

WINTER GUARD UNITED KINGDOM 2026

RULES AND REGULATIONS



September 2025

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This is an update of the rules and regulations for Winter Guard contests
as at 1st September 2025.

Any future amendments will be sent to you as an addendum to this booklet, or where any major changes to the rules, a new rules and regulations booklet will be produced and forwarded to each Guard.

Should you require further copies of this booklet please contact the address above or visit the Download Section on the WGUK website – <http://www.wguk.org.uk/downloads>



Whilst regulations regarding COVID19 are now relaxed there may be additional rules and restrictions we need to put in place and we ask that all members, staff and supporters adhere to these as and when they are issued.

1. ELIGIBILITY

Any mention below of "not over" an age means not reached their next birthday (i.e. not over 12 years of age means has not reached their 13th Birthday - not over 18 years of age means has not reached their 19th Birthday)

- 1.1** The average age of the members in an A Class Guard must not be over 22 years of age on the 31st August of the year preceding the competitive circuit. (i.e. average not over 22 on 31/08/25 to in the 2026 circuit). In addition - no member can be over the age of 25 as at the 31/08/25 perform
- 1.2** The average age of the members in a Junior Class Guard must not be over 16 years of age on the 31st August of the year preceding the competitive circuit. (i.e. average not over 16 on 31/08/25 to perform in the 2026 circuit). In addition - no member can be over the age of 18 as at the 31/08/25.
- 1.3** The average age of all the members in a Cadet Class Guard must not be over 10 years of age on the 31st August of the year preceding the competitive circuit. (i.e. average not over 10 on 31/08/25 to perform in the 2026 circuit). In addition - no member can be over the age of 12 as at the 31/08/25.
- 1.3a** Members of a Kids Class Guard must not be over 8 years of age on the 30th April 2026 to perform in the 2026 circuit and is based on School Key Stage 1.
- 1.4** The average age will be calculated by the whole year age of the member (i.e. not taking into account the months) on 31st August in the year proceeding the season just about to start (i.e. for 2025 the ages of the members on 31st August 2024 will be used to calculate the average age - which will be rounded up to 2 decimal places). Further details and help regarding this to ensure your calculations are correct can be sourced by contacting WGUK **before** submitting your member registrations. No dispensation will be allowed on any of the age eligibility rules.
- 1.5** There is no age limit in Open Class or World Class.
- 1.6** All Guards entering the circuit will be required to complete a member's registration form and proof of Guard member's ages may be required (see Rule 15. Withholding of Individual Registration).
- 1.7** A person may only perform with one Guard/unit in any one season.
- 1.8** Guards may compete in any class with a minimum of 6 and a suggested maximum of 30 members including Guard Captain(s). The maximum number is advisory to ensure performers can safely perform in the space available but can be higher if the Guard has assessed any risk and confirmed this to WGUK prior to the event/season. The minimum requirement may be waived by the WGUK Contest Referee* or by the WGUK Chair in respect of the season. Entry to World Class is only available to units that achieved a score of 85+ in Open Class at the previous year's Championships or were already in World Class in the previous season.
- 1.9** In line with national safeguarding guidelines, the lower end age limit before a member can be registered to perform at a WGUK contest is 4 years old and therefore the member **MUST** be 4 years old on or before the 31st August 2025 to be eligible to perform in 2026.

2. ARENA SPECIFICATIONS

- 2.1** The minimum Competition Arena size will be 80ft (*approx. 24.4m*) (front line) by 50ft (*approx. 15.25m*) (side line). All reference to Competition Arena and/or Arena in this booklet refers to these measurements.
- 2.2** The Arena markings, except where otherwise specified or approved, shall be laid down on the arena with yellow/black adhesive tape and are as follows
 - 2.2.1** Tape will mark the front-line boundary, with a taped mark at the centre.
 - 2.2.2** The start/finish line will be marked on the front boundary line (see 3.2 below).
- 2.3** All contests must have a professional sound system with provision for MP3 playback, with backup and adequate speakers. The preferred method of performing units supplying their music soundtrack will be via uploading to Competition Suite but all Guards must also supply a backup MP3. Sound systems should be tested by show sponsors on site prior to the start of the contest.
- 2.4** In the event of a mechanical failure with regard to music playback or other unreasonable interference with the performance, a Guard may be invited to withdraw and be rescheduled to compete later at the discretion of the WGUK Contest Referee*.

