



2023

## Western Dressage Association of Australia Rules and Regulations



The Western Dressage Association of Australia is an incorporated not-for-profit organisation formed in 2015 to create a uniform national entity through and by which Western Dressage can be encouraged, conducted, promoted and administered and to be the governing body of Western Dressage in Australia.

The National Board originally sought and gained permission from the Western Dressage Association of America to use their Rules as an interim measure until such time as an Australian Rulebook could be developed that would be appropriate to our unique circumstances.

We would also like to thank the Western Style Dressage Association of Canada for permission to base our original rules on their Rulebook. This 2023 Australian Rulebook which is effective as of August 2023, has been developed by the National Board who will make further changes as deemed necessary. The Rulebook will be subject to review by the National Board every two (2) years. The current approved version of the Rulebook will be available on the Association's website.

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# SECTION 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS

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## 1.1 Statement of Purpose

The aim of Western Dressage is to further enhance the harmony and partnership between horse and rider and to develop a well-rounded and disciplined horse regardless of breed or type.

Our Mission is:

*To develop and govern a national equestrian discipline that supports and encourages the pursuit of classical dressage for any breed of horse and their rider. We value the harmonious partnership between horse and rider, building the relationship through ethical training, lightness of rein, suppleness, accuracy and with the wellbeing of the horse paramount.*

Western Dressage provides systematic and progressive training for the western horse and rider in western style tack and attire. It integrates the lightness of the western horse and classical dressage foundations to improve performance for the purpose of enjoying a safe and versatile horse.

The purpose of the Western Dressage Association of Australia is to:

- a) be the governing body of Western Dressage in Australia.
- b) develop and promote Western Dressage as an equestrian discipline in Australia.
- c) provide standards of governance, education, competition of Western Dressage in Australia.
- d) preserve the integrity of the discipline and its execution.
- e) create awareness and communicate to the wider equestrian community the principles of Western Dressage.

## 1.2 Objectives of the Association

The objectives of the Western Dressage Association of Australia are to:

- a) create a uniform entity through and by which Western Dressage can be encouraged, conducted, promoted and administered and to be the governing body of Western Dressage in Australia.
- b) define and interpret the rules for Western Dressage in Australia in keeping with other national governing bodies for Western Dressage.
- c) promulgate and secure uniformity in such rules and standards as may be necessary for the management of Western Dressage, competitions and related activities, including but not limited to the rules of Western Dressage and coaching and officiating standards.
- d) formulate and implement appropriate policies, including policies in relation to Member protection, risk, codes of conduct, health, safety, youth and senior programs, horse welfare, and such other matters as arise from time to time as issues to be addressed by Western Dressage.
- e) establish and conduct education and training programs for riders, coaches, Judges and officials in the implementation and interpretation of Western Dressage rules and standards.
- f) in conjunction with State Associations and Affiliates further develop the Association and Western Dressage into an organised institution having regard to these objectives.
- g) maintain a points system for end of year awards gained by riders at approved Western Dressage Association of Australia competitions.
- h) give recognition to successful Members, officials and other individuals participating in Western Dressage and issue appropriate awards.
- i) act as an arbiter (as required) on all matters pertaining to the conduct of Western Dressage in Australia,

including disciplinary matters.

- j) pursue such commercial arrangements, including sponsorship and marketing opportunities as are appropriate to further the interests of the Association.
- k) represent the interests of its Members and the Association generally in any appropriate forum in Australia and Internationally.

### 1.3 Organisational Structure

WDA-AUS is the national governing body responsible for setting national standards in all aspects of Western Dressage for Members, State Associations and Affiliates, thereby establishing unity in training and competing in this discipline.

WDA-AUS provides the foundation and structural framework supporting sport development and event organisation by the State Associations and Affiliates.

- a) State Associations are incorporated Western Dressage Associations representing their Australian state or territory. State Associations assist the national body to advance the aims and objectives of Western Dressage. Each State Association has the primary responsibility for conducting their State Show and High Point Awards for WDA-AUS Members riding and competing in that state or territory. Individual WDA-AUS Members are automatically considered to be Members of the relevant State Association closest to their place of residence.
- b) Other incorporated organisations that wish to conduct Western Dressage events as part of their existing program may apply to become an Affiliate. An annual fee is paid to WDA-AUS and a formal agreement between WDA-AUS and the Affiliate is accepted. These Affiliates may conduct Western Dressage events as approved by WDA-AUS and subject to WDA-AUS Rules and Guidelines.
- c) Overseas Members and organisations are welcome to contact WDA-AUS if they wish to apply for Membership and affiliation.
- d) All Australian Members will be covered by the national insurance program. This includes Public and Product Liability; Associations Liability and Voluntary Workers Personal Accident insurance. This excludes Personal Injury/Accident and Affiliate insurance.
- e) Formal agreements are to be accepted between WDA-AUS and all Western Dressage State Associations and Affiliates.

### 1.4 Membership

Individual Membership with WDA-AUS is all that required to participate in Western Dressage in Australia.

Members are responsible for setting and maintaining the image and culture of Western Dressage. As ambassadors for the sport and their Association, they are expected to conduct themselves with dignity, integrity and display good sportsmanship. Results and awards achieved at a competition are less important than the manner used to gain them.

Members must comply with the Association Rules, Statement of Purpose, Policies and Objectives of WDA-AUS. All new and renewal membership applications are considered each month by the Management Committee for approval or non-approval.

- a) SENIOR MEMBERS: subject to the relevant WDA-AUS rules and conditions, may participate in all events and activities, and compete in all categories of competition including Sanctioned classes, and accrue competition points. Senior Members have the right to be present, speak and vote at General Meetings and to apply to serve as a National or State Board Member and apply to become a Judge.

For the purpose of this document, existing *Life Members* are included as and considered to be, Senior Members wherever there is any reference to Senior Members in this Rulebook.

- b) ASSOCIATE MEMBERS: subject to the relevant WDA-AUS rules and conditions, have the right to be present and speak at General Meetings but not to cast a vote. They are not able to take part as a rider in any ridden events, nor are they eligible to become a Judge. The fee is less than a full membership and is recommended for affiliate



committee members and show secretaries who do not ride.

- c) **YOUTH MEMBERS:** must be eighteen (18) years or less at the commencement of the Membership year and, subject to the relevant WDA-AUS rules and conditions, may participate in all training events and activities, and compete in all categories of competition including Sanctioned classes, and accrue competition points.
- **For example** – a youth turns 18 on their birthday 01 October 2020. The youth is 18 years of age on 1 July 2021 when the membership year for the 2021-22 period starts. The youth is current in their youth membership when they turn 19 on 01 October 2021. **They remain a Youth Member until 30 June 2022**, which is the end of the 2021-22 membership year. On 1 July 2022 the youth becomes a Senior Member. Youth Members do not have the right to cast a vote at General Meetings, nor be able to serve as a Judge or Member of the Board or a Committee except a Committee to represent Youth Members.

**Youth are not permitted to handle, ride or exhibit colts or stallions within the perimeter of the grounds at any competitions or any events.**

- d) **EVENT ONLY MEMBERSHIP:** is required by participants in all training events and activities, and to compete in Non-Sanctioned classes, and where the individual is not a WDA-AUS Member or a Member of the host Affiliate organisation. These riders are not eligible for Sanctioned competitions and do not accrue competition points.
- e) **AMATEUR PERMIT:** May be applied for by WDA-AUS members, who are no longer eligible to compete as a Youth and who are not professionals in the horse industry. They are members who ride their horses for the enjoyment of competing against other non-professional members.

## 1.5 Standard of Excellence

- a) An ideal Western Dressage horse is responsive, confident, willingly guided and performs all the required movements correctly with authority and finesse.
- b) The horse has a ground-covering stride of reasonable length in keeping with its individual conformation.
- c) The hindquarters are engaged to create the energy required for each movement and enable self-carriage and lightness of the forehand.
- d) The head and neck are carried in a relaxed, natural position appropriate for each individual horse's conformation and the level of training being demonstrated.
- e) The horse requires only subtle, light aids to maintain connection and communication with the rider. When using a snaffle bit the rein contact is light. When using a curb bit or bosal the reins should be slightly draped but not excessively loose.
- f) The rider is confident, balanced and effective. The rider demonstrates empathy, tact and smoothness to invite and allow the horse to perform at its best.
- g) The horse and rider are seen to work in unison and harmony.

## 1.6 Objective of Western Dressage Training

The objective of Western Dressage is the correct development of the horse and education of the rider to meet the Standard of Excellence resulting in a calm, confident horse that is a pleasure to ride and works in harmony with the rider. The training develops each individual athlete so that they are able and willing to perform at their optimum level.

- a) The quality of this training is seen in:
- i) Willingness to move forward, backward and laterally as required by the rider.
  - ii) Compliance and the ability to maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit congruent with the level of training.

- iii) Drive, cadence and regularity of the gaits.
  - iv) Balance, straightness and alignment, especially through transitions.
  - v) Suppleness and elasticity enabling the horse to perform with fluency and smoothness.
  - vi) Engagement of the hindquarters and lightness of the forehand; ease of movement and athleticism.
- b) The horse gives the impression of doing, of its own accord, what is required. The horse is confident and attentive, accepting the aids of the rider.
  - c) The rider is composed and focused. The rider uses subtle, correct aids and has light, responsive hands.
  - d) The horse and rider develop a useful working partnership and are pleasing to watch.

## 1.7 Objective of Western Dressage Competition

Western Dressage competition is integral to both the development of the discipline and the individual athlete. Competitions provide a supportive, progressive and structured environment that rewards and recognises achievements and encourages and empowers riders to set new goals. It encourages riders to develop effective riding skills and fosters the Western Dressage culture through shared experiences.

The central element of Western Dressage competition is the Western Dressage Test. These tests reflect and measure the progressive development of the horse and rider.

Non-sanctioned tests, 'Come and Try' and Assisted Rider classes are used to introduce new people to Western Dressage and make it easier for a wide range of people to become involved in the sport.

Western Dressage Tests and Events have patterns designed to develop and demonstrate a useful working partnership between horse and rider.

- a) Each series of Western Dressage Tests are grouped in Levels to show the progression of training. The Levels are Introductory (Walk/Jog only), Basic and Levels One, Two, Three and Four.
- b) All Tests are the Copyright property of the Western Dressage Association of Australia and may not be copied or reproduced or used without the Association's express permission.**
- c) Tests may only be used and ridden subject to WDA-AUS Rules and judging by WDA-AUS approved Judges, with any exceptions and other criteria for Training and Promotional Events and Competitions described in Section 6.
- d) Competition results are determined by the Judge who gives an evaluation of each individual performance of the Test.
- e) Over time, the Judges' scores and feedback influences the training and presentation of competition horses and consequently acts as a key influence on the evolution of the discipline. The Judge will objectively assess each movement and test with regards to the following qualities and how each of these impact on the overall appearance of harmony between the horse and rider.
  - i) **Finesse** describes the quality of a rider who is confident, graceful and proficient. The rider's effectiveness and connection with the horse is established and maintained through a balanced position, feel, timing and correct use of aids.
  - ii) **Fluency** describes the quality of a test that is pleasing to watch and flows through correct execution of movements and accurate pattern placement.
  - iii) **Attitude** of an ideal Western Dressage horse is demonstrated by being willingly guided, responsive, attentive, light, smooth and confident.
  - iv) **Rideability** is demonstrated by the horse's consistency in self-carriage, ease of movement and regularity of gaits, developed through its drive, straightness, cadence, suppleness and balance.

## SECTION 2: COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS

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### 2.1 Overview

Western Dressage competition and events are conducted by WDA-AUS State Associations and Affiliates upon approval. These competitions and events are open to riders on all types of equines including horses, ponies, mules and donkeys (collectively referred to as 'horses' throughout this document) subject to WDA-AUS Rules, Policies and Guidelines.

Each participant, and if a minor, the consenting parent or guardian, authorises the use of any picture, still or video which may be taken in conjunction with their participation in these WDA-AUS event and activities for WDA-AUS official uses.

Where appropriate, spectators are invited to positively engage with the performances. Acclamation and verbal encouragement of riders during their performance is allowed and therefore is not considered to be unauthorised assistance.

#### 2.1.1 INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The WDA-AUS management committee has introduced an incentive program relating to Championship and State Shows. State Associations and Affiliates are able to apply in writing via email to [secretary@westerndressage.com.au](mailto:secretary@westerndressage.com.au) seeking sponsorship for either a Championship or State Show (not both and also not for a standard show). The current amount offered is \$500 and is limited to only once per membership year. If used for sponsoring a Western Dressage Level, it may only be a Sanctioned Level. The amount will be reassessed each financial year and will be based on the financial viability of WDA-AUS.

### 2.2 Competition Show Categories

There are five (5) categories of shows.

- i) Online Show
- ii) Standard Show (can include Come & Try classes)
- iii) Championship Show
- iv) State Show
- v) National Show

- ✚ Each category has set requirements that must be complied with.
- ✚ All Awards must be listed in the Show Program. This includes any additional Awards included in Championship, State and National Show competitions.
- ✚ Tie Break rules must be referenced in the Show Program, refer to Section 8.7.
- ✚ National and State competition points are awarded to placegetters in accordance with the category of show.
- ✚ The competition show year commences on July 1 and ends on June 30 each year.
- ✚ All Level tests are scored to three (3) decimal places.
- ✚ In the case of equal scores in a test, all tied riders will receive the same place and the rider/s with the next highest score will be awarded the next placing. Example: 1<sup>st</sup> placegetter / 2<sup>nd</sup> placegetter / Tied 3<sup>rd</sup> place – two placegetters / 4th placegetter etc. Refer to Section 8.7 e) for tied Level Champion and Placegetter determinations.

### 2.3 Competition Show Requirements

#### 2.3.1 Online Shows

Online Western Dressage competition encourages riders to develop effective riding skills and provides riders with the opportunity to compete in a progressive and structured environment. Online competition ensures that all riders across the country, no matter how isolated, have the chance to compete and earn competition points.

These events are limited to a maximum of two (2) per year and can only be conducted by the WDA-AUS National

Management Committee.

Competition points (1/2 points) for sanctioned classes are allocated for the National and State end of year high point awards and WDA-AUS Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program.

Test selections should be limited to two (2) only. For example: All Levels – Tests B & E.

#### **MANDATORY CLASSES**

- ▶ Introductory Level (Non-Sanctioned) minimum of 2 tests
- ▶ Basic Level (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level One (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level Two (Sanctioned) 2 tests only

Optional classes include:

- ◆ Level Three (Sanctioned) 2 tests only, subject to eligibility of riders for this level
- ◆ Level Four (Sanctioned) 2 tests only, subject to eligibility of riders for this level

#### **AWARDS – ONLINE SHOW**

Ribbons must be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> place in each class (Open and Youth), including ties.

Rosettes must be awarded to each Level Champion and Reserve Champion. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Champion and Reserve Champion Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

Level placings 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> do not apply.

The style, size and colour must be as per Section 2.5 and the 2023 Ribbon & Sash Ordering 'how to' guide on the Event Organiser website page.

#### **CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION OPEN**

- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentages across the two tests at each level for **Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination)
- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentage across two tests at each level for **Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination)

#### **YOUTH CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION**

- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination – best two scores from any Sanctioned level class)  
The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.
- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination - best two scores from any Non-Sanctioned class)  
The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.

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### **2.3.2 Standard Shows**

WDA-AUS State Associations and Affiliates may apply to conduct standard show competitions. These can be held over one or two days and can include 'Come and Try' classes. There is no limit on the number of standard shows held each competition year.

Competition points (1 x) for sanctioned classes are allocated for the National and State end of year high point awards and WDA-AUS Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program.

A Standard Show may not be held within 7 clear days before or after a National Show, Australia wide.

Test selections should be limited to two (2) only. For example: All Levels – Tests B & E.

## MANDATORY CLASSES Standard Shows

- ▶ Introductory Level (Non-Sanctioned) minimum of 2 tests
- ▶ Basic Level (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level One (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level Two (Sanctioned) 2 tests only

Optional classes include:

- ◆ Introductory Level (Non-Sanctioned) an extra 2 tests (total of 4 Introductory Level tests but not including Come & Try Introductory Level tests)
- ◆ Basic Level (Non-Sanctioned) 2 tests only (*can be run either concurrently with Sanctioned Basic Level Tests OR run separately. When run concurrently, riders may not enter both*)
- ◆ Level Three (Sanctioned) 2 tests only (at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee if they have riders eligible for Level Three competition)
- ◆ Level Four (Sanctioned) 2 tests only (at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee if they have riders eligible for Level Four competition)
- ◆ **Come & Try Classes** can be offered as additional classes in Introductory and Basic Level
  - ❖ these are classed as Non-Sanctioned and are restricted to RIDERS
    - who have either never ridden in Come & Try classes at all or have only ridden in Come & Try classes at ONE show previously
    - or who have NEVER shown in Sanctioned or Non-Sanctioned official Western Dressage classes prior to the show
  - ❖ if Riders are entered in Come & Try classes, they may also enter other official classes at the same show (ie. Come & Try Introductory Level Test A as well as Introductory Level Test A (Non-Sanctioned) etc)

## AWARDS – STANDARD SHOW

Ribbons must be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> place in each class (Open and Youth), including ties.

Rosettes must be awarded to each Level Champion and Reserve Champion. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Champion and Reserve Champion Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

Level placings 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> do not apply.

The style, size and colour must be as per Section 2.5 and the 2023 Ribbon & Sash Ordering 'how to' guide on the Event Organiser website page.

Prizemoney may be given to overall placegetters, but it is not encouraged.

## CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION OPEN

- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentages across the two tests at each level for **Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination). Where more than two tests in a level are offered, the two highest test scores are used to calculate the highest average percentage.
- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentage across two tests at each level for **Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination)

## YOUTH CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION

- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination – best two scores from any Sanctioned level class)  
The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.
- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination - best two scores from any Non-Sanctioned class)
- The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.

### 2.3.3 Championship Shows

WDA-AUS State Associations and Affiliates may apply to conduct only one (1) Championship show competition during an individual competition year. These can be held over one or two days.

Come and Try classes are not permitted at a Championship Show.

A State Association or Affiliate is not permitted to have the same Judge/s officiate at a Championship Show in consecutive years. If extenuating circumstances exist, application may be made to the National Management Committee for consideration.

A Championship Show may not be held within 7 clear days before or after a National Show, Australia wide.

Competition points (1.5 x) for sanctioned classes are allocated for the National and State end of year high point awards and WDA-AUS Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program.

Test selections should be limited to two (2) only. For example: All Levels – Tests B & E.

#### MANDATORY CLASSES – Championship Shows

- ▶ Introductory Level (Non- Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Basic Level (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level One (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level Two (Sanctioned) 2 tests only

Optional classes include:

- ◆ Basic Level (Non-Sanctioned) 2 tests only (*can be run either concurrently with Sanctioned Basic Level Tests OR run separately. When run concurrently, riders may not enter both*)
- ◆ Level Three (Sanctioned) 2 tests only (at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee if they have riders eligible for Level Three competition)
- ◆ Level Four (Sanctioned) 2 tests only (at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee if they have riders eligible for Level Four competition)

#### AWARDS – CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW

Ribbons must be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> place in each class (Open and Youth), including ties.

Rosettes must be awarded to each Level Champion and Reserve Champion. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Champion and Reserve Champion Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

Rosettes must be awarded for Level placings 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

The style, size and colour must be as per Section 2.5 and the 2023 Ribbon & Sash Ordering 'how to' guide on the Event Organiser website page.

#### CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION OPEN & LEVEL PLACEGETTERS 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>

- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> will be awarded to the highest average percentages across the two tests at each level for **Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination). Where more than two tests in a level are offered, the two highest test scores are used to calculate the highest average percentage.
- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> will be awarded to the highest average percentage across two tests at each level for **Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination)

### **YOUTH CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION & LEVEL PLACEGETTERS 3<sup>rd</sup> TO 5<sup>th</sup>**

- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination – best two scores from any Sanctioned level class)  
The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.
- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination - best two scores from any Non-Sanctioned class)
- The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.

### **OTHER AWARDS – CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW**

These are optional, not mandatory. Prizes for these are at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee.

- ❖ Highest Aggregate Percentage of the Show (1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> place)
- ❖ Highest Scoring QH, ASH, APPALOOSA, PAINT, DILUTE
- ❖ Highest Scoring Adult Rider                      ❖ Highest Scoring Youth Rider
- ❖ Judges Encouragement Award (Adult)                      ❖ Judges Encouragement Award (Youth)

### **Other Prizes**

Should be considered for Level Champions, up to and including 5<sup>th</sup> place overall.

For example, a Buckle (for Champions only), garlands, merchandise, feed products, horse related products or tack.

Prizemoney may be given to overall placegetters, but it is not encouraged.

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## **2.3.4 State Shows**

WDA-AUS State Associations may apply to conduct only one (1) State show competition during an individual competition year. These can be held over one, two or three days.

If the State Association declines or is unable to conduct a State show competition in any given year, another Affiliate within the state may apply to conduct the State show competition that year.

A State Association or Affiliate is not permitted to have the same Judge/s officiate at a State Show in consecutive years. If extenuating circumstances exist, application may be made to the National Management Committee for consideration.

All competitors at a State Show must be current financial Life, Senior or Youth members of WDA-AUS.

All horses must be registered with WDA-AUS for a competition license. The exception is those that are only entered in the Introductory Level Non-Sanctioned classes.

Come and Try classes are not permitted at a State Show.

There is no requirement to qualify in order to participate at a State Show.

A State Show may not be held within 7 clear days before or after a National Show, Australia wide.

Competition points (Double points) for sanctioned classes are allocated for the National and State end of year high point awards and WDA-AUS Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program.

