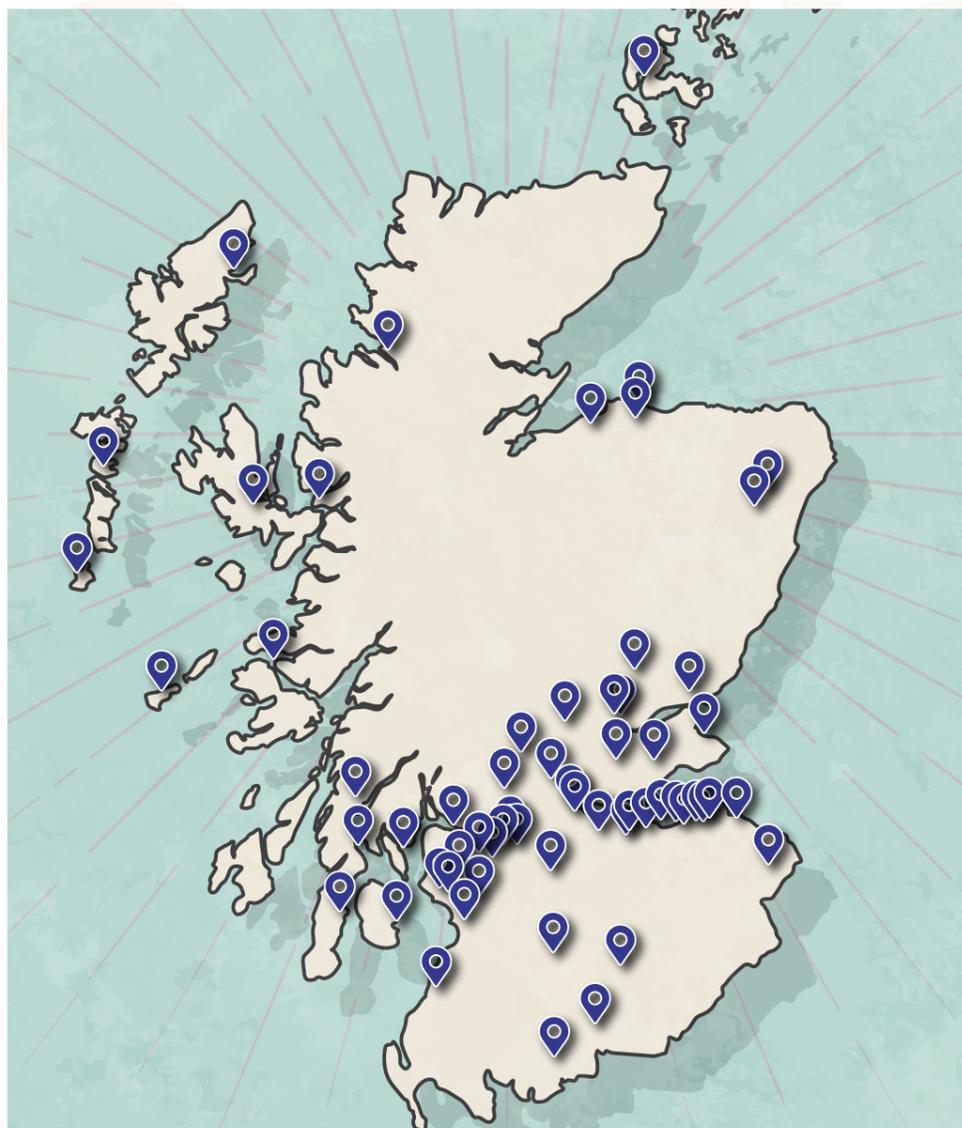
Lodge High School. As a part of their programme at Preston Lodge, in 2017 the SSPDT began offering paid internships through this programme and, in 2019, partnered with The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland to offer these internships as a part of the RCS undergraduate degrees in piping and drumming.

A list detailing the programmes supported by the SSPDT in 2022 and a map of their locations can be found in the tables provided.

SSPDT Supported Programmes 2022

Aberdeenshire Schools
Argyll and Bute Council
Arran High School
Balerno High School
Balfron High School
Barrhead Schools
Berwickshire Schools
Braeview School
Castlebay Community School
Craiglockhart Primary School
Crieff Schools
Dumfries High School
Dunbar Primary School
East Lothian Pipe Bands
Edinburgh Schools
Elgin Schools
Falkirk Schools
Fife Council
Firrhill Pipe Band
Forres Academy
Garnock Community Campus
Girvan Schools
Govan Schools
Haddington Schools
High Life Highland
Ilse of Tiree Schools
Inverclyde Schools
Isle of Bute Schools
Isle of Skye Schools
Kilmarnock Schools
Kinross High School
Kintyre Schools
Larbert High School
Larkhall Schools
Lewis and Harris Youth Pipe Band
Lochalsh Junior Pipe Band
Lossiemouth Schools
Madras College
Marr College
Maryhill and Summerston Schools
McLaren Schools
Meldrum Academy
Moffat Academy
Morningside Youth Pipe Band
Mull and Iona Schools
North Ayrshire Schools
Perth City and Highland Schools
Perth Grammar School
Pilrig Park School
Preston Lodge High School
Renfrewshire Schools
Sanquhar Academy
Sgoil Lionacliet
South West of Scotland Piping and Drumming Academy
Stanley Primary School
Stirling Schools
Strathmore Schools
Stromness Academy
Tarbert Schools
Tynecastle High School
Ullapool and District Schools
West Lothian Schools
Whitehill Learning Community Cluster
Windygoul Primary School

Education and



In addition to their teaching endeavours, the SSPDT organises and runs the Scottish Schools Pipe Band Championships. The Scottish Schools Pipe Band Championships is a unique and innovative platform that aims to showcase the exceptional musical talent of young students while simultaneously promoting the playing of pipes and drums. The competition features a diverse range of competition grades and categories that cater to both experienced school pipe bands and those with minimal or no competing experience. These

included graded competitions, a debut category for bands competing for the first time, a quartet competition, and a freestyle event that allows and encourages pipers and drummers to collaborate with non-pipe band related instruments to showcase their school's talent and create innovative arrangements. A breakdown of the two most recent competition entries is below. For the year 2020, bracketed numbers represent the number of bands that actually participated in the competition.