3. COMPETITION RULES

3.1 Time limits:

3.1.1 Kids Class/Cadet Class/Exhibition Class - The maximum time allowed on the Arena (see rule 2.2.2 above) will be 7 minutes. There will be no minimum performance time in this class.

3.1.2 Junior Class - The minimum performance time will be 3 minutes. The maximum time allowed on the arena (see rule 2.2.2 above) will be 8 minutes.

3.1.3 A Class - The minimum performance time will be 4 minutes. The maximum time allowed on the Arena (see rule 2.2.2 above) will be 9 minutes.

3.1.4 Open Class - The minimum performance time will be 4 minutes. The maximum time allowed on the arena (see rule 2.2.2 above) will be 9 minutes.

3.1.5 World Class - The minimum performance time will be 4 minutes. The Maximum time allowed on the arena (see rule 2.2.2 above) will be 10 minutes.

3.1.6 ALL Classes - Any Guard promoted (see rules 10. Promotion System at the end of this booklet) during the season can adhere to the timings of the class they were promoted from.

3.2 Guards total allocated Arena time (as specified above) will be divided into two parts:

A centre line will no longer be mandatory at contests and will be replaced by a small taped mark on the front boundary line. For the ease of definition, the Centre Line (start/finish line) is defined as a virtual line from the centre mark running at 90 degrees to the front line through the arena.

There will be no announcement to check if the judges are ready, The Chief Judge will have responsibility to let the Contest Referee*/Arena Marshall** know if any issue arises prior to the next Guard crossing the start/finish line.

a) Arena Entrance Time

Any equipment and/or props may be placed in the Competition Arena by anyone prior to the start of competition. Any non-members involved in set up must exit the Competition Arena prior to the start of performance time. Guards can move onto the floor up to the centre mark as the previous Guard exits past the centre line. The Arena Marshall** will indicate when the Guard can begin moving across the centre line or start pre-show music. Timing will NOT begin until the first performer or member of staff setting equipment/props crosses the centre start/finish line or the intro music begins.

b) Performance and Exit Time

The timing for this will start with the first note of music or movement from the Guard after the announcement that your Guard may start its performance (this announcement may be included within the Guards entry/show music). The Guard MUST inform the Contest Referee*/Arena Marshall** at each and every show if this option is to be used). Timing will cease when all personnel, equipment and/or props have cleared the centre line and any music is completed. For purposes of timing, equipment and props are considered "removed" when they have crossed the vertical centre line and music as ceased. After the equipment/props have crossed this line, they must continue to make forward progress out of the Competition Arena ensuring the whole arena is left in a fit and cleaned state for the next performing unit – the Contest Referee* will make any adjudication regarding excessive time to completely clear the Competition Arena.

3.3 Guards will be scheduled to compete on the Arena at intervals of no less than the maximum allowed Arena time for their class (see rule 3.1.1 - 3.1.5 above). Failure to appear at the marshalling area at the allotted time will incur penalties at the discretion of the WGUK Contest Referee*.

3.4 Music is permitted throughout a Guards arena time. This music must be controlled by a member of the Guards staff and will be included in the Guards set up time and exit times. (See rule 3.2).

3.5 Guards may enter/exit over any boundary subject to the provisions of rule 5.7. Equipment can only be used within the designated arena.