Test selections should be limited to two (2) only. For example: All Levels – Tests B & E.

Basic Level tests may only be offered as sanctioned tests.

### **MANDATORY CLASSES – State Shows**

- ▶ Introductory Level (Non-Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Basic Level (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level One (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level Two (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level Three (Sanctioned) 2 tests only

Optional classes include:

- ◆ Level Four (Sanctioned) 2 tests only (at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee if they have riders eligible for Level Four competition)

#### **AWARDS – STATE SHOW**

Ribbons must be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> place in each class (Open and Youth), including ties.

Rosettes must be awarded to each Level Champion and Reserve Champion. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Champion and Reserve Champion Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

Rosettes must be awarded for Level placings 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

The style, size and colour must be as per Section 2.5 and the 2023 Ribbon & Sash Ordering 'how to' guide on the Event Organiser website page.

All Level Champions must be awarded a State Show Champion Buckle. An optional extra prize recommended for Level Champions is a Garland. Additional prizes may also be given to Level Champions.

Additional prizes must be given to Level placegetters, up to and including 5<sup>th</sup> place overall. For example, merchandise, feed products, horse related products or tack.

Prizemoney may be given to overall placegetters, but it is not encouraged.

#### **CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION OPEN & LEVEL PLACEGETTERS 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>**

- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> will be awarded to the highest average percentages across the two tests at each level for **Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination). Where more than two tests in a level are offered, the two highest test scores are used to calculate the highest average percentage.
- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> will be awarded to the highest average percentage across two tests at each level for **Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination)

#### **YOUTH CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION & LEVEL PLACEGETTERS 3<sup>rd</sup> TO 5<sup>th</sup>**

- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination – best two scores from any Sanctioned level class)  
The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.
- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination - best two scores from any Non-Sanctioned class)
- The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.

#### **OTHER AWARDS – STATE SHOW**

These are optional, not mandatory. Prizes for these are at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee.

- ❖ Highest Aggregate Percentage of the Show (1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> place)
- ❖ Highest Scoring QH, ASH, APPALOOSA, PAINT, DILUTE
- ❖ Highest Scoring Adult Rider                      ❖ Highest Scoring Youth Rider
- ❖ Judges Encouragement Award (Adult)                      ❖ Judges Encouragement Award (Youth)
- ❖ Teams Challenge Champions – refer to Section 2.4.



### 2.3.5 National Shows

The WDA-AUS National Association approve the conduct of only one (1) National show competition every two (2) years. The National Management Committee will be responsible for determining the location and venue for the event. A National Show competition can be held over three or more days. The WDA-AUS National Management Committee may approve a National Show Sub-Committee, to take on the responsibilities of planning and coordinating all or part of the biennial event.

The National Management Committee is not permitted to have the same Judge/s officiate at consecutive National Shows. If extenuating circumstances arise, the National Management Committee may give consideration to the circumstances.

All competitors at a National Show must be current financial Life, Senior or Youth members of WDA-AUS.

There is no requirement to qualify in order to participate at a National Show.

All horses must be registered with WDA-AUS for a competition license. The exception is those that are only entered in the Introductory Level Non-Sanctioned classes.

'Come and Try' classes are not permitted at a National Show.

Competition points (Triple points) for sanctioned classes are allocated for the National and State end of year high point awards and WDA-AUS Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program.

Test selections should be limited to three (3) only. For example: All Levels – Tests B, C & E.

Basic Level tests may only be offered as sanctioned tests.

#### **MANDATORY CLASSES – National Shows**

- ▶ Introductory Level (Non-Sanctioned) 3 tests only
- ▶ Basic Level (Sanctioned) 3 tests only
- ▶ Level One (Sanctioned) 3 tests only
- ▶ Level Two (Sanctioned) 3 tests only
- ▶ Level Three (Sanctioned) 3 tests only, subject to eligibility of riders for this level
- ▶ Level Four (Sanctioned) 3 tests only, subject to eligibility of riders for this level

#### **AWARDS – NATIONAL SHOW**

Ribbons must be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> place in each class (Open and Youth), including ties.

Rosettes must be awarded to each Level Champion and Reserve Champion. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Champion and Reserve Champion Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

Rosettes must be awarded for Level placings 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

The style, size and colour must be as per Section 2.5 and the 2023 Ribbon & Sash Ordering 'how to' guide on the Event Organiser website page.

All Level Champions must be awarded a National Show Champion Buckle. An optional extra prize recommended for Level Champions is a Garland. Additional prizes may also be given to Level Champions.

Additional prizes must be given to Level placegetters, up to and including 5<sup>th</sup> place overall. For example, merchandise, feed products, horse related products or tack.

Prizemoney may be given to overall placegetters, but it is not encouraged.

#### **CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION OPEN & LEVEL PLACEGETTERS 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>**

- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> will be awarded to the highest average percentages across the three tests at each level for **Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination).
- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> will be awarded to the highest average percentage across three tests at each level for **Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination)

## **YOUTH CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION & LEVEL PLACEGETTERS 3<sup>rd</sup> TO 5<sup>th</sup>**

.....National Shows continued

- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination – best three scores from any Sanctioned level class)  
The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.
- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination - best three scores from any Non-Sanctioned class)
- The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.

## **OTHER AWARDS – NATIONAL SHOW**

These are mandatory. Prizes for these are at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee.

- ❖ Highest Aggregate Percentage of the Show (1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> place)
- ❖ Highest Scoring QH, ASH, APPALOOSA, PAINT, DILUTE
- ❖ Highest Scoring Adult Rider                      ❖ Highest Scoring Youth Rider
- ❖ Teams Challenge Champions – refer to Section 2.4.

## **2.4 Teams Challenge**

A Teams Challenge Award may be offered at State and National Shows only. Prizes for this award will be at the discretion of the Event Organiser and all members of the team are to receive the same prize.

### **2.4.1 Team Structure**

- Team members do not have to be from the same state, city, location, postcode, or affiliate.
- Team members do not have to be from the same level, teams can be made up from any combination of the different levels, including Introductory level.
- Teams are any age & can include a mix of adult and youth riders.
- Teams must consist of 3 horse/rider participants.
- Each team member must be a current member of WDA-AUS and entered in the show in which the Teams Challenge is being offered.
- Each rider can only be a member of one team.
- Each horse can be ridden by no more than two riders, with each rider competing in a different team.
- Each team member must ride a different test.
- No separate rides are required, the tests are the ones the entrant rides at the show offering the Teams Challenge.
- Each team member must specify which test they are riding for the team.
- If a rider wants to be in a team but doesn't have others to join in with, the Event Convenor is responsible for the maintenance of a list of single riders and making attempts to find a team for those persons. It is recommended that an assistant be delegated this task.
- Each team must choose a name and designate a Team Captain who will submit the entry form and entry fee (\$30 per team), and who will communicate with the designated Event Convenor/Show Secretary/Assistant.
- An entry form template is available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website. Event Convenors are to provide this form to Team Captains.
- The Teams Challenge can be entered as a separate event on [nominate.com.au](http://nominate.com.au) or can be run as a manual nomination with the fee paid to the hosting Association, via direct debit by the closing date.

## 2.4.2 Teams Entry Process

- The entry fee for each team is \$30.00.
- Each team must designate one Team Captain who will submit the entry form and entry fee, and who will communicate with the designated Event Convenor/Show Secretary/Assistant.
- If a rider's test results in an elimination, the rider will be asked to designate a different test if it meets the team criteria. If the rider fails to designate an acceptable test, they will be considered "scratched" and none of their scores will count towards the team score.
- Team entry forms must be emailed to the designated Event Convenor/Show Secretary/Assistant by the closing time and date of the show nominations.
- No entries are to be accepted after the closing date.

## 2.4.3 Scoring & Prize Allocation

- The Event Convenor/Show Secretary will obtain the official test results after all tests have been checked by at least two (2) scorers or designated persons. The Event Convenor/Show Secretary will calculate the team results.
- The team score will be calculated as the average of the individual team members % scores.
- The scores are calculated by adding the 3 team member scores together and dividing by three (3) to find the average.
- The highest average score % will be declared the Team Challenge winners.
- Any ties will be broken by averaging the Collective Marks of each team members' specified test.
- Each member of the winning team will receive an identical Teams Challenge prize.

## 2.4.4 Rider Questions Answered

Q. Can a rider be on more than one team?

A. No, for a team challenge a rider can only participate on one team.

Q. Can the horse be ridden by more than one rider?

A. Yes, the horse can be ridden by one or two riders, but each rider must be on a different team.

Q. Which tests count towards the team score?

A. The rider will specify the test they are riding for the team on the entry form, before the event.

Q. Why must each team member specify which test they are riding for the team?

A. Team sports are about working as a team and having a strategy which allows each team member to be at their best.

Q. I do not have a team to join. How can I participate?

A. Contact the Event Convenor/Show Secretary of the event with your expression of interest in joining a team. They will put you on a list and attempt to allocate you into a team. Team Challenge entries have a closing date so you can't leave it to the last minute, you will need to act well before the closing date.

## 2.5 Competition Ribbons, Sashes And Rosettes

All ribbons, sashes & rosettes are standardised Australia wide. Event Organisers must follow the guidelines outlined in the WDA-AUS Ribbons, Sashes & Rosettes Ordering Aid Memoire on the Event Organisers page on the WDA-AUS website. The following table contains a brief description only.

Placing	Non-Sanctioned classes – Open & Youth (All ribbons are the “narrower” types, 48mm – with silver writing/logo)	Sanctioned classes – Open & Youth (Ribbons will be a wider sash style 7.5 cm – with silver writing/logo)
1 <sup>st</sup>	Blue	Black
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Red	Grey
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Yellow	Yellow
4 <sup>th</sup>	White	White
5 <sup>th</sup>	Green	Green

SHOW CATEGORY	Non-Sanctioned Champion Rosette	Non-Sanctioned Res Champion Rosette	Sanctioned Champion Rosette	Sanctioned Res Champion Rosette
Standard	Blue/White	Red/White	Black/Gold/White	Black/Silver/White
Championship	Blue/White/Blue	Red/White/Red	Black/Gold/White	Black/Silver/White
State	Black/Gold/White	Black/Silver/White	Black/Gold/White	Black/Silver/White
Level Placings Rosettes for Championship and State Shows		3 <sup>rd</sup> Yellow/White/Yellow	4 <sup>th</sup> White/White/White	5 <sup>th</sup> Green/White/Green

## SECTION 3: WESTERN DRESSAGE LEVELS AND DIVISIONS

### 3.1 Levels

Western Dressage has five (5) levels of competition. Each level has up to five (5) tests for competition.

1. Introductory Level – Non-Sanctioned classes only
2. Basic Level – Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned classes
3. Level One – Sanctioned classes only
4. Level Two – Sanctioned classes only
5. Level Three – Sanctioned classes only
6. Level Four – Sanctioned classes only

### 3.2 Divisions

There are three (3) divisions.

1. Open Division
2. Youth Division
3. Amateur Division

**OPEN DIVISION** – Riders holding a Life, Senior or Youth membership may compete in the open division. Refer to Section 2.3 Show Requirements for the Open Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetter Award calculation for each different competition show category.

**YOUTH DIVISION** – Riders holding a Youth membership compete in the open division and are scored in the open division with all of the other class entrants.

However, they are also scored separately in the Youth division, for the same class with all of the other Youth riders in the same class.

As per the details outlined in Section 2.3 Show Requirements, Level Champion & Reserve Champion Awards are given to the Youth division. Level Placegetter Awards are given at the relevant show categories.

Youth Awards are calculated differently from the Open Division. It is determined by using the best two (2) scores from **ANY** Sanctioned Class. This also applies when calculating the Youth Non-Sanctioned Award, using the best two (2) scores from **ANY** Non-Sanctioned Class are used. For a National Show, the best three (3) test scores are used.

**Explanatory note:** The best scores can be from different levels ie one from Basic Level and one from Level 1. The same Horse/Rider combination that is awarded Champion Youth cannot also be eligible for Reserve Champion.

Youth are not permitted to handle, ride or exhibit colts or stallions within the perimeter of the grounds at any competitions or events.

**AMATEUR DIVISION** – Refer to Section 7.

### 3.3 Levels Of Competition - Tests

Introductory Level tests are always Non-Sanctioned or 'Come and Try' classes and therefore no competition points are awarded.

Basic Level tests may be offered as Sanctioned, Non-Sanctioned or 'Come and Try' Non-Sanctioned classes. For Non-Sanctioned or 'Come and Try' classes no points are awarded.

Level One, Two, Three and Four tests are only offered as Sanctioned classes.

Only WDA-AUS tests may be used.

TEST CATEGORY	WDA-AUS MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED	WDA-AUS HORSE REGISTRATION REQUIRED	NATIONAL, STATE & LIFETIME POINTS EARNT	EXCEPTION
Non-Sanctioned Introductory Level Tests	<b>NO</b> Event Only Membership fee is required if not a member of the Affiliate holding the show	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	State & National Shows  The Rider must be a WDA-AUS member
Non-Sanctioned Basic Level Tests	<b>NO</b> Event Only Membership fee is required if not a member of the Affiliate holding the show	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	
Sanctioned Basic Level, Level One – Four Tests	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Only the rider of the horse must be a WDA-AUS member, not the owner of the horse

### 3.4 Eligibility Criteria & Conditions for Test Levels

- a) The Levels of Western Dressage are offered as a means of evaluating a horse as its training progresses. The performance of the horse shall be considered in light of the degree of training it should have achieved to be shown at that Level.
- b) Riders may choose the test level that they wish to enter at a competition provided that they meet the conditions required of the level/s chosen.
- c) A horse may only compete in a maximum of two (2) consecutive test levels at any one competition.
- d) A horse may only be ridden a maximum of four (4) tests in any one competition day.
- e) A horse may be ridden by more than one rider but may not be entered in the same class with two different riders. A horse may not be ridden more than once in a class. A rider may ride more than one horse.
- f) Horses must be ridden astride.

TEST LEVEL	CONDITIONS
Introductory Level	Horses must be at least 3 years old.
Basic Level	Horses must be at least 3 years old.
Level One	Horses must be at least 3 years old.
Level Two	Horse must be at least 4 years old
Level Three	Horses must be at least 4 years old. Must have achieved at least a 75% score in a Level Two class.
Level Four	Horses must be at least 4 years old. Must have achieved at 75% in a Level Two class. May only be ridden two-handed in a snaffle bit, transitional bit, bosal or bitless bridle; or one-handed in a curb bit or two-rein bridle.

## SECTION 4: AWARDS

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### 4.1 National and State End Of Year High Point Awards

- a) End of Year National and State High Point **Open** Awards are determined by sanctioned competition points accrued within each Level by horse and rider combinations during the competition year.
- b) End of Year National and State High Point **Youth** Awards are determined by the total competition points accrued from results in all levels by youth rider and horse combination during the competition year from Youth Division class placings only.
- c) In the case of equal scores, all tied riders will receive the same place and the rider/s with the next highest score will be awarded the next placing. Example: 1<sup>st</sup> placegetter / 2<sup>nd</sup> placegetter / Tied 3<sup>rd</sup> place – two placegetters / 4th placegetter etc. This applies to the End of Year National and State High Point Awards.
- d) All equal placegetters receive the full award points applicable.
- e) Horse and rider combinations must compete in tests from at least 2 separate events during the competition year to be considered for National or State High Point Awards.
- f) State and National High Point awards are not to be announced prior to September 1<sup>st</sup>, each year. *The exception being in the year that a National Show is to be held. National High Point awards may be announced and presented at the National Show.*

### 4.2 WDA-AUS Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program

The WDA-AUS encourages the progression of horses and riders through the training levels and would like to provide encouragement, recognition, and awards throughout the journey.

#### 4.2.1 Horse Competition License

WDA-AUS issues lifetime Competition Licenses to individual horses registered with the Association. WDA-AUS awards licensed horses to recognise and reward progressive and successful training and promote fair competition.

- a) Competition licenses incur a once only fee upon application.
- b) The license stays with the horse for its entire life.
- c) The license is transferrable from owner to owner.
- d) If the horse is sold or the responsibility of the horse is transferred to another person, the acquirer is to complete a Horse License Transfer Application, available on the WDA-AUS website. The form is to be submitted to WDA-AUS via email at [secretary@westerndressage.com.au](mailto:secretary@westerndressage.com.au)
- e) There is no transfer fee applicable.

#### 4.2.2 Awards Program

- Horses must be 3 years of age and over.
- Horses must be registered with WDA-AUS and hold a Lifetime Competition License (Section 4.2.1)
- The rider must be a Life, Senior or Youth member of WDA-AUS.
- The rider does not have to be the owner of the horse.
- The horse owner does not have to be a member of WDA-AUS.
- Points are awarded to the licensed horse according to its percentage score, placing and number of entrants in the class. These points are awarded to the horse irrespective of the rider except for Youth class placings, ie. Only placings from “Open” classes will earn points.

- Points can ONLY be earned at WDA-AUS Affiliated and Sanctioned events judged by a WDA-AUS accredited judge.
- Points are only allocated to Sanctioned Classes (not Introductory Level or Come & Try Classes or Basic Level Non-Sanctioned classes).
- Places from 1st to 5th to be awarded for each class.
- All equal placegetters receive full points for their placing.
- No points will be earned for test scores below 60%.
  - ◆ **ONLINE shows recognised and/or organised by WDA-AUS earn HALF standard points**
  - ◆ **CHAMPIONSHIP Show = 1.5 times standard points**
  - ◆ **STATE Show = DOUBLE standard points**
  - ◆ **NATIONAL show = TRIPLE standard points**
    - ❖ **Affiliates are restricted to holding only one Championship Show per year**
- Points are cumulative for the lifetime of the horse and need not be earned in one competition year.
- Awards and Certificates will be sent out to the registered owner of the horse by WDA-AUS at the discretion of the association biannually as the horse reaches each milestone.
- Horses that reach these milestones and achieve the awards and certificates will be listed in the WDA-AUS Newsletter and on the WDA-AUS website in recognition of their outstanding achievement.

### 4.3 WDA-AUS Awards Points Scale

Minimum Percentage	Number of Riders in the Class	Placing	Points Awarded
65%	1 – 4	1st	4
65%	1–4	2nd	3
65%	1–4	3rd	2
65%	1–4	4th	1
60%	5 or more	1st	5
60%	5 or more	2nd	4
60%	5 or more	3rd	3
60%	5 or more	4th	2
60%	5 or more	5th	1

## 4.4 Awards & Certificates

<b>Certificate of Merit</b>	50 points in a Sanctioned Level
<b>Certificate of Achievement</b>	100 points in a Sanctioned Level
<b>Certificate of Excellence</b>	150 points in a Sanctioned Level
<b>Bronze Century</b>	100 points achieved in each of 2 different Sanctioned Levels
<b>Silver Century</b>	100 points achieved in each of 3 different Sanctioned Levels
<b>Gold Century</b>	100 points achieved in each of 4 different Sanctioned Levels
<b>WDA-AUS Performance Bronze Medal</b>	200 or more points Total across 3 different Sanctioned Levels* (*minimum 20pts in a level to count)
<b>WDA-AUS Performance Silver Medal</b>	350 or more points Total across 3 different Sanctioned Levels* (*minimum 20pts in a level to count)
<b>WDA-AUS Performance Gold Medal</b>	500 or more points Total across 3 different Sanctioned Levels* (*minimum 20pts in a level to count)
<b>WDA- AUS Superior Performance Horse</b>	500 or more points Total across 4 different Sanctioned Levels* (*minimum 20pts in a level to count)

**Explanatory Note:- (\*minimum 20 points in a level to count)**

- **Example 1. WDA-AUS Performance Bronze Medal (ELIGIBLE)**  
Mr Ed has 110 points from Basic Level, 100 points from Level One, 20 points from Level Two  
**Equals: 230 pts TOTAL**
- **Example 2. WDA-AUS Performance Bronze Medal (NOT ELIGIBLE)**  
Mr Ed has 110 points from Basic Level, 100 points from Level One, 5 points from Level Two  
**Equals: 215 pts TOTAL**

## SECTION 5: EXECUTION AND JUDGING OF TESTS

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### 5.1 Voice and Touch during Competition

- a) Subtle use of the voice and limited clicking of the tongue is permitted.
- b) Touching the horse as a reward is permitted.

### 5.2 Calling Western Dressage Tests

- a) All tests may be called during the competition.
- b) It is the responsibility of the rider to arrange for a person to call the test if required. Lateness and mistakes in calling the test will not release the rider from any penalties for Errors.
- c) Calling the tests is limited to reading the movement as it is written twice only.



### 5.3 Commencement of Western Dressage Test and Salute

- a) After the ring of the bell, the rider should enter the arena at A within sixty (60) seconds to commence the test.
- b) A test begins with the entry at A and ends after the final salute.
- c) At the salute, all riders must take the reins (and whip if carried) in one hand. The rider drops the other arm down and bows their head to the Judge at C. Men wearing cowboy hats may take off the hat to the Judge instead.
- d) Only riders who are in Military Dress Uniform may salute in Military Fashion.
- e) After the final salute the rider should leave the arena at A at a free walk.
- f) The Judge may stop a test and/or allow a rider to restart a test from the beginning or from any appropriate point in the test if, in the Judge's discretion, some unusual circumstance has occurred to interrupt a test. Time-outs are not permitted.

### 5.4 Scoring

The Levels of Western Dressage are offered as a means of evaluating a horse as its training progresses. The performance of the horse shall be considered in light of the degree of training it should have achieved to be shown at that Level.