Year	Regular Entries	Debut Entries	Quartet Entries	Freestyle Entries
2020	56 (53)	6 (4)	19 (17)	9 (8)
2023	41	9	16	15

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the competition ran online in 2021 as only a freestyle event, however figures from this competition are not readily available. The competition was cancelled in 2022. The effect of the pandemic can be seen in the figures above, with a lower entry in the regular entries and quartet categories, reflecting the trend in RSPBA pipe band competitions highlighted earlier in this report. However, debut entries increased from six to nine, indicating that, despite, or possibly because of, the pandemic, new teaching initiatives continue to launch throughout Scotland. Additionally, the increase in freestyle entries may be indicative of the innovative ethos emerging from the pandemic period.

THE ARGYLL PIPING TRUST



Also of note within the state school sector is support provided by the Argyll Piping Trust. An initial agreement was reached with Argyll and Bute Council in 1996 to support piping tuition in Argyll primary schools, and since then this programme has continued to expand. In the 2021/22 academic year, the Argyll Piping Trust provided funding for tuition in and around Oban, Mid Argyll, Mull, Islay, North Kintyre, Campbeltown, Cowal, Helensburgh, and Lower Argyll. The organisation is recognised as the primary funder of piping tuition in Argyll, funding six tutors in twenty-nine primary schools with approximately 216 pupils. The Trust reports these figures are up from twenty-four schools and approximately 100 pupils in the 2020/21 academic year.

Education and

SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND PIPING AND DRUMMING ACADEMY



In February 2015, the South West Scotland Piping and Drumming Academy (SWSPDA) became a registered SCIO. Its mission is '...to work with pipe bands, schools and others to raise the standard of, to increase participation in, and to raise enthusiasm for, piping and drumming in the South West of Scotland'.

The SWSPDA undertakes a wide variety of teaching initiatives. The organisation operates both a summer and autumn residential piping and drumming school and has steadily grown their influence in the region, as displayed in the table below.

Year	Schools Receiving Tuition from SWSPDA	Pupils Receiving Tuition Through SWSPDA
2017	12	100
2022	17	110

In 2022, SWSPDA initiated a new project at The Bridge, a community facility in Dumfries, that brings together all of their regional students on the first Saturday of each month to offer piping and drumming tuition. These monthly workshops attract between forty and fifty students each month. All lessons are free, and the SWSPDA subsidises their residential schools as much as is possible.

THE NATIONAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN TRADITIONAL MUSIC

A unique piping programme exists through The National Centre of Excellence in Traditional Music. Situated within Plockton High School, this programme accepts applications from students in the Scottish secondary education system and is funded by The Highland Council. Students accepted to this programme receive specialised instruction in piping and traditional music alongside a standard school curriculum. The school currently employs two freelance piping instructors and has five pupils. The school does not employ any drumming instructors

INTRODUCTION TO QUALIFICATIONS

A cornerstone of the development of piping and drumming over the last four decades has been the introduction of formal, certificated educational pathways for pipers and drummers. Academic qualifications in Scotland are overseen by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and organised using the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). An outline of this framework can be seen in the chart below. Within piping and drumming, qualifications are available from SCQF 2 through SCQF 12, the highest available SCQF level. This section provides a detailed account of the formal qualifications available to pipers and drummers.

THE SCOTTISH CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

This Framework diagram has been produced to show the mainstream Scottish qualifications already credit rated by SQA and HEIs. However, there are a diverse number of learning programmes on the Framework, which, due to the limitations of this format, cannot be represented here. For more information, please visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk to view the interactive version of the Framework or search the Database.

SCQF Levels	SQA Qualifications		Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	Apprenticeships & SVQs
12			Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship
11			Masters Degree, Integrated Masters Degree, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship SVQ
10			Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship
9			Professional Development Award Bachelors / Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
8		Higher National Diploma	Diploma Of Higher Education	Higher Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
7	Advanced Higher, Awards, Scottish Baccalaureate	Higher National Certificate	Certificate Of Higher Education	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ
6	Higher, Awards, Skills for Work Higher			Modern Apprenticeship Foundation Apprenticeship SVQ
5	National 5, Awards, Skills for Work National 5			Modern Apprenticeship SVQ
4	National 4, Awards, Skills for Work National 4	National Certificate	National Progression Award	SVQ
3	National 3, Awards, Skills for Work National 3			
2	National 2, Awards			
1	National 1, Awards			

SCHOOL LEVEL QUALIFICATIONS

Within schools, both the bagpipe and pipe band snare drum can be selected as a first study instrument for music qualifications ranging from National 3 to Advanced Higher. There are no exams offered by the SQA in pipe band bass and tenor. The piping and snare drumming courses of study include both practical performance elements as well as relative theory work. Exams are conducted within schools by visiting assessors, however, not all piping and drumming programmes at the school level offer these awards and they are opt-in for students.