- 3.6** Any number of non-performing members may assist in setting out equipment prior to the Guard's performance and in clearing the arena on completion of the performance. However, only a limited number of passes will be issued by WGUK and all other helpers will be expected to pay for admission and be in possession of a valid ticket.
- 3.7** A member dropping their piece of equipment may retrieve it without assessment of a penalty. A Guard may wish to designate one or two (maximum) equipment retrievers. They must not wear Guard costumes. These retrievers may return dropped equipment to the performer without gaining a penalty but may not move any other equipment, scenery or props, or bring on new items of equipment, scenery or props, once the performance time has started
- Non-performing personnel may not enter the Competition Arena during the Guard's performance time. The only exceptions to this will be in the act of returning dropped equipment, First Aid cases or Health & Safety concerns.
- 3.8** Guards must not cause or risk injury to members of the audience, judges or officials or themselves. Guards should be particularly careful when discarding equipment to ensure that it does not land in the audience or hit a judge or official. Any item of equipment or act of performance which is considered by the Contest Referee* to constitute a hazard or risk to any person may be prohibited at the show concerned or at any subsequent show. A minimum safety space of 1M should be maintained at all times from spectators.
- 3.9** All scenery, props and any other equipment used during the show can only be assembled either prior to the start of the competition or after passing the centre start line at the start of the total Arena time allowed. All scenery entering the Arena must be capable of fitting through a doorway 6'6" high by 6' wide at the point of entering the Competition Arena at the beginning and end of the total allowed Arena time. i.e. scenery can only be assembled to a size in excess of the aforementioned during the total Arena time and must be disassembled to the required size before clearing the Competition Arena.
- 3.10** An equipment/scenery storage area will be designated by the Contest Referee* in conjunction with the Show Organiser to the start of the event. This may be inside or outside the main hall. All scenery/equipment removed after a performance must be returned to the storage area immediately after crossing the finish line.
- 3.11** Flooring surfaces must enter the Competition Arena without being in any way unfolded or otherwise prepared and must be immediately capable of storage when they clear the Competition Arena i.e. flooring surfaces cannot be folded once they have cleared the Competition Arena and must therefore be folded to an acceptable state for storage before leaving the Competition Arena. Small pieces of flooring being used as scenery or similar do not necessarily need to be folded before being removed but must not cause any hazard whilst being removed from the Competition Arena.

4. AUTHORISED GUARD EQUIPMENT

- 4.1** The following WILL NOT be allowed on or around the Arena area - pyrotechnics, pressurised canisters, inflammable substances, animals, hazardous chemicals, smoke or dry ice machines, lasers and strobe lighting. Whilst mains and battery powered electrical equipment is permitted all items must be **declared to the Contest Referee*/Arena Marshall**** each and every show for safety approval. Each unit takes full responsibility for the safety of any used equipment.

Each Guard should consult with Contest Referee*/Arena Marshall** prior to using any equipment not specifically defined in these rules.

- 4.2** Guard equipment - general definitions:

- Flag - Material attached to a pole of minimum length 24".
Minimum flag size - 8" x 12".
National Colours must be a minimum size of 3' x 5'.
- Rifle - Minimum of 2' in length.
All rifles must be simulated.
- Sabre - Minimum of 2' in length with a handle or grip.
Sabres must be simulated or rendered safe.

4.3 Use of Mains Electrical Equipment:

- 4.3.1 All classes will have access to two electrical mains power sources at the front and back centreline to use any electrical device within their programme deemed safe by the Contest Organiser and Contest Referee* and that does not breach any other WGUK defined rule.
- 4.3.2 Each Guard must advise the Contest Referee*/Arena Marshall** at EVERY contest, in advance of the start if their class, if they will be using any electrical equipment at that event. The Contest Referee* has the ultimate decision regarding safety of any device in consultation with the Guard Director. The Colour Guard will assume any liability for issues arising out of the use of said electrical devices.
- 4.3.3 In the event of any electrical supply failure any performance re-run will be at the discretion of the Contest Referee*. In the event of any equipment provided by the performing unit failing no re-run will be permitted.
- 4.3.4 Neither the contest organiser nor any other organisation connected with the contest accepts responsibility in any way for the use of any electricity supply which might be provided. The use of any electricity whether supplied by the contest or by the competing Guard will be at the sole risk of the individual unit. All electrical equipment used will be deemed to be portable and as such must display/carry a valid PAT tested certificate.