**Judges observe the performance of each individual combination and make a balanced objective assessment so that the comments and scores accurately reflect the quality presented and differentiates between serious faults and minor mistakes.**

- a) Tests and patterns are comprised of several distinct manoeuvre groups which Judges are asked to evaluate on an individual basis dependent on execution as dictated by the pattern description and the rules for judging, and against the standard and expectations for that level.
- b) Points are awarded from 0 to 10 in 1/2 point increments with 4 points or below denoting extremely poor quality to 10 points for excellent quality and a score of 7 denoting a movement that is correctly executed and of average quality. There is an expectation of an average performance scoring 70%, i.e. averaging 7 out of 10 points for each movement.
- c) Each movement to be marked by the Judge is numbered on the Judge's test sheet.
- d) Certain movements and collective marks within the test patterns may have a co-efficient. The points are multiplied by the corresponding co-efficient where applicable and then totalled.
- e) Collective marks (points) for attitude, rideability, finesse and fluency are awarded from 0 to 10, including half points, after the rider has finished their performance.
- f) Penalty points for errors are deducted on the Judge's test sheet from the rider's total movement and overall points.
- g) The rider's score is their total points awarded expressed as a percentage of the total points available for the test.
- h) All Level tests are scored to three (3) decimal places. All percentage calculations must be rounded up or down to three (3) decimals after the decimal point as per the following example.

0.0011-0.0014 is rounded down. 0.0015-0.0019 is rounded up.

Therefore, a score of 78.1214 is rounded down to 3 decimal places to become 78.121% because the 4 is less than 5.

A score of 78.1216 is rounded up to 3 decimal places to become a score of 78.122% because the 6 is greater than the midpoint of 5.

## 5.5 Points Scale - Scoring

Points Awarded to Western Dressage Movements – Must relate to the Test Level for the class		
Points	Expectations	Reason
9 -10	Excellent exhibition of Western Dressage principles, does not have to be perfect	Excellent to exceptional – a joy to watch regardless of the spectator’s level of understanding. Demonstrates the objectives considering the degree of difficulty/level of competence required to perform the set pattern.
8	Very good example of Western Dressage, pleasing to watch	Very good display of the partnership’s confidence and skill development. A consistent, structured and accurate performance. Any minor or momentary lapses or inaccuracy have little effect on the overall presentation.
7	Average performance meets most of the expectations of Western Dressage for the Level	A competent performance demonstrating a good understanding of the objectives and skill development. There may be a simple mistake in execution of the movement that can be easily corrected. There will be areas for improvement and further development; nonetheless a good working partnership is demonstrated.
6	The performance meets some of the requirements of the Level	The movement displays an understanding of and working towards most of the objectives. There may be one or two of the following issues occurring: occasional tension or resistance; figures or transitions not precisely the correct placement, shape or size; inconsistent gait or cadence; the horse sometimes lacks straightness, suppleness or balance; the rider’s position and use of aids not always effective.
5	The performance meets a few of the requirements of the Level	The movement is executed but lacks the proficiency and consistency to meet the objectives with some of the following issues occurring: tension, resistance, disobedience; figures or transitions are incorrect placement, shape or size; loss of gait or cadence; horse lacks straightness, suppleness or balance; rider’s position or use of aids needs to demonstrate better balance, timing and smoothness. Horse and rider are not consistently attentive and responsive to each other.
4 or below	Does not meet the expectations of Western Dressage	There is a lack of harmony and understanding in the partnership; the movements are not correctly executed; there is tension; unwillingness; safety concerns; rider is unbalanced; aids are used roughly, imprecisely or poorly timed.
0	Not executed	Nothing of required movement has been performed or is recognisable.
Overall Points awarded at the conclusion of Test for overall impression of these demonstrated qualities		
Horse	Attitude	Attitude of an ideal Western Dressage horse is demonstrated by being willingly guided, responsive, attentive, light, smooth and confident.
Horse	Rideability	Rideability is demonstrated by the horse’s self-carriage and ease of movement developed through its cadence, drive, balance, suppleness and straightness.
Rider	Finesse	Finesse describes the quality of a rider who is confident, graceful and proficient. The rider’s effectiveness and connection with the horse is established and maintained through a balanced position, feel, timing and correct use of aids.
Rider	Fluency	Fluency describes the quality of a test that is pleasing to watch and flows through correct execution of movements and accurate pattern placement.

## 5.6 Expectations of the Levels for Western Dressage Tests

Introductory Level	
<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Movements</b>
<p>The horse is safe to ride and calmly complies with the rider's commands and moves with purpose and regularity of gaits.</p> <p>The horse's nose may be slightly in front of the vertical and the poll must not be lower than the withers in working paces.</p> <p>The horse's balance and connection through the bridle is reasonably consistent.</p> <p>The rider can confidently control the horse in walk and jog to execute the movements with a fair degree of accuracy. The rider can balance and follow the horse's movement, maintaining a steady rhythm and tempo. <b>All jog may be ridden sitting or rising.</b></p>	<p>Working walk</p> <p>Free walk</p> <p>Working jog</p> <p>Free jog</p> <p>Halt</p> <p>Circles, figure eights and serpentines (no less than 20m diameter of circle)</p> <p>Loops (5m and 10m from track)</p> <p>Half 10m circles</p> <p>Turns on forehand</p>
Basic Level	
<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Additional Movements</b>
<p>Horse is calm, obedient, maintains a consistent outline; moves freely forward in a clear rhythm with a steady tempo; transitions are smooth and balanced; accepts a light contact and yields to the rider. The horse's nose may be slightly in front of the vertical and the poll must not be lower than the withers in working paces.</p> <p>Rider is confident, maintains a steady position and demonstrates the ability to control and connect with the horse using correct aids and light contact with the reins. Horse and rider cooperate and appear to have a reasonable understanding of each other so that the execution of movements is more accurate. <b>All jog may be ridden sitting or rising.</b></p>	<p>Working lope</p> <p>Walk and jog 10m circles</p> <p>Leg Yield in working jog</p> <p>Counter-bend/flexion</p> <p>Backup</p> <p>Progressive transitions</p>
Level One	
<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Additional Movements</b>
<p>Horse is more cadenced, straight, supple and balanced and shows willingness to engage the hindquarters to promote lightness and ease of movement. The horse is attentive and responsive.</p> <p>Rider's position is stable and balanced. The rider guides the horse calmly and confidently with light contact and unobtrusive leg and hand aids. Horse and rider demonstrate a good working partnership through an accurate performance.</p> <p><b>Collected jog is ridden sitting; all other jog may be sitting or rising.</b></p>	<p>Lengthening stride at jog and lope</p> <p>Turns on the haunches</p> <p>Counter lope loop 5m from track</p> <p>Circles, figure eights and serpentines (no less than 15m diameter of circle)</p> <p>Jog loops quarter line to quarter line</p> <p>Shoulder-in at collected jog</p> <p>Side-pass</p> <p>Direct transitions</p>
Level Two	
<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Additional Movements</b>
<p>As for Level One and with a higher degree of athletic development of the horse and consistency.</p> <p><b>Working and collected jog is ridden sitting; lengthened and free jog may be sitting or rising.</b></p>	<p>Collected jog</p> <p>Free lope</p> <p>Circles, figure eights and serpentines (no less than 10m diameter of circle)</p> <p>Counter lope loops 10m from track and quarter line to quarter line</p> <p>Haunches in and haunches out at collected jog</p> <p>Change of lead through the jog</p>
Level Three	
<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Additional Movements</b>
<p>Horse demonstrates a high degree of suppleness, balance, straightness, cadence and self-carriage; clearly defined transitions between collected and lengthened gaits; changes of bend and direction are fluent. The horse is willingly guided, attentive, and confident.</p> <p>The rider is confident and proficient, demonstrating a balanced position, feel, timing &amp; correct use of aids. The horse and rider perform in unison and harmony.</p> <p><b>Free jog may be ridden rising; all other jog is sitting.</b></p>	<p>Collected lope</p> <p>Minimum 4 strides release of reins at the collected lope</p> <p>Half-pass at collected jog and collected lope</p> <p>Counter lope circles</p> <p>Change of lead through the walk</p>
Level Four	
<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Additional Movements</b>
<p>As for Level Three with a higher degree of athletic development of the horse. Level 4 movements should be performed with greater engagement, straightness, suppleness and balance. The horse and rider's execution of the movements demonstrates their authority and finesse. The performance is pleasing and exciting to watch.</p> <p><b>Free jog may be ridden rising; all other jog is sitting.</b></p>	<p>Zig-zag at collected jog and collected lope</p> <p>Flying change (including sequential changes)</p> <p>360 degree turn on the forehand</p> <p>Half pirouette and quarter pirouette</p> <p>Circles of less than 10m diameter</p> <p>Pivot one and a half turns</p> <p>Extended walk</p> <p>Collected walk</p>

## 5.7 Western Dressage Test Errors and Penalties

### 5.7.1 Error of Pattern

An Error of Pattern occurs when there is a deviation from or omission of a movement, such as a wrong turn, taking the incorrect gait at a marker or forgetting a movement entirely.

- a) When a rider makes an Error of Pattern the Judge may warn the rider by ringing the bell. It is up to the Judge to decide whether to ring the bell or not.
- b) In some cases, the ringing of the bell would unnecessarily impede the flow of the test. For instance, the rider makes a transition from Free Walk to Working Walk at R instead of M.
- c) The Judge shows the rider, if necessary, the point at which the rider must take up the test again and the next movement to be executed, then leaves the rider to continue the test.
- d) In principle, a rider is not allowed to repeat a movement of the test unless the Judge decides on an Error of Pattern and rings the bell.
- e) If the rider has started the execution of a movement and attempts to repeat the movement, the Judge must consider only score the first movement and penalise for the Error of Pattern.
- f) The decision as to whether an Error of Pattern has been made will be at the sole discretion of the Judge.
- g) If the Judge has not noted an error the rider has the benefit of the doubt.
- h) Every Error of Pattern, whether the bell is sounded or not, is to be noted by the Judge and is penalised as follows:
  - i) First time by two (2) points.
  - ii) Second time by four (4) points.
  - iii) Third time by elimination. At the Judge's discretion, the rider may continue to finish the test unless this will interfere with the start of the next scheduled ride. In this case the Judge must excuse the rider from the ring.

### 5.7.2 Error of Execution

An Error of Execution occurs when the rider makes a mistake in the execution of the movement but there is no omission or deviation from the movement.

- Some examples of Errors of Execution include: rising in collected jog; failing to take the reins (and whip if carried) in one hand at the salute; changing from riding one handed to two handed or and vice versa during a test.
- The Judge does not usually ring the bell as this is a rider inaccuracy and does not interrupt the flow of the test.
- If the error is likely to be recurring, for example, the reins are being held incorrectly, or rising instead of sitting for collected jog, then the Judge may choose to ring the bell and let the rider know that the error has occurred. It is up to the rider to decide whether they repeat the error for the remainder of the test.
- Where the jog is permitted to be either sitting or rising, the rider may change from one method to the other at any point within or between the movements.
- The decision as to whether an Error of Execution has been made will be at the sole discretion of the Judge.
- If the Judge has not noted an error the rider has the benefit of the doubt.
- Every Error of Execution is to be noted by the Judge and penalised as follows:
  - i) The rider is penalised by two (2) penalty points for each error.
  - ii) These errors do not result in elimination.

- iii) The penalty is recorded in the movement where the error occurred.
- iv) The rider can only be penalised once for a specific error within a movement. If the error is repeated in a subsequent movement/s, a further 2-point penalty is recorded in each movement where this occurs.

**Examples:**

- a rider goes from one handed to two handed in Movement 3 and then stays two handed for the rest of the test. The rider is given 2 penalty points in Movement 3 and each subsequent Movement.
- a rider goes from one handed to two handed in Movement 3 and stays two handed until Movement 11 where they revert to one handed for the rest of the test. The rider is given 2 penalty points in each Movement from 3 through 10.
- a rider performs the collected jog rising instead of sitting throughout the test. The rider is given 2 penalty points in each Movement where this occurs.
- the riders enter the arena before the Judge rings the bell.
- not entering the arena within sixty (60) seconds after the bell, but within ninety (90) seconds.

## 5.8 Elimination from the Class

Elimination from the Class by the Judge, or event management where relevant, occurs as a result of any of the following:

- a) Three (3) Errors of Pattern.
- b) Not entering the arena within ninety (90) seconds after the ring of the bell.
- c) Loss of control such as bucking, rearing or being unable to guide the horse.
- d) Use of illegal equipment or use of equipment that is not permitted for the class.
- e) Free hand or the romal/rein ends are used to strike and intimidate the horse.
- f) The leg or spur is used in front of the cinch.
- g) All four feet of the horse leave the arena at the same time during the test is elimination. Provided there is no issue with safety, there is no penalty for knocking down part of arena fence or stepping out of the arena with less than four feet – it may affect the Movement and/or Overall scores.
- h) Blatant disobedience or loss of control for longer than twenty (20) seconds (individual or cumulative) or any disobedience or loss of control such as bucking, rearing or being unable to guide the horse that presents a safety concern for the rider, horse, Judge, other participants, or public will result in elimination earlier than twenty (20) seconds.
- i) In the case of a fall of horse and/or rider the rider will be eliminated (it is considered to be a fall of the horse when both the shoulders and quarters of the horse have contacted the ground).
- j) Concern for the safety or welfare of rider, horse, Judge, other participants, or public.
- k) Misrepresentation of entry or inappropriate entry.

## 5.9 Elimination From An Event

Elimination from an Event by the Judge or Event Management, as relevant, occurs as a result of any of the following:

- a) Cruelty to the horse.
- b) Use of illegal equipment or misuse of equipment in a manner that is intended or likely to cause injury or abuse to the horse including excessive use of whips or spurs.
- c) Evidence of blood on a horse or marked lameness in the competition arena shall be cause for elimination from

the event by the Judge.

- d) Evidence of blood on a horse outside the competition arena shall be cause for elimination from the event, by event management.
- e) Engaging in unsporting, disreputable or abusive behaviour by any participant anywhere at the venue including in the warm up areas shall be cause for elimination from the event by event management.

## SECTION 6: TRAINING, PROMOTIONAL EVENTS & COMPETITIONS

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### 6.1 Training and Promotional Events and Competitions

Western Dressage training and promotional events and classes are designed to encourage greater participation and introduce new people to Western Dressage and include, but are not limited to:

- Training days, lessons, clinics and seminars.
- Demonstrations.
- Social/recreational activities.
- 'Come and Try' Western Dressage Introductory Level and Basic Level classes.
- Assisted Rider events.

State Associations and Affiliates conduct these events and competitions subject to the following:

- a) An Event Notification containing the event details is to be submitted to WDA-AUS in the form of an email to [events@westerndressage.com.au](mailto:events@westerndressage.com.au) at least 30 (thirty) days prior the event. This notification provides the opportunity to promote the event through WDA-AUS associated websites and other media, and for WDA-AUS to provide advice or assistance to the event Convenor.
- b) Participants must be Life, Senior or Youth or Associate (non-riding event) WDA-AUS Members or members of the Affiliate Association conducting the event. Otherwise the participant is to pay an Event Only Membership Fee.
- c) Events Convenors must use the online event system at [www.nominate.com.au](http://www.nominate.com.au) for participant registration.
- d) WDA-AUS rules and guidelines apply to these events, with the exception that entry to the event may be restricted and eligibility for horse and riders may be defined by the Event Convenors.
- e) The Event Convenors may choose to allow riders to use any style of saddle with any WDA-AUS defined legal headgear for ridden events.
- f) Additional criteria and exemptions apply to equipment and attire for Assisted Rider classes – refer to Section 6.3.
- g) Ribbons, prizes and other awards, if given, are determined and arranged by the event organisation.
- h) Eligibility criteria and other any other stipulations for classes should be publicised no later than the opening of nominations for the relevant event or classes.
- i) Horses do not need to be licensed. No WDA-AUS Competition Points are recorded. Results are not counted for WDA-AUS or any other High Point awards.
- j) WDA-AUS Approved Judges are recommended but not required. These events provide an opportunity for 'Trainee' judges to gain experience and mentoring.
- k) Classes are judged in accordance with WDA-AUS Rules and Guidelines.

## 6.2 Come and Try Classes

### 6.2.1 Definition

Come & Try Classes can be offered as additional classes in Introductory and Basic Levels. These are classed as Non-Sanctioned classes. The classes apply to the riders, not the horse.

Come and Try classes are restricted to riders who:

- have either never ridden in Come & Try classes at all; or have only ridden in Come & Try classes at ONE (1) show previously
- or who have NEVER shown in Sanctioned or Non-Sanctioned official Western Dressage classes prior to the show

If Riders are entered in Come & Try classes they may also enter other official classes at the same show (ie. Come & Try Introductory Level Test A as well as Introductory Level Test A (Non Sanctioned) etc)

- ◆ Any and all photos/videos taken of rider competing in Come and Try classes **must** have a notation made with them that the class is a Come & Try Western Dressage class (hence explaining the lack of compliant tack that may be in use).

### 6.2.3 Come and Try Requirements

'Come and Try' classes may be conducted as a stand-alone event or in conjunction or concurrently with other competitions and events.

- a) Introductory (walk/jog) and Basic Level tests may be offered as 'Come and Try' classes and may be judged concurrently or in conjunction with other classes, as part of a training or promotional day, or as a stand-alone event.
- b) Come and Try classes are only permitted at Standard Shows.
- c) Horses must be at least 3 years old to enter 'Come and Try' classes.
- d) The Event Convenors may choose to allow riders to use any style of saddle with any WDA-AUS defined legal headgear. The other equipment and attire should adhere to the requirements stated in Sections 10 (Presentation of Horse and Rider) and 11.29 (RWD).
- e) These classes cannot earn any competition points or provide eligibility for any other awards. Ribbons or other prizes are not necessarily awarded.
- f) The class may also be structured to allow for some coaching and individual feedback during or immediately following the performance; to provide the opportunity to 're-ride' all or selected movements; to use 'live' judging where the comments and scores are announced during the performance for the benefit of riders, coaches, trainee judges and spectators.
- g) WDA-AUS Approved Judges are recommended but not required. These events provide an opportunity for 'Trainee' judges to gain experience and mentoring.
- h) Classes are judged in accordance with the relevant rules and guidelines in Section 5.
- i) A Horse may compete in a maximum of four (4) test rides (including Sanctioned or Non-sanctioned classes) in any competition day.
- j) A Horse may be ridden by more than one rider but may not be entered in the same class with two different riders.

### COME AND TRY CLASSES

- As above
- Event Convenor's may choose to allow any style of saddle to be used with any WDA-AUS defined legal headgear as contained in this rulebook.
- Restricted to RIDERS who have never or only once before, ridden in Come and Try classes.
- Also means a person who has never shown in Sanctioned or Non-Sanctioned official Western Dressage classes before.
- Come and Try classes are only permitted at Standard Shows.
- If riders are entered in Come and Try classes, they may also enter other official classes at the same show (ie: Come & Try Introductory Level Test A as well as Introductory Level Test A Non-Sanctioned).
- Any and all photos/videos taken of rider competing in Come and Try classes must have a notation made with them that the class is a Come & Try Western Dressage class (hence explaining the lack of compliant tack that may be in use).

## 6.3 Assisted Rider Events

WDA-AUS has opted to include specific Assisted Rider events to support participation for those who require assistance to compete and this may include Riders with Disabilities, young and/or inexperienced riders. In doing so, WDA-AUS does not assume responsibility for safety of participants.

- Riders participating in Assisted Rider classes may not show in other classes, but their horse may be ridden in those classes by other riders.**
- No competition points are earned from any results in the Assisted Rider classes.
- The Judge and Event Management may modify a test or set their own to make the class more suitable for the participating riders.
- The emphasis of this program is on providing the rider with the opportunity for safe, fun participation in the event and rewarding the rider's effort.
- Each rider **must be led** by a suitable experienced assistant who is (sixteen) 16 years of age or older and may be accompanied by a side walker who is (sixteen) 16 years of age or older. The assistant's main role is not to lead the horse, but to guide or control the horse when necessary to ensure the rider's safety. If needed, the assistants can explain what is required and help the rider. The rider is encouraged to make an effort to be in control, maintain their balance and use the aids properly to guide the horse.
- Riders do not have to attempt or complete all elements of the patterns but a rider who omits a movement or does it incorrectly cannot be placed above a rider who does the correct pattern.
- The assistants and side walkers should wear western style pants/jeans, enclosed safe shoes, long-sleeved shirt with a collar and a western hat.
- The lead line should be approximately 2m long and is attached to a halter that is properly fitted and worn under the bridle. The lead must not be attached to the bit.
- The reins may be attached to the side rings of the halter or to the bit, depending on rider's level of experience, but the rider should make an effort to retain control of the reins at all times.
- Riders must wear a properly fitted and fastened with harness, current approved Australian Standard protective helmet.
- Riders may use any WDA-AUS defined legal headgear and any style of saddle. Riders may hold the horn of the saddle and the use of neck reins and 'monkey grips' is permitted. Other equipment and attire should adhere to the criteria described in Sections 10 (Presentation of Horse and Rider) and 11.29 (RWD).



## SECTION 7: AMATEUR DIVISION

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### 7.1 Eligibility Criteria

Amateur status is not automatic, a person must apply and be accepted by WDA-AUS at the start of each membership year and pay the Amateur Permit Fee (\$30).

A person is eligible to apply for Amateur status once they officially cease to be a Youth rider as per Section 1.4 c).

Every person entered in an Amateur class must hold an Amateur Permit issued by WDA-AUS.

Regardless of one's equestrian accomplishments or skills, a person is considered an Amateur if they have not in the **previous 3-year period (36 months)**, engaged in any of the activities identified below:-

- Accepts remuneration for training horses, showing horses, assisting in training horses.
  - Accepts remuneration for conducting horse riding lessons/clinics/schools (including driving, showmanship, equitation, or training of horses).
- ◆ Remuneration is defined as compensation or payment in any form such as cash, goods, sponsorships, discounts, or services; reimbursement of any expenses; trade or in-kind exchange of goods or services.

