

PCV- Dressage 2021

To be used in conjunction with PCV Dressage tests effective 1 September 2020

New content for 2021 is highlighted.

10. Expected Standards

Coefficient: The number 2 in the coefficient column on the dressage score sheet doubles the mark given for that particular movement, to stress its importance in the training of the horse. As well as the free walk, a coefficient is applied to movements such as medium paces and transitions. This is to encourage riders to be more aware of the importance of these to the horse's basic paces.

10.1 Grade 6

10.1.a Grade 6 is an introductory level for the true beginner rider. The Grade 6 rider's position will lack balance at times and this rider is not yet capable of canter. In the walk & trot work, the Grade 6 rider may have moments of stop/start.

10.1.b The judge should not be too concerned about details of rider position or accuracy of test lines. Calmness and safety of combination and that they are attempting to follow the directives of the test is more important. Remarks should be simple and generous with praise.

10.2 Grade 5

10.2.a Grade 5 riders have developed more skills. The majority of the time they are capable of the two basic requirements: "to keep the pony/horse going at required speed and on the correct line." They are not yet capable of grade 4.

10.2.b All Grade 5 can do, or try to do, is make the pony go and keep it as nearly as possible on the required track. It is more important that the pony goes *where* the rider wishes (effectiveness of rider) rather than *how* it goes (qualities of mount not to count). The judge should not be too concerned with details of position and should always reward a 'safe and happy combination'. Incorrect diagonal or leading legs should not be penalised. Remarks should be simple and generous with their praise and every sheet should somewhere carry remarks that comment on the rider's attempts to fulfil the two basic requirements: "to keep the pony going at required speed and on the required line."

10.3 Grade 4

10.3.a Grade 4 is for a rider with a more balanced position, with better control of their hands and better application of the aids. Experienced senior riders may compete green horses in this grade but not in Grade 5.

10.3.b The judge now expects the rider to be more balanced in their position, with better control of their hands and better application of the aids. The horse should go willingly forward. The rider who tries to get their horse near the corner and on the track should be marked more leniently than the rider who lets the horse take the line it chooses. The fact that the rider has to use the outside rein causing the horse to look to the outside is a minor detail at this grade.

10.3.c At this grade, it is not always possible to achieve correct bend and flexion. The horse that goes quietly but lacks impulsion should mark better than one that is pulling and over bent. Riders should be rewarded for trying to do transitions on the markers.

10.3.d **All trot work** at Grade 4 is in rising trot.

- 10.3.e **Increase the trot.** Riders should show a difference in energy and activity. Judges should show some leniency at grade 4 and early grade 3, as at these levels horses do not have to be on the bit, so will not be able to maintain rhythm and lengthening and will tend to run and quicken the stride. When asked to increase the trot the rider should be able to ride a reasonably straight diagonal, with the horse going forward more energetically, so that there is a difference from the working trot. If the horse does not lengthen the stride this should not be penalised at this grade.
- 10.3.f As the rider progresses through the grades improvement should be made so by Grades 1 and 2 the horse is expected to maintain rhythm and lengthen the stride.
- 10.3.g **Free walk.** The horse should stretch out the neck and walk with long, relaxed, marching strides but would not be expected to maintain contact.

10.4 Grade 3

- 10.4.a Grade 3 is for more experienced juniors and less experienced senior riders.
- 10.4.b The rider should be starting to show an ability to influence the horse's way of going. This is possible due to a more balanced position, steadier hands and better understanding of application of the aids. The horse is not expected to be supple enough to go far into the corners as it may take uneven steps and bend its neck excessively and the smooth bend through the whole body is lost. The horse must not be ridden on too short a rein, which would result in short restricted paces, pulling, over bending and stiffness. There must be an obvious effort to ride the horse forward to contact on the bit with some resulting effect on the horse's frame. This does not have to be consistently maintained. At this grade riders should be able to ride accurate figures and transitions on the markers.
- 10.4.c Momentary lapses behind the vertical should not outweigh correct work shown in other aspects. Quality of pace through tracking up and freedom of movement should be the focus of judging, with any restriction of the horse's natural stride by the use of too short a rein to be marked as insufficient.
- 10.4.d **Medium walk.** A clear, regular and unconstrained walk of moderate lengthening. The rider maintains a light, soft and steady contact with the horse's mouth by following contact with their arms and hands moving forward and back in time with the undulations of the horse's head and neck.
- 10.4.e **All trot work** is rising or sitting by rider's choice unless otherwise stated.
- 10.4.f **Stretching trot.** Horse to stretch gradually forward and downward with an elastic and consistent contact with rider's hands. The pace must maintain its rhythm and horse's hindlegs well-engaged. During the retake of the reins the horse must accept the contact without resistance in the mouth or poll.
- 10.4.g When doing "**moderately lengthened strides**" the rider should try to show a clear transition into and out of the movement, strides should lengthen and show a difference without loss of rhythm. The horse should be straight, but some loss of balance should not be heavily penalised.
- 10.4.h Every sheet should report on the success, or otherwise, of the rider's efforts to round the horse up while keeping him going. This is basic to any further progress in the horse's education.