Education and

PIPING AND DRUMMING QUALIFICATIONS BOARD

Piping and Drumming Qualifications Board



The PDQB was formed in 2006 to create a unified structure of examinations in piping, pipe band drumming, pipe bands, and associated areas and, in 2010, partnered with the SQA to offer SCQF level qualifications. The PDQB is made up of five individual organisations: The National Piping Centre, The Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming, The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association, Tri Services Combined Cadet Force Pipes and Drums, and The Piobaireachd Society. Of these, all are approved SQA examination centres, save The Piobaireachd Society.

This joint body offers a wide variety of examinations and qualifications both independently and in conjunction with the SQA.

Qualifications offered in partnership with the SQA range from SCQF 2 to SCQF 6, known as National Progression Awards (NPA) in both piping and pipe band snare drumming and at levels SCQF 7 and SCQF 8, known as Professional Development Awards (PDA) in piping. At this time, there are no SQA qualifications in

pipe band bass or tenor. These exams consist of two components, a theory exam and a practical exam, ensuring students going through these exams receive a holistic musical education.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a considerable impact on the ability to conduct examinations due to lockdowns and travel restrictions. In response to this, various PDQB member organisations have moved examinations online. At the time of this publication, 2022 exam figures for the full PDQB are not available. However, a breakdown of the total PDQB examinations delivered by TNPC can be found in the tables provided.

Year	Total NPC PDQB Exams
2019	286
2020	84
2021	110
2022	155

The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic can clearly be seen reflected in these data. The reduction in exams from 2019 forward is reflective of students not being able to access the Centre for examinations; the cancellation of international schools run by TNPC, where a large number of exams took place; and the cancellation of schools run by third parties, where exams are conducted on TNPC's behalf by certified external assessors. However, as online examinations became more readily accessible, an increase in the number of exams delivered can be seen and, in 2022, an increase in in-person examinations continued to contribute to the rising numbers of examinations taking place.

The PDQB offers a number of qualifications independent of the SQA. These include Bass and Tenor Drumming certificates from PDQB Level 2 to 6, a piobaireachd certificate, a piping performance certificate, tutor certificates in both piping and pipe band drumming, and teacher certificates in both piping and pipe band drumming.

All bodies involved with the delivery of examinations offer tuition to assist students in progressing through these exams. The examinations are open to anyone and are delivered worldwide, though the majority of examinations take place within the UK. Examinations may be pursued by individuals, though it is increasingly common for school programmes to hire examination centres to visit their school in order to deliver exams.

FURTHER EDUCATION

Further education involves professional training for individuals, generally post-school, that results in a qualification. However, these qualifications do not reach degree level. Within Scotland, these qualifications are known as the Higher National Certificate (HNC), equivalent to SCQF 8, and the Higher National Diploma (HND), equivalent to SCQF 9. The National Piping Centre has offered an HNC with bagpipes as a first study instrument since 2016 and, in September of 2021, began offering an HND with bagpipes as a first study instrument. There is an avenue for those who already hold an HNC to upgrade this award to an HND or to go directly into year 2 of the HND programme. A breakdown of student enrolment on TNPC's HNC and HND courses can be found in the tables provided.

Academic Year	HNC FT	HNC PT	HNC/D Bridging Course	HND FT	HND PT
2018/19	2	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
2019/20	2	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
2020/21	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021/22	1	0	3 (PT)	0	0
2022/23	3	2	0	1	2

Low enrolment on the course in 2020/21 and 2021/22 was in large part due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The University of the Highlands and Islands Benbecula Campus also offers an HNC with bagpipes as a first study instrument. Graduates of the University of Highlands and Islands HNC programme have the possibility of enrolling straight into year two of the UHI BA applied music degree and graduates of TNPC's HND are similarly eligible to enter this degree in year three.

No HNC or HND courses currently exist for pipe band drumming.

HIGHER EDUCATION



Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

The emergence of bagpipes in tertiary education over the last four decades has been a driving force in the recognition of the bagpipe's value alongside other instruments and has contributed greatly to the education of young pipers in Scotland, with many of the teachers currently active in schools holding a degree in piping. There exist a number of centres in Scotland offering degrees with bagpipes as a first instrument. TNPC partnered with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in 1996 to deliver the piping components of their degree in traditional music. In 2000, a review determined that a dedicated course was needed, which resulted in a dedicated Bachelor of Arts degree in piping. This degree was further developed in 2014 to its current iteration as the BMus Traditional Music - Piping degree. This is a three year course with an optional fourth honours year. Further to this, the RCS offers a Master's level degree in piping. Additionally, the RCS also offers a BEd degree where students can use the bagpipes as either their first or second study instrument, for which the piping instruction is delivered by TNPC. Currently, there is one first study and one second study piping student pursuing the BEd degree. The RCS boasts an impressive alumni list including Finlay MacDonald (Director of Piping at The National Piping Centre), Cameron Drummond (Senior Piping Instructor at Fettes College), and Calum MacCrimmon (founding member of Breabach).

Pipe band snare drum is also available as a first study instrument through the RCS BMus and Masters Traditional Music programmes.

A full breakdown of students enrolled on the RCS piping and drumming degrees can be found in the tables provided.

Year	BMus Piping	Masters Piping	BMus Drumming	Masters Drumming
2018/19	18	1	2	0
2019/20	19	2	4	0
2020/21	19	1	5	0
2021/22	18	0	7	0
2022/23	19	0	6	1

It is important to note that the student pursuing the Drumming Masters degree is the first student to do so at RCS.

Other degree level study with bagpipes as a first study instrument can be found at The University of the Highlands and Islands in Benbecula through their BA Applied Music programme and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig through their BA degree in Gaelic and Traditional Music.

