

ALC Judges Panel Report from Martin Tait Chair of the Judges Panel.

Judges Guide of Best Practice.

At the time of preparing this report there has been no progress from the KC office in publishing the 2023 version of the Judges guide.

A new guide was prepared by the ALC for publication in 2022 to replace outdated material but at our June 2022 meeting, we were advised that there were some delays in publication due to resource to format the document. These delays have continued now for almost 18 months.

The Kennel club has recently published a statement around bullying and use of social media against individuals at shows. The ALC judges panel, judges' trainers, judges, show organisers and competitors will all benefit from the publication of this document as it can resolve and covers many of the re-occurring issues that create frustration and misunderstanding between people.

We even have proposals being sent the ALC for discussion where the matter has been addressed in the guide but the outcomes just not made publicly available. This is causing frustration and confusion.

The Judging panel have already collated changes need to the 2023 guide ready for 2024, most of these changes related to regulation changes but also to clarify a number of issues raised during the year. Liaison is underway with the judge's subgroup so that these are available for the office to update the Judges guide at the end of November ready for publication of a new version in Jan 2024

The ALC judges panel (in cooperation with the Judges sub-group, judges' trainers and the ALC) will continue to collate material during the year ready for an annual edit of this document so a new version is ready for publication in January in each year.

Given that currently the guide has yet been published we suggest that all efforts are put into getting the document ready to be published as early as possible in 2024

Judges' day Number of dogs

Following on from several conversations from judges who are concerned about length of a judge's day we will be re-looking at max number of dogs judged per day, and this will include getting data around average run time per dog i.e. how long from first jump to last jump an average course takes, to help us identify impacts on a judge's day.

CPD

CPD and assessments with the introduction of more Accredited agility judges' trainers. We are still looking at formalising some CPD/assessment or mandatory seminars for judges and we look forward to seeing what the Judges subgroup are proposing.

Judges Contracts

To discuss if we should add the date that judges passed their online exam to all judge's contract so competition managers and show secretaries are aware that all their judges are compliant.

Course design

Guidelines for course design are being reviewed and the very first draft will be available shortly. This is a very subjective subject, and it is therefore designed as a document for sense checking and guidance rather than rules and regulations.

Class Restarts

Restarting a class, Accredited trainers teach that when a class is being restarted the course design should be changed significantly to ensure that those who have already ran the course do not gain a significant advantage, there is however no current rule and therefore we are looking at getting this included in the code of best practice and a discussion item as to whether it needs to be a written regulation.

Do we need a grade review?

Small class sizes are a constant debate, and this can mean long days for judges. Based on data kindly provided by Agility Plaza we have numbers of individual dogs competing in the UK and also how many new Grade 1 dog handlers are registered in a 12 month period from 1st October 22 to 30th Sept 23 and Agility is as popular if not more so than ever, so the only other impact on small class sizes if not a decline in dogs is an increase in shows, Do we need a grade review to maybe reduce the number of grades to increase class sizes?

Dogs entered in KC shows between 1st Oct 2022 and 30th Sep 2023

Based on grades and heights on 16th Sept 2023

Grade 1	Undefined	14		
Grade 1	Large	672		
Grade 1	Intermediate	419		
Grade 1	Medium	597		
Grade 1	Small	392	2,094	16.85%
Grade 2	Undefined	1		
Grade 2	Large	1,011		
Grade 2	Intermediate	741		
Grade 2	Medium	817		
Grade 2	Small	601	3,171	25.52%
Grade 3	Large	660		
Grade 3	Intermediate	478		
Grade 3	Medium	488		
Grade 3	Small	348	1,974	15.89%
Grade 4	Large	440		
Grade 4	Intermediate	276		
Grade 4	Medium	311		
Grade 4	Small	247	1,274	10.25%
Grade 5	Large	316		
Grade 5	Intermediate	229		
Grade 5	Medium	216		
Grade 5	Small	178	939	7.56%
Grade 6	Large	309		
Grade 6	Intermediate	244		
Grade 6	Medium	235		
Grade 6	Small	209	997	8.02%
Grade 7	Large	520		
Grade 7	Intermediate	422		
Grade 7	Medium	543		
Grade 7	Small	491	1,976	15.90%

All Grades	Undefined	15	0.12%
All Grades	Large	3,928	31.61%
All Grades	Intermediate	2,809	22.61%
All Grades	Medium	3,207	25.81%
All Grades	Small	2,466	19.85%
Total dogs competing		12,425	