5. PENALTIES

- 5.1 A Guard will be disqualified from a competition if found in breach of Rule 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.3a.
- 5.2 Improper use of National Colours will attract a penalty of 1/10 point for each offence. Dropping of National Colours will result in a penalty of one whole point. (National Colours refers to the national flag of any recognised nation. Such flags may not be used for display purposes and must at all times be treated with the dignity which should be afforded to a national flag.)
- 5.3 The use of any illegal equipment will attract a penalty of minimum 1/2 point.
- 5.4 Safety violations will attract a penalty of 1 whole point per member for each offence.
- 5.5 Penalties relating to timing offences will be at the rate of 1/10 point for every 1 second unless otherwise stated (over a maximum or under a minimum timing requirement).
- 5.6 A Guard failing to report to the assembly area at the stipulated time will attract a penalty of 5/10 points for each 5 minutes late or part thereof up to the conclusion of the contest at the discretion of the WGUK Contest Referee*.
- 5.7 Any infraction of Arena entry or exit rules will attract 1/10 point penalty for each member up to a maximum of 2 whole points for 20 members or more. The front line may only be crossed under the direction of WGUK Contest Referee*/Arena Marshall**
- 5.8 Any Guard causing or risking injury to any member of the audience, judge, performing member or official will attract a minimum penalty of one (1) whole point for each incident at the WGUK Contest Referee's* discretion.
- 5.9 Any infringement of rules 3.6, 3.8, 3.9 or 3.10 will attract a minimum of 5/10 points penalty
- 5.10 General: Any Guard violating any rules, or part of a rule, for which no specific penalty is provided may be penalised for each such violation, not less than 1/10 point nor more than disqualification at the discretion of the WGUK Referee*.
- 5.11 All equipment used must be adequately protected to avoid injury to any competitors, officials, audience etc, and to the Arena surface. Poles should have either a stopper fitted or be protected in some other way and rifles/sabres should be rendered safe. Any equipment may be inspected by the WGUK Referee* and dangerous equipment may be prohibited from being used.

- 5.12** No show design or floor is to cross the front boundary. The side and back boundary lines are advisory; it must be born in mind that the safety of the audience and participants is paramount. Any designed activity which involves crossing the side and back boundary lines and which is, in the opinion of the WGUK Contest Referee*, unsafe or potentially unsafe may attract penalties up to and including disqualification. Designs involving the crossing of side and back boundaries must be reported to the WGUK Contest Referee*/Arena Marshall** prior to the competition. In no circumstances must aisles and safety gangway be used or compromised (A 1 Metre minimum clearance must be maintained between any activity and the audience). Fire exits must not be obscured. A penalty, at the discretion of the WGUK Contest Referee*, will be given for shows designed to cross the front boundary. If the front boundary line is crossed in error rather than by design then penalties may be given and will be at the discretion of the WGUK Contest Referee*.
- 5.13** Any Guard withdrawing from a show following the advertised closing date will attract a minimum penalty of two (2) whole points for the remainder of the season and including the British Winter Guard Championships.

6. SCORING

- 6.1** A full explanation of the current judging system and methods employed for the judging of all Classes is available upon request. The email address for any judging enquiries is judges@wguk.org.uk.
- 6.2** All Judges will be located at the front of the Arena either “upstairs” (e.g. top of the stand or a balcony – General Effect and Design Analysis Caption judges) or “downstairs” (low part of stand or slightly raised plinth – Movement and Equipment Caption judges).
- 6.3** All aspects will be judged throughout the whole of a Guard's performance up to the maximum performance time allowed for each class
- 6.4** Missing Judge Policy – if an allocated judge is unable to fulfil their duties on any given panel, an attempt will be made to fill that judge's caption with a certified judge. Chief Judge will work with the Judges Co-ordinator to confirm the replacement.

In the event of a missing judge on a single panel:- for General Effect the score given by the remaining General Effect Judge will be doubled. For the other three captions the missing judge's score will be determined as the average of the other four judges scores.

In the event of a missing judge on a double panel:- for General Effect the score given by the remaining General Effect Judges will be averaged and used to fill the missing General Effect judges score. For the other three captions the score given by the remaining Judge in that caption will be doubled. If a Caption has no judge at all then the missing judge's score will be determined as the average of all the other judges scores.

In the event of a missing judge for Kids Class:- the score from the remaining two judges will be averaged and will be used to fill the missing judges score.