A number of overseas schools also offer degree level tuition in piping. Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, USA offered the first undergraduate degree in piping performance in 1990, a BFA in Music Performance (bagpipes). This programme is widely regarded as North America's premier degree course in piping and with three students currently enrolled. Notable graduates of this course include Lyric Todkill (Pipe Band Director at St. Thomas' Episcopal School, Texas), Nicholas Hudson (2022 Northern Meeting Gold Medallist), and Dr. Andrew Bova (Research Coordinator and Piping Teacher at The National Piping Centre). North of Pittsburgh, Edinboro University also offers a degree in music education with pipes as a first instrument.

PIPING AS A UNIVERSITY ELECTIVE STUDY

The National Piping Centre and The University of Glasgow have a unique partnership, offering a course for study abroad students entitled 'The Highland Bagpipe: History, Repertoire, and Performance'. The course is delivered at SCQF Level 8 over one semester for undergraduate students studying abroad at The University of Glasgow and features both cultural and historical seminars alongside individual piping tuition. This programme has suffered as a result of the pandemic. Pre-pandemic, typical annual enrolment for the course sat between 40 and 60 students. A breakdown of enrolments on this course can be found in the tables provided.

Year/Semester	Enrolment
2019 S2	18
2019 S1	25
2020 S2	13
2020 S1	Cancelled
2021 S2	Cancelled
2021 S1	7
2022 S2	7
2022 S1	8

This course has struggled to return to pre-covid enrolment numbers, partly due to reduced student numbers engaging with study abroad and partly due to changes in the registration process brought on by Covid. Additionally, this course was previously also offered at the University of Edinburgh, but was not revived following the pandemic.

Education and

POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

Postgraduate education involves degrees at Masters (SCQF 11) and Doctoral (SCQF 12) levels. As discussed above, the National Piping Centre, in partnership with The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, offers a Masters level degree in both piping and drumming. Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, USA also offers a Master of Music degree in piping performance, from which there have been two graduates.

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland offers a PhD programme with awards validated by the University of St. Andrews. To date, three PhDs in piping have been completed at the RCS. Professor Simon McKerrrell, Professor in Media and Music at Glasgow Caledonian University, was awarded the degree for a thesis entitled 'Scottish Competition Bagpipe Performance: Sound, Mode and Aesthetics' in 2005. Next to earn the degree was Dr. Decker Forrest, Programme Leader for the BA (Hons) Gaelic and Traditional Music Degree at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, with a thesis entitled 'Ceòl Beag: the Development and Performance Practice of the "Small Music" of the Great Highland Bagpipe (c. 1820-1966)' in 2009. Most recently, Dr. Andrew Bova, a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University's undergraduate and Masters degrees in piping and Research Coordinator for The National Piping Centre, was awarded his PhD in 2020 for his thesis entitled 'Competitive Scottish Bagpipe Repertoire from 1947-2015: Convention, Change, and Innovation'.

In February of 2023, Dr. Andrew Yu was awarded his PhD from The School of Scottish Studies at The University of Edinburgh entitled 'The Development of Scottish Bagpiping in Former British Colonies of the Far East'.

PhDs in piping have been pursued internationally, as well. These include Dr. Daniel Milosavljevic and Dr. Erin Grant at The University of Otago in New Zealand, Dr. Fraser Clark at The University of Guelph in Canada, and Dr. Patrick Reagan at Durham University in England.

EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON TEACHING

While various effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been highlighted throughout this section, further information has been gleaned as a result of this study. Responses to a survey distributed to educational institutions in Scotland by the researchers for this report has yielded a breadth of responses concerning learners aged five through sixty. Responses were more heavily weighted towards the bottom end of that spectrum, with the majority of responses concerning learners aged nine to eighteen. State schools, private schools, higher education institutions, and independent teaching organisations were among the respondents.

Due to a small sample size of responses, statistical questions asked in the survey bear little weight when considering the broad spectrum of teaching in Scotland. However, the respondents teach a combined body of 1,636 students, meaning that impactful information can still be pulled from the data. Further information regarding the effects of the pandemic has been pulled from publically available reports published by various piping and drumming organisations.

Through the survey, 87% of the organisations reported that they continued to operate during the pandemic. 6% responded that they ceased operations during the pandemic and 6% reported that their organisation did not exist until after the pandemic ended. However, of the organisations that existed during the pandemic, 50% reported that they continued taking on new students during the pandemic and 50% reported that they did not take on new students during the pandemic. When asked how post-pandemic operations differ from pre-pandemic operations, there was a strong correlation between schools that continued to accept new pupils and reporting a generally positive outlook on current student numbers and the progress of their pupils. Conversely, schools that did not take on new pupils tended to report an overall dip in students post-pandemic or negative impacts upon the overall health of their programmes. When asked how the size of their programme compared to pre-pandemic numbers, 46% reported an increase, 23% reported a decrease, and 31% reported no change.

Of the schools that continued operations, when asked how they adapted their pedagogy to work within the lockdown environment and COVID-19 restrictions, a variety of creative answers were given including moving tuition online for both groups and individuals, teaching outdoors, and the use of electronic practice chanters.

For schools that depend upon recruitment such as The National Centre of Excellence in Traditional Music and The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, a particular challenge was the reduced ability to recruit students due to travel restrictions.

The National Piping Centre moved all tuition online including individual tuition, group lessons, seasonal gatherings, and teaching for the RCS piping degree. TNPC reports that a noticeable effect of moving tuition online was the increased global reach of its programmes, resulting in broader international engagement and community building. While some of this global interest in online tuition has started to wane as life increasingly returns to normal and in-person tuition is more readily available, TNPC remains committed to a continued effort of global accessibility through online learning.