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Amateurs are PERMITTED to accept remuneration for the following activities:-

- Accept remuneration for horse related work duties either on or off competition grounds including but not limited to grooming, tacking and untacking, bathing, clipping, lunging, braiding, tack and stall cleaning, loping/warming up/exercising (but not training) horses that do not belong to them (e.g. Racehorses, cutting horses)
- Accept remuneration for teaching/training/working with disabled riders for therapeutic purposes.
- Accept remuneration for judging equestrian events or providing classroom information sessions relating to judging of equestrian events.
- Accept remuneration as a Social Media Influencer or Social Media Brand Ambassador.
- ❖ Amateur riders can only show a horse in Amateur classes, if that horse is owned by themselves, their spouse, defacto partner or their immediate family members (Mother, Father, Sister, Brother).
- ❖ Amateur riders can show a horse they have leased, if the lease is for a **minimum** of 6 months and proof of the lease is lodged with WDA-AUS.
- ❖ Youth riders that are transitioning out of Youth Division and in to Amateur Division at the end of their 18-year-old year are exempt from the aforementioned 3-year (36month) period.
- ❖ Any remuneration received while their status is Youth is not scrutinized, however anything that occurs as of ***Day One*** of the first eligible WDA-AUS membership year that they are no longer considered a Youth rider (whether they are a member of WDA-AUS or not at the time), will be considered when applying for Amateur status.
- ❖ If the holder of an Amateur Permit loses/relinquishes their Amateur status at any point and receives remuneration for training horses, showing horses, assisting in training horses, conducting horse riding lessons/clinics/schools (including for driving, showmanship, equitation or training of horses) they have the option to reapply once a 3 year (36month) period has elapsed from when they stop receiving remuneration for those activities as set out above. Proof of timeline must be provided to WDA-AUS.

The WDA-AUS National Management Committee has the authority to deny the acceptance or the continuance of a Member's Amateur Status if it believes that the applicant does not qualify in accordance with this section 7.1.

## 7.2 Amateur Class Overview

### STANDARD SHOWS & CHAMPIONSHIP SHOWS

Amateur classes are held within the Open classes at **Standard** and **Championship** shows.

### STATE SHOWS & NATIONAL SHOWS

Amateur classes can be held either within the Open Classes or as separate classes at **State** and **National** shows (at the discretion of the organising committee)

### Amateur Class **Within** The Open Class.

- ◆ An Amateur must enter the designated combined Open class + Amateur if they also wish to be considered for the Amateur placings (a nominal fee will apply) – this must be done at the time of nominations.
- ◆ Once nominations close for the show the Amateur cannot enter retrospectively.
- ▶ For Example: A Competitor who holds an Amateur Permit enters a Western Dressage class as follows
  - ✚ Basic Level Test B (Open) \$18 entry + Basic Level Test B (Amateur) \$3 entry = \$21 total entry fee – one test to ride and two chances at being placed from the results of that test.

### Amateur Class **Separate** To The Open Class.

- ◆ This will be a completely separate class to the equivalent Open class and will have full entry fee requirements similar to the Open class.
- ◆ The 4 tests per horse/day rule still applies regardless of the type of class entered.
- ▶ For Example: A horse/rider combination can enter at a one-day State Western Dressage show – Class 1: Basic Level Test A (Open) \$18 entry + Class 2: Basic Level Test A (Amateur) \$18 entry + Class 3: Basic Level Test B (Open) \$18 entry + Class 4: Basic Level Test B (Amateur) \$18 entry. The horse may not be entered in any further classes on that day because they have been nominated for the maximum number of tests in any one competition day.

## 7.3 Amateur Placings, Awards, Points

Amateur competitors are placed from first (1<sup>st</sup>) to fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) place in a class at all approved Western Dressage competition shows.

### 7.3.1 *Standard Shows*

There are no Amateur **Level Champion** or **Level Reserve Champion** awards at approved Standard Western Dressage shows.

There are:

- ◆ **Overall Sanctioned Amateur Champion** and **Reserve Champion** awards for the highest aggregate percentage.
  - The two highest scoring tests of a horse/Amateur rider combination from **ANY** Sanctioned class is used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ◆ **Overall Non-Sanctioned Amateur Champion** and **Reserve Champion** awards for the highest aggregate percentage.
  - The two highest scoring tests of a horse/Amateur rider combination from **ANY** Non-Sanctioned class (Excluding Come & Try classes) is used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ▶ A Horse/Amateur rider combination who wins the Overall Amateur Champion cannot be considered for Overall Amateur Reserve Champion (Sanctioned or Non sanctioned).

### 7.3.2 *Championship Shows, State Shows And National Shows Where The Amateur Classes Are Held Within The Open Classes*

There are no Amateur **Level Champion** or **Reserve Champion** awards at approved Championship Western Dressage shows or State Shows or National shows where the Amateur classes are held within the Open classes.

There are:

- ▶ **Overall Sanctioned Amateur Champion, Reserve Champion** as well as **Third, Fourth and Fifth place** awards for the highest aggregate percentage
  - The two highest scoring tests (Championship/State Show) or three highest scoring tests (National Show) of a horse/Amateur rider combination from **ANY** Sanctioned class is used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ▶ **Overall Non-Sanctioned Amateur Champion, Reserve Champion** as well as **Third, Fourth and Fifth place** awards for the highest aggregate percentage.
  - The two highest scoring tests (Championship/State Show) or three highest scoring tests (National Show) of a horse/Amateur rider combination from **ANY** Non-Sanctioned class (excluding Come & Try Classes) is used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ▶ A Horse/Amateur rider combination can only be considered for one placing in the Overall results in both Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned categories.
  - For Example: A Horse/Amateur rider combination win the Reserve Champion Sanctioned Amateur award – they cannot also place fifth overall (sanctioned) using a different combination of their sanctioned test scores.

### 7.3.3 *State Shows Where The Amateur Classes Are Held Separate To The Open Classes.*

There are:

- ▶ **Sanctioned Amateur Level Champion, Reserve Champion** as well as **Third, Fourth and Fifth place** awards for the highest aggregate percentage in each sanctioned level.
  - Both scores from the two tests offered in each level are used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ▶ **Non-Sanctioned Amateur Level Champion, Reserve Champion** as well as **Third, Fourth and Fifth place** awards for the highest aggregate percentage in each non-sanctioned level.
  - Both scores from the two tests offered in each level are used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ▶ A Horse/Amateur rider combination can only be considered for one placing in the Overall results in both Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned categories.
  - For Example: A Horse/Amateur rider combination are Sanctioned Amateur Reserve champions – they cannot also place fifth overall (sanctioned) using a different combination of their sanctioned test scores.

### 7.3.4 *National Shows Where The Amateur Classes Are Held Separately To The Open Classes*

There are:

- ▶ **Sanctioned Amateur Level Champion, Reserve Champion** as well as **Third, Fourth and Fifth place** awards for the highest aggregate percentage in each sanctioned level.
  - Where only two tests per level are offered at the show then both scores from these two tests are used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
  - Where three or more tests per level are offered at the show then the two HIGHEST test scores are used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.

- ▶ **Non sanctioned Amateur Level Champion, Reserve Champion** as well as **Third, Fourth and Fifth place** awards for the highest aggregate percentage in each non-sanctioned level.
  - Where only two tests per level are offered at the show then both scores from these two tests are used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
  - Where three or more tests per level are offered at the show then the two HIGHEST test scores are used to determine the highest aggregate percentage
- ▶ A Horse/Amateur rider combination can only be considered for one placing in the Overall results in both Sanctioned and Non sanctioned categories.
  - For Example: A Horse/Amateur rider combination are Sanctioned Amateur Reserve champions – they cannot also place fifth overall (sanctioned) using a different combination of their sanctioned test scores.

### 7.3.5 Amateur Division - National & State High Point Awards; and Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program

Horses accumulate lifetime points in Amateur as part of the Horse Lifetime Recognition and Awards Program and these points are recorded with WDA-AUS.

- ▶ Points are tabulated for Horse and Amateur Rider Combinations which are then eligible for End of Year National and State High Point Awards (subject to Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program rules).
- ▶ Amateur points will be collected as of **1<sup>st</sup> July 2023**
- ▶ Amateur classes are mandatory for all WDA-AUS approved Western Dressage shows as of **1<sup>st</sup> July 2024**

## SECTION 8: EVENT MANAGEMENT

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This section is to be read in conjunction with Section 12 (deliberately left blank pending approval) relating to incidents at shows and disciplinary action relating to shows.

### 8.1 Event Convenor, Event Organiser, Show Secretary

State Associations and Affiliates should appoint an Event Convenor. This term means and includes Event Organiser and Show Secretary and may be filled by more than one person (a Show Committee), depending on the size and category of competition show being conducted. The Event Convenor and any assistants are to be provided with access to the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website so they can familiarise themselves with the requirements and documentation associated with conducting an event. The President of State Associations and Affiliates are to ensure that any new Event Convenors are provided with an adequate handover and orientation to the position.

### 8.2 Show Approval

Show or program approval is a privilege, not a right, granted or rejected at the discretion of WDA-AUS according to the continuous evaluation of the applicant. The evaluation includes but is not limited to, the competence of the Event Convenor (full meaning of the term), the quality of events, adherence to WDA-AUS Rules and Regulations, and the service to WDA-AUS members.

In order to conduct an approved competition show including Come & Try events, the Event Convenor must submit an application on the approved form, to the WDA-AUS Event Coordinator at [events@westerndressage.com.au](mailto:events@westerndressage.com.au) subject to the following conditions:

- a) The relevant application applicable to the category of the show must be submitted to WDA-AUS within the required time frame. The application forms are available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website. Competition Show applications will not be accepted **LESS THAN 30 days prior to the show date or MORE THAN 90 days prior to the show date.**

- b) A show program must accompany the application. The program must adhere to the Show Requirements and include the relevant Event Information that has been provided by WDA-AUS for each category of show. Show Requirements and Event Information documents are available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website.
- c) Event Convenors have the right to cap entries if there are time, Judge and arena access constraints. This must be advertised clearly and prominently on the show program and on the event listing on nominate, **prior to nominations opening**, so that all potential competitors are made aware of this limitation. A guideline on capping entries and managing waiting lists is available to Event Convenors on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website.
- d) WDA-AUS will review the application and notify the Event Convenor of their decision.
- e) Clinics and training events, other than Come & Try events do not require an application. The Event Convenor must notify WDA-AUS via email at [events@westerndressage.com.au](mailto:events@westerndressage.com.au) of the event, prior to it occurring. This will be recorded on file for insurance and legal purposes.
- f) The Event Convenor must use nominate.com.au for the advertising and registering of nominations for all competition shows, including Come and Try events. Class numbers entered on nominate.com.au must be in the same order & have the same number as listed on the program. It is recommended that this system be utilised for other training events such as clinics, protocol days and training days.
- g) All competition show programs and training event flyers are to be uploaded to the **Event Information** section on the nominate.com.au system as a pdf document only. Details are **not** to be entered directly into the Event Information section, the pdf file will be listed below that section and will populate into the Event Information section when the event is published and viewed. A 'how to' guide on this process is available to Event Organisers on the WDA-AUS Event Organiser page.
- h) It is recommended that the Event Convenor uses checklists to plan and coordinate the conduct of their event (Resources are available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website).
- i) For competition shows, Event Convenors are to request that participants who are competing on horses registered with the AQHA, provide their AQHA horse registration numbers (and owner/rider AQHA registration numbers where possible). These details are required for the competition show results form. Section 8.8 refers.

This information can be captured utilising the 'question' facility when setting up the event in nominate.com.au A 'how to' guide is available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website to guide Event Convenors through that set up.

### 8.3 Draw

- a) Organisers must prepare a draw with scheduled times for all rides. Riders shall be notified of the draw **at least forty-eight (48) hours prior** to the start of the competition. Judges and riders are to be sent the draw or instructions on where to view it online no later than 48 hours prior to the start of the competition, so that the organisers can be immediately advised of any conflicts of interest.
- b) The draw must be done in the order of the classes as listed on the program of events.
- c) Classes must be run in their entirety. When preparing a time schedule, consideration must be given to riders entered in more than one (1) class or riding more than one (1) horse. Consideration should also be given where possible to riders who may be calling for each other (for example: mothers & daughters, riders travelling together).
- d) No changes to the order of horses or riders are permitted once the draw has been finalised. No substitutes for horses or riders are permitted after the draw has been finalised.
- e) Time intervals should be allowed between rides/classes for Judge's breaks and award presentations. A 15-minute break should be scheduled after approximately 2 to 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hours judging (between classes where

possible) and half to one hour meal breaks where appropriate.

- f) A Judge should not be expected to judge more than 10 hours per day, excluding breaks.
- g) If the number of entries received for a class exceeds 35 horses, the class should be split and the divisions placed separately.
- h) The draw should include a notation for the riders to the effect that 'Times are approximate, and riders must be ready to ride slightly earlier or later than scheduled'. The following directive is to be followed by the Event Convenor.
  - 1. 15 minutes earlier or later is an acceptable rider scheduled time change for the rider to be prepared for (as per the notation on the draw).
  - 2. More than 15 minutes, the Event Convenor is to ensure that ALL RIDERS are informed that their times will change to an earlier time, or later time as the case may be. If the time changes will occur on a following day of the event, it is acceptable to provide all riders with a new draw with time changes only. Section 8.3 d) still applies.
  - 3. If the event is running very early, the Event Convenor may extend upcoming scheduled break times and incorporate an open pen during the break/s.

## 8.4 Open Pen

- a) Where possible the arena should be made available for riders to work their horses prior to the start and at the end of competition each day. At the Event Convenor's discretion, the arena may be open during breaks in the competition, especially if warm up areas are limited or because of unfavourable weather conditions. Riders should be advised as soon as possible (preferably when the program is posted) about the availability, times and any conditions regarding Open Pen.
- b) Riders and their helpers should display good sportsmanship and support each other by exercising due care and consideration when using Open Pen.
- c) Where possible, it is preferable that riders are able to use separate areas for lunging and ridden warm up prior to entering the Arena.

## 8.5 Scribes

- a) Scribes should have knowledge of the tests or patterns being judged.
- b) Scribes must not be an owner, coach, trainer or family member of a rider/horse in the class in which they are scribing.
- c) Scribes must not attempt to manipulate or influence the Judge's decision, commentary or score.
- d) Riders may act as a Scribe for a Judge after all the classes that they have entered (under that same Judge) have concluded.

## 8.6 Arena Specifications

- a) The arena should be on as flat and as level ground as possible.
- b) The interior measurements of a Standard Arena are sixty (60) metres long and twenty (20) metres wide.
- c) The enclosure itself should ideally consist of a low fence about 30cm high and should be completely enclosed, except for the entrance at A. The width of the entrance must be at least two (2) metres. Exceptions to the height of the fence are allowed for poles or ground markings as long as the arena is visibly marked and presents no safety risk to horse and rider.
- d) The fence should be as such to prevent the horse's hooves from becoming entangled. Rope, stakes, concrete or unbreakable chain fencing is not permitted.

- e) Event management should make every effort to provide the best possible footing in competition and schooling areas.
- f) The Judge is preferably placed a maximum of five metres and minimum of three metres from the end of the arena and must be directly behind the letter C.
- g) Riders should be permitted by management or the Judge to enter the arena prior to their ride if arena conditions do not permit riding around the perimeter of the arena prior to entry. Such permission must be announced prior to the start of the class.

## 8.7 Scoring and Award Presentations

- a) In the case of the Event Management utilising paper-based score sheets, the Judge's sheets are collected after each performance by the event organisers and given directly to the scorers. **There must be a minimum of 2 scorers.** Points and comments must be written in ink with errors noted with an asterisk \*. In the case of any corrected points the Judge who has made the correction must initial it. The points are multiplied by the corresponding co-efficient where applicable and then totalled. Penalty points incurred for errors in the execution of the test are deducted from this total, not the individual movement.
- b) This total score for the test must also be given as a percentage to three (3) decimal points. In all competitions the winner is the rider having the highest total score, the second placed rider is the one with the next highest score and so on.
- c) In the case of Event Management utilising electronic score sheets through the Livescore system, the Show Secretary is responsible for managing the system use and ensuring the accuracy of the calculations in any reports run. **A minimum of 2 people must review all results and all placings to ensure the accuracy of each.**
- d) In the case of equal scores in a test (percentage to 3 decimal places), all tied riders will be awarded an equal place and the rider/s with the next highest score will be awarded the next placing. Each tied rider will receive the same place ribbon.
- e) In the case of ties when working out the Level Champions, Reserve Champions and overall 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> Level placings within the applicable show category (including Youth and/or Amateur overall placings) the following tie breakers are to be used to determine each placing:
  1. First tie breaker will be the horse/rider with the single highest test score.
  2. The second tie breaker will be the horse/rider with the highest cumulative collective mark scores from each test that is used to determine their highest aggregate percentage.
  3. The third tiebreaker will be the horse/rider with the highest mark scored for the final movement in any test that was used to determine their highest aggregate score.

As a result of a tie breaker situation, the losing rider will move to the next lowest placing and all other riders scored below them, will move down the placings accordingly.

If a tie still remains, the horse/rider combinations will be declared equal and will share the contested placing and the next relevant placings.

**Example 1:** Two riders tied in an unbreakable Champion placing, will share Champion & Reserve Champion placings and the relevant prizes. A toss of a coin is to be used to split the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> place prizes between the two relevant riders.

The next horse/rider combination scoring below them will move to 3<sup>rd</sup> place position.

**Example 2:** Three riders tied in an unbreakable 3<sup>rd</sup> Level place position will share 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Level place positions and the relevant prizes. A toss of a coin is to be used to split the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Level place prizes between the three relevant riders.

In the case of any prize money offered, all monies will be split equally between the equal place getters.

At the discretion of the event organisers duplicate prizes may or may not be obtained and shared between the equal placegetters. *E.g. An unbreakable tie for Champion Basic Level at a State show where a trophy buckle is the prize, the Event organisers may choose to order a duplicate buckle to award to the equal placegetter that loses the coin toss.*

*A reference to the relevant Tie Breaker rule must be included in the event program.*

**For Example: Tie Breaks will be determined as per Section 8.7 d) & 8.7e) of the WDA-AUS Rulebook.**

Refer to Section 2.4.3 for the Teams Challenge tie break rule used in determining the winning team.

- f) If a rider withdraws (scratches) prior to a class or is excused, eliminated or is a “no show” prior to, or during the performance of a test, the words “scratched”, “excused”, “eliminated”, or “no show” or abbreviations of each, must appear after the rider’s name in the result sheet.
- g) A Judge is free to leave when all scores from that Judge’s class/tests have been totalled.
- h) Class Awards are to be presented at the conclusion of the last test of the day. Results and Judges’s score sheets are not to be released prior to that, irrespective of whether a paper-based or electronic based scoring system is being used.
- i) **Immediately** after a class has been awarded, in the case of a paper-based system, the Judge’s score sheet shall be given to the rider. The score sheet should be collected directly by the rider or the rider’s representative. Privacy of the score sheets must be maintained. However, at the discretion of the organising committee the scores may be published.
- j) **Immediately** after a class has been awarded, in the case of the electronic Livescore system, the Show Secretary is to finalise all classes and cause for the Judge’s score sheets to be sent to the relevant rider.
- k) If a mathematical error on the score sheet is discovered by the rider, it must be brought to the attention of event management within one (1) hour of awarding the last class of that competition day.
- l) Level Awards are to be presented after the Class Awards at the end of the competition show event.
- m) A video recording may not be used to dispute a Judge’s decision.
- n) The Judge’s comments, while judging, may not be audio-recorded without prior written permission of the Judge, the specific rider(s), and event management.

## 8.8 Show Results Reporting

All competition show results must be submitted within 14 days of the conclusion of the event to, the WDA-AUS Events Coordinator at [events@westerndressage.com.au](mailto:events@westerndressage.com.au) and the AQHA at [shows@aqha.com.au](mailto:shows@aqha.com.au)

- a) Only the approved results forms are to be used.
- b) These are to be typed, not handwritten.
- c) Both the WDA-AUS Results Form and the AQHA WDA-AUS Affiliates Results Form are available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website.
- d) Examples of completed results forms are also on the Event Organisers page to assist Event Convenors. The examples must be followed. Cutting and pasting reports from the Livescore system is ineffective and is not permitted.
- e) Results submitted other than on the approved forms will not be accepted by WDA-AUS or the AQHA.
- f) Late submissions to the AQHA may incur a fee and is not in line with WDA-AUS rules and regulations. There is a risk that points will not be recorded if submitted late.



## SECTION 9: JUDGES

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### 9.1 Approved Western Dressage Judges

Event Convenors must use Judges from the WDA-AUS Judges List for all competition shows, except Come and Try events.

A Judges Contract is to be completed where applicable forwarded to the Judge by the Event Convenor. Once both parties have signed the agreement, a copy is to be forwarded to the WDA-AUS Events Coordinator at [events@westerndressage.com.au](mailto:events@westerndressage.com.au) with the Show Approval Application or in any case, prior to the commencement of the show.

Event Convenors can access a Judges Contract and an example of a completed contract on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website.

# Section 9.1 & 9.2

## Under Review

# as of 16.01.2025

### 9.2 Western Dressage Judge Accreditation Program

A Judging Convenor and an Assistant Judging Convenor portfolio will be filled by members of the WDA-AUS National Management Committee. Subject to financial viability, WDA-AUS will host a Judges Seminar each year. The location of the seminar will be determined on a needs basis by WDA-AUS. The seminar will form the basis of the accreditation program and will consist of theory based sessions, live judging and a written assessment.