Rationale when using the average score from the other 4 judges: The system is designed to work with four areas of emphasis: Equipment, Movement, Design Analysis, and General Effect. With a full panel, each individual judge has one-fifth of the total score. The system blends the four areas of emphasis to arrive at a total score. If someone is missing, the fairest and most consistent method of reaching a new score is to retain the blended system approach. Averaging the scores is consistent, and maintains the integrity of the system. If there is a missing judge, each remaining judge has one-fourth of the input to the total. No judge has to think differently on the day in applying scores or applying our process and the meaning of a tenth remains unchanged.

7. DISPUTES

- 7.1** Any dispute on the day of a competition shall be referred to the Contest Referee* for arbitration and the Contest Referee's* decision shall be final and binding on the day
- 7.2** Any dispute regarding the decision of a Contest Referee* should be reported immediately to the WGUK Chairman in writing, by post to 140 Rockingham Street, Barnsley, South Yorkshire. S71 1JU. Any dispute not lodged within 72 hours, commencing at midnight on the day of the competition, shall be considered void. On receipt of any such dispute the Chair shall consult with other Contest Referee*s and/or Board Members to review the decision involved in the dispute. The person referring the dispute will normally be informed of the outcome of the review within 14 days of it being lodged. There is no right of review of a decision reached by this mechanism. If the Chair is involved in the dispute, then the matter will be referred by him to the appointed Deputy for consideration.

8. TIE PROCEDURE

- 8.1** If there is a tie for 1st Place in any Class then this will stand and joint Champions will be announced. Ties will be permitted for contest positions and champions at any contest including finals. However, should a tie be recorded during a seeding block then the Guard with the highest score is deemed the winner. If these scores are the same then a Toss of a Coin should be used to separate.

9. SEEDING

- 9.1** The performance order for the January contests will be determined by the date in which a fully competed and confirmed registration is received and then a random draw of each day's registrations.
- 9.2** For all Classes, except Kids Class & Exhibition Class, seeding to be introduced after first show, based on an average of a Guard's last two shows (or one show if only one attended). Re-seeding will occur after each show. Kids Class and Exhibition Class order of performance will be by random draw for every contest including British Championships
- 9.3** The Cadet Class Championships order of performance will be based on the seeding from rule 9.2.
- 9.4** If numbers permit then at WGUK Championships every attempt will be made to allow Junior & A Class to match Rule 9.5 however if the number of units registered in Junior & A Class do not allow enough time in the Championships Day schedule then Junior & A Class Finals performance order will be based on the scores achieved in Prelims. Prelims performance order will be based on the seeding from rule 9.2. 50% of each class (up to a maximum of 8 units per class) are eligible to perform in their respective class Finals.
- 9.5** Open and World Class Finals performance order will be based on the scores achieved in Prelims. Prelims performance order will be based on the seeding from rule 9.2. All units are eligible to perform in their respective class Finals.
- 9.6** Any late entries or show contest changes will result in the unit performing first in class.
- 9.7** In the event of a contest being cancelled, and therefore no scores be allocated to those units that were scheduled to take part, future seedings will continue to be on the last two scores achieved.

10. PROMOTION SYSTEM

Cadet, Junior A and Open Class

- 10.1** For 2026 the minimum promotion score required will rise per contest and provisionally will be as follows:

<u>Jan 18th</u>	<u>Feb 01st</u>	<u>Feb 8th</u>	<u>Feb 14th</u>	<u>Mar 1st</u>	<u>Mar 15th</u>	<u>Mar 22nd</u>	<u>Apr 4th</u>
75 *	77	78	79	81	No promotion	No promotion	(85*) 90