Performance Opportunities

INTRODUCTION TO PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities for pipers and drummers to perform are myriad, including playing with pipe bands (as discussed under the RSPBA), competing in junior, amateur, and professional solo competitions, taking part in festivals, or playing in more informal settings. This section explores the opportunities for players to perform, as well as organisations that support these performance opportunities.

THE SOLO PIPING JUDGES' ASSOCIATION

The Solo Piping Judges' Association (SPJA) is recognised by the Competing Pipers' Association (CPA) and major piping competitions as the sole authority for the appointment and regulation of qualified solo piping judges in Scotland, though the association does contain overseas members, reflecting a global standard of excellence in piping. Judges fall into two categories: senior and approved. Senior judges are those who have competed successfully at a high level over an extended period and who can demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and experience in judging. Approved judges must demonstrate experience and knowledge, as well as experience in competition, but not necessarily at the highest level.

JUNIOR COMPETITIONS

Junior competitions provide many young pipers with their first opportunity to perform in public and play a vital role in the development of young pipers, not only in terms of their musical skills but also in their participation in the community of piping. These competitions serve as a forum where young pipers meet their peers and form lasting friendships, gain confidence, and develop other life skills. These competitions are organised and run by individual organisations and societies. In addition to competitions organised by piping organisations, local Highland games also run junior competitions, which provide young pipers with the opportunity to listen to top-class competitors and gain an understanding of the standards required in this form of piping. There were a total of 78 junior competitions held in Scotland in 2022, listed below.

Junior Competitions 2022

- Mods
- Àird nam Murchan | Ardnamurchan
- An Dreòlluinn | Mull
- An t-Eilean Sgìtheanach | Skye
- An t-Òban | Oban
- Barraigh | Barra
- Cataibh is Gallaibh | Sutherland & Caithness
- Cille Bhrìghde an Ear | East Kilbride
- Dùn Èideann | Edinburgh
- Glaschu | Glasgow
- Ìle | Islay
- Inbhir Nis | Inverness
- Leòdhas | Lewis
- Loch Abar | Lochaber
- Mod Lochailse | Lochalsh
- Na Hearadh | Harris
- Royal National Mod
- Siorrachd Pheairt agus Aonghais | Perthshire and Angus
- Sruighlea | Stirling
- Uibhist | Uist

Highland Games and Dedicated Junior Competitions

- Aberdeen Highland Games
- Abernethy Highland Games
- Aboyne Highland Games
- Airth Highland Games
- Arisaig Highland Games
- Assynt Highland Games
- Atholl and Breadalbane Gathering
- Ballater Highland Games
- Balquhidder Lochearnhead and Strathyre Highland Games
- Birnam Highland Games

OPPORTUNITIES ARE MYRIAD

Junior competitions play a vital role in young player development

Performance

Performance Opportunities

Blairgowrie and Rattray Highland Games

Braemar Gathering

Braemar Junior Games

Ceres Highland Games

Cowal Gathering

Dornoch Highland Gathering

Dundonald Highland Games

Durness Games

Festival of Juvenile Solo Piping

Forres Highland Games

Glenfinnan Highland Gathering

Glenisla Highland Games

Glenmorangie Tain Highland Gathering

Glenurquhart Highland Games and Gathering

Gordon Castle Highland Games and Country Fair

Graeme Johnstone Memorial

Halkirk Highland Games

Harpenden Highland Gathering

Helmsdale and District Highland Games

Highlands and Islands

Inveraray Highland Games

Inverness Highland Games

Isle of Mull Games

Kenmore Highland Games

Killin International Highland Games

Kinloch Rannoch Highland Games

Loch Lomond Highland Games

Lochaber Piping Society Junior Competition

Lonach Highland Gathering and Games

Luss Highland Gathering

Mallaig and Morar Highland Games

Markinch Highland Games

Nairn Highland Games

Newtonmore Highland Games

North Uist Highland Games

Pitlochry Highland Games

Scottish Piping Society of London

Skye Highland Games

South Uist Games and Piping Society Highland Gathering

St. Andrews Highland Games

Stonehaven Highland Games

Strathardle Highland Gathering

Strathmore Highland Games

Strathpeffer Highland Games

Taynuilt Highland Games

The Atholl Gathering

The National Piping Centre Junior Competition

The Northern Meeting

Tomintoul Highland Games

The National Piping Centre's Junior Competition might be used as a case study to observe engagement with junior competitions. Entry numbers for the past four years are listed below.

Year	Total Competitors
2019	94
2020	98
2021	227
2022	88
2023	83

It is important to note that TNPC's Junior Competition regularly reaches capacity for competitors, capped at 30 entrants per individual event. In 2019 and 2020, there were 9 events across three categories including chanter competitions, U15 competitions, and U18 competitions. In 2021, the competition moved online and, because there was no constraint on space available to hold the competitions, increased to 17 events. This year saw a massive increase in international competitors joining the competition, allowing young players to compete against an international field of competitors that would otherwise not be possible. A freestyle competition was introduced in this year, with the aim of encouraging young people to experiment with different instruments, arrangements,

and video editing. In 2022, the competition returned to an in-person format, but the online freestyle event remained, and remains popular with international competitors. While the piping events remain strong, entries in the chanter category have reduced by approximately 50%, going from an average of 23 competitors to an average of 12 competitors.