The Program will provide ongoing training, assessment and support to Interim Judges, Applicants and Accredited Judges so that they can objectively assess horse/rider combinations and give accurate feedback through test scores and comments.

The program is based on an evaluation of the individual's prior experience and qualifications, assessment during the

applicant's attendance and active participation in Judge seminars, any shadow judging undertaken, and any online training offered.

Ongoing education, judging opportunities and individual mentoring to assist and support Judges is recommended and supported.

A Judge's personal conduct and integrity as a WDA-AUS Member, official and rider must be exemplary.

### 9.3 Recommended Fees and Reimbursement of Expenses

A Judges Contract is to be completed (Section 9.1 refers) with a record of the agreed fees and expenses listed.

- a) Recommended Fees for Competitions:
  - i) \$5 per test judged with a minimum payment of \$100 per day for all category of classes.
  - ii) Judges should not be expected to judge more than 10 hours per day, excluding breaks.
- b) Recommended Fees for Training and Promotional Events:
  - i) \$50 per hour with a minimum of \$250 per day for training days, lessons, clinics, seminars, presentations and demonstrations.
- c) Recommended Reimbursement of Expenses:
  - i. Air Travel – if required should be booked & paid for by Show Management, unless otherwise agreed. Any reimbursement to the judge must be paid prior to travel.
  - ii. Airport Parking – if required & agreed upon, will be reimbursed by Show Management to the judge prior to the judge departing the event.
  - iii. Transfers – between the airport, accommodation & event venue will be provided by Show Management, unless otherwise agreed. Any agreed reimbursement to the judge to be paid as soon as practicable.
  - iv. Private Vehicle Travel – is to be reimbursed at the rate of 50c per km return trip (excluding the first 50km)
  - v. Accommodation – other than private should be booked & paid for by Show Management, unless otherwise agreed. Any reimbursement to the judge to be paid prior to the judge departing the event.
  - vi. Meals – to be provided by Show Management during the event. Meals related to overnight accommodation to be paid for by Show Management if practicable, or otherwise reimbursement to the judge will be paid to a maximum of \$40 per meal excluding alcohol. Any reimbursement to the judge to be paid prior to the judge departing the event.
  - vii. Receipts – to be provided by the judge where possible, for reimbursements other than private vehicle travel.
  - viii. Personal Expenses will be met by the judge and not subject to reimbursement by Show Management.

### 9.4 Judge Protocols

Over time, the Judges scores and feedback influences the training and presentation of competition horses and consequently acts as a key influence on the evolution of the discipline. Judges, riders, coaches, trainers, spectators and supporters need to have confidence in the integrity and quality of the judging system.

- a) Accredited Western Dressage Judges are ambassadors of western dressage and are representing WDA-AUS in an official capacity. Therefore, Judges must adhere to the rules of the association and comply with the code of conduct, policy & procedures. That includes supporting the Statement of Purpose of WDA-AUS and the Objectives of this association.
- b) Judging western dressage events that have not been approved by WDA-AUS is not in line with the above and therefore is not permitted under any circumstances.

- c) If a Judge is unsure if an event has been approved, contact is to be made with the WDA-AUS Secretary for advice.
- d) Judges must conduct themselves in an honourable manner when officiating at any WDA-AUS event. This includes wearing an appropriate standard of dress, not consuming alcohol immediately prior to or during an event, not using electronic communications or mobile phones during the event, not using abusive language or engaging in any other behaviour unbecoming to this position either at the venue or elsewhere for the duration of the event.
- e) A Judge who agrees to officiate at a WDA-AUS sanctioned event is responsible for fulfilling that commitment and a Judges Contract is to be utilised. The contracted Judge should assist the organisers to arrange for a suitable replacement if for any reason he/she is unable to meet this obligation.

## 9.5 Judges Attire

A Judge is to dress in western attire at all competition show events. This includes:

- i. Western Hat
- ii. Jacket optional but mandatory for State and National Shows.
- iii. Western style pants/jeans/trousers.
- iv. Long sleeve collared shirt – collar may be a band, stand-up, tuxedo etc.
- v. Tie or neckwear – optional
- vi. Western boots

## 9.6 Judges Code of Conduct

Western Dressage Judges must adhere to the following WDA-AUS Judges Code of Conduct.

Judges must:

- a) Maintain a consistent standard for all riders within a class and across all competitions.
- b) Not deviate from the rules.
- c) Hold a high level of integrity and standards when judging, competing and on social media.
- d) Aim to encourage riders through comments on the judge's scoresheets.
- e) Show a friendly attitude towards riders without being overly familiar and should not be prejudiced by prior knowledge of riders, horses or their past performances. They must not make comments on the Judge's scoresheets regarding past performances.
- f) Make their decisions having regard for the welfare of the horse above the interests of any others involved.
- g) Be aware that they are responsible for setting and maintaining the image and standards of western dressage both in the competition arena and away from it and that, as an ambassador for western dressage, they should conduct themselves with dignity, honesty and good manners, especially in difficult situations.
- h) The Judge should have with them the current WDA-AUS Rules and Regulations book together with any amendments.
- i) Treat requests from riders to explain their decisions as an opportunity to assist the rider to improve their performance.
- j) Honour a commitment to judge and if unforeseen circumstances prevent this, endeavour to help the organisers to find a replacement.
- k) Maintain an objective and fair mind towards all riders which includes:
  - i) Not taking into account anything known about riders, horses or past performances.
  - ii) Guarding against conflicts of interest and avoiding judging in situations in which they have a close personal

or professional relationship with a rider or owner.

- iii) An open and friendly attitude towards all riders while being careful not to show familiarity towards those competing.
- iv) Ensure to the best of their ability that the same conditions apply to all riders.
- v) Maintain the same standard for all riders within a competition and at all events.
- l) Judges must know and understand these Rules and be prepared to align their personal opinion with the principles of WDA-AUS.
- m) Judges must have a thorough knowledge of the correct training of the Western Dressage horse and rider and understand the requirements of the test they are to judge.

## 9.7 Conflict of Interest

- a) Individuals may not judge or be judged by one another where they have, within fourteen (14) days prior to a competition, participated in any clinics, private lessons, or group lessons.

Individuals may not judge or be judged by one another where they have, within sixty (60) days prior to a competition, maintained a regular, ongoing or contractual business relationship where horse and/or rider training services are provided and remuneration is incurred.

- ◆ Regarding private lessons, group lessons and clinics, “regular and ongoing” is defined by more than 3 private lessons, group lessons or clinics in sixty (60) days.
- b) A horse may not be exhibited under a Judge where the Judge, or a member of the Judge’s immediate family or the Judge’s employee/employer, has been an owner, exhibitor or trainer of that horse within the preceding (60) days.
- c) The Judge is responsible of notifying event management as he/she becomes aware that a horse/rider is entered in a class and not in compliance with these guidelines. The horse may be ridden hors concours (HC) but the test may not be placed in the competition and no competition points can be awarded.
- d) All parties involved including but not limited to the owner, exhibitor, and Judge will be held responsible in the event of non-compliance with the above standards. The Judges Panel and the WDA-AUS Board will investigate and deal with the matter according to WDA-AUS disciplinary procedures.
- e) Judges must always act in the best interest of the Western Dressage Association of Australia and avoid any situation that creates a conflict of interest while judging any WDA-AUS approved event.
- f) Judges shall not visit with owners, trainers, participants or agents before or during a WDA-AUS approved event.
- g) Judges are not to be housed in private homes unless the Judge has agreed to it prior to the competition.
- h) The Judges shall talk only with representatives of event management, beyond the exchange of normal greetings, until the entire class or competition that they are judging is completed.
- i) It is recommended that a Judge shall not appear on the venue more than one hour prior to the scheduled start of the event unless as directed or requested by event management.
- j) After an event Judges may provide feedback to riders on an individual basis. These discussions with riders should be monitored by event officials. Competitors are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and courteous manner and recognise that such a discussion is an opportunity for the rider to learn and improve their performance. Any disrespectful or confrontational behaviour between any participants or officials during an event is not to be tolerated.

## 9.8 Procedures for Judges

When invited to judge at an event, ask for a contact name, phone number and e-mail address and request that details be confirmed in writing within two weeks, preferably with a WDA-AUS Judges Contract, which all Event Convenors have access to.

- a) Agree and confirm in your contract, fees and expense allowances and the distance (most direct route) you have to travel.
- b) Advise the organisers if you are bringing your own scribe.
- c) Advise the organisers if you require a car if judging outdoors.
- d) Arrive at the venue 30 to 60 minutes prior to starting time. Contact the Event Convenor should you be delayed on the way to the venue.
- e) Have your Rulebook with you and be prepared to take action and/or offer assistance to the organisers with regards to rules, guidelines, risk management and event procedures.
- f) The Judge must physically inspect the arena and communicate with the Event Convenor to ensure that:
  - i) the arena surface and fence are a satisfactory standard.
  - ii) the marker letters are the correct position and distance outside of the arena (.5 to 1m).
  - iii) the letter A must be placed at least 5-10 metres back from the entry and in line with C.
  - iv) no dogs or any other distractions are at or near the Judge's car or table.
  - v) as much as possible, conditions remain the same for all riders in each class.

Conversation, apart from the exchange of normal greetings, should only occur with the Event Convenors or event representatives until the entire event is completed. The Judge is free to leave when all scores from the classes that they have judged have been totalled and checked.

## SECTION 10: PRESENTATION OF HORSE AND RIDER

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Reference should also be made to the Frequently Asked Questions section at the end of this publication.

### 10.1 Bridles

- a) Any Western or Australian Stock headstall style may be used. A headstall is defined as a leather or leather like item to carry a bit or bosal. The headstall for bitless bridles must be of rope, leather or leather-like material.

### 10.2 Snaffle Bits

- a) Snaffle bits may be used at any level of competition by any horse of any age.
- b) The rider must use two hands with a snaffle bit.
- c) A standard snaffle is a conventional O-Ring, Egg Butt, Full Cheek or D-Ring, all with rings having an inside diameter no smaller than 50mm (2"), nor larger than 100mm (4").
- d) Bars of the mouthpiece must be round or oval shaped and no less than 8mm to 19mm ( $\frac{5}{16}$ " to  $\frac{3}{4}$ ") in diameter when measured 25mm (1") from the cheek. The mouthpiece may be inlaid or latex wrapped but must be smooth.
- e) The mouthpiece may be Mullen, barrel, or ported and consist of one, two or three pieces.
- f) If a mouthpiece is three pieces, a connecting link must be no larger than 32mm ( $1\frac{1}{4}$ " ) in diameter, or a connecting flat bar must be no longer than 50mm (2"), 9.5 mm to 19mm ( $\frac{3}{8}$ " to  $\frac{3}{4}$ "), measured top- to-bottom, and must lie flat in the horse's mouth.
- g) Other types of snaffle bits such as hanging cheek snaffles are legal and are not considered to be leverage bits. Bits such as the Spanish Snaffle or Kimberwick, which have slots for both the reins and the cheek pieces, are permitted. A chin strap or curb chain is permitted above the reins.

- h) The port of any snaffle bit must be no higher than 32mm (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>”).
- i) Bit hobbles below the reins are permitted.

### 10.3 Curb Bits

- a) A curb bit is a leverage bit and may have loose or fixed shanks. Curb bits must connect directly from the cheek piece to the mouth piece.
- b) When using a curb bit, the rider may use one or two hands up to and including Level 3.**
- c) The rider should not go from one to two handed or vice versa during an individual test – penalty points are applied in this case.**
- d) When used in Level 4 classes the rider may only ride one handed with a curb bit.**
- e) Maximum length from the inside bottom of the top ring to the point of pull on the lower ring is 216mm (8.5”) – *see opposite*.
- f) A curb chain or flat leather chin strap must be used with a curb bit and must be at least 12.7mm (1/2”) in width and **lie flat** against the jaw of the horse.
- g) The angle created between the shank and lower jaw as the curb strap tightens, should not be less than 45 degrees or more than 90 degrees.
- h) Bars of the mouthpiece must be round or oval shaped and no less than 8mm to 19mm (5/16” to 3/4”) in diameter when measured 25mm (1”) from the cheek. The mouthpiece may be inlaid or latex wrapped but must be smooth.
- i) The mouthpiece may be one, two or three pieces. A three piece, connecting link of 32mm (1 1/4”) or less in diameter, or a connecting flat bar of 9.5 mm to 19mm (3/8” to 3/4”) measured top to bottom with a maximum length of 50mm (2”), which lies flat in the horse’s mouth, is acceptable.
- j) Jointed and cricket mouthpieces and rollers attached to the centre of the bit and covers are acceptable. All curb bits must be free of mechanical devices. Nothing, such as extensions, rivets or prongs may protrude from the mouthpiece. No curbs may have a double fulcrum effect.



#### **Transitional Curbs**

- a) Transitional Curb Bits permit the shanks to be independently moved.
- b) A transitional curb bit may be used by horses at least three (3) years of age.
- c) Shanks must have an independent swivel action either from the port or the cannons of the bit.
- d) The port of any transitional bit must be no higher than 50mm (2”).
- e) Bit hobbles are not permitted on transitional curbs.
- f) May be ridden two handed in all levels.

#### **Fixed Shank Curbs**

- a) The rider should preferably use one hand with a fixed shank with a solid mouthpiece. However, the use of two hands is permitted.
- b) No horse under four (4) years of age may be ridden in a fixed curb with a solid mouthpiece.
- c) Bit hobbles below the reins are permitted.

## 10.4 Spade Bits and Two Rein Bridles

- a) A Spade Bit or Two Rein Bridle (bosalita and spade bit configuration) is only permitted in Level 3 and 4 and horses must not be under four (4) years of age.
- b) Must be ridden one handed with the exception of the rider's free hand which can be used without penalty in the two-rein setup.
- c) The port of a spade bit may not exceed 90mm (3.5")
- d) Bit hobbles below the reins are permitted.

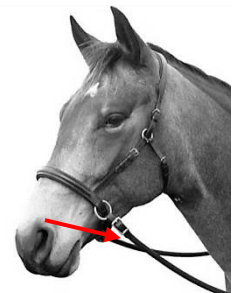


## 10.5 Bosals and Bosalitas

- a) Bosals are permitted on horses of any age for any event or competition level.
- b) The bosal and bosalita are rounded in shape, **smooth and constructed of braided rawhide or leather** and must have a flexible non-metallic core, attached to a suitable headstall.
- c) The bosal diameter must be no wider than 19mm (¾") when measured at the cheek or bars just below the side buttons where the hanger (headstall) is connected.
- d) The bosalita is a light bosal approximately 9.5mm (3/8") in diameter that is used in the two-rein set up.
- e) The bosalita may be worn without reins in the manner of a noseband.

## 10.6 Bitless Bridles

- a) The noseband for bitless bridles must be **smooth and constructed of flat leather or braided rawhide or leather as for a bosal**. There are no knots or protrusions permitted on the noseband.
- b) Control is achieved by direct pressure on the nose. There is neither leverage nor any type of clamping action permitted.
- c) **The reins attach directly to a fixed ring on the noseband – see opposite.**
- d) Reins can be split, looped or joined and are used two handed.



## 10.7 Reins

See also Section 11.28 – Rein Handling Techniques.

- a) Reins must be of leather, rope, horsehair, or synthetic material.
- b) Split, looped or joined reins can be used two handed with a snaffle, curb bit or bitless bridle.
- c) Looped or joined reins can be held independently or bridged when riding two handed.
- d) Split reins are bridged when used with two hands.
- e) Split reins can be used one handed with a curb bit. There are two different rein handling methods that can be used. Refer to **Section 11.28** for details.
- f) Romal reins are used one handed with a curb bit.
- g) Mecate reins are used two handed with a bosal.
- h) Romal and mecate reins are used one handed for the Two Rein setup with a spade bit and bosalita.
- i) Slobber straps on snaffle bits can be no wider than 50mm (2") or longer than 216mm (8.5").

## 10.8 Saddles

Refer also to the Frequently Asked Questions annexure at the end of this publication.

- a) A Western or Swinging Fender or 'half-breed' saddle is to be used.
- b) All saddles used must meet at least 2 of the 3 following requirements:
  - i) Saddle Skirt.
  - ii) Western Fenders which must be a minimum of 75mm (3") at the narrowest point.
  - iii) Horn.
- c) A saddle pad of suitable size, material and thickness must be used under the saddle.
- d) At the Event Convenor's discretion, English or other styles of saddle and any WDA-AUS defined legal bridle with a legal bit or legal bitless bridle may be used for Training and Come and Try days. Refer to Section 6.

## 10.9 Optional Equipment

- a) A saddle blanket may be used over the top of the saddle pad.
- b) Breastplate.
- c) Crupper.
- d) One whip is permitted when riding provided it is no longer than 120 cm (48") including lash.
- e) A cavesson noseband or bosalita (as described in **Section 5.5**). A cavesson must be constructed of smooth leather, fit comfortably (not too tight) and be appropriately positioned above the bit according to the individual horse's conformation.

## 10.10 Illegal Equipment

The use of illegal equipment will result in elimination from the class and/or competition. The following equipment is illegal:

- a) Martingales.
- b) Bit guards.
- c) Nosebands other than a cavesson or bosalita such as drop, crossover, etc.
- d) Gadgets of any kind (running or draw reins, tongue tie, tie-downs, etc).
- e) Any form of blinkers, earhoods, or hoods. (Ear plugs are permitted)
- f) Sharp, square, twisted or pointed edges on any mouthpiece or noseband.
- g) Slip or gag bits, donut or flat polo mouthpieces.
- h) Bits with reins attached to a single ring at the centre of a cross bar.
- i) Any rein design or other device that increases the effective length thereby affecting the leverage of the shank of a curb bit.
- j) Anything that alters the intended use of equipment as provided for in the description of appointments for a given class/test.
- k) Curb bits that create double leverage.
- l) Mechanical Hackamores.
- m) Bosalita and snaffle configuration.



- n) Bitless bridles that use straps that have leverage and/or tighten around a horse's head to apply pressure to the nose, jaw, cheek and/or poll are not permitted – *examples below.*



## 10.11 Equipment in Warm-Up Ring and Training Areas

- a) For safety reasons, lunging or long-reining should be in a separate area to the warm-up areas where horses are being ridden. While lunging, long-reining or working in hand, side-reins or headset attachments from the bit or headstall to the saddle/roller and the use of one whip or a training stick are permitted. No training equipment is allowed in the marshalling area or the performance arena one hour prior to the commencement and one hour after the cessation of the show each day.
- b) Side-reins or headset attachments from the bit or headstall to the saddle are prohibited when mounted.
- c) Equipment that is illegal for competition purposes cannot be used at the venue at any time during the venue usage or hire period booked for the event, including the set up and pull-down days immediately prior to and following the event.

## 10.12 Gear Check

- a) The responsibility for the correct attire and equipment rests with the rider.
- b) Inspection of tack and bits may be completed by or at the discretion of the Event Convenor or Judge. A horse must be eliminated from the test just completed if the equipment is in violation of the rules. All horses in each class/test may be inspected at the Judge's discretion if any tack or equipment is thought to be illegal.
- c) Tack and bits on both sides of each horse may be inspected and checked for each class/ test and may be done immediately as the horse leaves the arena if requested by an official.
- d) Any evidence of blood on the horse's mouth or sides will result in elimination of the entry for that competition. Environmental causes such as insect bites shall normally not be the cause of elimination.
- e) If checking of the bridle is performed, it is to be done with due caution, as the horse may be overly sensitive or reactive.
- f) If riders are required to remove the bridle it should be done in a safe manner.
- g) Biosecurity and hygiene protocols must be followed when doing a gear check.

## 10.13 Presentation of the Horse

- a) Tendon boots, splints boots, leg wraps or bandages in plain colours (white, off-white, black, brown or beige) may be used. **Bell boots/over-reach boots of any kind are not permitted.** Hoof boots designed for riding may be used instead of horse shoes.
- b) False tails, manes and forelocks are permitted.
- c) Manes may be long, trimmed, pulled or hogged and tails may be natural, trimmed or pulled.

- d) Coats and facial hairs may be clipped or trimmed.
- e) No decoration of the horse with extravagant items, such as ribbons or flowers, glitter, etc is permitted.
- f) No braiding, banding or plaiting of the mane, tail or forelock is permitted.

### 10.14 Attire

- a) Helmet or Western style hat must be worn.
- a) WDA-AUS strongly recommends the wearing of a properly fitted and fastened, current safety approved protective headgear at all times when in the saddle.
- b) Riders with Disabilities, 'Assisted' and Youth riders must wear a properly fitted and fastened, current safety approved protective headgear at all times when in the saddle.
- c) Helmet use may be deemed mandatory in any competition and/or warm up areas where the Event Convenor or facility owner requires the use of a helmet.
- b) Western style long-sleeved shirt with any type of collar and Western style trousers or a one-piece long sleeved Western equitation suit provided it includes a collar must be worn.
- c) In the case of inclement weather, it is at the Judge's discretion to make concessions in acceptable clothing such as jackets or raincoats.
- d) Boots must have a minimum of 12.7mm ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " ) well defined square cut heel.
- e) Caps and polo/short sleeved shirts are not permitted for competitions.
- f) High English type boots or leggings are not permitted.

### 10.15 Optional Attire

- a) Necktie, kerchief, bolo tie or pin.
- b) Vests.
- c) Spurs of western or English type. Rowels are permitted but must be blunt, smooth, vertical and rotate freely. The shank must come from the centre of the back of the heel. The tip of the shank on dummy spurs must be smooth and blunt and not point up or inwards.
- d) Chaps or chinks.
- e) Gloves.