- 10.2** If a Guard scores the minimum score as listed above AND at least 3 out of the 5 judges have promoted the Guard then they will be promoted to the next class – there will be no appeal. Promotion scores are subject to final approval prior to 1st January of each season * *Although a Promotion Score is allocated in January no promotions happen at first contest plus no in season promotions happen at any contest after 1st March 2026.*
- 10.3** Units may choose their class of competition (with the exception of World Class - see Rule 1.8) based on the criteria and expectations for that class. However, any Guard achieving the promotion criteria at **any time** during the season or scoring 90+ at Championships must compete in the equivalent promoted class for the following season. Any appeals are at the discretion of the WGUK Board.
** Any Guard achieving 85+ (but below 90) at Championships will also be advised that moving up to the next class for the next season should be considered but would not be mandatory.*
- 10.4** The judges will use the criteria reference as the sole basis for assigning scores at any contest.
- 10.5** Any Guard promoted from Cadet to Junior Class or Junior to A Class would be allowed to adhere to their performance times and other relevant rules from their previous class. Units in Kids Class cannot be promoted. Any Guard promoted will perform last in their new class at the next contest they attend and then in their seeded score position for any subsequent contests (*see Seeding above*). In addition, at the next contest attended, any unit promoted will receive a Promotion Certificate and at the WGUK Championships will receive a Gold Promotion Medal.
- 10.6** It is not the role of WGUK to demote Guards – a decision that should not be taken lightly by a Guard and one that should be discussed with WGUK if a Guard felt they were misclassified.

11. MEMBERSHIP & CONTEST FEES

- 11.1** Organisations can enrol on line for membership from the 1st October 2025.
- 11.2** MPAUK Membership Fee for 2025 is £75.00 per organisation.
WGUK Membership Fee for 2025 is £100.00 per organisation
- 11.3** For the 2026 season each WGUK Registered Guard must pay a £15.00 fee per season contest entered. The fee for WGUK Championships event will be £25.00 per Guard
- For the 2026 season each International or non WGUK Registered Guard must pay a £50 fee per season contest. The fee for WGUK Championships event will be £75.00 per Guard
- 11.4** Contest Organisers must pay WGUK a fee of £100.00 per contest they organise

12. INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATIONS

- 12.1** A form must be completed for each WGUK Registered Guard which includes each and every member who is to be registered to perform. Registration will only be finalised when ALL elements of the form are completed and the correct registration fee has been received.
- 12.2** Initial registrations must be received in full by WGUK at least 7 days in advance of the unit's first contest. Additional registrations must be received at least 48 hours prior to the next contest.
- 12.3** Registration fees per performing member are –
Kids/Cadets/Junior/A/Open/World: - £15.00 per member
No members may be registered after 1st March 2026.
- 12.4** The number of available staff passes (inc Directors) is as follows:
1 unit = 6 passes, 2 units = 11 passes, 3 units = 15 passes, 4 units = 18 passes, 5 units = 20 passes, 6 units = 21 passes
- 12.5** Registration fees per Staff member are -
ALL Classes: - £15.00 per member.
No staff member can be registered after 1st March 2026.
- 12.6** Participation fees for performing members and staff of International and/or non WGUK Registered Guards are as follows:
ALL Classes: £5 per member per contest entered at any time in the season. Maximum of £15.00 per performing/staff member in one season (*i.e. attending more than 3 events then no individual participation fee charged for event 4 onwards*)

13. CONTEST ENTRY REQUIREMENT, REGISTRATION PROCESS & PERFORMANCE ORDER

- 13.1** Contest Entry Requirement and Registration Process is approved annually by the WGUK Board
- 13.1.1** If your organisation has more than one unit then a separate registration is required for each unit.
- 13.1.2** Registration should be made by 1st November 2025 and should indicate the Class you wish to enter (please note that World Class is only available to 2025 World Class units or Open Class units who scored 85+ at the 2025 Championships) and also indicate which contests you will be attending.
- 13.1.3** With the exception of Kids Class - to be eligible to compete at the British Winter Guard Championships entries must include the contest in January, one of either of the first two contests in February and one of either of the last two contests in March. Entry into more contests than this is encouraged but not mandatory. To be eligible to perform at the WGUK Championships event Kids Class must enter at least two contests but these can be any two contests during the season.
- 13.1.4** If, after 1st November 2025, any contest is deemed to be under subscribed then the WGUK Board may decide to remove that contest from the schedule and if that contest was the only one you entered in that month you will need to choose another contest in that month to be eligible to perform at Championships.
- 13.1.5** Following 1st November 2025 show entry details will be released to units and you will have until 30th November 2025 to confirm or amend your show entries.
- 13.1.6** From 1st December 2025 if you withdraw from any contest then there is a £50 penalty (to be paid before your next contest) plus a 2 point penalty (20 tenths) which will be deducted from all scores at subsequent contests including Championships.
- 13.1.7** From 1st December 2025 if you wish to enter additional shows then your unit will be placed to perform first in their class at the additional show/s entered.
- 13.1.8** All performing members names and dates of birth need to be registered and forms will be made available for this purpose.

