

Petplan Equine Area Festivals

The Petplan Equine Area Festivals were introduced in 1999 to give grass-roots riders the opportunity to perform in true championship conditions at leading venues across Britain.

To be part of the glitz and glamour of these prestigious shows, which run from July to October each year, is easier than you think. All you need to do to qualify is compete at affiliated shows and score just **62% twice at one level from preliminary to elementary** and **60% twice from medium to prix st georges** between 1 January and the closing date for entries for your area festival.

Your score sheets are your proof of qualification. You need to send the original sheets, with the date and venue of the class written on them, to the show organiser of the area festival you would like to go to, together with your entry form. Test sheets can only be used once, but it is a good idea to keep copies as they will not be returned to you.

You do not need to be a British Dressage (BD) member or have a registered horse to qualify for an area festival at preliminary level, but you will need to become a BD member to ride at an Area Festival. If you qualify for the Petplan Equine Championships, you will also need to register your horse with BD to compete there.

If you are riding at novice level upwards, you can also compete without being a member by using class tickets or training classes, but both horse and rider have to be registered before entering an area festival.

At preliminary level, only riders in group 7 or 8 and horses with 49 points or fewer are eligible when qualifying. Group 4-8 riders can compete in area festivals up to and including advanced medium level, group 3 riders can only compete at novice level and above, group 2 riders are only allowed to compete at advanced medium level and above and group 1 and group 2A riders are not allowed to enter area festivals at all. If you upgrade after qualifying, you can still compete at the area festival.

The Petplan Equine Championships run alongside the Winter Championships, which take place annually in April at Hartpury College, Gloucestershire. The top two combinations at medium level and above with a score of 62% or more at area festivals qualify for the finals. If the classes are split, then the winner from each section will qualify. A horse/rider combination which qualifies for both the Area Festival championships and the winter championships in the same year may only compete in the Area Festival championship at a higher level than in the winter championship. Music freestyle classes are included. Those qualified for both must withdraw from the Area Festival championship.

At preliminary, novice restricted, novice open, elementary restricted and elementary open the top four combinations with a score of 62% or more will qualify. If the classes are split, then the first and second from each section will qualify. At the championships, these three classes will run in a two-round format. Round one will be in the morning when two arenas of 30 competitors each will run concurrently. In the afternoon, the top 15 from each arena will go through to the final round.

The dates of the area festivals and final will be published in the Key Dates section of *British Dressage* magazine and will also be available in the Competitions section of this website under Major dates.

Wild cards will be issued after close of entries for the Area Festival Championships to the next highest qualified percentages across all Area Festivals for any class which has not been filled. Entries received after the closing date from pre-qualified combinations will not be accepted once wild cards have been issued.

Please note that the information given here is a simplified guide and that you will need to refer to the current *British Dressage Rules* for full details.