## SECTION 11: PERFORMANCE OF HORSE AND RIDER

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### 11.1 Overview

The quality of the horse's training and the rider's proficiency is assessed according to the principles and standards described in **Section 1: Standard of Excellence; Objectives of Western Dressage Training; and Objectives of Western Dressage Competition**. According to the Level being demonstrated, they may be required to execute any of the following:

- a) Gaits - walk, jog, and lope.
- b) Paces - working, free, lengthening and collected.
- c) Movements and exercises - halt, back-up, counter-lope, transitions, simple change of lead through the walk, simple change of lead through the jog, flying change, release of rein, leg-yield, side-pass, shoulder-in, haunches-in (travers), haunches-out (renvers), half-pass, zig-zag, turn on the forehand and turn on the haunches, pivot, pirouette (including half and quarter pirouettes).

- d) Figures - circles, figure eights, loops, serpentines; changes of direction; straight lines, turns, corners and change of bend.

## 11.2 Walk

- a) The walk is an evenly spaced four-beat marching gait. Throughout all walk movements the horse should maintain the same rhythm and tempo and move with ease and confidence.
- b) If the walk has a lateral rhythm where the hind and front legs on the same side swing forward almost at the same time, this is a serious fault and irregularity of the gait.
- c) The following paces at the walk are recognized:
  - i) Working Walk – The horse’s frame and steps are of moderate length, with the hind feet tracking up or slightly over-tracking and the horse walks with purpose and confidence. The rider maintains a light connection with the reins allowing the natural movement of the head and neck. The horse’s nose may be slightly in front of the vertical and the poll must not be lower than the withers. A halt through working walk must be no more than 3 – 5 steps unless otherwise directed in the test.
  - ii) Free Walk - The free walk is a pace of relaxation in which the contact is surrendered, and the horse is allowed complete freedom to lower and stretch down with its head and neck. The hind feet should overtrack the front footprint and the horse should be calm and willing to move forward and straight as directed by the rider. The poll must be clearly lower than the withers and the nose in front of the vertical.
  - iii) Lengthening of Stride at the Walk - The horse goes freely forward in a longer frame and without hurrying increases the over-track of the hind feet. The rider maintains a light connection with the reins allowing the natural movement of the head and neck. The horse’s nose may be slightly in front of the vertical and the poll must not be lower than the withers.
  - iv) Collected Walk - The horse marches forward and the hind feet track up into the front footprint. The horse clearly displays self-carriage and the frame is more collected. The rider maintains a light connection with the reins and the neck is more arched and raised but must be allowed to remain open through the gullet and maintain its natural movement.

## 11.3 Jog

- a) The jog is a regular two-beat gait of alternating diagonal legs separated by a moment of suspension. Throughout all jog movements the horse should maintain the same rhythm and tempo and move with ease and confidence.
- b) The quality of the jog is shown by the regularity, cadence and length of the steps. According to the level of the horse’s training it will demonstrate self-carriage and maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit.
- c) Excessive speed or slowness, short steps, dragging feet (no clear moment of suspension), leaning on the bit, and inability to maintain a steady rhythm and tempo are serious faults. The rider should be on the correct diagonal when rising to the jog (i.e. in unison with the inside hind and outside foreleg according to the direction of travel).
- d) The following paces at the jog are recognised:
  - i) Working Jog - The horse’s frame and steps are of moderate length, with the hind feet tracking up or slightly over-tracking and the horse jogs with purpose and confidence. The rider maintains a light connection with the reins. The horse’s nose may be slightly in front of the vertical and the poll must not be lower than the withers. The working jog may be ridden either rising or sitting up to and including Level 1 and then must be ridden sitting from Level 2 onwards.
  - ii) Free Jog - The free jog is a pace of relaxation in which the contact is surrendered and the horse is allowed complete freedom to lower and stretch down with its head and neck while maintaining the same rhythm and tempo as the working jog. The hind feet should overtrack the front footprint and the horse should

remain calm and balanced. The poll must be clearly lower than the withers and the nose in front of the vertical. The free jog may be ridden either rising or sitting at all levels.

- iii) Lengthening of Stride at the Jog - The horse goes freely forward in a longer frame and without hurrying increases the over-track of the hind feet. The rider maintains a light connection with the reins. The horse's nose may be slightly in front of the vertical and the poll must not be lower than the withers. Lengthening of stride at the jog may be ridden either rising or sitting up to and including Level 2 and then must be ridden sitting from Level 3 onwards.
- iv) Collected jog - The horse clearly displays self-carriage and willingness to move forward. The hind feet track up into the front footprint and the frame is more collected. The rider maintains a light connection with the reins and the neck is more arched and raised but must be allowed to remain open through the gullet with the nose approaching the vertical position. Collected jog must be ridden sitting.

## 11.4 Lope

- a) The lope is an asymmetrical three-beat gait with a moment of suspension between strides. The sequence of footfalls, according to the direction of travel, is: outside hind, diagonal pair, inside front (leading leg), moment of suspension. The quality of the lope is revealed by the regularity and lightness of the steps. Throughout all lope movements the horse should maintain the same rhythm and tempo and move with ease and confidence.
- b) In each lope stride a triangle is formed with the ground and the two hind legs as the sides, and another triangle with the ground and the two front legs as the sides. In a balanced working lope, the two triangles will have about the same dimensions. When a horse is unbalanced and on the forehand, the triangle made by the hind legs will be smaller than that made by the front legs. As the training progresses, the lope will appear more 'uphill' through increased flexion of the hocks and lowering of the haunches that enables the forehand to be lighter and more agile.
- c) If the lope has a four-beat rhythm this is a serious fault and irregularity of the gait. Serious faults also occur if the horse does not travel straight and in alignment (quarters to the inside), falls in or out on the circle or has incorrect bend (away from leading leg). Other faults include excessive speed or slowness, incorrect lead, being disunited and breaking gait. Stiffness and lack of balance or hindquarter engagement may manifest as abrupt, delayed or rough transitions; leaning on the forehand and pulling against the rider's hands.
- d) The following paces at the lope are recognized:
  - i) Working Lope - The horse's frame and stride are of moderate length, with engagement of the hindquarters in accordance with the expectations of the Level being shown. The rider maintains a light connection with the reins allowing the natural movement of the head and neck. The horse's nose may be slightly in front of the vertical and the poll must not be lower than the withers.
  - ii) Free Lope - The free lope is a pace of relaxation in which the contact is surrendered and the horse is allowed complete freedom to lower and stretch down with its head and neck while maintaining the same cadence and balance as the working lope. The horse should remain calm and steady. The poll must be clearly lower than the withers and the nose in front of the vertical.
  - iii) Lengthening of Stride at the Lope - The horse goes freely forward in a longer frame and without hurrying increases the distance covered in each stride. The rider maintains a light connection with the reins allowing the natural movement of the head and neck. The horse's nose may be slightly in front of the vertical and the poll must not be lower than the withers.
  - iv) Collected Lope - The horse clearly displays self-carriage and willingness to move forward. There is increased flexion of the hocks, lowering of the haunches and lightening of the forehand. The strides cover less distance and the frame is more collected. The neck more arched and raised but must be allowed to remain open through the gullet with the nose approaching the vertical position. The rider maintains a light connection with the reins allowing the natural movement of the head and neck.

## 11.5 Halt

- a) At the halt the horse should be straight and stand attentive and motionless with the weight evenly distributed over all four legs.
- b) The horse should maintain a steady outline with a soft connection to the reins for the length of time directed, usually a minimum of four (4) seconds of immobility.
- c) The quality of the pace and frame of the horse before the halt, the transitions into and out of the halt, and the squareness of the halt should meet the expectations of the Level being shown.
- d) Anxiety, inattention, refusing to stand still, stepping back, crookedness, swinging hindquarters, abrupt, delayed or rough transitions and pulling against the rider's hands are serious faults.
- e) A halt through working walk must be no more than 3 – 5 steps unless otherwise directed in the test.

## 11.6 Back-up

- a) The back-up is a rearward diagonal movement with a two-beat rhythm. Each diagonal pair of legs is raised and returned to the ground alternately, with the forelegs aligned on the same track as the hind legs. The horse should appear to carry more of its weight on the hind legs with the hind end lower than the front.
- b) The steps are counted as each foreleg moves back.
- c) The quality of the back-up is shown by the regularity, cadence and length of the steps. According to the level of the horse's training it will demonstrate self-carriage and maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit.
- d) Anticipation of the movement, resistance to or evasion of the contact, rushing, deviation of the hindquarters from the straight line, spreading hind legs, hesitation and dragging feet are serious faults.

## 11.7 Counter Lope

- a) The horse is loping on the opposite lead to the direction of travel. The horse maintains a slight flexion in the direction of the lead.
- b) The counter lope can be used to develop the horse's straightness, balance, coordination and collection and demonstrate the level of communication and understanding between the horse and rider.
- c) Anxiety, failing to maintain the lead, stiffness, resistance to the rider's aids, rushing, deviation of the hindquarters from the straight line, loss of cadence are serious faults.
- d) Any change of direction or transition from true lope to counter lope should be fluent, emphasising the integrity and quality of the horse's movement according to the Level being shown. The horse and rider should remain composed and balanced throughout.

## 11.8 Transitions

- a) The changes of gait and pace should be smooth and clearly shown when the rider's leg is adjacent the prescribed marker.
- b) On a diagonal, the transition is made when the rider's leg is adjacent the letter at the end of the diagonal.
- c) The cadence of a gait or pace should be maintained up to the moment when the gait or pace is changed or the horse halts. The horse should remain light in hand, calm and balanced.
- d) Transitions are either direct or progressive. Direct transitions occur without any steps of intermediate gaits and progressive transitions clearly include all intermediate gaits. For instance, a transition from jog to halt through the walk is a progressive transition while a transition from jog to halt without any intermediate walk steps is a direct transition.

## 11.9 Simple Change of Lead through the Walk

- a) This is a movement in which, after a direct transition out of the lope into a walk, with 3-5 clearly defined steps at the walk, an immediate transition is made into the other lead. This is considered a Simple Lead Change when done through the walk.
- b) The changes of gait should be smooth and clearly shown.
- c) The quality of the pace and frame of the horse before, during and after each transition, should meet the expectations of the Level being shown.
- d) The cadence of each gait should be maintained up to the moment of transition. The horse should remain light in hand, calm and balanced.

## 11.10 Simple Change of Lead through the Jog

- a) This is a change of lead where the horse is brought back into the jog and after 3-5 strides, strikes off into a lope with the other leg leading.

## 11.11 Flying Change of Lead

- a) The flying change is executed when the horse changes from one leading leg to the other while maintaining the balance and cadence of the lope. The change should be smooth and straight, almost imperceptible, emphasising the integrity and quality of the horse's movement.
- b) Failing to stay straight and cleanly change from one lead to the other (becoming disunited, changing with the front or hind leg first and then developing the new lead, breaking gait), rushing, kicking out or loss of composure by either horse or rider are serious faults.
- c) The flying change of lead will ideally begin with the sequence of the new outside hind leg, the diagonal pair and followed by the new leading front leg. The change of lead of the hind and front leg take place immediately after the moment of suspension without a break of gait. The aids should be precise and unobtrusive. Flying changes of lead can also be executed in series. For example, flying changes can be performed at every 4th, 3rd, 2nd or at every stride. The horse, even in the series, remains light, calm and straight with lively impulsion, maintaining the same rhythm and balance. In order to not restrict or restrain the lightness, fluency and groundcover of the flying changes in series, enough impulsion and forwardness must be maintained. The flying lead changes show the reaction, sensitivity and obedience of the horse to the aids.

## 11.12 Release of Rein

- a) Release of rein may be asked for at the collected jog or collected lope.
- b) The rider shows a clear release of contact while the horse maintains its frame, cadence and balance.
- c) Release of rein demonstrates self-carriage and is not a free pace or movement.

## 11.13 Leg-Yield

- a) The horse is almost straight, except that there may be a slight flexion at the poll away from the direction of movement. In a leg-yield on the diagonal the horse should be almost parallel to the long sides of the arena and the forehand may be slightly in advance of the hindquarters.
- b) When progressing forward and sideways in a leg-yield to the left, the right legs will pass and cross in front of the left legs and vice versa for leg-yield to the right.
- c) The quality of the movement is shown by the regularity, cadence and length of the steps. According to the level of the horse's training it will demonstrate self-carriage and maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit.

## 11.14 Side-Pass

- a) The side-pass is a sideways diagonal movement with a two-beat rhythm. Each diagonal pair of legs is raised and returned to the ground alternately. When side-passing to the left, the right legs will pass and cross in front of the left legs and vice versa for side-pass to the right. The steps are counted as each foreleg moves across or over.
- b) There is little or no forward movement. The horse is almost straight and in alignment, except there may be a slight flexion at the poll towards the direction of movement and the forehand may be slightly in advance of the hindquarters.
- c) The quality of the movement is shown by the regularity, cadence, coordination and smoothness of the steps. According to the level of the horse's training it will demonstrate self-carriage and maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit.
- d) Crookedness, hesitation, loss of coordination and stepping behind are serious faults.

## 11.15 Shoulder-In

- a) The horse is ridden with a slight but uniform bend around the inside leg of the rider maintaining an angle of approximately 30 degrees. The horse's inside foreleg passes in front of the outside foreleg; the inside hind leg steps forward under the horse's body weight following the same track of the outside foreleg. The horse's footfalls create three tracks.
- b) The quality of the movement is shown by the regularity, cadence, length and smoothness of the steps. According to the level of the horse's training it will demonstrate self-carriage and maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit.

## 11.16 Haunches-In (Travers)

- a) The forehand remains on the track and the hindquarters step to the inside of the track. The horse's footfalls create three to four tracks. When travelling on the track or circle to the right the horse will maintain a right bend and flexion. At the end of the haunches-in, the hindquarters are brought back on the track without any counter-flexion as though finishing a circle.
- b) The quality of the movement is shown by the regularity, cadence, length and smoothness of the steps. According to the level of the horse's training it will demonstrate self-carriage and maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit.

## 11.17 Haunches-Out (Renvers)

- a) This movement is a mirror image of haunches-in where the hindquarters remain on the track while the forehand steps to the inside of the track. The horse's footfalls create three to four tracks. When travelling on the track or circle to the right the horse will maintain a left bend and flexion. To complete the haunches-out, the forehand is re-aligned with the hindquarters on the track and the horse's bend and flexion re-aligns to the track or circle.
- b) The quality of the movement is shown by the regularity, cadence, length and smoothness of the steps. According to the level of the horse's training it will demonstrate self-carriage and maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit.

## 11.18 Half-Pass

- a) This movement is a variation of haunches-in, executed on a diagonal line instead of along the wall, and performed at the collected jog or lope.
- b) When progressing forward and sideways in half-pass to the left, the right legs will pass and cross in front of the left legs and vice versa for half-pass to the right. The forehand must be slightly leading. The horse should be slightly bent and flexed in the direction of movement.

- c) The quality of the movement is shown by the regularity, cadence, length and smoothness of the steps. The horse will demonstrate clear self-carriage and maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit.

### 11.19 Zig-Zag (Counter Change of Hand)

- a) A zig-zag is a half-pass performed either at collected jog or collected lope where the horse half-passes in one direction and then straightens momentarily before half-passing in the other direction. At the lope a flying change will coincide with this change of direction.
- b) The quality of the movement is shown by the regularity, cadence, length and smoothness of the steps. The horse will demonstrate clear self-carriage and maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit.

### 11.20 Turn on the Forehand

- a) The turn on the forehand is executed out of a halt or hesitation of movement. The horse's inside fore leg marks time in place or steps on a circle no more than 1 metre. The hind legs and outside foreleg describe a circle around the inside foreleg while maintaining the rhythm of the walk.
- b) A right turn on the forehand occurs by moving the hindquarters to the left. The horse must bend slightly around the rider's right (inside) leg and maintain right flexion; the right hind leg will pass and cross in front of the left hind leg; the left fore will step around the right fore; and vice versa for a left turn on the forehand. There is minimal forward movement.
- c) The turn may be executed as quarter, half or full revolutions.
- d) The quality of the turn is judged by the regularity and cadence of the steps and smoothness of the movement. According to the level of the horse's training it will demonstrate self-carriage and maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit.
- e) Stepping back and loss of rhythm are serious faults.

### 11.21 Turn on the Haunches (Turnaround)

- a) The turn on the haunches is executed out of a halt or hesitation of movement. The horse must maintain the same cadence, frame and straightness of movement as for the walk. The horse is almost straight, except there may be a slight bend and flexion towards the direction of movement. Stepping back is a serious fault. The turn may be executed as half, full or multiple revolutions.
- b) There are two methods of performing a turn on the haunches. Both methods must be judged equally, however switching from one method to the other during a test is not allowed. The two methods are as follows:
  - i) The turn on the haunches is executed with the horse pivoting on the inside hind leg and stepping around it with the outside hind leg. The horse pushes off with the outside hind leg. The pivot leg is allowed to pick up and reset when it reaches the point of stress. The pivot foot must stay as near as possible to the same location.
  - ii) The turn on the haunches is executed with the inside hind leg marking time in place or stepping on a circle no more than 1 metre diameter. The forelegs and outside hind leg step around the inside hind leg while maintaining the rhythm of the walk.
- c) The quality of the turn is judged by the regularity and cadence of the steps and smoothness of the movement. According to the level of the horse's training it will demonstrate self-carriage and maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit.
- d) Stepping back and loss of rhythm are serious faults.

### 11.22 Pivot

- a) The horse pivots on the inside hind leg and steps around it with the outside hind leg. The horse pushes off with



the outside hind leg. The pivot leg is allowed to pick up and reset when it reaches the point of stress. The horse should maintain correct bend and balance and respond to the rider's leg. A pivot should begin at a walk tempo with forward intention, building speed moderately while maintaining form and fluidity. Pivoting around the middle axis of the horse should receive a score of 5 or lower. It is not a fault to step forward 1-2 steps into the pivot.

### 11.23 Pirouette, Half Pirouette, and Quarter Pirouette

- a) The pirouette is a highly developed form of lateral movement executed on a very small circle, it can be performed in the walk or the lope. The quality of the movement is judged by the rhythm and tempo of the gait in which it is performed being maintained before, during and in the departure from the movement. A high degree of collection and impulsion must be held to achieve this.
- b) The walk pirouette is the advanced movement of the Turn on the Haunches. The walk pirouette is asked from the collected walk and executed in a smaller diameter of the inside hind leg scribing a circle. The walk pirouette may be executed as half, full or one and a half revolutions.
- c) The lope pirouette is a circle or part of a circle executed on two tracks with the forehand moving around the haunches. The haunches are lowered to afford the lightness required to maintain the proper lope sequence throughout. The horse is slightly bent in the direction of the turn and lightly on the bit. The quality of the pirouette is further demonstrated by the relatively small size of the turn, suppleness, balance, fluidity and maintenance of forward intention.
- d) Quarter Pirouette: the quarter pirouette is a preliminary exercise to prepare the horse for half and full pirouettes. While the demands of a smaller figure of a quarter turn consisting of 2-3 strides are less, the same criteria for full pirouettes apply.
- e) The strength and balance required for the pirouette is further demonstrated by the ability to perform the half-pirouette, full pirouette and sequences of multiple pirouettes. Impulsion, willingness to carry and engagement behind in the pirouette create a highly collected lope while maintaining a calm, confident demeanour which is the hallmark of the Western Dressage horse.

### 11.24 Counter-Bending Exercises

Counter-bending occurs when the horse's bend and flexion is opposite to the direction of travel. Counter-bending exercises improve straightness, balance, coordination and suppleness. These exercises can also promote better communication and understanding between the horse and rider.

- a) Counter-bending exercises include, and are not limited to, the following:
  - i) Change of bend and/or flexion without changing direction. For example, when travelling to the right on the track, circle or turn the horse is asked to establish and maintain left bend and flexion without changing the line of travel
  - ii) Change of direction without changing bend and flexion. For example, on a figure eight, the horse goes from a left circle in true bend to a right circle in counter (left) bend
  - iii) Figure eight where both circles are performed in counter-bend
  - iv) Repeatedly changing every few strides from true bend to counter bend and vice versa while executing a figure
  - v) Figures performed in counter-lope, haunches out (renvers) or counter shoulder-in
  - vi) Change of movement while maintaining the same direction of travel, such as shoulder-in to renvers; haunches in to haunches out; shoulder-in to counter shoulder-in and so on
- b) The horse should maintain regularity, cadence and length of the steps throughout the exercise and move fluently through the changes of bend and flexion. According to the level of the horse's training it will

demonstrate self-carriage and should remain light in hand, calm and balanced.

## 11.25 Circles, Serpentine, Loops and Figure Eights

- a) The diameters of circles in Tests are generally stated as 10m, 15m or 20m. Circles of 6m, 8m, 12m or 18m may also be specified. A circle of less than 10m diameter is also known as a volte.
- b) Serpentine - There are two variations:
  1. Serpentine start and end on the short side of the arena and consist of three (3) or more half circles of equal width touching the long side of the arena. When crossing the centre line, the horse should be straight and parallel to the short side. The number of straight steps connecting the half circles and in between the changes of direction varies depending on the width of the half circles. The diameter of the half circle is determined by the number of loops of the serpentine.
  2. Serpentine start and end on the short side of the arena and consist of three (3) or more loops from quarter line to quarter line.
- c) Loops start and end on the long side of the arena and are smooth, shallow curves requiring two changes of direction by deviating either 5m or 10m from the track being ridden. They are ridden from the long side to the quarter line or centre line; or from quarter line to quarter line or centre line. The second half of the figure should be a mirror image of the first half. Each change of direction will occur approximately 20m from the short sides.
- d) The figure eight consists of two connected circles of equal size. The horse should be momentarily straight before changing direction at the centre of the figure eight.
- e) When these figures are ridden in lope, a change of direction can either specify a change of lead or continuation in counter-lope. In counter-lope the horse will maintain a slight flexion in the direction of the lead.
- f) The quality of the movement is shown by the fluency, correct execution and accurate placement of the figure.
- g) The horse will demonstrate straightness and clear changes of bend and flexion where required.
- h) The horse's body must stay in alignment with the hind leg directly following the fore leg on the same side. Any deviations such as quarters in, shoulders falling in/out, sideways movement or incorrect bend or flexion are serious faults.
- i) The horse will maintain the regularity, cadence, length and smoothness of the steps throughout the movement. According to the level of the horse's training it will demonstrate self-carriage and maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit.

