International Suzuki Association

POLICY ON TEACHER TRAINING

Adopted by ISA Board of Directors October 16, 2018

Revised on December 16, 2020, October 15, 2026

Every Regional Suzuki Association shall have the right and responsibility to establish and oversee Teacher Training for its region, and to determine the procedure through which Teachers may be permitted to call themselves SUZUKI™ Teachers.

Administration

- Each Regional Association should maintain an updated and detailed description of its Teacher Training program for the use of Regional Representatives, Administrators, and Teacher Trainers
- Regional Associations must maintain records of training of all current SUZUKI™ Teacher members. These records should include training taken in the home region and abroad, both in person and online

Appointment of Teacher Trainers

The following requirements for the appointment of Regional SUZUKI™ Teacher Trainers apply to all Regional Suzuki Associations.

Candidates must:

- Reside in the region and be members of the Regional Association
- Have completed training through the highest level of core material for their particular discipline at the time of application
- Have a minimum of 10 years of experience teaching the Suzuki Method™
- Fulfill all additional requirements set by the Regional Association

Regional Associations are expected to provide continuing professional development for Teacher Trainers as long as they remain active.

Jurisdiction of Teacher Trainers

- SUZUKI™ Teacher Training offered anywhere in the region by an approved Teacher Trainer from that region is valid in all countries in that region
- Teacher Trainers are authorized to give Teacher Training courses only in the region where they have been appointed, unless formally invited by another region
- Regional Associations may invite Teacher Trainers from other regions to offer training courses on an ad hoc basis as the need arises, with the following stipulations:

- Invited Teacher Trainers must be in good standing in the region where they are officially appointed
- When a Teacher Trainer is invited and approved to offer a course in another region, the training offered must conform to the policies and guidelines of the hosting region and publicised
- Regions may require visiting Teacher Trainers to be a member of the hosting region for the duration of the training course

Online Teacher Training

In-person individual approaches to training and mentoring Teachers are foundational to the Suzuki Method™ and are an essential component in SUZUKI™ Teacher Development. ISA recognizes that online may be an appropriate option in certain circumstances and have made available a set of Guidelines, including best practices, for Online Teacher Training.

See Appendix A for Guidelines for Online Teacher Training

Cross Regional Training

- All Teachers taking training must be members of the Regional Association where they are living
- Teachers wishing to take training in another region, whether it be in-person or online training must have the endorsement of both their home Regional Association and the Regional Association hosting the training
- Regional Associations may recommend or require that Teachers pursue training in their home region if it is available

Recognition of Regional SUZUKI™ Qualifications

- Each region should follow procedures as set out in International Recognition of Regional SUZUKI™ Qualifications for recognizing Teachers who move to the region from another or who have done in-person or online training in another region
- Teachers may be asked to do additional training and/or demonstrate performance competency on their instrument.

See Appendix B for International Recognition of Regional SUZUKI™ Qualifications

Appendix A

Guidelines for Online Teacher Training

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to –

- give guidance to all regions on online Teacher Training
- provide consistency in approach to online Teacher Training throughout all Regional Associations

Scope

These guidelines apply to all Teacher Trainers in all Regional Associations when conducting SUZUKI™ Teacher Training online.

Effective Date

These guidelines come into effect January 1, 2027.
'Best Practices' will be reviewed annually as technology is updated.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Regional Association to ensure that their Teacher Training procedures incorporate these guidelines and that all Teacher Trainers are informed of them.

All regions/Teacher Trainers/Trainees should abide by the ISA Policy on Teacher Training for procedures where cross regional training is concerned.

- *All Teachers taking training must be members of the Regional Association where they are living.*
- *Teachers wishing to take training in another region, whether it be in-person or online training, must have the endorsement of both their home region and the region hosting the training.*
- *Regions may recommend or require that Teachers pursue training in their home region if it is available.*

Statements

The essential elements of human connection and live interaction remain important to SUZUKI™ Teacher Training and whenever possible, **in-person Teacher Training is the preferred choice and is to be recommended.**

In-person training is particularly important in the early stages of Teacher Training, however, flexibility is also key in some circumstances to make training available to all interested Teachers.

Whilst it is essential to uphold the quality and standards of the Suzuki Method™, **it is also necessary to allow for flexibility** in different parts of the world and amongst different instruments in the interests of future development of the Suzuki Method™. **Online Teacher Training can offer this flexibility.**

Hybrid Teacher Training courses (where some of the course is conducted in person and some is delivered online) and **Dual delivery Teacher Training courses** (where the course is attended by some trainees in person whilst some trainees are online) **are good compromises and should be considered before online training where at all possible**.

It is recommended that Hybrid Teacher Training courses have at least 50% of the course content given in-person.

There is a place for online Teacher Training where –

- there is no Teacher Trainer of a given instrument in that region
- there are circumstances limiting travel of Teacher Trainers (e.g. pandemics, war)
- there are too few Teacher Trainees to make in-person training viable
- Teacher Trainees live in remote areas

Best practice for Online Teacher Training

It is important to remember that online Teacher Training is not just sitting in front of a screen and giving a lecture with the camera recording/streaming. On the contrary, it requires the application of interactive and innovative practices.

The aim is to conduct online Teacher Training courses that –

- use the best that technology has to offer to overcome some of the challenges of online Teacher Training such as sound quality and the ability to play together
- are creative and stimulating, encouraging interaction and building communities

Technology

All Teacher Trainers and others offering online enrichment classes are encouraged to take advantage of any regional course(s) available on effective online delivery and use of technology.

Guidelines should be established by Teacher Trainers at the start of their course with respect to the use of the chat box, including private chat between trainees.