ADULT AMATEUR PIPING COMPETITIONS AND THE COMPETITION LEAGUE FOR AMATEUR SOLO PIPERS

CLASP

COMPETITION LEAGUE FOR AMATEUR SOLO PIPERS

The world of amateur piping competitions has undergone significant changes over the past decade. Through the Competition League for Amateur Solo Pipers (CLASP), over 18 open solo competitions and a limited number of dedicated amateur events have evolved into a more organised structure that provides performance and competition opportunities for those who wish to participate in competitions, but not at the professional level.

The CLASP is currently the primary platform for open amateur competition. Founded in 2005 by The National Piping Centre, the CLASP offers a structured and graded set of competitions that allow for initial grading and progression through prizewinning and the gaining of points. The CLASP hosts numerous indoor and outdoor competitions throughout the calendar year, with the piobaireachd element of the contest based on set tunes. An essential aspect of CLASP is the feedback provided to competitors from judges, which allows them to receive an honest appraisal of their abilities and identify opportunities for improvement. Regular seminars and teaching events are held by TNPC to enable participants to learn these set tunes and expand their proficiency and repertoire. The charts below outline CLASP membership, competitions, and events run from 2019-2022.

CLASP Membership

Year	Members
2019	90
2020	160
2021	204
2022	179

Performance Opportunities

COMPETITIONS

CLASP Competitions		
Year	In-Person Competitions	Online Competitions
2019	10	0
2020	1	4
2021	0	5
2022	7	3

CLASP WORKSHOPS AND MASTERCLASSES

Year	In-Person Workshop	Online Workshop	IP/OL Workshop	Master classes
2019	1	0	0	0
2020	0	1	0	0
2021	0	1	0	0
2022	0	0	1	5

In 2020, the CLASP transitioned to a 100% online format for both competitions and annual weekend workshops in an effort to continue delivering competitions and education during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, there was a marked increase in the number of international competitors willing and able to participate in the CLASP competitions, and thus an increase in membership. As in-person competitions have returned around the world, there has been a slight drop-off of participation from international competitors online. While the overall number of competitions was halved during the pandemic, the fully online format proved successful, as reflected in the membership figures. In an effort to maintain the global community created during the pandemic, a reduced number of online competitions have been retained. Additionally, the annual weekend workshop which moved from an in-person to an online format has been reconfigured to be a blended in-person/online approach, again in an effort to maintain global engagement. Finally, with the availability of bringing in guest speakers online, a new 'CLASP In Conversation With' master class series was launched, wherein leading members of the piping community present online seminars on various topics.

ADULT PROFESSIONAL COMPETITIONS AND THE COMPETING PIPERS' ASSOCIATION



The Competing Pipers Association's (CPA) main aim is to provide competition promoters with a professional, competent system of evaluation that results in only the best candidates being selected to play in professional competitions. This is achieved in part through their grading system, which provides a framework for advancement through competitive success. Members typically enter the CPA in the C grade, progressing through B, A, and finally to P (professional) as they gain regular success in their allotted grade.

Many P and A grade events are seen as elite competitions, central to the solo piping ecosystem in that they present a clear goal as players progress, attract the highest calibre players, offer prestige for prize-winners, and, at times, act as qualifying events for invitation-only competitions. Events that fall into this category include the Dunvegan Medal on Skye, the Masters Solo Piping Competition in Glasgow, P and A events at the Argyllshire Gathering in Oban, P and A events at

the Northern Meeting in Inverness, and the Bratach Gorm in London. To facilitate competitors working towards eligibility to compete in these prestigious events, the CPA was also responsible for instituting the Silver Medal piobaireachd competitions at the Northern Meeting and Argyllshire Gathering. In March of 2022, The CPA introduced a Bronze Medal piobaireachd competition, held at The National Piping Centre, for players not yet eligible for the Silver Medal Competitions. This event was sponsored by The Piobaireachd Society. The CPA also receives funding from The William Grant Foundation towards B and C graded competitions. However, the majority of their income comes from member subscriptions, with a small portion of their income coming from competition entries at The Duncan Johnstone Memorial, Bronze Medal, Royal National Mod, and John MacLellan competitions. A breakdown of their membership figures from 2019-2022 can be found in the tables provided.

CPA Membership	
Year	Members
2019	232
2020	229
2021	206
2022	230

While there was a dip in membership during the pandemic, this was largely due to a lack of available CPA graded competitions in which to participate, and membership has returned to pre-pandemic levels with the reintroduction of regular competitions throughout the year.

A sample of competition health can be gleaned from The Duncan Johnstone Memorial Competition, held annually at The National Piping Centre and jointly run by the CPA and TNPC.

Performance Opportunities

Performance Opportunities

Duncan Johnstone Memorial Entries	
Year	Total Performances
2019	170
2020	147
2021	Cancelled
2022	157