## 11.26 Straight Lines, Turns and Corners, Change of Direction

- a) The horse is required to execute straight lines by proceeding parallel to short and long sides and diagonally across the arena as specified in the test.
- b) Turns and corners are ridden as one quarter of a circle. The diameter of this circle progressively decreases from approximately 12m down to 6m according to the Level being shown.
- c) Changing from a straight to a curved line and back to straight occurs when entering and exiting a turn, corner or circle.
- d) The horse's body must be straight and aligned with track. The hind leg follows the track of the fore leg on the same side. In lope, the horse maintains a slight flexion of the head and neck towards the leading leg.
- e) In preparing to change track or bend the horse should first establish a slight flexion towards the new direction.
- f) Change of direction can be executed in the following ways:
  - i) Half circles and figure eights.
  - ii) Right-angled turns.

- iii) Serpentine and loops.
- iv) Half turns on the forehand and half turns on the haunches.
- v) Half and quarter pirouettes.
- vi) Zig-Zag (Half-Pass Counter-change of Hand). The horse should be straight momentarily before changing direction and in lope a flying change is required at this point. The Test will specify the locations or stride intervals where changes of direction are to occur.
- vii) Short and long diagonals. When riding on a diagonal, the rider should wait to change bend (and in rising jog to also change diagonal) at the end of the straight line. When loping across a diagonal, the Test may specify that one or more lead changes are required at certain points or stride intervals, or continuation in counter-lope at the end of the diagonal.
- g) Throughout these movements, the bend of the horse's body should adjust to the curvature of the line it follows. The horse maintains balance and regularity, cadence, length and smoothness of the steps. The execution should be fluent and accurate.

## 11.27 Rider Proficiency

The rider is confident, graceful and proficient. Their performance demonstrates a fluency and finesse that makes it apparent the horse and rider have a mutually cooperative and enjoyable relationship.

- a) The rider's connection with the horse is established and maintained through a balanced upright position. There is vertical alignment of the body through the head, shoulder, hip and heel. The foot should rest home in the stirrup at a natural angle and level. The rider should sit evenly in the centre of the saddle, using their core stability and strength to maintain balance and steadiness.
- b) The suppleness of the body and joints and absence of unnecessary tension allows the rider to smoothly absorb and quietly follow the horse's movement.
- c) The hands should be independent and unobtrusive. The rider should use the appropriate rein handling method as described in **Section 11.28 Rein Handling Techniques** and maintain a light connection to the horse's mouth.
- d) Other Aids:
  - i) Subtle use of the voice and clicking of the tongue.
  - ii) Touching the horse as a reward. The romal/rein ends or free hand must not be used to intimidate the horse.
  - iii) Discreet use of a whip no longer than 120 cm (47.24 inches) including lash.
  - iv) Subtle use of spurs which must be smooth to touch and rowels must also be smooth and rotate freely. Using the leg or spur in front of the cinch is not permitted.
  - v) The bit, spurs and any other tack or equipment should never be used in a manner that intentionally or carelessly causes injury to the horse.
- e) The horse is influenced by the rider's feel, timing and correct use of aids including hands, legs and body position. The horse should be subtly directed with little apparent effort by the rider.
- f) The rider's awareness and ability to feel for the horse's intention and the consequent response or movement is central to being able to use the correct signals and timing to efficiently work with the horse. This understanding is a key ingredient in the development of the horse and rider relationship.
- g) Knowledge and understanding of the discipline is demonstrated by the accurate and correct execution of movements.
- h) Over time, it is the effectiveness and expertise of the rider that fundamentally determines the horse's responsiveness and level of training achieved.

- i) Self-control, focus and awareness are especially revealed by the rider's empathy for the horse and composure under pressure.

## 11.28 Rein Handling Techniques

Refer also to Section 10.7.

Skilful rein handling and thorough knowledge and understanding of the equipment and techniques are attributes of competent riders. Riders should choose the appropriate equipment and methods to use considering the individual needs, capability and level of training of both themselves and their horse.

A full description of bits, bosals, reins and bridles and related tack that may be used in Western Dressage can be found in **Section 10 Presentation of Horse and Rider**.

The rider may use this equipment in competition as follows:

### ◆ **TWO HANDED – SNAFFLE, CURB, BOSAL AND BITLESS BRIDLE**

- a) A snaffle bit and a bitless bridle can be used for all Test Levels and must be ridden two handed with either split or joined reins as described below in 11.28 (c).
- b) With the exception of Level 4 Tests and/or for the Two Rein Bridle setup, the rider may ride two handed with a curb bit and use either split or joined reins as described below in 11.28 (c). The rider may not change from one handed to two handed or vice versa during an individual test or pattern.
- c) Joined or split reins can be used two handed with a snaffle, bitless bridle, or curb as per 11.28 (a) and (b) above, as follows:
  - i) Joined or connected reins can be buckled (English style) or looped (mecate or romal style but without the tie-rein or romal extension).
  - ii) These reins may be bridged or held independently. The reins come from the bit and pass across the palm of each hand and exit over the index finger. The fingers are closed and the thumb is kept uppermost and locks down the rein against the index finger.
  - iii) When held independently, the bight (excess rein) should fall on the off (right) side of the horse's neck and underneath the rein.
  - iv) To bridge the reins, the excess rein passes to the opposite side of the neck and is also held by the thumb and fingers of each hand creating a 'bridge' between the hands. Split reins are bridged when used two handed.
  - v) For the bitless bridle the reins should be slightly draped. A signal is given when pressure is applied to one rein and it is released as the horse responds. There should not be a constant contact or pressure and only one rein at a time should be used to signal the horse.
- d) A bosal can be used for all Test Levels and must be ridden two handed with a mecate rein setup.
  - i) The mecate is a single rope or braided rein configured as two parts, the looped rein attached to a bosal and the long tie-rein that comes out of the bottom of the bosal. The tie-rein is attached to the saddle while mounted.
  - ii) The looped rein is held with two hands about shoulder width apart with the thumbs facing inwards and the fingers closed around each rein. The left hand can also hold a loop of the excess rein which can be used to lengthen and shorten the mecate as needed while riding.
  - iii) The mecate should be slightly draped and a signal is given when pressure is applied to one rein and it is released as the horse responds. There should not be a constant contact or pressure and only one rein at a time should be used to signal the horse.

## ◆ **ONE HANDED – CURB AND TWO REIN BRIDLE**

- e) When using a curb bit the rider may ride one handed in all Levels and must ride one handed when using a curb bit in Level 4. Split or romal reins are to be used. The reins can be held in either hand although it is customary for the rein hand to be the non-dominant hand (that is, the left hand if you are right-handed and vice versa).
- e) When riding one handed, the rider is allowed at the end of the free walk, free jog or free lope, to use the free hand to adjust the reins back to the desired length. Riders using romal reins may use the hand holding the romal to alter the tension or length of the reins from the bridle to the rein hand.
- f) There are two methods of riding one handed with a curb bit that may be used with split reins.
  - i) In the first method, the reins come from the bit over the index finger. The reins can be held together or separated by the one finger. The thumb is kept uppermost and locks down the rein/s against the index finger (usually the right rein is on top and the left rein is underneath). The two reins then exit below the closed hand with the ends falling on the same side as the rein hand.
  - ii) The free hand must not be used to alter the length or tension of the reins except as permitted after free paces. The free hand should not touch the reins except to untangle the end of the reins (below the rein hand) if necessary.
  - iii) The second method is similar to the romal setup. The reins are held in a fist with the thumb uppermost. The reins come from the bit under the little finger and pass out over the thumb. No finger separates the reins.
  - iv) The free hand holds the excess rein and rests against the rider's leg. The rein hand and free hand must be held so that there is at least 40 cm (16") of excess rein between the hands. The rider is allowed to alter the tension or length of the reins as long as the hands are held in a legal manner.
- g) Romal rein setup may only be used with a curb bit and ridden one handed.
  - i) Romal reins consist of two parts, the joined reins and the single extension of material (romal) attached at this point. These parts are balanced in length and weight and connect in the middle (the keeper, or hobble, that attaches to the romal is considered to be part of the romal). The reins attach to the bit. The romal has a leather popper or quirt on the end.
  - ii) The reins are held in a fist with the thumb uppermost. The reins come from the bit under the little finger and pass out over the thumb. No fingers are permitted between the reins except in the two-rein setup.
  - iii) The free hand must hold the romal and is not allowed, at any time, to touch the reins. The reins and romal must be held so that there is at least 40 cm (16") of rein/romal between the hands. The rider is allowed to alter the tension or length of the reins as long as the hands are held in a legal manner.
  - iv) The Two Rein Bridle with a bosalita and spade bit configuration may only be used in Level 3 and 4 and the horse must be at least four (4) years old.
  - v) The bosalita with mecate reins is worn under the bridle and bit with romal reins.
  - vi) The rider holds both sets of reins in the same manner as a romal setup, but is allowed to separate the reins with the fingers as they wish. The free hand holds the romal in the usual way and can be used to adjust the length of the reins.

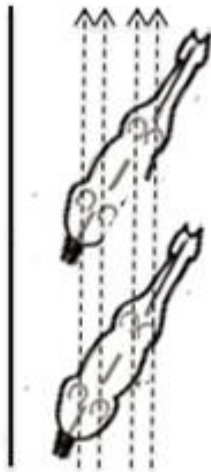
### **11.29 Riders With Disabilities (RWD)**

- a) A rider with a physical or intellectual disability (RWD) that has signed documentation from a medical practitioner stating their condition and that equestrian related activities are a safe option for them to pursue are encouraged to participate in Western Dressage events and activities.
- b) This documentation is to be provided the first time that the rider joins WDA-AUS or registers to attend a WDA-AUS event. This enables a rider to gain approval to participate with the use of compensating aids or other

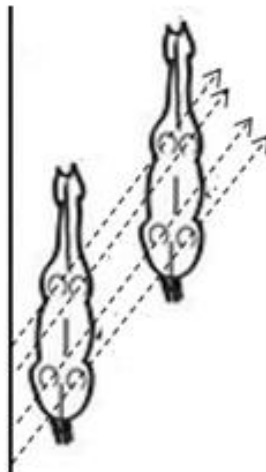
- appropriate assistance as needed to enable them to ride at their optimum functional level. Youth RWD participants must be seven (7) years of age or older to participate in ridden events.
- c) WDA-AUS recommends that where practical Event Convenors opt to include specific RWD classes and support RWD participation in competition classes and clinics. In doing so, WDA-AUS does not assume responsibility for safety of participants. The Event Organisation conducts these events and controls both the physical facility and all aspects of the event and so responsibility for participant's safety remains solely with the Event Organisation.
  - d) Each RWD participant, and if the participant is a minor, the parent or guardian by allowing participation, assumes all risk of personal injury or property damage and releases and discharges WDA-AUS, its State Associations and Affiliates and Event Convenors, their respective officers, directors, representatives, and employees, from any and all liability, whenever or however arising, as to personal injury or property damage occurring as a result of participation in these classes, except for the negligent act or omission, if any, of said indemnities. Further, in the case of a minor, as parent or legal guardian, they agree to indemnify and hold harmless WDA-AUS and Event Organisation from such liability to the minor.
  - e) The rider will need to provide a written list of all compensatory aids, modified equipment and assistance required for competition. WDA-AUS will review this and any supporting documentation in order to provide a dispensation notification. Riders are not allowed to use any other aids, modified equipment or assistance while competing that is not specifically listed on their dispensation notification. The rider will provide a copy of this notification to the Event Convenors when registering to attend an event. The Event Convenor shall attach a copy of this notification to all applicable scoring sheets for the Judge's reference.
  - f) If an assistant is required, they must be eighteen (18) years of age or over and should wear western style pants/jeans, enclosed safe shoes, long-sleeved shirt with a collar and a western hat. The assistant/s remains in a designated area unless their assistance is required and requested by the Judge, rider or event official. If a lead line is needed, the assistant can attach it to a halter that is under the bridle. The lead cannot be attached to the bit.
  - g) A RWD with hearing impairment can have an assistant/s who communicates via sign language or cue cards to the rider so they can be informed of event officials and Judge's directives.
  - h) Judges are not permitted to alter a test, pattern or course except for specific RWD only classes. In this case the Judge can modify a test, pattern or course or set their own in order to make the class more suitable for the participating riders.
  - i) All other competition and event guidelines, apart from the exceptions noted in this section, apply to RWD specified classes, and participation by RWD in other WDA-AUS classes and events.**
  - j) RWD Eligible conditions:
    - i) Amputation; Arthrogryposis; Asperger's Syndrome; Autism; Batten's Disease; Cerebrovascular Accident; Cerebella Ataxia; Cerebral Palsy; Coffin Lowry Syndrome; Cystic Fibrosis; Down Syndrome; Dwarfism; Fragile X Syndrome; Friedrich's Ataxia; Guillan Barre Syndrome; Hearing Impairment; Hunter's Syndrome; Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis; Intellectual Disability; Microcephaly; Multiple Sclerosis; Muscular Dystrophy; Post-Polio Syndrome; Prader Willie Syndrome; Rhetts Syndrome; Spina Bifida; Spinal Cord Injury; Tourette Syndrome; Traumatic Brain Injury; Trisomy Abnormalities; Vision Impairment; Other diagnoses will be considered upon request.
  - k) RWD Ineligible conditions:
    - i) ADHD; Anxiety Disorders; Chronic Fatigue Syndrome; Depression; Dyslexia; Eating Disorders; Fibromyalgia; Learning Disabilities; Psychological Diagnosis.
  - l) RWD and Assisted Riders must wear a properly fitted and fastened with harness, Australian Standard protective helmet. No equipment is allowed that would in any way affix the rider to the horse or saddle with the exception of light rubber bands. Safety stirrups (covered or other approved safety stirrups) are required if rider is unable to wear boots with a heel.

- m) RWD tack and equipment is to conform to the needs of the rider and be suitable for the horse. Special adaptive equipment may be used where appropriate. Acceptable adaptive equipment includes:
  - i) Audio Communications; Bareback Pads; Boot Adaptations; Dowel Reins; Hand Holds: Flexible and/or Rigid; Velcro or Rubber Bands to tie stirrups or leathers to girth or cinch; Ladder Reins; Loop Reins; Rein Handles; Rein Handle Tethers; Rubber Bands; Saddle Blocks, Wedges, Cushions; Safety Stirrups; Seat Savers; Surcingles; Whips (one or two); Other equipment will be considered upon request.
- n) The equipment and attire must adhere to the requirements stated in **Section 10 - Presentation of Horse and Rider** with exceptions of authorised adaptations described in the case of the RWD Dispensation Notification.

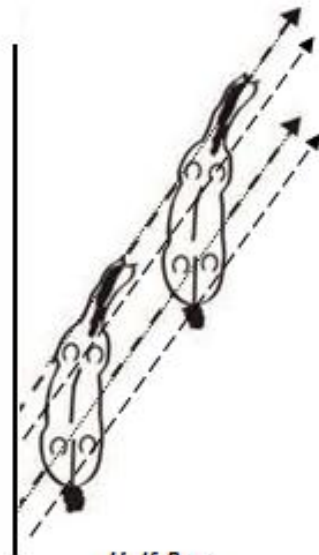
11.30 Illustrations and Diagrams



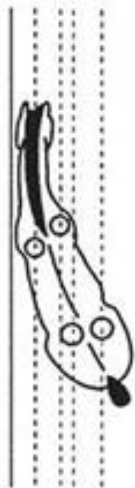
*Leg-Yield  
on the wall*



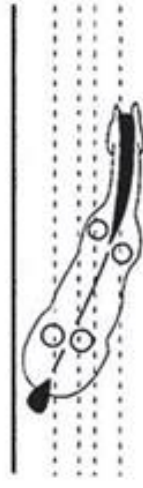
*Leg-Yield  
on the diagonal*



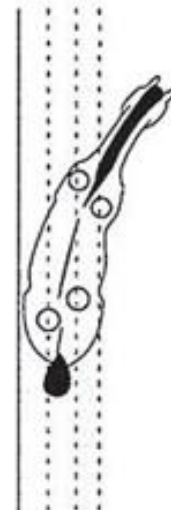
*Half-Pass*



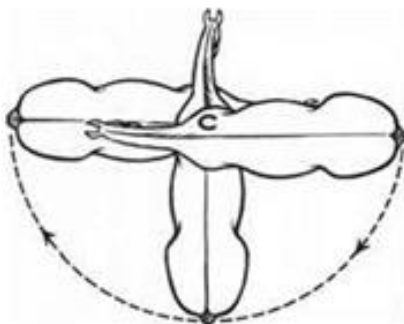
*Haunches-In  
(Travers)*



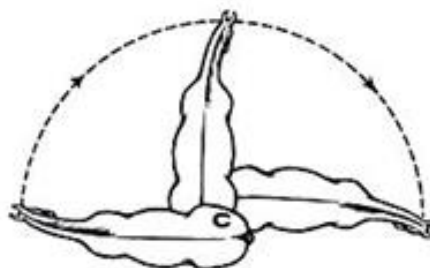
*Haunches-Out  
(Renvers)*



*Shoulder-In*

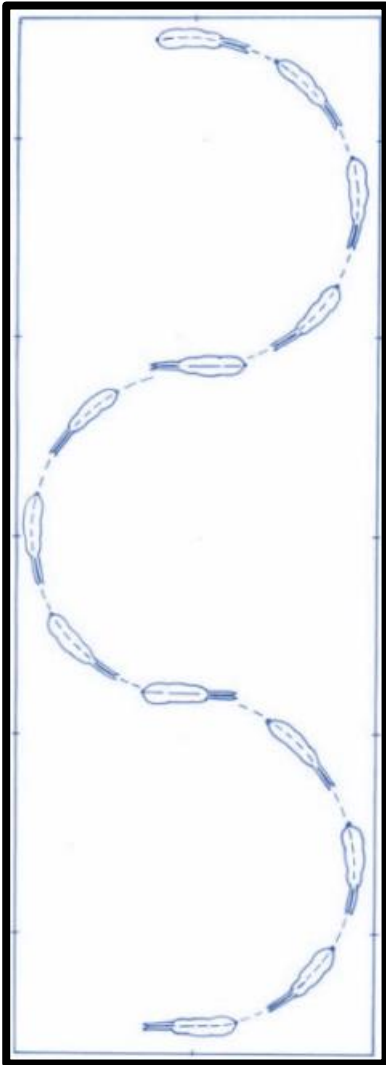


*Half-Turn on the Forehand*

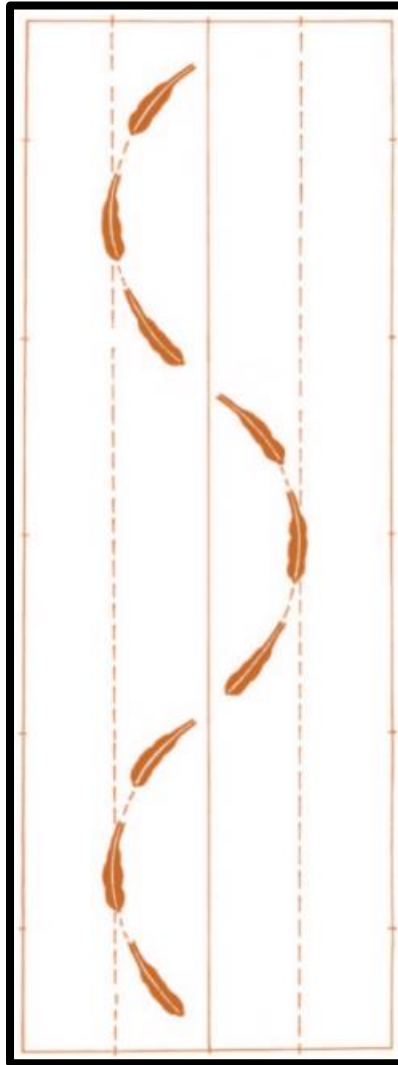


*Half-Turn on the Haunches*

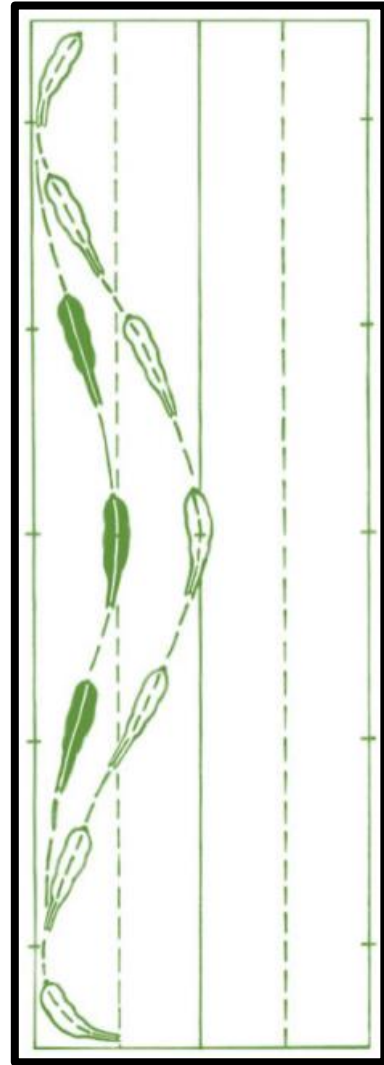




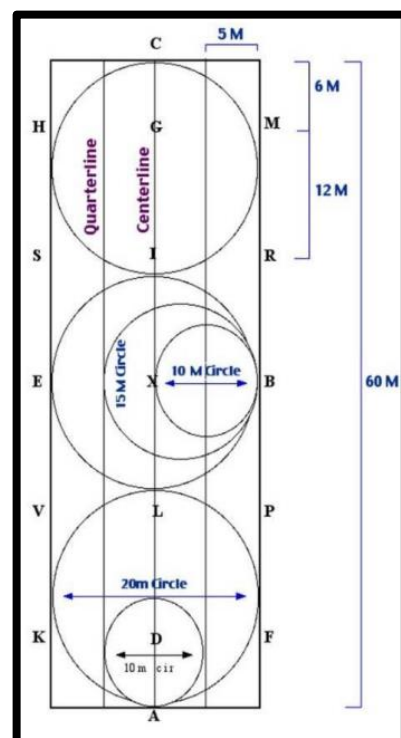
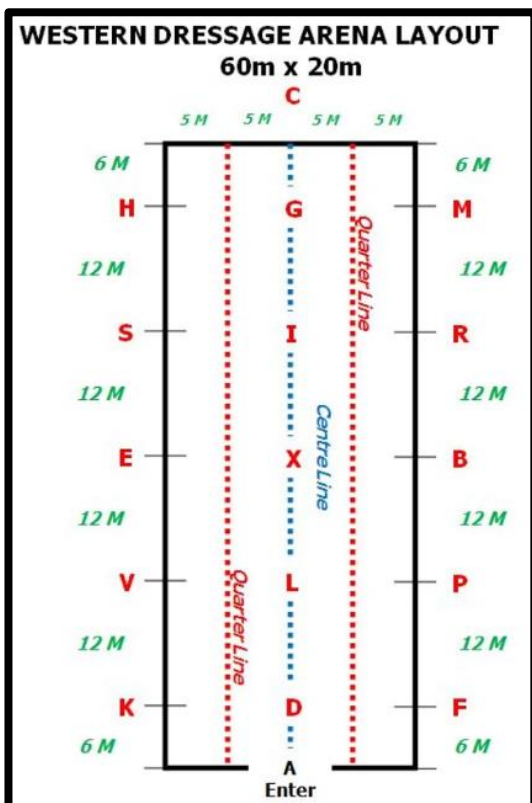
11.25 b) Serpentine 1.