Teacher Trainers and Trainees need access to –

- fast and secure internet speed, an ethernet cable is recommended
- a desktop or laptop rather than a tablet or mobile phone to ensure that the best sound settings are available
- a quality directional microphone

"Original Sound for Musicians" on Zoom needs to be enabled

Use of platforms where all the information is in one place and the Trainees have the feeling of having a “room” and “own space” even if it is in the Cloud.

Sound quality

Better tone quality is achieved with videos for example –

- Videos of Trainees interacting with their students
- Videos of the Teacher Trainer (full lessons) and recorded exercises where a good tone can be heard

Scheduling

Online sessions should ideally not last longer than 1.5 hours without a break, with 2 to 3 sessions per day.

Weekly classes set over several weeks rather than every day are recommended to allow time for better absorption of the material, time to reflect, practice new skills and return to class with questions.

Playing together

There are a number of Apps available, which enable real-time performing with musicians at remote locations without the time lapse and helps to eliminate the sense of distance between trainees during online. For example –

SYNCROOM by YAMAHA https://syncroom.yamaha.com/global/ available for a small subscription fee. Currently only available in Japan and South Korea.

JAMKAZAM https://jamkazam.com/ available in free and premium versions

Pedagogy

Consider a partnership of a senior/experienced Teacher Trainer with a younger/less experienced Teacher Trainer to run online Teacher Training courses.

Treat the screen as if it was a window to your studio and to your Trainees' studios. Encourage Trainees to move, to stretch, to get up with their instruments, etc.

Give a different perspective with a second camera and also for close-up views of positioning of fingers, wrist, etc.

Use different body activities during the session (relaxing, stretching, muscle memories exercises, elongation, etc.).

Observation of a video of in-person lessons (not online lessons) is recommended with all Trainees watching the same video and discussing later in class.

Give consideration to the number of Trainees with a view to ensuring the quality of interactions.

Allow additional time in the course schedule to review videos.

Examples of online exercises

Suggest that the trainees lead different pieces where the other trainees have to follow, however all other trainees have to be muted.

Games to learn –

- *"Hear with your eyes". Tell me how is my tone (while muted) by watching the point of contact, the weight of the arm, etc.*
- *"Watch with your ears" (what is the position of your bow in terms of Contact Point for example or weight of the bow just by hearing.*

Use of tools such as Whiteboard, screen sharing, the host randomly muting and unmuting during a performance (when they all play together), etc.

Feedback

It is particularly important with online Teacher Training that Teacher Trainers continuously monitor the level of understanding of the Trainees. With the different levels of participation that online gives, additional tools are needed to monitor progress.

- Question Trainees on the content of the previous class
- Ask the Trainees to do a presentation on a piece or a topic to the entire class with screen sharing and demonstration
- Set a written task to help evaluate the level of understanding of the Trainees

Community

Online Teacher Training creates opportunities which go in the direction of building communities and is a good first step to creating Suzuki Communities in all regions and across regions. Communities formed online can then lead to a coming together in person resulting in strong connections across a wide span.

- Schedule in activities to help create the feeling of community (e.g. coffee breaks in online breakout rooms to encourage casual conversation without the Teacher Trainer present)
- Use breakout rooms for group activities (e.g. presentation of a given topic in groups)
- Set homework which requires Trainees meeting outside of the course schedule
- Organise extra opportunities for Trainees to go to workshops and other in-person events outside of the online Teacher Training course to give opportunities to teach 'in person'
- Sessions with guests to share experiences and generate discussions can be organised

Appendix B
International Recognition of Regional SUZUKI™ Qualifications

The Teacher Training systems currently in place in the five Suzuki regions, whilst all being at the core of the Suzuki approach, are different in the way they are structured and administered. These differences will become apparent to SUZUKI™ Teachers moving from one region to another to live and teach.

An international recognition process has therefore been developed as a consistent approach to all Teachers moving regions to ensure that they feel welcomed and valued, and to introduce them to their local Suzuki Community.

The application for recognition within each Regional Association is there simply to assist with identifying the level of compatibility of Teachers' skills within the Regional Association's Teacher Training system, taking into account their teaching, performing, certificates achieved and courses attended/completed.

Application

1. Letter of application
2. CV with certificates of qualifications achieved/courses completed
3. Videos of –
   a. Applicant teaching Individual Lessons
      All students to be under 18 years of age
      i) Early student

Individual lesson - Early student Evaluation points
Lesson format/structure
Student/Teacher interaction
Teacher/Pupil/Parent relationship
Tone
Repertoire
Knowledge of Teaching Points
Philosophy
Review

      ii) Advanced student

Individual lesson – Advanced student Evaluation points
Lesson format/structure
Student/Teacher interaction
Teacher/Pupil/Parent relationship
Tone
Repertoire
Knowledge of Teaching Points
Philosophy

Review

b. Applicant teaching a Group Class (where applicable)

All students to be under 18 years of age

Group Class Evaluation points
Lesson format/structure
Students/Teacher interaction
Tone
Repertoire
Philosophy
Review

c. Applicant performing

Performance within the past year

Applicant Performance Evaluation points
Musicality
Tone
Posture
Technique

d. Applicant's students performing

All students to be under 18 years of age

i) Early student

Student Performance - Early student Evaluation points
Musicality
Tone
Posture
Technique
Focus
Security in performance
Stage etiquette

ii) Advanced student

Student Performance - Advanced student Evaluation points
Musicality
Tone
Posture
Technique
Focus
Security in performance
Stage etiquette

4. Letter of reference from the applicant's Teacher Trainer

Applications to be sent to the Regional Suzuki Association Office
https://internationalsuzuki.org/regional-associations

Evaluators

Each Regional Association will appoint Evaluators to process applications for recognition according to their regional structure and procedures.

Evaluators will ensure that the Applicant is put in contact with a Mentor and introduced to the local Suzuki Community.