

## 1. EXPLANATION OF LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

### PREAMBLE

When assessing combinations for competition, the prime considerations are safety and fairness. In each level, there will be combinations which are at the beginning stage, consolidating stage and established stage. Combinations which are considered to be established but not yet ready for the next level should be assessed on half points. The *Expectations* are a guide to what you would expect to see at that level. The *Requirements* listed are tasks which the combination will be required to attempt in competition. The overall standard of the combination is assessed using the Expectations and Requirements as a guide to ascertain the level of experience and ability.

Note on 2013 Dressage Tests: the final test of each level is designed to test readiness to progress and include some movements found in the higher level. These more difficult movements are not included in the list of Requirements for the level. Combinations which can perform the requirement of the final test of each level competently and confidently should be considered for assessment at the higher level.

### LEVEL 5 - DRESSAGE

#### PREAMBLE:

This Level is for inexperienced combinations with minimal competition experience. It enables them to enjoy competition against combinations of a similar ability and to develop the ability to perform simple movements calmly and obediently. Experienced Riders training green/young horses **MUST NOT** be assessed at this Level. A Rider is considered too capable for Level 5 if they **have ever been assessed Level 3 or above in this discipline.**

To be assessed at base Level 5 for Dressage or Showing, riders will be required to demonstrate that they can walk, trot, canter, turn and halt their mount with a degree of balance and control which would allow them to satisfy the requirements of the level.

1. When <b><i>commencing</i></b> at this Level, Combinations:	2. Level 5 Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may have an unsteady position and ineffective, obvious and/or uncoordinated used of the aids.</li> <li>• may be unable to ride a straight line or execute accurate figures.</li> <li>• may be unable to recognise correct diagonal at trot or leading leg at canter</li> <li>• may be unable to perform a square halt either front or back</li> <li>• may be unable to maintain a steady rhythm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Execute changes of pace – halt, walk, trot and canter</li> <li>• Hold immobility at halt for 3 seconds</li> <li>• Execute canter depart from a corner</li> <li>• Ride circles 20m at trot</li> <li>• Transitions should be within 3 strides of the marker</li> <li>• Transitions into and out of halt through walk</li> </ul>

## LEVEL 4 - DRESSAGE

### PREAMBLE:

This Level is the next step up for Level 5 Combinations. The combination's ability has improved to enable them to show a steadier, more accurate test. The rider will have better balance and control but may not be achieving a steady connection. In level 4, the horse should be allowed to work forward in a natural rhythm with minimal interference from the rider. Relaxation and steadiness of rhythm should be developing but loss of balance and/or suppleness may affect the quality of the work. Transitions may be unbalanced and not at the markers. Sitting trot is not required and would be difficult for horse and rider to perform. Horse and/or rider may lack competition experience.

The main aim of this Level is to show a horse willing to move freely forward in a steady rhythm and showing acceptance of the basic aids. The rider should attempt correction of incorrect diagonals and leading legs in canter.

When **commencing** at this level, combinations

- Should show more balance than Level 5,
- May be unbalanced during transitions, or transitions may be unsteady and not at the marker
- Paces may be unsteady in rhythm

3. Level 4 Expectations	4. Level 4 Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The horse should be going forward willingly and calmly</li> <li>• Transitions should be within two strides of the marker</li> <li>• Halt should be square in front but not necessarily behind</li> <li>• Corners should be ridden on a 15m diameter curve</li> <li>• Should be able to ride correct diagonal, or correct when wrong</li> <li>• Should be able to ride a reasonably accurate 20m circle at trot or canter</li> <li>• Should attempt to ride accurately on the track</li> <li>• Transitions into and out of the halt will be through the walk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain immobility at halt for 4 seconds</li> <li>• Execute canter depart from a corner with correct lead</li> <li>• Ride circles, 20m at trot and canter</li> <li>• Free walk showing clear lengthening of the rein to enable horse to stretch neck</li> <li>• Change of rein on short diagonal in trot</li> <li>• Working trot and working canter</li> </ul>

## LEVEL 3 - DRESSAGE

### PREAMBLE:

At this level, the rider will be establishing an independent seat allowing more effective use of the aids and steadier paces. Combinations should be working towards consolidation of rhythm, suppleness and acceptance of the contact.

Level 3 is generally suited to an experienced rider on a less established horse, or a less experienced rider on an educated horse.

Dressage tests will be ridden in sitting and/or rising trot. Sitting trot should be reasonably steady, with the rider establishing the ability to follow the movement of the horse without interference to rhythm and contact.

With the horse's improving balance, the ability to show lengthened strides in trot is being developed. Transitions will be smoother and closer to the markers. The rider may be able to work the horse from behind into a contact, but there may still be some inconsistency in the quality of the connection.