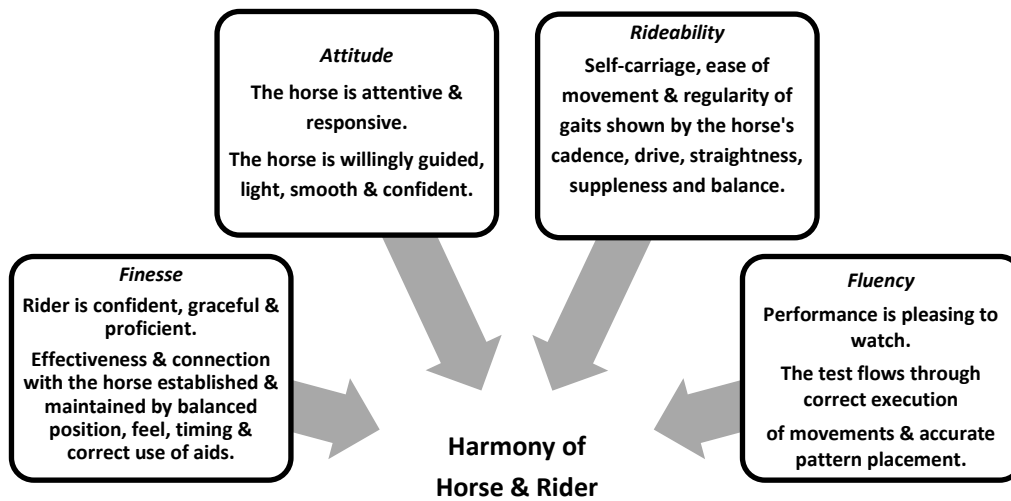


11.25 b) Serpentine 2. (Quarter Line)



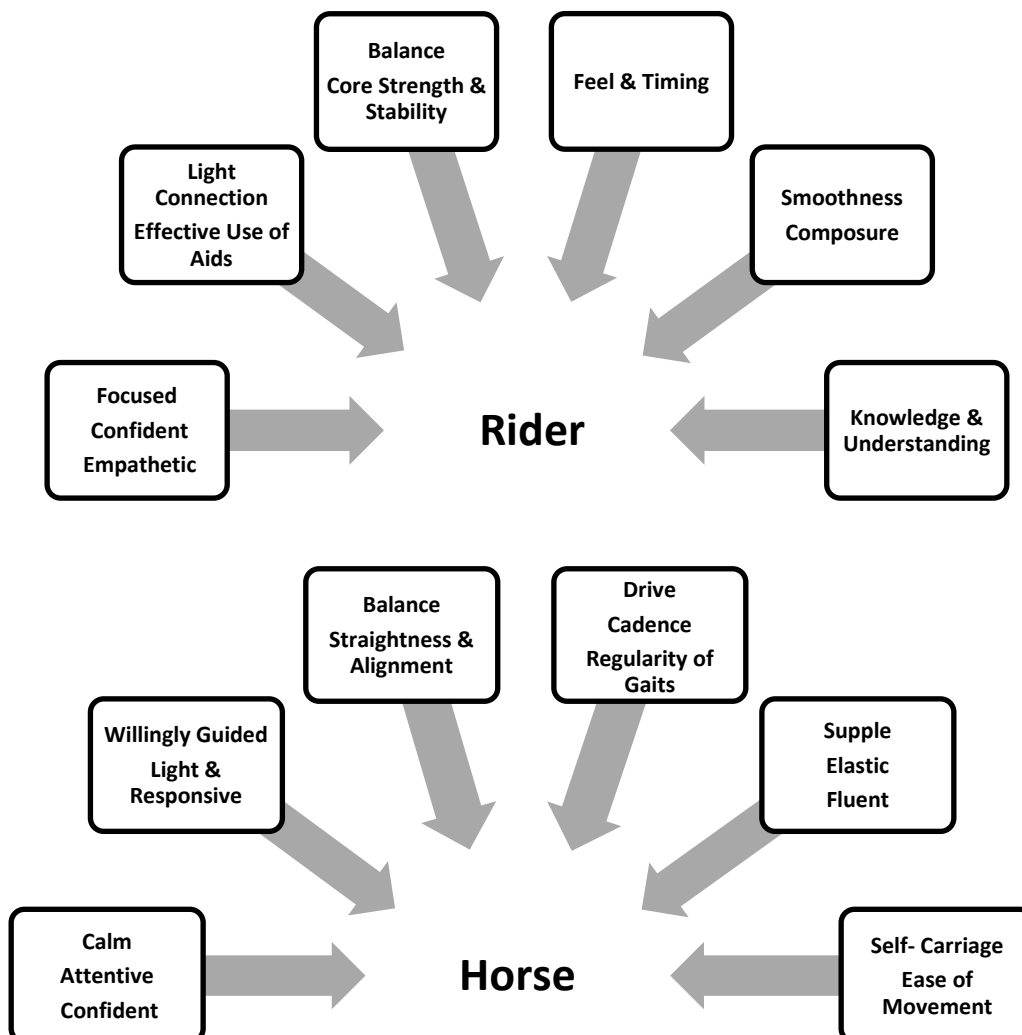
11.25 c) Loops 5m & 10m





**Western Dressage Competition – Key Elements**

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**Western Dressage Training - Key Elements**

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SECTION 12: INCIDENTS AT SHOWS AND DISCIPLINARY  
COURSES OF ACTION

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## ANNEXURE – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

☑ **Where can I find information on the tack that I can use?**

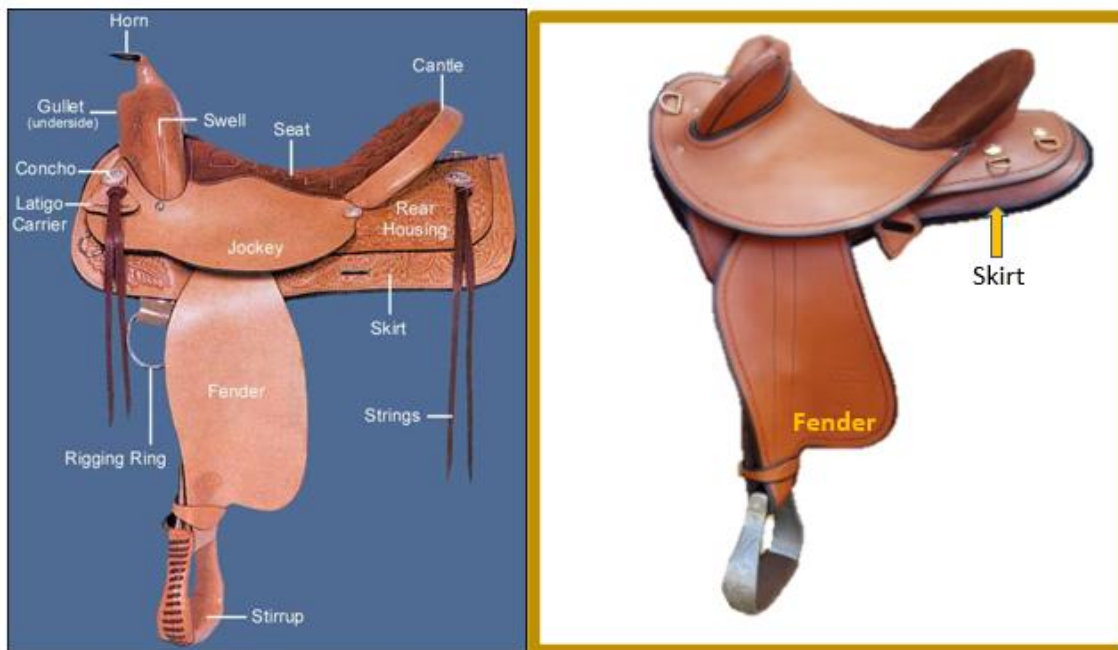
The WDA-AUS rule book has details of tack, attire and presentation of the horse, in Section 10. This page also provides brief information based on questions that have been asked.

☑ **What type of saddle do I have to use?**

A Western or Swinging Fender or Half Breed Saddle is required, but all saddles **must have at least 2 of these 3 requirements**:-

1. Saddle Skirt
2. Western Fenders which are a minimum of 75mm at the narrowest point
3. A Horn.

### LEGAL WESTERN SADDLE AND LEGAL HALF BREED SADDLE



☑ **What is a saddle skirt?**

The skirt attaches to the underside of the bars. Its purpose is to protect the horse from the bars and helps distribute the rider's weight more evenly, as per the diagram above.



**Can I use a Pee Wee bit?**

No, Pee Wee bits are not permitted.

**NOT LEGAL - PEE WEE BIT**



**When does the membership year start? Do I get a discount if I join late in the membership year?**

The membership & show year starts on 1 July & ends on 30 June each year. It is the same price throughout the year, no matter what month you join.

**Can I use a nose net?**

You need to make a request to the WDA-AUS Board for consideration via [secretary@westerndressage.com.au](mailto:secretary@westerndressage.com.au) & must include a Veterinary Certificate certifying the medical need for the use of a nose net. It must also include a photo of the net (preferably on the horse), the full name of the horse and the medical condition applicable to the use of the nose net. You would need to submit your request several weeks in advance, to allow time for the board to convene & consider your request. If you apply a week before the relative show, you won't get approval. The net must be transparent and must not cover the bit or the mouth of the horse.



**Can I use an Anatomical bridle, for example a micklem bridle?**

No, anatomical bridles like the one pictured are not permitted.



**I have heard that when a rider is using split reins with 2 hands, they have to bridge the reins. Is that true?**

Yes that's true. Split reins must be bridged when used with 2 hands. If they are joined or connected though, they can be held independently.

**Am I disqualified if I go off pattern?**

No, that is classed as an error of pattern. You will be penalised by 2 points for the first error, 4 points for the 2<sup>nd</sup> error. If you make 3 errors of pattern, then yes you are eliminated.

**Can I carry a whip during a test?**

Yes, so long as it is 120cm or less, including the lash.

**I know there are 4 different jogs. Do I have to ride the jog sitting or rising?**

1. In the working jog, you can ride either sitting or rising, up to Level 1. Level 2 & above is sitting only.
2. In the free jog, you can ride either sitting or rising in all test levels.
3. In the lengthen stride jog, you can ride either sitting or rising, up to Level 2. Level 3 & above is sitting only.
4. In the collected jog, you can only ride sitting.

If your test level allows the jog to be ridden sitting or rising, you can change from one to the other at any point throughout the test.

**There's a WDA-AUS approved show coming up but I only want to try WD out instead of joining at the moment. Can I do that?**

Yes, you definitely can do that. You can pay an event only membership and ride in the non-sanctioned Introductory and Basic Levels. The non-sanctioned basic tests are exactly the same tests as the sanctioned basic tests but are awarded separately. Ribbons are awarded for placings. Your horse does not need to be competition licensed either.

**If I only do the non-sanctioned tests and pay the event only membership, do I still have to comply with the rules for tack and attire?**

Yes, you still have to comply with those rules. Occasionally our affiliate associations will include designated "Come & Try" non-sanctioned Introductory and Basic level classes at their shows. The event convenors have the discretion to allow any style of saddle to be used in specifically identified "Come & Try" classes only. The headgear used must comply with the WDA-AUS legal tack rules. These classes are stand-alone classes, run separately to the other non-sanctioned classes, but as part of an approved show.

**How do I know what level to enter my horse in?**

You can choose the test level for your horse, up to Level 2. Only 2 consecutive levels can be ridden at any one competition: for example Basic/Level 1. To further explain for example: You can't ride Basic & Level 2 at a show.

If you wish to ride in Level 3 or above, then you must comply with an eligibility rule. This means your horse must be at least 4 years old and must have achieved at least 75% in a Level 2 class.

All tests from Level 1 upwards are sanctioned only and riders must be WDA-AUS members and the horses must hold a lifetime competition license.

**How many classes can I enter each day?**

You can enter each horse in a maximum of 4 tests per day, no matter what the test is. For example only, if the show is a 2 day event, you could enter a total of 8 tests (4 tests on day one & 4 tests on day two, providing you comply with the 2 consecutive levels rule for the sanctioned tests).

**I have seen some western dressage classes advertised at shows, but the tests look a little different from the ones on your website. If I get the judge to sign my points book, can I have competition points awarded from those events.**

No. WDA-AUS is the national governing body responsible for setting national standards in all aspects of Western Dressage for our members and affiliated associations, this establishes unity in both training & competition. Therefore, competition points are only earned at WDA-AUS approved events.

**There is a new WDA-AUS affiliate in my area & event attendance is starting to grow. Is there any advice on including Champion & Reserve Champion awards?**

WDA-AUS has standardised the event information for all show types across Australia. All affiliate associations & branches now offer the same awards for each different show type (Standard, Championship & State Shows). Their programs will all have the same event information outlining how the Champion & Reserve Champion awards are calculated. They will have these awards in Sanctioned, Non-Sanctioned & Youth classes. Some affiliate associations & branches may offer optional awards in addition to the set standards



☑ **I'm a member of WDA-AUS, but I'd like to ride a horse that is owned by a non-member. Is that allowed?**

Yes it certainly is. If you intend to ride the horse in sanctioned classes, the horse only needs to have a competition license. The license costs \$25 and is issued for the lifetime of the horse, it is not subject to annual renewal. If you only intend to ride the horse in non-sanctioned Introductory and or Basic tests, then no license is needed.

☑ **Do I have to salute & what am I supposed to do when I finish my test?**

Yes, you have to salute if the test lists it in the movement, otherwise you could be penalised for an error of execution. Once you finish the final movement and salute, you should move towards the rail on a 10m ½ circle (arc) at a free walk and you can exit diagonally from any rail marker towards A, to exit at A. All exits are at a free walk.

☑ **Can I use an English style headstall in Western Dressage?**

As the name suggests, Western Dressage requires the use of a Western style of headstall, or an Australian Stock style headstall made of leather or leather like material. If using a bitless bridle, it must be made of rope, leather or leather like material.

**These are just a few types of Western & Stock style headstalls. You are not limited to these particular ones; they are simply examples.**

**The bitless headstall on the palomino is not legal because the reins attach to rings on a sliding chin strap that applies direct pressure to the jaw. The bitless headstall on the bay is legal because the reins attach directly to a fixed ring on the noseband & there is no leverage or clamping action occurring.**



**WESTERN**



**STOCK**



**NOT LEGAL - BITLESS**



**LEGAL - BITLESS**

☑ **Can I band my horses mane and spray some glitter on the hindquarters?**

No braiding, banding or plaiting of the mane, tail or forelock is permitted. No decoration of the horse with items such as ribbons, flowers or glitter is permitted either.

☑ **Do I have to wear chaps in Western Dressage?**

No, it is not mandatory to wear chaps in Western Dressage. You may wear chaps or chinks as an optional item though. The same ruling applies to gloves. Some riders like to wear these at Championship, State and National Shows, while others wear them at Standard Shows also.

**The rulebook says that chin straps and bit hobbles are permitted to be used with a snaffle bit. Is it mandatory that I use a chin strap or bit hobble when I use a snaffle bit?**

*No. Chin straps or bit hobbles are not mandatory if using a snaffle bit. These are permitted though if you want to use one. If you are using a curb bit, it is mandatory to use a curb chain or flat leather chin strap which is at least 12.7mm (1/2 inch) in width and it must lie flat against the jaw of the horse.*

**Can I use a sheepskin nose band cover when I show in a bosal?**

*No, nose band covers are not permitted.*

**Can I use a work saddle pad, stock horse saddle pad or pony club saddle pad when I show?**

*As the name suggests, Western Dressage requires a western style saddle pad or western style show pad/blanket in competition. You can use any type of saddle pad at clinics, training days or social events but for WD Shows you must use a western style saddle pad/blanket. You can use a western saddle blanket or western show blanket over your preferred non-western saddle pad, provided that it is not visible.*

**I'm new to western and I like to ride in skinny jeans. Can I wear my western boots over the top of my jeans while showing, if I can't fit my jeans over the top of my boots?**

*No, your jeans or western style trousers must be worn over the top of your boots when you are riding at a show, unless covered by chaps. However, if you are riding at a clinic, training day or social event you can wear your boots over the top of your jeans if preferred. If you are wearing short boots, your jeans/trousers should still cover the top of them.*

**I nominated for a show and the horse that I nominated has gone lame on the morning of the show. Can I change horses and ride another horse instead?**

*No, you can't change horses after the draw has been posted. Horse and rider combinations must stay the same as per the draw and must be ridden in the order of the draw also.*

**Sometimes it's hard to hear my caller. Can I wear an earpiece that is paired with a microphone being used by my caller?**

*No, that is not permitted. Many affiliate associations & branches hosting WD shows have a PA system where callers have the option of using a microphone through an amplifier, so that riders, judges & the spectators can hear the test being called. If a rider has a diagnosed hearing impairment, a request to the WDA-AUS Board for consideration via [secretary@westerndressage.com.au](mailto:secretary@westerndressage.com.au) can be made. You would need to submit your request along with medical certification, several weeks in advance, to allow time for the board to convene & consider your request. If you apply a week before the relative show, you won't get approval.*



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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**Event Organiser** – includes Event Convenor, Show Secretary and any Assistants to those roles. The term also includes a Show Committee.

**Affiliate Association** – includes State Associations and Branches.

**Capping Event Entries** – means placing a limit on the number of nominations that can be accepted per test and or per show.

**Nominate.com.au** – Electronic system used to process online entries for equestrian events.

**Livescore** – Paperless western dressage scoring application, used instead of paper tests. Scribes enter the judge's comments on a mobile device.

**Caller** – an assistant to the rider who stands outside the arena boundary and calls each movement of the test for the rider.

**Scorer** – A minimum of two (2) persons delegated to adding up the scores on the judge's scoresheets, taking into account any deductions due to penalties and determining the final score in the form of a percentage mark to 3 decimal places. Each test is to be scored by the two scorers who verify the final percentage mark. In the case of the use of Livescore means a minimum of two (2) persons who each review all results and placings to ensure the accuracy of each.

**Scribe** – a person who sits with the judge and notes the judge's comments, scores and penalties on the paper score sheet or on the mobile (tablet) device.

# AMENDMENTS

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Any future amendments made prior to the next 2 year review, may be listed here. To be incorporated into the 2025 version.

04/07/2024

## 4.1 National and State End Of Year High Point Awards

- f) State and National High Point awards are not to be announced prior to September 1<sup>st</sup>, each year. **The exception being in the year that a National Show is to be held. National High Point awards may be announced and presented at the National Show.**

24/07/2024

## 7.3.2 *Championship Shows, State Shows And National Shows Where The Amateur Classes Are Held Within The Open Classes*

Correction of omission regarding the number of tests held at a National Show. Inserted the words:- (Championship/State Show) or three highest scoring tests (National Show)

- The two highest scoring tests (**Championship/State Show**) or **three highest scoring tests (National Show)** of a horse/Amateur rider combination from ANY.....

31/10/2024

## 10.13 Presentation of the Horse

- a) Tendon boots, splints boots, leg wraps or bandages in plain colours (white, off-white, black, brown or beige) may be used. **Bell boots/over-reach boots of any kind are not permitted.** Hoof boots designed for riding may be used instead of horse shoes.