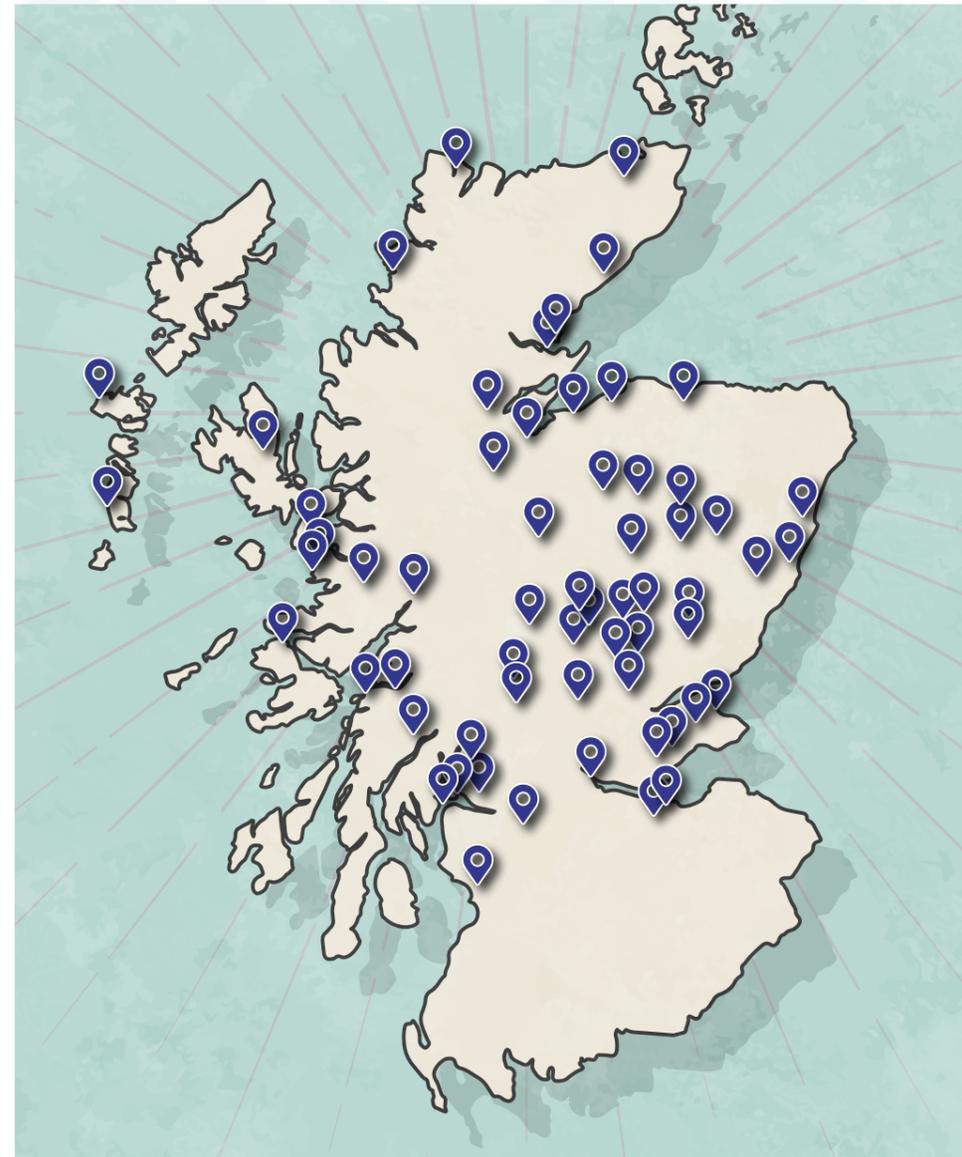
The CPA is one of the members of the Joint Committee for Solo Piping Competitions, which fosters dialogue between competitors, judges, and competition promoters. While the CPA does not oversee all solo competitions in Scotland, they do provide an annual 'guide to the games' that lists all of the available solo competitions in that given year. A list of the competitions, including highland games and indoor solo competitions, is provided below, alongside a map of these competitions' locations.

2022 Solo Piping Competitions
Aberdeen Highland Games
Abernethy Highland Games
Aboyne Highland Games
Airth Highland Games
Arisaig Highland Games
Assynt Highland Games
Atholl and Breadalbane Gathering
Ballater Highland Games
Balquhiddy Lochearnhead and Strathyre Highland Games
Birnam Highland Games
Blairgowrie and Rattray Highland Games
Bowhill Highland Games
Braemar Gathering
Ceres Highland Games
Cortachy Highland Games
Cowal Highland Gathering
CPA Bronze Medal

Creiff Highland Games
Dornoch Highland Gathering
Drumtochty Highland Games
Duncan Johnstone Memorial
Dundonald Highland Games
Durness Games
Forres Highland Games
Glenfinnan Highland Gathering
Glenisla Highland Games
Glenmorangie Tain Highland Gathering
Glenurquhart Highland Games and Gathering
Gordon Castle Highland Games and Country Fair
Halkirk Highland Games
Harpden Highland Gathering
Helensburgh and Lomond Games
Helmsdale and District Highland Games
Highlands and Island Music and Dance Festival
Inveraray Highland Games
Inverness Highland Games
Isle of Mull Games
Kenmore Highland Games
Killin International Highland Games
Kinloch Rannoch Highland Games
Loch Lomond Highland Games
Lochaber Gathering
Lonach Highland Gathering and Games
Luss Highland Gathering
Mallaig and Morar Highland Games
Markinch Highland Games
Nairn Highland Games
Newtonmore Highland Games
North Uist Highland Games
Pitlochry Highland Games
Royal National Mod
Skye Highland Games
South Uist Games and Piping Society Highland Gathering
SPA Professional
St. Andrews Highland Games
Stonehaven Highland Games
Strathardle Highland Gathering

Strathmore Highland Games
Strathpeffer Highland Games
Taynuilt Highland Games
The Argyllshire Gathering

The Atholl Gathering
The Captain John MacLellan MBE Piping Championship
The Northern Meeting
Tomintoul Highland Games



There has been a slight drop off in competitions following the pandemic. Below, a chart demonstrates the number of competitions held in 2017 and 2022.