- 13.2** The Performance Order criteria is approved annually by the WGUK Board
- 13.2.1** The performance order for the January contest will be determined by the date in which a fully competed and confirmed registration is received and then a random draw of each days registrations. To confirm your registration you will be sent an invoice, after 1st November, covering the MPA:UK and WGUK Member Fees and the Contest Entry Fees and you will have 14 days to send payment. After 14 days, if no payment has been received, your registration will be deemed expired and you will be required to re-register.
- 13.2.2** With the exception of Kids Class and Exhibition Class (which will be via random draw) the performance order for all classes for the February and March contests will be seeded after EVERY contest taking the average of your previous two scores (one score initially following the Stoke contest January).
- 13.2.3** With the exception of Kids Class and Exhibition Class (which will be via random draw) the performance order for Cadet Class Finals, Junior Class Prelims and A Class Prelims, Open Class Prelims and World Class Prelims will be seeded by taking the average score of each unit from their previous two contests.
- 13.2.4** The performance order for Junior Class Finals, A Class Finals, Open Class Finals & World Class Finals will be seeded by taking the scores from their respective Prelims contests. All Open & World Class Guards plus, if numbers allow, all Junior & A Class Guards progress to their respective Finals. If registered numbers do now allow a suitable schedule on Championships Day for all Junior & A Class to perform twice then we will need to revert to only 50%, rounded up, of Junior & A Class moving through to Finals – the decision regarding this will be made as soon as we know the number of units registered in those classes – so this should be before the season starts in January 2026.

14. EXHIBITION CLASS

- 14.1** In 2015 WGUK created a new class - 'Exhibition' class. The class is designed to provide a performance arena for newly created Winter Guards, providing the opportunity to perform in the WGUK circuit without the competitive edge.
- 14.2** The class will support new Guards, returning Guards or even existing Guards just looking to provide a further Winter Guard experience. The Exhibition class welcomes all age groups, all experience and skill levels. Units entering this class must still adhere to the principals and rules for competing units and will be allocated the same timings as the Cadet Class (i.e. maximum 7 minutes arena time and no minimum performance time).
- 14.3** Feedback will be available for all performing Guards: with the introduction of the mentoring/instructor recordings all groups will have the opportunity to receive feedback from a recognised and experienced activity individual.
- 14.4** Exhibition Class units cannot be full members of WGUK and as a result any charges will be as per non WGUK Registered Guards (see 12.6 above)

15. WITHHOLDING OF INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATIONS

- 15.1** The Withholding of Registration (WOR) could apply to members moving either from a WGUK unit to a DCUK unit, from a DCUK unit to a WGUK unit in or WGUK unit to another WGUK unit.
- 15.2** If monies or equipment are outstanding (and no agreement can be reached between the parties for repayment or collection) then a DCUK and/or WGUK registered organisation can request that a WGUK/DCUK Pass be withheld from a member of another unit until such time as the matter is settled.
- 15.3** For a Pass to be considered to be withheld then proof of the debt or outstanding equipment must be provided to DCUK/WGUK together with details of what action has already been taken to recover the monies/items.
- 15.4** Please be aware that it is unlikely that a Pass will be withheld if the person has been allowed to complete the season (i.e. perform at the British Championships event) and the outstanding monies (and possibly equipment if these have been outstanding for a period of time) relate to amounts owed during the season rather than just at the very end.
- 15.5** The WOR is not designed to be a debt collection service and should only be used as a last resort if an agreeable settlement can not be reached. This is not a rule designed to stop members moving between units – they are still free to do so as long as they clear any debt and return equipment to the unit they are leaving before they move on!
- 15.6** WGUK does not encourage members to continually move from one unit to another but appreciate that sometimes circumstances change and so movement between units can and will happen. WGUK does however expect, as a matter of courtesy, the receiving organisation to contact the organisation the member is moving from to ensure there are no outstanding issues (including any debt or equipment) and also check they are aware of this move.