10.5 Grade 2

- 10.5.a The rider should have a reasonably balanced position, be moderately steady in sitting trot, and demonstrate that they understand correct application of the aids. They should be able to ride forward to contact on the bit and be able to maintain a steady frame most of the time. There should be no drawing up of the legs when giving aids. More emphasis should be given to correct execution of transitions as well as accuracy. The horse should now show correct bend so corners and circles can be ridden without loss of rhythm and tempo. The rider should be improving in their ability to encourage the horse to be more active in his movements.
- 10.5.b **All trot work** is sitting or rising unless otherwise stated.
- 10.5.c Consistent over bending throughout a movement should be penalised with a mark below 5, as insufficient, with corresponding loss in collective marks. However, momentary lapses behind the vertical should not outweigh correct work shown in other aspects. Any restriction of the horse's natural stride by the use of too short a rein is insufficient.
- 10.5.d **Stretch on a Long Rein.** In order to execute the criteria "stretch on a long rein" the rider must lengthen the reins and the horse stretches gradually forward and down, but always maintains a steady contact with the rider's hands. During the taking up of the reins, the horse must accept the shortening of the reins without any kind of resistance in his poll. If the contact is correct the horse is supple, well balanced, relaxed and obedient.
- 10.5.e **Leg yielding.** Refer to rule 9.11.
- 10.5.f **Give the Reins.** The rider while sitting upright with seat remaining in the saddle pushes the hands forward towards the bit momentarily releasing the contact. This is done in the rhythm of the canter and the horse remains in the same outline and balance. The horse does not stretch his neck forward but shows he is in self carriage.

10.6 Grade 1

- 10.6.a The judge should look for a well-balanced and effective position that enables the rider to apply correct aids and influence the horse to achieve correct unrestricted paces. The horse should show free forward movement while going up to a steady contact on the bit. The roundness in the frame should be maintained throughout the test. Sitting trot should be established enough to obtain active engagement of the hindquarters. Transitions should be smooth and accurate with circles and corners executed correctly. There should be a general impression of harmony and balance of horse and rider.
- 10.6.b Consistent over bending throughout a movement should be penalised with a mark below 5, as insufficient, with corresponding loss in collective marks. However, momentary lapses behind the vertical should not outweigh correct work shown in other aspects. Any restriction of the horse's natural stride by the use of too short a rein is insufficient.
- 10.6.c **All trot work** must be executed sitting unless otherwise stated.
- 10.6.d **Collected Paces;** refer rule 9.14.
- 10.6.e **Shoulder-in;** refer rule 9.12.e.
- 10.6.f **Travers-** refer rule 9.12.f.
- 10.6.g **Renvers-** refer rule 9.12.g.

- 10.6.h **Simple Change of Lead**- refer rule 9.5.d.vii.
- 10.6.i **Counter Canter** – refer rule 9.5.d.vi.
- 10.6.j **Half Turn on the Hindquarters** – refer rule 9.9.c.
- 10.6.k **Rein back** – refer rule 9.6.

10.7 PC Advanced

- 10.7.a The judge should look for a horse/rider combination that is demonstrating the qualities of the training scale; rhythm, looseness, contact and acceptance of the bit, impulsion, straightness and collection.
- 10.7.b Horse to demonstrate balance in all movements and show purity of gait with correct rhythm and tempo. In collection the hind legs show more bend and take a greater load therefore lightening the forehand and appearing more uphill.
- 10.7.c All transitions should be performed with fluency, at the marker, in balance and with engagement. Lateral work to be established and show a degree of suppleness and bend where required. Horse can now ride corners on an 8m diameter curve .
- 10.7.d Horse and rider should be in harmony, with the rider able to influence the horse through correct use of the aids including seat. There should be a soft and steady contact between the rider's hand and the horse's mouth. A rider who uses the hands too strongly and causes the horse to go with the nose behind the vertical or show false bend is to be penalised as this is a fault. Horse should appear to 'seek' the riders contact, with the poll the highest point of the neck.
- 10.7.e Riders at this level are to demonstrate the use of a still and supple seat which is in balance with the horse at all times. Application of the aids are now subtle and discreet.
- 10.7.f **All trot work** must be executed sitting unless otherwise stated.
- 10.7.g **Half Pass**-refer rule 9.12.h.
- 10.7.h **Half Pirouette in walk**-refer rule 9.9.d.
- 10.7.i **Flying change of lead**- refer 9.5.d.