Year	Number of Contests
2017	60
2022	56

Performance

ADULT INVITATIONAL PROFESSIONAL SOLO PIPING COMPETITIONS

As competitors progress to the highest level of solo competition, a small world of premier invitational competitions open up. These include events such as the Silver Chanter, Donald MacDonald Quaich, Donald MacLeod Memorial, Springbank Invitational, Captain John MacLellan MBE Memorial Dinner, Uist and Barra, Masters' Invitational, and the Glenfiddich Solo Piping Championship. Of these, the Glenfiddich Solo Piping Championship, or simply 'the Glenfiddich' to the piping world, holds the reputation as the pinnacle of all solo piping competitions. All of these events tend to be well attended by the public, due to their high profile and high standard of performance. Attendance and online viewership figures for the Glenfiddich are listed below.

Glenfiddich Solo Piping Championship Audience Figures			
Year	Advance Ticket Sales	In-Person Attendance	Online Views
2019	162	~380	6,147
2020	1,143 (streaming tickets)	N/A	6,436
2021	192	~270	1,808
2022	225	~380	2,212

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the competition was held in 2020 behind closed doors and offered to the public as a live streamed event. For the first time in 2020, the stream was held behind a ticketed paywall. This did not, however, diminish viewership figures. The event remained behind a paywall in 2021 and 2022 which, likely in conjunction with streaming event burnout and the reintroduction of in-person events, has reduced online viewership of the event from pre-pandemic numbers. In 2021, the event was able to return to an in-person format with limited seating due to concerns surrounding COVID-19, resulting in the lower in-person attendance figure. However, in 2022, the event returned to a restriction-free format and a capacity attendance of approximately 380 attendees.

SOLO PIPE BAND DRUMMING COMPETITIONS

The world of pipe band drumming performance mostly exists within the context of ensemble performance through pipe bands. However, there are a small number of solo drumming events throughout the year where pipe band percussionists are able to demonstrate their individual skill. Chief among these is the World Solo Drumming Championships, run by the RSPBA each October in Glasgow. For the premier solo drumming title, there are a number of qualifying events for this championship throughout the year. A list of solo drumming competitions can be found in the tables provided.

Solo Pipe Band Drumming Competitions

- World Solo Drumming Circuit
- Scottish Solo Drumming Championship (qualifying event)
- European Solo Drumming Championship (qualifying event)
- British Solo Drumming Championship (qualifying event)
- World Solo Drumming Championship

Solo Drumming Competitions

- George Watson's College Indoor Solo Contest
- Ayr, Dumfries and Galloway Indoor Solo Contest
- Lothian & Borders Branch Indoor Contest
- Braemar Junior Games
- Lochaber Gathering
- North of Scotland Solo Drumming Competition
- Lathallan Junior Highland Games

These drumming events largely focus on snare drum, with a more limited approach taken to bass and tenor events. In 2022, the RSPBA offered the first adult tenor drumming event at the World Solo Drumming Championships, won by Jordan Bailie of Inveraray and District Pipe Band. These competitions are conducted by age category, rather than playing ability as is achieved through piping organisations such as the CLASP and CPA.

PIPE BAND COMPETITIONS

Detailed information on opportunities available for piper and drummers to compete in the context of pipe bands can be found under The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association in the first section of this report.

PIPERS AS PROFESSIONAL PERFORMING MUSICIANS

In addition to the myriad opportunities available for pipers and drummers to perform through competitive means, there are increasing opportunities, largely as a result of the folk revival of the 80s and increase in traditional music degree programmes, for these musicians to perform in more conventional, non-competitive environments such as festivals,

Perform

Performance Opportunities

recitals, concerts, and sessions. Importantly, these opportunities have laid the groundwork for professional pipers and drummers today to build portfolio careers. It is important to note that pipers and drummers have historically assigned the term 'professional' to the best players in the competitive community, though these players are not always career musicians. These portfolio careers may include touring, both through festivals and individual gigs; recording; producing books; taking commissions for new compositions; and teaching, both privately and freelance through organisations such as TNPC, the RCS, and Fèisean nan Gàidheal. An example of festival opportunities available includes Celtic Connections, which featured 14 performances in 2023 involving highland or bellows pipes.

The landscape for professional pipers and drummers is dynamic, reacting to changes in society and culture. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic halted all live performances, which resulted in digital concerts and collaborations to allow these musicians to continue working professionally during the pandemic. Additionally, the rise of streaming platforms has altered the way new music is released, moving away from album launches and focusing on singles and music videos released via streaming platforms.

A list of events and event organisers can be found in the tables provided.

Performance Events and Organisers

- Belladrum Tartan Heart Festival
- Burns & Beyond Festival
- Carradale Music Festival
- Celtic Connections
- Ceol Cholasa
- Dandelion Festival
- Eilean Dorcha Festival
- Edinburgh International Festival
- Edinburgh Trad Fest
- Fresh Ayr Festival
- The Gathering
- Gig at the Gathering (Cowal)
- Gig in the Gail
- Glasgow Skye Association
- Hands Up for Trad
- HebCelt
- Highlands and Islands Music & Dance Festival
- Jura Music Festival
- Killin Music Fest
- Kintyre Piping Society
- Lowland & Border Pipers' Society
- Lochwinnoch Arts Festival
- Lewis & Harris Piping Society
- Mull Music Festival
- Mull of Kintyre Music Festival
- The NPC/Piping Live
- NYPBoS
- Netherlorn Piping Society
- Orkney Folk Festival
- The Reeling Festival
- Royal National Mòd
- Skye Live
- Tiree Music Festival
- Tiree Piping Society



THE NATIONAL PIPING CENTRE – A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Scotland's Piping and Drumming Ecology Report

by The National Piping Centre



Commisioned by
WILLIAM GRANT
FOUNDATION