When **commencing** this level, combinations

- Will be starting to show acceptance of the bridle, but the horse may not be working from behind, and the contact may still be inconsistent
- Should be working in a more consistent outline – however the horse should NOT be overbent or “pulled” into an outline
- The rider should have a good understanding of ringcraft

5. Level 3 Expectations	6. Level Three Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should be going forward willingly and calmly</li> <li>• Should show clear transitions and be closer to the marker (within one stride)</li> <li>• Should attempt to ride corners on a 10m diameter curve</li> <li>• Halt should be square in front</li> <li>• May perform transitions into and out of halt through walk (2 strides max)</li> <li>• Should attempt a reasonably steady sitting trot</li> <li>• Should attempt to show correct bend and flexion on circles and in corners</li> <li>• Should work in a rounder frame</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain immobility at halt for 4 seconds</li> <li>• Ride straight lines</li> <li>• Ride correct circles, 15m at trot and 20m at canter</li> <li>• Ride serpentines of 3 loops at trot</li> <li>• Free walk on a long rein</li> <li>• Working trot and canter</li> <li>• Some lengthened stride in trot</li> <li>• Inside and both rein release in trot</li> <li>• Stretch out and down in trot</li> <li>• Sitting trot</li> </ul>

## LEVEL 2 - DRESSAGE

### PREAMBLE:

The Rider has an independent seat with the correct use of the aids to influence the horse. The horse will be working forward in a regular rhythm with developing impulsion. Acceptance of the contact will be established with the horse working consistently on the bit, showing improved balance, self carriage and throughness. Transitions will be smooth and flowing, at the markers, clearly showing the changes of pace. Correct bend and flexion would be shown on circles and corners.

When **commencing** this level, combinations:

- Should be able to show a clear lengthening of pace in trot and canter
- Should show the horse attempting to work from behind into a steady contact, showing a willing acceptance of the bridle
- Should show transitions at the markers
- Should clearly show change of pace, smooth, forward and flowing transitions
- Should show correct bend and flexion on circles and corners

7. Level 2 Expectations	8. Level 2 Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of pushing power</li> <li>• Reliably on the bit with better balance and throughness</li> <li>• All transitions should be smooth and at the marker</li> <li>• The halt should be square front and back, the horse should be immobile and attentive to the Rider</li> <li>• Corners should be ridden on a 10m diameter curve</li> <li>• Execute change of canter lead through trot (3 to 5 strides)</li> <li>• Maintain effective sitting trot</li> <li>• Paces and rhythm should be regular and balanced</li> <li>• Correct flexion and bend to be shown at all times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show lengthened strides in trot and canter</li> <li>• Execute transitions in and out of halt direct from trot</li> <li>• Halt, immobile and attentive for 5 seconds</li> <li>• Canter showing correct depart on a straight line</li> <li>• Ride straight and accurately on the centre line</li> <li>• Ride correct circles, 10m at trot and 15m at canter</li> <li>• Ride 3 loop serpentine at trot</li> <li>• Ride leg yield in trot</li> <li>• Stretch forward and downward in trot</li> <li>• Canter loop off long side</li> <li>• Change of lead through trot</li> </ul>

## LEVEL 1 - DRESSAGE

### PREAMBLE

The horse is working reliably on the bit, in self carriage, showing submission with more balance, engagement, suppleness, impulsion and straightness. The horse should be accepting more weight on the hindquarters with an uphill tendency and defined transitions. The rider should have a deep, independent seat with correct use of the aids to influence the horse. Horse and rider should appear in harmony at all times.

When *commencing* at this level, combinations:

- May not be able to maintain consistent collected paces when required
- Should be able to attempt medium paces without loss of rhythm or balance

9. Level 1 Expectations	10. Level 1 Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All transitions should be performed fluently, at the marker, with the horse balanced and engaged</li> <li>• Corners should be ridden on a 8m diameter curve</li> <li>• Reliably on the bit showing self carriage</li> <li>• Consistently engaged with an uphill tendency</li> <li>• Suppleness and straightness</li> <li>• Confidence and harmony in the work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show medium and collected paces at trot and canter</li> <li>• Execute simple changes (with 3 to 5 strides of walk)</li> <li>• Execute canter depart from walk</li> <li>• Execute rein back</li> <li>• Ride counter-canter</li> <li>• Ride circles 10m at trot and canter</li> <li>• Execute shoulder-in and travers</li> <li>• Ride serpentine – 3 &amp; 4 loop at trot, 3 loop at canter</li> <li>• Inside rein release in canter</li> </ul>

## **ADVANCED - DRESSAGE**

### **PREAMBLE:**

Horse and rider in harmony, with the rider able to influence the horse via the correct use of the aids. The horse should now be showing increased engagement, impulsion and balance. The horse is carrying more weight on its hindquarters resulting in more consistent collection, clear transitions within paces and a higher degree of submission and harmony. Lateral work should be established.

<b>11. Advanced Level Expectations</b>	<b>12. Advanced Level Requirements</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All transitions should be performed fluently, at the marker, with the horse balanced and engaged</li><li>• Corners should be ridden on a 8m diameter curve</li><li>• A higher degree of collection is expected</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Show collected, medium and extended paces</li><li>• Execute simple changes (with 3 to 5 strides of walk)</li><li>• Execute canter depart from walk</li><li>• Execute rein back</li><li>• Ride counter-canter</li><li>• Execute shoulder-in and travers</li><li>• Ride serpentine – 3 &amp; 4 loop at trot, 3 loop at canter</li><li>• Perform half pirouette at walk</li><li>• Execute flying changes</li><li>• Execute half pass in trot and canter</li><li>• Ride circles 8 m at trot</li><li>• Ride half circles 8m at canter</li></ul>