16. USE OF MEDIA (PHOTOS/VIDEOS)

- 16.1** WGUK reserve the right to photograph and record performances for use in DVD production, promotions (inc website and yearbook/programmes), Fan Network and other mediums as approved by the WGUK Board.

****Contest Referee** – Person who has final say on an event day regarding any issues or rule violations including deciding/approving any penalties/sanctions. Any decision made may be referred to the WGUK Board after the event for formal ratification. This Person will normally be a WGUK Board Member/MPAUK Trustee or, if none available, then an appointed person by the WGUK Chairman and/or WGUK Board*

*****Arena Marshall** – Person who controls flow of contest. This role is mainly for keeping the event to timetable by ensuring performing units move on and off competition arena in a safe and timely fashion and checking event staff and Judges are ready and in position before allowing performing units to commence. Any issues, including rule violations, should be passed to the Contest Referee with enough information to allow the Contest Referee to take any action that may be required on the day or for the WGUK Board to consider after the event.*

WINTER GUARD UNITED KINGDOM – CODE OF CONDUCT

The **Board of WGUK** and the **Trustees of Marching & Performing Arts United Kingdom** primary function is to ensure competitive events and the general reputation of the organisations is maintained through structured, safe, and inclusive activity. Members of all **Guards, staff and their supporters** are subject to the following Code of Conduct. Breach of this Code could bring penalties, such as disqualification, financial loss, suspension from, or loss of, membership of WGUK.

1. All performers, staff and supporters **must** show respect for others both in person at events, and through communication (including socials) after. No activity, or series of activities, should bring an individual, group or WGUK/MPAUK into disrepute. Directors are responsible for ensuring the behaviour of their performers, staff (including themselves) and supporters always aligns with this.

2. Award ceremonies are a chance to celebrate the performers and their achievements. This is not solely represented by scores and placements. Every performer tries their best to be the best they can and this must always be our focus. Respect between performers, staff and supporters should be shown consistently during this special time. Obscene language, gestures or any other actions that may cause offence **will not** be tolerated.

3. Performers **should** always be aware of their equipment and performance space. Vocal warnings should be issued to people in the vicinity of uncontrolled equipment.

4. If Critiques are made available then during critiques, attendees must be respectful of others in the room and in the waiting area. They must adhere to the Critique rules. Failure to do so will be investigated and may result in future restrictions.

5. When members and supporters are attending competitions or shows, they must ensure that the appropriate tickets are purchased, and performers are aware of any restrictions to their access. WGUK and its members should support each other to maximise the success of any show. #FillTheVenue.

6. Where official instructions are issued either by the show sponsor or WGUK officials, these **must** be followed. Things will not always be perfect, but there will be good reason for them! This includes the scenery Marshall in operation at Championships.

7. The **Directors/Managers Meeting held virtually before shows are compulsory**. If the Director cannot attend, then an appropriate alternative person must do so and that information given, both at these virtual meetings and any in person meetings on the day, is passed on to all within your organisation. Important information about the venue and ensuring the safety of the performers will be discussed and may need to be shared. It may also be helpful to have a member of the floor crew on the call for clarity around scenery storage and movement.

8. Keeping to timings is imperative. The show will be directed (as best as possible) by the arena Marshall and sponsor/WGUK staff. Directors must ensure that key timings (including building access) are shared with their groups and that these are adhered to. There are reasons for the timings and if they are not respected then this will disrupt the flow of the day.

9. Safeguarding is everyone's business. Directors hold responsibility for ensuring appropriate checks are in place for their organisations. All staff and WGUK/DCUK/MPAUK officials must be aware of appropriate ways to behave, especially in matters concerning instructions regarding changing rooms and any wider safety issues relating to the venue being used for an event. Wristbands clearly indicate areas that can be accessed by wearers and must be adhered to. In case of any concerns, please follow the appropriate procedures as outlined in the compulsory training.

10. We often operate in public spaces. The usual guidelines for these must be followed and our activity should not inconvenience the public. We want people to be intrigued, impressed, come and watch our wonderful performers, and aspire to join in!